The AbilityPLUS Mission

To offer increased access to life affirming athletic and recreational opportunities for persons with physical and intellectual disabilities that will create freedom, promote independence, support inclusion and help those individuals and their families discover their full social, mental and athletic potential.

Welcome to the AbilityPLUS family! You are a member of a supportive group of compassionate, enthusiastic, adaptive sports professionals devoted to providing athletic and recreational opportunities for people with disabilities. AbilityPLUS volunteers’ lives are enriched along with the lives of our participants and their families and friends.

This handbook is intended to:
- Describe our organization and the relationship between you and AbilityPLUS
- Outline the policies and procedures necessary for our programs to run as safely, smoothly and consistently as possible
- Provide a clear and easily accessible resource for your reference while you are a volunteer with AbilityPLUS

AbilityPLUS is a Paralympic Sport Club and a chapter of Disabled Sports/USA. We provide opportunities for individuals with any type of disability to participate in athletic and recreational activities that many typically-abled people take for granted. For a person with a disability, the opportunity to experience the thrill and sense of accomplishment that results from sports participation is life affirming. We are committed to including families and friends of our participants, volunteers, partners, and the community at large in our efforts to make sports and recreation available to all who wish to participate.

AbilityPLUS, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization, and may lawfully solicit donations.

TIN #04-3367707
Website: www.abilityplus.org
Facebook: facebook.com/AbilityPLUSadaptive
Twitter: @adaptivesports

Contact Info

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Executive Director: Lisa MacDonald

Program Director: TBD

Board Members: Mark Shepherd  
              Tim Sorgi  
              Mik Oyler  
              Lynette Pierce  
              Jon Erickson  
Our board members can be contacted through our website

Hours of Operation
AbilityPLUS winter programs generally take place between the hours of 8:30AM and 3:00 PM, and vary by location and program. Special events, fundraisers, and special programs may have different hours. The Program Director will notify all volunteers of start and end times of all lesson, programs and events.

Services and Operations
All AbilityPLUS programs are provided by reservation only to ensure that appropriate volunteers and any needed adaptive equipment are available. Space for participants in our programs is limited to the qualified volunteer staff available on any given day; a reservation request does not guarantee availability. Same-day requests may be accommodated at the discretion of the Program Director. Please refer interested participants or their families/caregivers to the Program Director.

It is the intention of AbilityPLUS to provide any person with a disability the opportunity to participate in the adaptive programs we provide. If there is a financial hardship, financial assistance may be available. Please encourage interested parties to contact the Program Director for details.

OUR LESSONS: SAFETY FIRST, THEN FUN, THEN LEARNING!

The safety of our participants, volunteers and other guests is the #1 priority during all adaptive lessons and events.

How to Assure Safety
Each volunteer must act responsibly for his/her safety and that of fellow instructors, guests and our students. Even with extensive training of volunteer instructors and evaluation of students, accidents may occur. All incidents, accidents, injuries or damage to equipment or materials must be reported to the Program Director immediately, and documented on an AbilityPLUS incident report. Each volunteer must follow the safety regulations, rules and policies of host venues at all times.
Your judgment will affect a student’s safety. Please only embark within your and the participants’ abilities. Be alert to changing weather, visibility and surface conditions. Be prepared to stop at any time and most importantly, use good judgment and common sense.

Go With The Flow!

- Please be aware and respectful of others as you lead or assist a participant in an activity.
- Respect Slow Zones - Slow down at orange signs and trail junctions.
- Follow the Pace - Faster than those around you is too fast KNOW THE CODE!

As a Ski/Snowboard Instructor, you must know and follow the Skiers/Riders Responsibility Code:
1. Always stay in control and be able to stop or avoid other people or objects.
2. People ahead of you have the right of way. It is your responsibility to avoid them.
3. You must not stop where you might obstruct a trail or are not visible to other skiers.
4. Whenever starting downhill or merging on to a trail, look uphill and yield to others.
5. Always use devices to prevent runaway equipment
6. Observe all posted signs and warnings. Keep off closed trails and out of closed areas.
7. Prior to using any lift, you must have the knowledge and ability to load, ride and unload safely

This is a partial list. Be safety conscious.

