



Volunteer Information – Road Marshals

Thank you for your gift of time and talents to the Alleghany Highlands Cycling Festival. We are proud to promote the beauty and lifestyle of the Alleghany Highlands region, and hope to become an institution in the community for years to come.

Here are a few basic rules, guidelines and bits of information for our Road Marshals that will help ensure a safe and successful experience for all involved.

Role of the Road Marshal

The road marshal's job is to ensure safe passage of the cyclists through intersections and danger spots on the course. The road marshal will flag the cyclists in the direction of the turn (as in an intersection), or flag/direct the cyclists to slow down (in the case of a descent or danger spot on the course).

Under the terms of the VDOT permit granted to this event, the road marshal **will not** have the role of stopping car traffic. Only local or State Police are permitted to do this. The road marshal will often, however, have the job of slowing down or informing local motorists of the presence of cyclists on the road. In this way, road marshals perform an essential function that ensures the safety of the event's participants.

Cyclists First!

The road marshal's allegiance and attention is always first and foremost on the cyclists approaching his or her post. Please do not allow yourself to be distracted by conversation with motorists or local residents. Cyclists need deliberate and obvious direction as they approach an intersection that – for most of these riders – will be unfamiliar to them.

Ambassador Second!

On occasion, the presence of the road marshal – wearing a safety orange vest and flag – will cause local motorists to slow and ask the marshal what's going on. Ideally, this will happen, as we want drivers to be aware of cyclists on the road. The road marshal should be positive about the event, courteous to motorists and residents, but also firm and deliberate in signals and actions. In most cases, this courtesy and confidence is rewarded with respect from the local public.

Rules of the road

The riders in the Gran Fondo Alleghany Highlands are under obligation to follow Virginia state laws regarding bicycles on open roadways. The GFAH is a bicycle *ride*, and not a race with special exemption from traffic rules. This means that all riders must stop at intersections, slow down for road dangers, and follow the directive of police officers at intersections. Cyclists may ride two abreast on the road. The road marshal's job is not to enforce these rules, but knowledge of them will help the road marshal be most effective.

Be deliberate!

When cyclists approach an intersection or danger spot, the position of the road marshal should alert them to upcoming stops or hazards. The road marshal should use wide, sweeping motions and visible gestures to alert cyclists to the upcoming hazard. Vocal cues are often lost in the rush of air past the cyclists' ears, so hand/arm gestures are your main avenue of communication. The gestures to be used include:

- Flag extended at arms length right or left - turn ahead. Wave flag up and down with forearm.
- Arms and hands pushing down, palms down – slow down, danger or turn ahead

Be prepared!

Some road marshals will have posts that require a number of hours of service. We will send along vehicles with auxiliary marshals or police officers to provide relief at intervals so that you may visit the restroom, get something to eat, or get out of the sun for a spell. However, be prepared for your position by bringing the following:

- A jacket in case of rain
- A visible, wide brim hat to provide shade/sun protection
- Food and drink
- Wear sunscreen!
- Wear closed-toe or sturdy shoes

Get VDOT certified

We require that all road marshals become VDOT-certified as flaggers. There is a study guide and (easy) open-book exam to be taken to gain certification. The study guide and exam will be posted at the event website (www.ahcyclingfestival.com). Please submit your exam answers to Lynda Thompson (volunteers@ahcyclingfestival.com) before July 7th.

Lightning Safety

Thunderstorms with lightning are not uncommon in the region in July. The safety of our staff, volunteers and riders is paramount. In the case of cloud to ground or frequent lightning, take cover in your car or a nearby building, if possible. Riders will be encouraged to do the same until the storm has passed, even though the event will still officially go on.

Arriving at your post

Road marshal assignments will be available and posted to the event website starting June 17th. Please become familiar with your assigned intersection if you are not already. You will be given a time to arrive at your post, and please be on time to your assignment.

Road Marshal Uniforms

Road marshals need to wear a **volunteer t-shirt** and **safety vest and flag** for their assignments. These will be available at the Alleghany Highlands Chamber of Commerce in Covington the week before the event, **July 4-8**. If you are unable to pick them up during the week, you may stop by The Shoe Box on Friday evening from 4-10 PM in downtown Covington.

Last-minute Problems

Please let Lynda Thompson know as soon as possible if you are unable to be at your assigned post during your appointed time, so that we may reschedule/reassign your post. The safety of the participants is dependent on all posts having an assigned marshal at them.

This document, a list of volunteer names and assignments and the VDOT study guide and test will be posted at the event website after June 16.

Liability and release

The Alleghany Highlands Cycling Festival is being run under a permit granted by the League of American Bicyclists, and all volunteers are required to sign a volunteer waiver. This transfers liability from the volunteer to LAB, and ensures that you and your actions as a volunteer will be fully covered under LAB's comprehensive \$4 million per incident general liability coverage.

Thank you again for your time as a volunteer of the Alleghany Highlands Cycling Festival. We value and appreciate your service, and look forward to working with you to produce a successful and safe event.