

AMERICAN VOLKSSPORT ASSOCIATION

POLICY MANUAL



Fun, Fitness, Friendship

The American Volkssport Association (AVA) Policy Manual is considered a living document and, as such, is subject to change at any time based on the approval of the AVA National Executive Council (NEC).

The Policy Manual, as published on the AVA website, shall be the final authority in resolving questions, disputes and/or interpretations as to AVA policy guidelines.

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SECTION 1: GENERAL POLICIES

1.01 DONATIONS

I. GENERAL

The American Volkssport Association (AVA) National Headquarters and National Executive Council will solicit donations of money and property. All donations will meet the requirements established in the AVA Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. They also must meet the requirements of Section 501(c)(3), Internal Revenue Code (IRC). Classifications of donations are: General (unspecified use), Designated (specified use), Memorial (specified or unspecified to honor a person or an organization), Endowment (designated income for AVA programs), or Anonymous (specified, unspecified or designated income from an unidentified donor).

II. POLICY

AVA will acknowledge, by letter, all donations. Additionally, the National Executive Council will acknowledge all donations in the Council Meeting Minutes. The AVA National Headquarters will list all donations in the Corporate Book of Records.

1.02 IRS TAX EXEMPTION DESIGNATION

I. GENERAL

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has granted tax-exempt status to the AVA under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC). As part of this tax-exempt status, the IRS also granted AVA authority to include its subordinate organizations under that tax-exempt status as part of a group exemption. The AVA may add subordinate organizations under this group exemption only in March of each year.

II. POLICY

- A. All Member Clubs and State Organizations of the AVA, except those already tax exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3), under some other portion of Section 501, or under the direct control of another tax-exempt organization, will apply for recognition under the AVA Group Exemption as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3), IRC. To be eligible, the Member Club or State Organization must:
 - 1. Be in good standing with Articles of Incorporation or organization and a Constitution and/or Bylaws that conform to the AVA Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws and to Section 501(c)(3), IRC.

2. Qualify as a nonprofit organization under Section 501(c)(3), IRC; not be a private foundation; not be a for-profit organization; not have financial ties to a for-profit organization; not already be 501(c)(3) or other 501(c) organization; or not be a subordinate of a different central organization recognized under any other portion of Section 501, IRC.
 3. Operate on a fiscal accounting year of July 1 to June 30, maintain all funds in a bank account in the name of the organization, and submit all reports required and identified below.
 4. Obtain an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the IRS.
- B. Member Club or State Organization granted recognition under the AVA Group Exemption will be disqualified if it no longer meets the requirements for the exempt status, becomes inactive according to AVA Policies, or fails to file the required annual reports. Unless the disqualified club has obtained its own tax-exempt status under Section 501(c) or has become subordinate to another tax-exempt organization, the club will be subject to taxation under the current Internal Revenue Code. Any Member Club or State Organization obtaining tax-exempt status subordinate to another tax-exempt organization – other than AVA – will submit an information copy of that tax-exempt document to AVA which will be filed with that Member Club's or State Organization's records.
- C. A Member Club or State Organization requesting 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, status under the AVA Group Exemption will apply to the AVA National Headquarters with their membership application. The Member Club or State Organization must submit this application only once. The application must include a completed AVA Form 102C3, *Application for IRS 501(c)(3) Status Under AVA Group Exemption* and all supporting documentation listed on the application form. The AVA will submit all completed applications on file at the AVA National Headquarters to the IRS in March of each year. The AVA will notify Member Clubs and State Organizations when the IRS approves their requests.
- D. Member Clubs and State Organizations approved for 501(c)(3) status under the AVA Group Exemption must submit to the AVA National Headquarters the reports listed below (Failure to submit the required information will jeopardize the club's 501(c)(3) standing and the club's ability to sanction events):
1. Club Officer Information Update.
Every club must submit the officer/club information report within thirty days of the change of an officer or any officer/club information and at least once annually between January 1 and November 15. Information required and procedures for submitting this report are shown in the official section of the AVA web site. If the report is not received by November 15, a late fee of \$10.00 will be assessed. Failure to make an annual report before December 31 will place the club in "not good standing".

