

Rules and Penalties

Application of Rules and Penalties

All team members, drivers, support staff, relay volunteers affiliated with a team, spectators, etc... must comply with the Rules. A violation of any rule by a person affiliated with a team will result in the respective penalty of the team.

Violations Notification

Any team member (of a team in violation) may be informed, by a Relay Official, of a Rule violation on the course. The informed team member MUST tell the race official his/her bib #. All violations and penalties will be finalized at the finish line. Team Captains must report to the Finish Line Official's Tent within 30 minutes of their team's finish.

Finish Line

Team Captains must report to the Official's Tent within 30 minutes of their team's finish to be informed of any rules violations. A team wishing to file a protest must do so in writing within 30 minutes of their finish at the Official's Tent. The Protest Committee will evaluate all incidents and their decision will be final.

I. Disqualification

Violations of the following rules will result in your team being immediately disqualified and unrecognized at the Finish. In addition, the team risks prohibition from future Blue Ridge Relay events and possible prosecution by local law enforcement, North Carolina Highway Patrol, Grayson Highlands State Park, the Blue Ridge Parkway and National Park Service.

1. On Course Vehicles: Each team is limited to two vehicles, preferably vans, minivans, or SUVs (not to exceed 6'9" wide by 20ft in length). NO MOTOR HOMES, LIMOUSINES, BUSES, OR TRAILERS. This applies to all exchange zones and transition zones. It's critical that you know the size of your rental or personal vehicle well in advance of the start. If a violation occurs at the Start, the team will not be allowed to check in and will not be allowed to start. If a violation occurs at an exchange zone or transition zone, race management will be notified and the team will be disqualified. It is a violation for a 15-passenger van to transport a rear cargo carrier.
2. Grayson Highlands State Park Rules (see park office for complete details)
 1. Upon entering Grayson Highlands, team vans must check in at the gate house. 2 team vehicles for 7-12 runner teams and 1 team vehicle for Ultra teams will be admitted with no fee. A parking fee per vehicle applies to all other vehicles, which must be paid upon entering the Park.
 2. All laws, rules, and regulations of Grayson Highlands State Park must be obeyed. A violation will result in immediate disqualification from the Blue Ridge Relay and may result in Park fines and arrest.
 3. Team Sign-in at the start line will take place 15:00 prior to the start of your team's wave, at the Visitor's Center, located 4 miles after passing through the Park entrance gate. Packet Pick-up is 30 minutes prior to start time.
 4. Park Rangers will be monitoring the Park roadways. Please respect their requests and directions.
 5. Porta-johns: Because this is a State Park and has lots of forest, it is acceptable for animals to use the forest as a restroom. However, all humans must use the porta-johns. Use of the forest as a restroom will result in team disqualification. Porta-johns will be set in the gravel parking lot below the start line and adjacent to the Rangers' Station at EZ1. The restrooms in the Rangers' Station are NOT to be used by the BRR.
 6. Obey park speed limit.
 7. Drones are not permitted in the State Park, unless the operator has a special use permit.
3. Blue Ridge Parkway Laws (this is a partial listing, see park office for complete details)
 1. All laws and regulations of the Blue Ridge Parkway and National Park Service must be obeyed. A violation will result in immediate disqualification from the Blue Ridge Relay and may result in Park fines and arrest.
 2. Support Vehicles are not permitted on the Blue Ridge Parkway. There is only one exception to this rule, on Leg 35, Support Vehicles are permitted access to the Blue Ridge Parkway but must exit at Craven Gap.
 3. Runners are restricted to the Mountains to Sea Trail (MST).
 4. Runners must yield the motor road to oncoming vehicle traffic when crossing the Blue Ridge Parkway motor road. Runners must also comply with race officials stationed at the motor road crossings.
 5. Parkway speed limit is 45 miles per hour.
 6. Roadside parking of Support Vehicles is not permitted on Leg 35.
 7. Use of drones are not permitted within National Parks and is a federal offense, unless the operator has a special use permit.