Let’s Talk About FUN!
If you, and your student are not having fun, learning will not take place. Always be positive and keep the experience FUN. Fun will lead to learning.

General Procedures/Policies

Training/Benefits
AbilityPLUS requires annual training of its staff and volunteers in order to stay proficient and current in its practices.

Training Requirement
- Seasonal Orientation
- Lift Evacuation Training every 2 years (alpine ski volunteers only)
- 4 Additional Clinics presented by AbilityPLUS or with approval of Program Director
Volunteer Benefits -

**ALL TRAINING REQUIREMENTS MUST BE MET TO RECEIVE BENEFITS**

Volunteers will receive a discount identification card upon completion of training, this card will only be issued once, it will not be replaced if lost.

**Attitash or Wildcat**
- 2 - 2-hour lessons = 1 day of teaching
- 21+ Days of Commitment - Season Pass
- Less than 21 days - Ticket for the day of instruction plus a voucher for an additional one-day ticket
  
  Voucher numbers are recorded and assigned by the Program Director at the time a volunteer is given their voucher(s). Vouchers are intended for your use, or the use of close family/friends. They may not be sold for any currency value at any time.
- If you have purchased your own pass or ticket, you may still earn a voucher
- Volunteers that meet their training requirements are also entitled to discounts at local area businesses such as 20% off food at Matty B’s, discount at EMS, Attitash food service, and local ski shops. These discounts are for AbilityPLUS volunteers only and are subject to change at any time by the merchant.

**ESSC Programs**

In order to receive the benefits provided by the Eastern Slope Ski Club, AbilityPLUS Volunteers must:
- Attend AbilityPLUS Orientation
- Background Check for ESSC
- Fulfill AbilityPLUS training requirements
- Attend a meeting at the host mountain for your ESSC program

**Jackson Ski Touring Foundation**

Volunteers can earn one complementary voucher for each day of instructing if they have participated in at least one on snow training session within the last 2 seasons.

**MWV Ski Touring**

AbilityPLUS has 2 transferable trail passes that are used for our programs. If a volunteer wishes to use them they may do so with advanced notice if they are not being used for programming.

**On-Site Rental Equipment Policy**

As a volunteer, you are required to have your own ski/snowboard equipment. AbilityPLUS staff and volunteers are NOT entitled to complimentary rentals from the rental shop at our host venues.
Professional Certification

All volunteers are encouraged to attend workshops or certification exams to increase their level of knowledge and qualifications for instructing and leading the sports and recreation activities we offer to our participants. Consider building your skills and obtaining the following certifications:

- CPR, First Aid
- Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA): Adaptive, Alpine & Nordic
  The Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA) is the system of teaching used throughout the United States at most all ski schools. The Adaptive techniques are all based on this system of teaching. PSIA holds workshop clinics, specialty clinics and certification exams during the winter in alpine, adaptive, Nordic and snowboard disciplines.

All volunteer instructors are encouraged to attend any PSIA workshops or certification exams to increase their level of knowledge and qualifications. Applications and schedule of events are available at the office. If you have any questions about the process or your qualifications, please see the Program Director.

- American Association of Snowboard Instructors (AASI): Alpine, Adaptive
- American Canoe Association (ACA)
- Wilderness First Responder
- Wilderness First Aid

Volunteer Scholarship

AbilityPLUS has a scholarship fund to help volunteers with the associated costs of professional certifications, please contact the Program Director for an application

Are Not Employees

As a volunteer of AbilityPLUS, you are not eligible for Worker’s Compensation benefits or insurance protection under the AbilityPLUS umbrella while participating in any way in any AbilityPLUS activity or any activity that is associated in any way with the AbilityPLUS organization. It is your sole responsibility to procure medical and liability insurance coverage while participating in any AbilityPLUS activity or function.

Furthermore, any volunteer benefits extended or made available to you by AbilityPLUS in no way constitute or imply an employment arrangement.