2. Annual Financial Report for 501(c)(3) Organizations.
Every club under the AVA 501(c)(3) umbrella must submit an annual financial report between July 1 and November 15. Information required and procedure for submitting this report is shown in the official section of the AVA web site. If the report is not received by November 15, a late fee of \$10.00 will be assessed. Failure to make an annual report before December 31 will place the club in “not good standing”.
3. IRS Form 990, *Return of Organizations Exempt from Income Tax*. A Member Club or State Organization must file this form with the IRS
 - a) at the end of the first year it is under the AVA Group Exemption;
 - b) if it normally has gross receipts of \$50,000 or more; and
 - c) in any year in which the IRS sends it an IRS Form 990 for completion.

III. NON IRS GROUP ORGANIZATIONS

Clubs or sponsoring organizations that are exempt from participating in the AVA Group Designation must:

- A. Furnish to AVA copies of correspondence from IRS approving the exempt designation.
- B. File such reports with the IRS on an annual or other report time as required by IRS.
- C. Maintain the IRS requirements for not for profit or tax exempt designations.
- D. Submit an *AVA Club Officer Information Update* as required by Section 1.02 D1 above.
- E. Obtain an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the IRS.

1.03 COMMERCIAL SPONSORSHIP OF EVENTS, PROGRAMS, AND ACTIVITIES

I. GENERAL

The use of commercial sponsorships for events, programs, and activities at both the national and the local level is an important part of the general financial stability of the AVA and its members.

II. POLICY

- A. The AVA National Headquarters will seek commercial sponsorship(s) for events, programs and activities at the national level. National commercial sponsorships will be in the best interest of the AVA. No commercial sponsor's name will replace the AVA in the title of any national event, program, or activity. The National Executive Director will approve commercial sponsorships for national events, programs, and activities. Before completing national commercial sponsorship, the AVA National Headquarters will review both the legal and tax liabilities.
- B. Member Clubs and State Organizations may seek local sponsorship for their events, programs and activities. All local level commercial sponsorships will be in the best interest of the AVA. No commercial sponsor's name will replace the local Volkssporting organization's name or the AVA's name in the title of the event. Member Clubs and State Organizations may seek commercial sponsors for local events, programs and activities without AVA approval; however, these sponsorships must not violate contractual agreements between the AVA and its sponsors, and sponsorships by national organizations must be coordinated with the National Executive Director before acceptance. Before completing local level commercial sponsorship, the Member Club or State Organization should review both the legal and tax liabilities.

1.04 IVV ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS PROGRAM

I. GENERAL

The International Federation of Popular Sports (IVV) established the Achievement Awards Program to encourage regular participation in un-timed, noncompetitive sporting events organized under IVV rules. The AVA administers the IVV Achievement Awards Program in areas under AVA jurisdiction. The program grants awards based upon the number of events in which a person participates and the number of kilometers a person walks, bikes, skis, skates, or snowshoes.

II. POLICY

- A. IVV Achievement Awards. Individuals receive IVV Achievement Awards at the following levels:
 - 1. For event participation at 10, 30, and 50 events; then every 25 events through a total of 600 events; then every 50 events through a total of 1,500 events; and then every 100 events.
 - 2. For distance covered at intervals of 500 kilometers (km) through a total of 8,000 km; then every 1,000 km through a total of 22,000 km; then 3,000 km for a total of 25,000 km; and then every 5,000 km.
 - 3. For bicycle distance covered (using a Bicycle Record Book) at intervals of 1,000 km, 2,500 km, 5,000 km, 7,500 km, and 10,000 km; and then every 5,000 km.