4. Traffic Laws: Roads will remain open to normal traffic during the Blue Ridge Relay. As such, Blue Ridge Relay participants, support staff and vehicles, spectators, event staff, and everyone affiliated with the Blue Ridge Relay must obey traffic laws at all times. For the safety of everyone involved, respect all users of the roads. Violators of traffic laws will be reported to local law enforcement. DOT requires runners (pedestrians) to yield to vehicles.
5. Public Nuisance Rule: Use trash containers and restroom facilities. Littering, urinating or defecating by some means other than in appropriate facilities will not be tolerated. There are ample restrooms and/or portable toilets at exchange zones. Please plan accordingly.
6. Alcohol Consumption On Course: The Blue Ridge Relay prohibits the consumption and presence of alcoholic beverages during the Relay by everyone involved with the Relay including runners, support staff, volunteers, and spectators. A violation will result in immediate team disqualification, prohibition of all team members from future Blue Ridge Relay events, and notification of the violation to the proper authorities. BRR finishes at Highland Brewing Company and alcoholic beverages are available for consumption after your team crosses the Finish Line. Even though the approximate final 200 meters of the BRR course is on Highland Brewing Company property, alcoholic beverages are not allowed on the BRR course. Your team's final runner may NOT have an alcoholic beverage in his/her hand before crossing the finish line. Teammates who wish to cross the finish line with their final runner may NOT have an alcoholic beverage in-hand on the BRR course.
7. Highland Brewing Company Beverage Policy: While on the campus of Highland Brewing you are allowed and encouraged to bring your personal water bottle to stay hydrated, Highland Brewing DOES NOT allow other outside beverages at Highland Brewing. Coolers and outside alcohol are strictly prohibited. It is illegal for guests to consume outside alcohol on the premises of Highland Brewing—offenders will be immediately banned from Highland property and DQ'd from BRR. All alcoholic beverages must be opened and served by a Highland Brewing Ambassador. Highland Brewing continues to be very generous, allowing BRR to finish on their campus and is very accommodating to BRR needs. BRR fully supports and will comply with Highland Brewing policies.
8. Night Gear: While running during nighttime stages, the following must be worn at minimum: reflective vest, one flashing light on front, one flashing light on back, and a lit flashlight/headlamp must be carried/worn. When out of the support vehicle, all team-members, support crew, and spectators must wear their vests during nighttime hours. The hours of the nighttime stages are 7:30PM through 7:30AM. Each team member should have a reflective vest! At the discretion of the exchange zone official, reflective vests and other night gear may be required during inclement weather, such as rain and fog. Note a reflective belt or sash DOES NOT qualify as a reflective vest.
9. Van Decorations: Vans may be decorated, but must be decorated in a tasteful and safe way. Vans will be screened upon entry to Grayson Highlands State Park. Obscene and/or derogatory signs and decorations, whether direct or implied, will not be allowed.
10. Race Numbers/Bibs: Race numbers must be worn on the front at all times. A runner cannot run without a number. If a runner loses his/her race number/bib, the runner will be disqualified and the team must continue to run in sequence without that runner.

II. 60 minute Penalties

A 60 minute penalty will be applied for the 1st violation. Team disqualification may result from the 2nd team violation.

1. Support Vehicles Signs: Vehicle signs will be issued to each team vehicle and must be displayed on the dashboard.
2. Runner Rotation: All teams are to run their members in rotating legs and in the same sequence of rotation throughout the race. You may not shuffle the sequence of runners. No alternates may be used once your team has started. If a violation occurs, the team must return to its original sequence.
3. Exchange Zones: Runners must exchange at every exchange zone.
4. Companion Runners: Companion runners are permitted. A companion runner must be a member of the team, must wear his/her number during the companion leg, must comply with all Rules, must complete all of his/her assigned legs, and must complete the entire leg as a companion runner. The companion runner must not assist the active runner in any way (provide fluids, carry runner's flashlight, etc...).
5. Runner Drop Outs: No runner may drop out of the race solely for the purpose of substituting a faster runner in their place. If a runner drops out due to injury, they may not be reinstated into the team lineup. The team must finish with the remaining runners rotating in their current order. The order may not be shuffled. Relay Officials will be monitoring the team rotation. An injury report must be completed with the Relay Official at the next exchange zone.

If a runner drops out due to injury during a leg (that is, if it becomes impossible to walk to the next exchange point), only the next runner in rotation can take the Wrist Strap and continue, but only to the next exchange point. The next runner in rotation can only finish the unfinished portion of the previous leg and go no further. A handoff must occur at the next exchange point (second runner ahead of the injured one).

