

CLUB DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT

AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE

The American Volkssport Association (AVA) is committed to working with member clubs to develop, train and support them to achieve the purposes enumerated in the Articles of Incorporation, specifically:

To promote the public health, physical fitness and well-being of the people of the United States, its possessions, trusts, territories, dependencies and overseas military bases and diplomatic missions, by organizing, promoting and conducting scheduled programs of noncompetitive, family oriented, participatory lifetime sports;

To assist in the organization of new volkssport clubs within the geographic jurisdiction of the AVA, and;

To provide understanding of the benefits of participation in organized programs of noncompetitive, family oriented, participatory, lifetime sports.

CLUB DEVELOPMENT

I. GENERAL

Club development includes the broad topics of launching new clubs from application (AVA Form 201) through full operations to include first event(s); and sustaining existing clubs with necessary training and expertise to continue to grow and improve. Important components of development training include: AVA policy & administrative operations; club officer roles & responsibilities, non-profit incorporation, financial and IRS reporting requirements; event operations and trailmaster training; membership; and marketing/publicity.

II. POLICY

The AVA provides for club development through:

- A. AVA National Office / Employees:
 - 1. Publishing organizational guidelines such as the Policy Manual and Trailmaster Guide.
 - 2. Maintaining a national website and other forms of regular communications to ensure that member clubs and state organizations remain informed on new programs, important issues or changes in policy.
 - 3. Coordinating training workshops on developmental topics at biennial conventions and other appropriate venues.
 - 4. Employees training that ensures that the National Office employees can answer questions on a wide variety of topics pertaining to the AVA and their operations.

5. Providing for the chartering of new clubs, a new club application process and associated checklist, and training to Regional Directors and their deputies, state organizations and clubs on techniques for starting new clubs.
- B. Regional Directors (RD) / Deputies (DRD):
1. Maintain regular communications with their member clubs and state organizations – serving as the first stop for answering questions or resolving issues.
 2. Visiting with clubs and meeting with leadership. RDs/DRDs typically have long experience in AVA and are an important source of training and development for new club officers and volunteers. RDs/DRDs assess the needs of clubs and can offer development solutions that meet those needs.
 3. RDs/DRDs may develop or use existing diagnostic assessment tools to assess clubs and direct assistance or resourcing. Measurable criteria include: participation, membership, leadership, and administrative/financial fitness; along with intangible factors and observations.
 4. Regional Conferences. Many regions hold regularly scheduled (annual or bi-annual) regional conferences for area clubs. These forums are another training platform for club development.
- C. State Organizations – See guidance for Club Development in Appendix D.
- D. Outside Opportunities. AVA encourages clubs to seek partnerships with outside organizations that can further their development process. These include, but are not limited to:
1. Local government agencies (Parks & Recreation, for example) or Chamber(s)-of- Commerce.
 2. Non-profit organizations with similar missions / audiences – such as the AARP, YMCA/YWCA, hiking/scouting or other outdoors activity groups.
 3. Healthcare providers that emphasize non-competitive sports activities as a vehicle for maintaining health & wellness.
 4. Local businesses that can provide advertising, sponsorship (resources) and/or expertise in business operations or other aspects of club operations.

CLUB SUPPORT

I. GENERAL

AVA Clubs have access to support from neighboring clubs, State Associations, RDs/DRDs, the AVA National Office employees and local/outside agencies in their communities. Support might consist of administrative assistance / answering questions; technical support with AVA systems

or to established website / social media presence; consulting expertise in various aspects of club operations (trailmaster, finance, marketing/publicity); financial support to new or struggling clubs; manpower / volunteers for an event; or other kinds of support.

II. POLICY

- A. Requests for support generally start by contacting the Regional Director (RD), or State Organization (for clubs in states containing a State Organization.)
- B. State Organizations (see also existing guidance in Appendix D.)
 - 1. State Organizations will establish processes to render assistance to their member clubs, to include an approval process for financial support.
 - 2. Clubs requesting financial support will route request through their state organization, if applicable. State organizations will recommend approval/disapproval and forward to the RD, if they are unable to fulfill the request at their level.
- C. Regional Directors (RDs) / Deputies (DRDs):
 - 1. RDs/DRDs can answer a wide variety of issues and as needed, engage the National Office employees on the club's behalf to solve specific problems. They are trained in AVA policy and procedures and usually have years of experience in club operations.
 - 2. RDs/DRDs can connect clubs needing assistance with other clubs, coordinate with existing state organizations or other Regions. Requests for technical expertise or volunteer manpower, or a host of other support can be sourced through your RD.
 - 3. For clubs requesting specific financial support, your RD will evaluate the request and recommend approval/disapproval to the AVA CEO.
- D. AVA National Office.
 - 1. Clubs' requests for support from the AVA will be in writing (e-mail is acceptable in most cases), forwarded through the appropriate State Organization (if applicable) and Regional Director for their endorsement.
 - 2. In the case of a request for financial support, complete the AVA application providing a description of what funds are requested and the intended purpose.
 - 3. AVA financial support will be considered in the form of micro-grants, with an eligible dollar range to be determined each term by CEO and approved by the Board of Directors. All grants will also be subject to the availability of funds in the current budget year.
 - 4. Requests for AVA financial grants must be tied to services or products intended to meet strategic objectives, such as to support increased awareness,

participation, or membership, or to start a new club or satellite group. Grants will be approved with stipulations for measurable outcomes, based on established metrics. Direct support services for an event / event(s) like permits, porta potties, food, entertainment, etc. will also be evaluated.

5. AVA grants may not be requested for routine/recurring club expenses (i.e. to “pay bills”); or for club parties or other administrative services. Nor will grants be provided for products or services that the AVA already provide for free like awards, national event patches, etc.

E. Outside Support: Clubs may seek/accept the support of outside individuals or organizations to include donations, loans or grants – provided such assistance is consistent with club and AVA Bylaws and does not impinge the club’s or AVA’s status as a 501(c) non-profit organization. Legal questions should be referred to the AVA, through RDs.