B. IVV Record Books.

1. Credit toward Achievement Awards is earned at IVV-sanctioned events worldwide. Placement of an IVV Certification Stamp in official IVV Event and/or Distance Record Books confirms participation in an event.
2. IVV Record Books are individual records of achievement. Individuals must purchase a separate record book for each level of achievement. More than one person may not use the same book(s). Individuals cannot transfer their books to another person to be valid, record books must have the owner's name and address on the cover.
3. Every Member Club and State Organization, must offer IVV Event and Distance Record Books and New Walker Packets for sale at all AVA/IVV sanctioned events, except Year-Round and Seasonal Events. Insert pages must be provided at Year Round and Seasonal Events if IVV Record Books are not offered for sale. Record Books and New Walker Packets are also available for sale at the AVA National Headquarters. The National Executive Council will establish the sales price of these items. Member Clubs and State Organizations will sell these items at the established price.
4. Record Book and Insert Pages will be available at all events. Record Book Insert Pages should be available at no cost to participants who require space in addition to that provided in the Record Book to complete a particular level of achievement. Member Clubs and State Organizations may also use Insert Pages in emergencies when IVV Record Books are not available to meet demand. Insert Pages will be used sparingly. Policies that govern the placement of the IVV Certification Stamp in IVV Record Books also apply to Insert Pages. A separate Insert Page for Event Credit and for Distance Credit will be given to a participant completing a sanctioned event who is in need of the Insert Pages.

C. Granting of IVV Achievement Awards.

1. Upon completion of a level of achievement, the participant may send the IVV Record Book to the AVA National Headquarters for processing. The AVA National Headquarters will verify the IVV Certification Stamps in the record book and issue the appropriate award and certificate to the individual. If the individual is receiving the first IVV Achievement Award, the AVA National Headquarters will also issue a Record of Achievement Card. There will be no additional charge for these items. Participants who have received the first award in a series (event, distance or bicycle) must return the Record of Achievement Card with the IVV Record Book to be processed.

2. Individuals may purchase additional award elements (pin, patch and/or certificate) for any level achieved. To receive additional awards, an individual must send a written request to the AVA National Headquarters. The request must identify the award element wanted and the individual's AVA Registration Number found on the Record of Achievement Card. Individuals who want to order additional awards should contact the AVA National Headquarters for ordering information.

1.05 ACCOUNTABILITY FOR AVA/IVV ITEMS

I. GENERAL

Accountability for AVA and IVV property is vital to the financial stability of the AVA and its members.

II. POLICY

- A. AVA and IVV items provided to State Organizations or members of the National Executive Council on a consignment or temporary basis are the sole responsibility of that organization or individual when the items are received by them. When the organization or individual no longer needs the items, they must return them to the AVA National Headquarters or pay the AVA the full retail value for the items. The individual who has signed a receipt for these items, or is listed as the Official Contact for that Organization, will be held accountable for those items through submission of quarterly reports.
- B. The individuals returning items to the AVA National Headquarters should insure the items for their full retail value.
- C. If AVA and/or IVV items provided on consignment or temporary basis are lost or damaged, the accountable individual will ensure the organization pays the full retail value to the AVA. The National Executive Committee may grant relief from financial responsibility. The individual seeking relief must submit a written request through the appropriate Regional Director giving specific details why the National Executive Committee should waive this responsibility. The individual may appeal the National Executive Committee decision to the National Executive Council. The decision of the National Executive Council is final.

1.06 OFFICIAL VOLKSSPORT PUBLICATIONS

I. GENERAL

Official volkssport publications are those publications written, published and/or distributed by Member Clubs, State Organizations, National Executive Council members and AVA National Headquarters. These publications provide information on volkssporting events; club, state, regional, and national activities and issues; and educational material on the benefits of volkssporting and living a healthier lifestyle.

