

MESSIAH COLLEGE

Assumption of Risk and Liability Release

I understand that this is a legally-binding Release given by me, _____, (Participant) to **MESSIAH COLLEGE** (College).

I understand that there are dangers and risks to which I may be exposed by participating in the following activity: _____ during the following dates or times: _____. I understand that the College **does not require** me to participate in this activity, but I want to do so and choose to participate voluntarily, despite the possible dangers and risks.

I understand that the activity may involve significant physical exertion and that it is possible for me to suffer a serious injury during practice, conditioning, travel, or participation in the activity. I understand that such an injury could result in death or other serious physical and/or psychological harm and damage to me or my property. I have been warned of the significant non-obvious risks associated with this activity, have full knowledge of these risks, and realize that I am responsible for my own safety and well-being while participating in this activity.

I AGREE TO USE REASONABLE CARE WHILE PARTICIPATING IN THIS ACTIVITY. In consideration of being permitted to participate in the activity, I AGREE, on behalf of my family, heirs and personal representatives, TO ASSUME ALL THE RISKS and responsibilities involved in my participation in the activity. I RELEASE and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the College, its trustees, employees, agents and volunteer activity leaders, from and against any present or future liability, claims or actions that may arise from injury or harm to me, from my death, from damage to my property, or for which I may be liable to another person, as a result of my participation in the activity EXCEPT FOR injury, death or damage resulting from the gross negligence or willful misconduct of the College.

I understand that the College will not have medical personnel available at the site of the activity. I have no health-related conditions which preclude or restrict my participation in the activity. I agree that the College is not responsible for my medical or medication needs and assume all risk and responsibility for such needs. I grant the College permission to authorize emergency medical treatment for me, if necessary, and agree to reimburse the College for any costs. Further, I agree that the College assumes no responsibility for any injury or damage which might arise out of or in connection with authorized emergency medical treatment.

I agree that this Release shall be interpreted in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The invalidity of any part of it shall not affect the validity of the remaining parts.

I have read this entire Release and am signing it voluntarily on this date: _____. I understand that I am giving up my rights to sue the College for injury, loss, or death which I may suffer as a result of participating in the activity. I agree to be legally bound by this Release.

THIS IS A RELEASE OF YOUR RIGHTS. READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING.

(Participant's Signature)

(Parent or Guardian Signature if Participant is under 18)

Risks Associated with Adventure Activities

In adventure programming, it is impossible to eliminate all the risks associated with the various activities. In many cases, the risks are an integral part of the activity and eliminating risks would destroy the unique character of the experience. These risks are inherent in the activity and although we take precautions to appropriately manage these risks, they can cause loss or damage to equipment, accidental injury, illness, or in extreme cases, permanent trauma, disability or death. The purpose of this document is not to frighten participants or reduce their enthusiasm, but to inform them (and their families) so they know what to expect and are aware of the activities' inherent risks. The following describes some, but not all, of these risks.

Risks associated with many adventure activities:

Environmental risks and hazards include insects (bees, ticks, mosquitoes), snakes, animals; poisonous plants (poison ivy); falling rocks or trees; weather (lightening, rain, snow, cold, heat); deep, moving and/or coldwater. Possible injuries and illnesses include bites, Lyme's disease, anaphylactic reactions, skin irritations, burns, hypothermia, heatstroke, dehydration, and drowning. Equipment may fail or malfunction despite reasonable maintenance and use. Many of the adventure activities occur in remote places or in locations difficult to access. Electronic communication is sometimes unreliable and transportation is often difficult. Evacuations and transport to medical care facilities may require significantly more time than is typical in front country environments.

Adventure activities may be strenuous, both emotionally and physically. Emotionally, participants may be challenged through facing fears, intense group dynamics, addressing conflict, introspection, and stress. Physical exertion could result from climbing, running, hiking, paddling, crawling, carrying weight, etc. Possible injuries include scrapes and bruises from physical contact with challenge course elements or natural elements (rocks/trees), and strains or sprains from walking or running on uneven terrain or lifting heavy objects.

Additional risks associated with specific activities:

Caving

- Added difficulty and time required for evacuations because of confined spaces.
- Risk associated with hazards common to caving – darkness, falls, collapse/falling rocks, cold (hypothermia), flooding.

Canoeing/kayaking

- Drowning is possible in any water environment. Hazards that contribute to the possibility of drowning in paddling environments include strainers (trees fallen in the river that allow current to pass but trap boats and people), low head dams (create recalcitrating hydraulics that can trap people), moving water, wind, and waves.
- Boats will sometimes capsize. This may cause the following conditions/injuries: becoming wet and cold (hypothermia), banging into rocks/trees, crushing injuries from being between a swamped boat and rock/tree, being trapped upside-down in kayak because of an improperly executed wet exit.

Rock Climbing and Challenge Courses:

- Being struck by falling objects such as rocks, carabiners, other gear/equipment, etc.
- Falling from heights.
- Falling near the ground resulting in an impact.
- Injuries or discomfort caused by improper wearing of harness.
- Hair, clothing, or jewelry getting caught in rappel device, pulleys, or other parts of the challenge course.

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