6. Navigation: Runners must know the cue sheet and map for their leg. If a wrong turn is made, the runner must return to the course on foot to the point on the course where the error occurred and resume the race. Directional signs are posted before all turns and a confirmation arrow is posted after the turn.
7. Exchange Zones: Runners must exchange at every designated exchange zone. These will be clearly marked with an orange construction cone during the day legs and a flashing/strobe light during the night legs. Relay Officials will be wearing light blue and fluorescent yellow reflective safety vests. EXCHANGE ZONE signs will be posted ¼ mile before the Exchange Zone. Please also reference "Runner Drop Outs", Rule #6 under 60 Minute Penalties.
8. Run on the Left: Runners are to run along the left shoulder of the roadway at all times unless officially instructed otherwise by a Relay Official or listed on the course/leg map.
9. Race Officials: Relay staff and volunteers at Exchange Zones are considered Race Officials. Obey their instructions – you will be penalized for not obeying. There will be Parking Officials assigned to direct parking at each exchange zone. If you see an Official, you are to obey their parking instructions.
10. Shadowing: Vehicles cannot trail, follow, shadow or leap-frog their runners. Team vehicles may not stop along the course to provide support (food/drink/verbal encouragement). Runners are encouraged to carry water/fluids/fuel for the longer legs if necessary (refer to Rule 4, Public Nuisance Rule for disposal of empty containers, wrappers, etc...). Team vehicles may only stop at designated EZ. Team vehicles MAY NOT stop on road shoulder.
11. Pets: Pets are not allowed on the racecourse or at the exchange zones at any time.
12. Bicycles: Bicycles are not permitted.
13. Ear Buds, Shokz, Earphones, etc...: For safety reasons, runners are permitted to carry phones. Runners are NOT permitted to have anything in, on or near their ears. Runners need to hear and respond to his/her surroundings (i.e. officials, vehicles, other runners, etc...) at all times.
14. Inactive Runners in the Roadway: Inactive runners must remain off the road, remain on the same roadside as the parking, remain clear of the exchange zone and keep roads clear to avoid normal traffic, to avoid team vans and not interfere with active runners. Runners may use the roads for warm-up and cool-down.
15. Quiet Zones: All Legs and Exchange Zones during the night hours will be designated as Quiet Zones. From 7:30pm until 7:30am, please respect our local families with no audible music outside the support vehicles and hushed, very hushed, conversations. At minimum a 60 minute penalty will be assessed for the first team violation. Disqualification may result for the first team violation and will apply for a second violation.
16. Indecent Exposure/Language: Use indoor facilities (e.g. porta-johns, restrooms, vans, etc...) to change clothing. Profanity is not necessary. Indecent exposure/language will result in a 60-minute penalty minimum.

III. 30 Minute Penalties

A 30-minute penalty will be applied for the first reported violation. An additional, 60-minute penalty will be applied for the second reported violation. Team disqualification will be applied for the third team violation.

1. Wrist Straps: Must be carried by the active runner at all times throughout the race.
2. Runner Check-in: At each exchange zone the outgoing and incoming runners must check-in with the race official at the exchange zone. As the incoming runner approaches, the outgoing runner vocalizes his/her bib #, the exchange is made and followed by the incoming runner vocalizing his/her bib number. Runners are required to wear their bibs, but vocalizing numbers will ease the congestion and confusion at the exchanges.
3. One Vehicle at Exchange Areas: Only one team vehicle with proper identification will be allowed at an exchange zone (two vehicles are permitted in transition zones). The second van must drive ahead to the next transition zone.
4. Hammocks: At the request of several exchange zones, hammocks are not permitted.

False time estimates

If your team's position on the course is significantly ahead such that your team is out running our support infrastructure because you misrepresented your 10K pace (i.e. projected a slower pace than you are actually capable of running), at our discretion we may hold your team at any designated Exchange Area until such time that our support network is in place. In addition, we will assess your team a minimum time penalty of 3 hours.

If your team's position on the course is falling behind our support infrastructure because you misrepresented your 10K seed, and/or event-related injuries slow your team, then we may at our discretion (via communication with the Sweep Vehicle), ask your team to jump ahead to an Exchange Zone of our designation. Your team's finishing time will be prorated based on your on-course performance to that point in time. An additional time penalty may be assessed.

Seeding

The race course and finish line will close Saturday evening at 6:00 PM. Teams on the course who fall behind this closure time schedule will be asked to advance a designated number of legs via communication with the Sweep Vehicle.