II. POLICY

- A. All official volkssport publications will always promote the aims and goals of the AVA and uphold the reputation of the AVA and its elected officials, employees, Member Clubs and State Organizations. The publications will promote the benefits of participation in organized programs of noncompetitive, family-oriented, lifetime sports. They will stress the fun and exhilaration of walking, bicycling, swimming, cross-country skiing and other events sanctioned by the AVA.
- B. Use of the AVA and IVV logos in official publications is allowed, but that use must comply with all copyright standards.
- C. Publishers of official AVA publications must provide at least one copy of each issue to the AVA National Headquarters.
- D. The AVA National Headquarters will notify, in writing, any publication that fails to comply with established policies and guidelines. The publisher must correct the problems identified in the notification before the next issue of the publication. The National Executive Committee will take the action necessary to correct the problem. Publishers may appeal the decision of the National Executive Committee to the National Executive Council. The decision of the National Executive Council is final.

SECTION 2: MEMBERSHIP

2.01 TYPES AND APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

I. GENERAL

There are four types of club memberships in the American Volkssport Association (AVA).

- A. Regular Member Club.
A club formed by an organization or group of persons who want to conduct or sponsor AVA-sanctioned volkssport events.
- B. State Organization.
An organization formed by the Member Clubs in a specific state.
- C. Volkssports Associate.
An individual, family or business wanting to provide financial support to the AVA.
- D. Honorary Member.
A membership conferred by the National Executive Council on an individual, club or organization whose actions have greatly helped or promoted the aims and purpose of the AVA.

II. POLICY

- A. Application for Membership.
 - 1. Any organization or group of persons wanting to form a Regular Member Club must submit an AVA Form 201, *Application for Club Membership*, with the charter fee and the appropriate prorated portion of the annual dues, the organization or group will send the application through the State Organization (if applicable) and the appropriate Regional Director to the AVA National Headquarters.
 - a) The proposed Member Club must, as a minimum:
 - (1) Have an elected President, Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer;
 - (2) Have an approved Constitution and/or Bylaws;
 - (3) Have an established bank account in the club's name;
 - (4) Submit, if eligible, an application for inclusion in the AVA's 501(c)(3) Group Tax-Exemption; and
 - (5) Have an Employer Identification Number (EIN) issued by the Internal Revenue Service.

2.02 MEMBERSHIP DUES

I. GENERAL

The National Executive Council establishes dues for the various classes of membership.

II. POLICY

- A. Regular Member Clubs and State Organizations will pay annual dues on or before July 1 of each year. The AVA National Headquarters will mail an annual dues notice to each Member Club and State Organization by May 1. A club or state organization that has not paid its annual dues by September 1 will be assessed a late fee. A club or state organization that has not paid its annual dues plus the late fee by October 1 will be considered “*not in good standing*”. At its next regular meeting, the National Executive Council will declare the club or state organization *inactive* as of December 31 of the year in which the club or state organization failed to pay their dues. The National Executive Council will make arrangements to process the Year Round Events/Seasonal Events from the affected club.
- B. Dues for newly established Member Clubs and State Organizations will be prorated based on the fiscal year quarter in which the membership is requested.
- C. Dues for Volkssports Associate members, except life members, are collected on an annual basis based on the anniversary month of the membership.

2.03 STATUS AND STANDING

I. GENERAL

The status and standing of a Regular Member Club, and State Organization determine their rights and privileges.

II. POLICY

- A. Regular Member Clubs and State Organizations are considered *active* when the club's or organization's membership application has been accepted and all its activities are conducted according to the provisions of the AVA Bylaws and Policies.
 - 1. Active Member Clubs and State Organizations are considered *in good standing* when all debts, liabilities and obligations to the AVA have been satisfied. They may exercise all the privileges of their respective membership.

