

FL (Hiking Environments) Scope of Practice

The Field Leader (Hiking) course certifies a person to lead groups into Class 1 Hiking Terrain (see page 22) on a one day hike providing the following conditions are met

- 1) The Field Leader (Hiking) Leader is being adequately supervised. Adequate supervision will typically mean:
 - a) The supervisor has 5 or more years of leadership experience, of which 2 years have been with participants of the same demographic as those the FL (H) graduate is leading.
 - b) The performance of the Field Leader is actively monitored through direct observation from time to time and there is a comprehensive trip reporting system in place.
 - c) The supervisor takes steps to ensure that the trip reporting system is capturing the information required to form a judgement of the leader's performance.
 - d) The supervisor is committed to creating participant centered programming.
- 2) The Field Leader (H) has inspected every part of the terrain that their group will be using at least once in the previous 12 months.

The following **restrictions** apply:

- 1) If The Field Leader (Hiking) is under the age of majority in the Province in which they are leading, they must be directly supervised by an adult who also has the FL certification or higher. Directly supervised means that the adult is leading the group and is able to observe or at least be in verbal contact with the minor throughout the event.
- 2) If The Field Leader (H) is a new leader, an adult who also has the FL (H), or higher, must directly supervise them until a qualified supervisor judges that they have attained the skill, experience, and judgement to become an equal partner in the leadership team, or leader of the event.

The following **extensions** apply:

- 1) The Field Leader (H) may lead a group in Class 2 terrain where they hold a valid certificate for the risk factor that makes the terrain Class 2. All other risk factors must remain compatible with the descriptors for Class 1 terrain. For example: Field Leader (H) with a 'Winter' certification can lead 1 day trips in a winter environment into terrain that otherwise qualifies as Class 1 in every respect.
- 2) The OCC is unable to vouch for any leader that leads in terrain not covered by the above scope of practice. However, the OCC recognizes that there are many experienced outdoor leaders who do not have formal terrain specific certification. In part this situation exists because accessible, affordable, and appropriate certification has not been available. Collectively, these people are providing an excellent service to the community and the majority are competent to lead in the terrain they do. However, such leaders should be aware that the most serious incidents occurring to custodial groups in hiking terrain have typically happened to more experienced leaders who did not have terrain specific certification. The OCC recommends that such leaders, and their supervisors, take the necessary steps to assure themselves that other recognized outdoor leaders with equivalent or higher qualifications agree that they have the necessary skill, experience and judgement to lead the hike.