Volunteers are invited to participate with AbilityPLUS at the discretion of the Program Director and Board of Directors, and may be rejected or dismissed from the organization without warning at any time for any or no reason.
Scheduling, Absences and Cancellations

Winter Volunteers are asked to submit a season-long commitment schedule so that the Program Director may

- Submit accurate volunteer pass and voucher requests to host resort
- Accept lesson reservations knowing what volunteer staff is available.

To the extent possible, all volunteers are asked to honor their commitment schedules, but we are aware that there will be changes as the season progresses.

If you are unable to work on your scheduled day, you must contact the Program Director at least 24 hours in advance, except in the case of sudden illness or emergency. If you are unable to teach on a date that you committed to, please call or email as soon as possible. Failure to show up on a day/time you have committed to twice without notifying the Program Director will result in dismissal from the AbilityPLUS volunteer program and forfeiture of all passes/earned vouchers.

Severely inclement weather DOES NOT mean that your student will cancel. We may cancel a lesson if we determine the conditions to be dangerous for a student, but we do not generally cancel lessons unless the host resort closes their operations. Please show up for your assigned lesson unless we inform you otherwise. If you feel the weather is too hazardous for you to travel, please be sure to contact us as soon as possible so we may attempt to substitute another instructor.

If your student cancels or does not show up for a lesson, we will make every effort to assign you to another lesson that is appropriate to your ability and interests. If we are unable to assign you to another lesson, you will be asked to attend a training clinic if available. If there is no appropriate reassignment available, you will still receive credit for your commitment for that day.

Instructor assignments are made **ONLY** by the Program Director. Should another staff member, board member, or volunteer attempt to change your assignment and/or assign additional volunteers and/or students to your lesson, do not accept the change without consulting the Program Director.

Instructors are assigned to students by the Program Director based upon the instructor’s qualifications and abilities in relation to the student. If you have any questions, concerns or requests for your assignment at any time, contact the Program Director to discuss.

First Aid

- A Basic First Aid Kit is available in the Program Room
- AbilityPLUS Staff and Volunteers are not medical personnel; all medical emergencies must be referred to Base First Aid
Helmet Policy

All AbilityPLUS staff, volunteers and participants are required to wear a properly fitted helmet during their AbilityPLUS ski/snowboard sessions. If a volunteer or participant does not have a helmet, they may borrow one from AbilityPLUS.

In the event that a **participant** is unable or unwilling to wear a helmet due to their disability, please notify the Program Director immediately. DO NOT take a student out without a helmet without first discussing with the Program Director. Helmet exceptions may be made in the case of certain disabilities, but only at the discretion of the Program Director.

All volunteers MUST wear a helmet when on the slopes in an AbilityPLUS lesson, and/or when wearing an AbilityPLUS uniform on the slopes, with or without a student (such as during training). There are absolutely no exceptions to the helmet policy for AbilityPLUS staff and volunteers.

Transportation

**Volunteers and Participants**

As a rule, AbilityPLUS does not provide transportation for volunteers or participants/families/friends. We may from time-to-time help coordinate carpools, or transportation to and within venues. If you need help with transportation as a volunteer, contact the Program Director who may at their discretion, help you arrange transportation with other AbilityPLUS volunteers or participants.

Equipment

Adaptive ski/snowboard equipment is located at our Attitash Program Office and in a local storage unit. From time to time, the Program Director may ask volunteers to help transport adaptive equipment for special events/programs. Volunteers are not liable for any damage to adaptive equipment that may result from their transporting equipment on behalf of AbilityPLUS.

Parking

Our host venues each have policies regarding parking and we must abide by the policies. The Program Director will let volunteers know what the policy is for each venue.

- **Attitash** - Volunteers are required to park in lot 2 on weekends, vacation weeks, and holidays unless informed otherwise by the Program Director. There is a shuttle bus that runs to and from the lot throughout the day with increased frequency in the mornings. Midweek volunteers are required to park to the west of the orange post (about tree line along the street) in the main lot. If you have paid for your own pass or lift ticket, you may park with other paying mountain guests.
Equipment

AbilityPLUS adaptive equipment must be used properly to ensure the safety of our participants. Volunteers must take appropriate training to learn how to check and use each piece of adaptive equipment before using it with a participant.