2. Except as noted in Policy 4.11, After Action Reporting, active Member Clubs and State Organizations are considered *not in good standing* when an outstanding debt, liability, and/or obligation has not been satisfied within sixty days of the date due. A Member Club or State Organization *not in good standing* forfeits all rights and privileges to include the right to conduct or sponsor events. It may not vote in any state, regional or membership meeting of the AVA. Once a Member Club or State Organization has satisfied that outstanding debt, liability and/or obligation it will be considered *in good standing*.
- B. The National Executive Council will declare Regular Member Clubs inactive when the club is *in good standing* and requests inactive status; fails to pay its annual dues postmarked by October 1; fails to satisfy an outstanding debt, obligation or liability to the AVA; or is expelled under Article III, Paragraph 3.7(c) of the AVA Bylaws. To request inactive status, a club must submit the request in writing through the State Organization, if applicable, and the Regional Director to the AVA National Headquarters. An inactive club may not conduct sanctioned events or vote in any state, regional or membership meeting of the AVA. An inactive club must return all official materials supplied to the club by the AVA and/or IVV. Failure to return these materials may result in legal action.
 - C. The National Executive Council may declare State Organizations *inactive* when the number of clubs within the state is five or less; the organization does not satisfy debts, liabilities or obligations to the AVA; or the AVA expels the organization under Article III, Paragraph 3.7(c) of the AVA Bylaws. An inactive State Organization may not conduct sanctioned events or vote in any state, regional or membership meeting of the AVA. An inactive State Organization must return all official materials supplied to the organization by the AVA and/or IVV. Failure to return these materials may result in legal action.
 - D. The AVA National Headquarters will notify, in writing, the Member Club or State Organization that it has been placed on inactive status and the requirements for reactivation.

2.04 REACTIVATION OF MEMBERSHIP

I. GENERAL

Any organization or group of people may request reactivation of an inactive Regular Member Club, or State Organization.

II. POLICY

An inactive Regular Member Club or State Organization may be reactivated provided it meets all membership requirements established in Policy 2.01, Types and Application for Membership. Applications for reactivation will follow the procedures outlined in Policy 2.01. The Reactivation Fee and the appropriate prorated annual dues must accompany the application. If the inactive club is *in good standing* and the State Organization, Regional Director or National Executive Council does not approve the application, the disapproving authority will notify the club in writing and return the reactivation fee and prorated dues.

SECTION 3: RECOGNITION AWARDS

3.01 RECOGNITION OF INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATION SERVICE

I. GENERAL

The AVA Recognition Awards Program honors individuals and organizations, both within and outside the AVA, for service, deeds, and accomplishments that have advanced the ideals and aspirations of volkssporting in the United States.

II. POLICY

Awards for national service may be presented at the AVA Biennial Convention. Regional recognition awards are presented by the Regional Director at regional, state or club events. Paid employees of the AVA do not qualify for the AVA Recognition Awards Program unless they are being recognized for serving in a volunteer capacity.

3.02 AWARDS CRITERIA

- A. AVA Hall of Fame Award
The AVA may induct individuals into the AVA Hall of Fame who have given at least ten years of service to the AVA at the national, state, and local level and have made exceptional contributions to volkssporting that have affected several AVA regions. This is the AVA's highest award and might not be given at each convention.
- B. AVA Distinguished Achievement Award
The AVA may bestow the AVA Distinguished Achievement Award upon individuals who have given at least eight years of service to the AVA. Personal contributions must have been made at an exemplary level at several stages of service, including national level.
- C. AVA Meritorious Service Award
The AVA may bestow the AVA Meritorious Service Award upon individuals who have given at least five years of outstanding service to the AVA. The Meritorious Service Award will be awarded by the Regional Director of the region in which the majority of service was performed.
- D. Certificate of Service Award
The AVA may bestow the AVA Certificate of Service Award upon individuals who have given at least three years of significant service to the AVA. Certificate of Service Awards may be presented at three years, five years, and every five years thereafter. The Executive Council, appointed AVA officials and members of all national committees shall receive Certificate of Service Awards. National Committee Chairmen shall award Certificate of Service Awards to all members of national committees. All other Certificate of Service Awards shall be awarded by the Regional Director of the region in which the majority of service was performed.

