



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS SCHOOL AND GROUP PROGRAMS

### **WHAT IS THE PROGRAM LIKE?**

On every Outward Bound program, participants learn by doing. Participants will be challenged as an individual and become an effective member of the team. They will be compelled to dig deep within themselves, whether canoeing, backpacking, sea kayaking or dogsledding. It is important to know that your participation is voluntary and we expect you to try new things and put forth your best effort. The program is designed to be physically, emotionally and mentally challenging. We allow participants to try new things in a safe and supported environment – you will never be forced to do something you don't want to do. Your instructors inform and inspire you; as the course progresses, the responsibility of tasks shifts from instructors to participants, and the groups' technical and decision-making abilities are able to thrive and grow.

### **WHAT DO I NEED TO BRING?**

Outward Bound Canada supplies all of the technical gear you need! This includes canoes, kayaks, paddles, life jackets/PFDs, tents, first-aid equipment, sleeping pads, cooking and eating utensils, stoves, helmets, ropes, harnesses and tarps. OBC also provides the tripping packs appropriate for each course. Participants are only responsible for bringing their own personal clothing and footwear and a headlamp! You can pack everything in luggage that is suitable for traveling. We will provide you with a Clothing List, which outlines the items you should pack. We expect participants to do their best with bringing their own clothing, as it is always more comfortable to wear your own. If you have questions or get stuck, we can help you find tricky items or come up with an alternative. We have an inventory of supplies that participants can borrow if they do not have the ability to acquire some things on their own. During *Duffle Shuffle*, the instructors will ensure all participants are well equipped for the trip before heading out.

### **WHAT KIND OF FOOD DO WE GET ON THE PROGRAM?**

A detailed menu is planned before each course and is subject to change based on a number of factors. We can accommodate many dietary restrictions – vegetarian, Halal, Kosher - and some food allergies. Please indicate your dietary restrictions and allergies on your Confidential Medical History Form in as much detail as possible. We may request some follow-up information in order to plan your course menu. Participants will receive sufficient calories in reflection of their physical output on the course. Bringing your own food/snacks on course is not required. Please speak to the Admissions Department to make sure you understand the dietary concerns of other participants before packing extra snacks.

### **WHAT IS YOUR ALCOHOL, SMOKING, VAPING AND SUBSTANCE USE POLICY?**

The possession and/or use of non-prescription drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, cannabis or illegal substances while on course is strictly prohibited. This includes the misuse of prescription medications. If you would like to use tobacco for ceremonial purposes, please speak with your instructor upon arrival to your program. You will be asked to sign a Code of Conduct & Assumption of Risk form demonstrating your understanding of this policy. Any participant who brings these substances on course will be sent home at the expense of the participant/their family.

### **WHAT WILL THE SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS BE?**

Participants will be sleeping in tents or improvised shelters that are suitable for the landscape where your course takes place – bringing you that much closer to nature! Outward Bound provides you with the tent, sleeping bag, and sleeping pad. Feel free to bring your own sleeping bag if you wish, however, if it is not appropriate for the weather conditions, your instructors may suggest that you use one of ours.



## **CAN I BRING MY CELL PHONE?**

You won't need it – participants on course enjoy a vacation from technology! Your cell phone, along with your other personal belongings that you don't need (wallet, music player, airline tickets, etc.) will be stored safely at our office nearby while you are in the wilderness. Once the course starts, you will not be able to contact anyone at home, you will be immersed in the Outward Bound experience – building connections with yourself, others, and the natural world! Please know that the instructor team has a plan for getting in touch with our office and your emergency contacts at home in the event of an emergency.

## **WILL I BE SAFE?**

Our highly trained instructors make sure that all activities adhere to strict safety guidelines that we have developed over more than fifty years of working in the wilderness. Instructional briefings precede each new activity to help you participate safely in all of our activities. Our methods and practices are monitored and reviewed regularly by a committee made up of senior Outward Bound staff from schools across North America, as well as independent experts. While there is inherently a risk involved spending time in the wilderness, you're in great hands!

## **WHAT ARE YOUR RISK MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES SURROUNDING COVID-19?**

Outward Bound Canada is committed to mitigating the risks involved with our expeditions, and to minimizing the spread of infectious illness among our participants and staff. The risk of contracting COVID-19 is new for all of us, and cannot be eliminated completely. An Outward Bound expedition is a group experience – one in which you and your new team will live, work, travel and play in a close-knit community. As you may already be aware, there will be times on your course that you and your group members are in close physical proximity. Due to the nature of our programs, there is a risk that you can be exposed to contagious and infectious illness, like COVID-19 (the disease presented by the novel coronavirus), while on your course. [Click Here](#) to read our Information Letter on Infectious Illness. [Click Here](#) to review our Covid-19 Field Protocols.

## **WHAT DO YOU DO ABOUT TICK BITES?**

Ticks are insects that are present across Canada, and their bite is a known vector for causing illness, such as Lyme disease. While the risk of being bit by an insect/vector is as present in the wilderness as it is in your own backyard, our highly qualified instructors carry out regular prevention measures and are trained to take precautions to help prevent the spread of vector-borne illness. We work closely with participants to carry out regular prevention measures. Participants will be briefed on vector bite prevention and participate in regular prevention routines during their time on course with us. [Click Here](#) to read our Information Letter on Vector Borne Illness.

## **WHO ARE MY INSTRUCTORS?**

Outward Bound Instructors are skilled, dedicated, and caring outdoor educators. These well-rounded individuals have extensive wilderness experience. They come from a variety of backgrounds: education, business, camp and other outdoor education networks, or from one of many Outward Bound schools around the world. Aside from formal qualifications in Wilderness First Aid, our instructors continually update their skills through independent training, personal expeditions, and staff development opportunities provided by Outward Bound Canada. They can't wait to meet you!

## **WHAT IS YOUR CANCELLATION / REFUND POLICY?**

Our Cancellation Policy reflects the fact that we incur most of the costs of your expedition before you arrive for the program. Outward Bound Canada has a contractual agreement with your school/organization and any participant cancellations will be considered within the context of the agreement. If you are joining our program with your school or community organization, any cancellation to your attendance should be in consultation with your teacher or group leader. Please **speak with your teacher or group leader as soon as possible if you will not be able to attend the program.**