- As a professional, you should keep your personal equipment in good condition. It should be suitable for the activity, checked regularly, and maintained in top operating condition.
- If you will be skiing, you are required to have your bindings inspected by a certified ski technician prior to any on snow activities at the start of the season.

Rental Equipment for Participants

- Typical ski/snowboard rental equipment is included in our Daily Adaptive Lessons.
- Typical ski/snowboard rental equipment IS NOT INCLUDED in our Seasonal Programs or clinics.
- As an adaptive ski/ride instructor, you are required to have you own equipment and are not entitled to rental equipment from the host venue.

Pet Policy

*Certified Working Service and Therapy Dogs are welcome, and are exempt from the Pet Policy.*

Pets are not permitted at the winter resorts we work with. For events located off-site, with advance permission from the Program Director, in some cases well-behaved pets are welcome.

As caretaker of your pet, you must be prepared and available to handle pet emergencies that may happen during the adaptive event, which will affect your ability to fulfill volunteer requirements.

- Anyone who is critical to the successful outcome of the event must not bring his/her pet. This applies to family, caregivers, volunteers, and staff.
- When AbilityPLUS is planning an event, and considering volunteer coverage, a volunteer who brings a pet will not be counted as 'coverage' since that person may need to leave at any time, and will not receive requisite volunteer benefit (voucher, pass, etc.)

Confidentiality

*Participant Records and Information*

Participant medical information confidentiality is legally protected under HIPPA. Be sensitive and discreet when discussing a participant’s diagnosis and medical information. If you need clarification with the information or terminology in a participant's file, consult with the Program Director, the participant, a family member, or a caregiver. Treat the AbilityPLUS
participant’s file as a medical record, and protect its confidentiality by returning
it to the office filing location, or Program Director, when you have completed
reviewing or making notes. Do NOT discuss, at any time, the participant’s
medical information with any person unrelated to AbilityPLUS.

All participant paperwork related to any program run under the auspices of
AbilityPLUS is the property of AbilityPLUS and may not be accessed,
duplicated or removed from AbilityPLUS office for any reason without the
explicit permission of the Program Director.

AbilityPLUS Business

Please do not discuss any incidents, program-related issues, or operational
events with anyone not related to the incident, issue or event. If you have
questions or concerns about private AbilityPLUS matters, please speak to
the Program Director, or a member of the AbilityPLUS Board of
Directors.

AbilityPLUS encourages the submission of concerns by staff, board members
or volunteers. If you have a concern about the behavior of a staff or board
member, or other AbilityPLUS volunteers that you are unable to resolve
directly, please contact two AbilityPLUS staff and/or board members. Your
concerns deserve attention, and will remain confidential and protected.

Social Media/Image Policy This policy is to protect the privacy of our participants,
and must be adhered to.

AbilityPLUS staff, volunteers and board members are not permitted to post any
images (photo or video) that include, outside of oneself, any AbilityPLUS
participant, family member, volunteer, staff and/or board member to any social
media platform without prior approval. Should you desire a photo or video be
posted on social media. Please submit the image/videos to the Program
Director who will review for posting on the official AbilityPLUS pages. Then
you are welcome to share it from there.

General Conduct

Please adhere to the conduct policies of AbilityPLUS and our host venues. You are a
valuable role model for our participants, members, and the guests of the venues at
which our activities take place.

You have a great impact on the way in which our participants perform and behave.
When you are in the National Forest, please “leave no trace.” When on a ski slope,
adhere to the Skiers Responsibility Code and to all posted signs.

When leading or assisting your participant in an activity, help him/her by sharing your
love for the activity. We are all ambassadors of good will. Take the opportunity to
promote our organization and programs to the public.

While we are operating our programs at our host venues, we represent their organization as well as ours. Venue staff, management, and guests will undoubtedly associate your actions with AbilityPLUS and the venue as a whole.

**Communicating Important Information**

The Program Director manages a tremendous amount of information each day, and fulfills several roles and responsibilities. The Program Room is often chaotic. If you need to communicate an important piece of information, please be sure to do it in writing (email is best), and do not assume your information was received unless you receive a reply from the Program Director.

**Fundraising**

Sports and recreation for everyone is our philosophy at AbilityPLUS. Creating and sustaining accessible, meaningful and fun recreational opportunities is critical. One challenge associated with offering our programming is funding. AbilityPLUS is a non-profit organization. Our Board of Directors, volunteers and members work with individuals, foundations, and corporations to raise funds. AbilityPLUS is always seeking to develop new sources of revenue via planned giving, matching gift programs and our special events.

Giving your time as a volunteer is greatly appreciated! Because of your commitment to AbilityPLUS, you can be a tremendous asset in assisting our fundraising efforts by identifying people, including yourself, your employees, co-workers or other organizations that may wish to support our program. We request that each volunteer participate in a fundraising event annually. Please contact the Program Director to volunteer for a fundraising role.

**Uniform & Jacket Policy**

The AbilityPLUS jacket policy mirrors the uniform policy of our host ski resorts. Volunteers may wear an AbilityPLUS instructor jacket on the hill:

- During assigned lesson while working with student/participant
- During training clinics
- While conducting terrain check at request of Program Director

If you would like to free-ski between and/or after your scheduled lessons, you must change out of your AbilityPLUS uniform jacket.

Program jackets may not be taken off the premises unless needed for an off-site organizational event.

Adaptive instructors are required to wear self-provided BLACK ski/snowboard pants. All volunteers must wear appropriate clothing while participating in an AbilityPLUS program and maintain a neat and clean appearance. All clothing
and accessory equipment must be of current standards and in good repair. It is imperative that you dress appropriately for the weather and act as a model for participants.

**Lift-line Policy**

AbilityPLUS volunteers and staff are not permitted to jump lift lines or use the “Privates or Lesson” line at lifts. Those lines are reserved for mountain guests that have paid extra for their use.

**Interactions with Guests at Host Venues**

As a volunteer with AbilityPLUS, you are expected to interact positively with all staff and guests at our host venues under all circumstances. If you should encounter a guest you feel is behaving irresponsibly or unsafely, avoid engaging or interacting with the guest and always report the incident to the Program Director.

**Physical, Verbal, or Other Abuse & Harassment; Interactions with Staff and Guests**

AbilityPLUS has zero tolerance for physical, verbal, other abuse or harassment, otherwise inappropriate behavior by its members, volunteers or participants toward anyone.

**Volunteer Dismissal Policy**

Divergence from any of the above policies can result in dismissal from the AbilityPLUS volunteer staff and result in revocation of all volunteer benefits.

Please talk with any of our staff if you have any questions.

We are grateful for your time and commitment to AbilityPLUS!
Acceptance of AbilityPLUS Policies and Procedures

I ______________________ acknowledge that I have read, understand and agree to follow the guidelines as set forth in the AbilityPLUS Volunteer Policies/Procedures Handbook.

Volunteer Signature                      Date

Parent/Guardian Signature
Date if under 18 years of age
Volunteer Insurance Responsibility

I, ____________________, understand that as a volunteer of AbilityPLUS, I am not eligible for Worker’s Compensation benefits or insurance protection under the AbilityPLUS umbrella while participating in any way in any AbilityPLUS activity or any activity that is associated in any way with the AbilityPLUS organization. I understand that by applying to become an AbilityPLUS volunteer that it is my sole responsibility to procure medical and liability insurance coverage while participating in any AbilityPLUS activity or function. I understand that this form is a part of my permanent record at the AbilityPLUS office and does not expire as long as I am an active participant in AbilityPLUS programs.

I further understand and agree that any stipends and/or perquisites extended or made available to me by AbilityPLUS are incidental and/or gratuities, and said stipends and/or perquisites in no way constitute or imply an employment arrangement, or alter the aforementioned benefits and insurance responsibilities and agreements.

__________________________  ____________
Volunteer Signature        Date

Parent/Guardian Signature
Date if under 18 years of age