- E. AVA President's Award
The AVA President may bestow the President's Award upon individuals, clubs or groups who, through their exemplary display of volkssporting spirit, are worthy of national recognition.
- F. Ted Ballman Memorial Award for Youth Volkssporters
The AVA may bestow the Ted Ballman Memorial Award for Youth Volkssporters on an individual or organization inside or outside AVA who has been instrumental in the creation of AVA Youth Programs or who has worked to enhance or promote volkssporting programs for youth around the world.
- G. AVA Trailblazer Award
The AVA may bestow the AVA Trailblazer Award on AVA Member Clubs that have made significant contributions to the development, maintenance or improvement of walking trails or to the support of trail related issues.
- H. AVA Certificate of Appreciation Award
The AVA may bestow the AVA Certificate of Appreciation Award on individuals, organizations, and businesses for service to AVA on a national, regional, state or club level.
- I. IVV Honors
The AVA may nominate individuals within the American Volkssport Association for services, deeds, and accomplishments concerning the international aspect of the AVA for IVV Honors.

3.03 PROCEDURE FOR NATIONAL LEVEL AWARDS

- A. Nominations
 - 1. Any person wishing to nominate an individual or organization for a National Level AVA Award, Recognition, or IVV Honors must submit the nomination to the Regional Director in the region in which the nominee resides by November 1 of the year prior to the AVA Biennial Convention. Nominations for Hall of Fame, Distinguished Achievement, Trailblazer, and Ted Ballman Youth Awards must be on AVA Form 302. Nominations for the President's Award must be on AVA Form 303PA and submitted directly to the AVA President. To nominate an individual for IVV recognition, submit a detailed list of accomplishments to the Regional Director by November 1 of the year prior to the AVA biennial convention. Nominations approved by the National Executive Council will be submitted by the AVA President, on the appropriate IVV form, to the IVV for final approval. Nominations for all awards, recognitions, and honors may be submitted by US Postal Service, delivery service, facsimile, or internet (email).

2. The Regional Directors will forward all National Level Award nominations, with their recommendations, to the AVA Awards and Recognition Committee Chair by December 1 of the year prior to the AVA Biennial Convention.
3. The AVA Awards and Recognition Committee Chair will review all nominations to determine if they are complete and then forward the information to the committee members as soon as possible after the December 1 deadline. All incomplete forms will be returned to the respective Regional Directors. The Regional Director will notify the person that submitted the award nomination of the incomplete information. The Regional Director will be allowed ten days to resolve the problem with the nomination and return the nomination to the Awards and Recognition Committee Chair. If the problem is not resolved within that time frame, the nomination will be considered cancelled by the Regional Director.
4. The AVA Awards and Recognition Committee Chair will submit the nominations and committee recommendations to the National Executive Council at the first meeting of the NEC after January 1 of the year of the AVA Biennial Convention.

B. Selection

1. The Awards and Recognition Committee Chair and/or the NEC Liaison will present each nomination and Committee recommendation for the NEC to review.
2. The AVA President or presiding officer will moderate any discussion of each nomination.
3. The NEC will vote by secret ballot on each nomination before considering other nominations.
4. Approval of the nomination will be by majority affirmative vote of the NEC members present and voting.
5. Nominations not approved may be considered for a different award or referred to the Regional Director.

3.04 PROCEDURE FOR REGIONAL AWARDS

A. Nominations

1. Regional level awards shall include the Meritorious Service Award, the Certificate of Service Award, and the Certificate of Appreciation Award.

2. Any person wishing to nominate an individual for a regional level AVA award must submit the nomination to the Regional Director of the region in which the nominee resides, by the date designated by the Regional Director. Nominations for Meritorious Service, Certificate of Service, and Certificate of Appreciation Awards must be on AVA Form 302CS/MS. Nominations may be submitted by US Postal Service, delivery service, facsimile, or internet (email).
3. The first Certificate of Service Award nomination for a person will be for the highest number of years of service that person has performed.
4. The Regional Director must notify the Awards and Recognition Committee of Regional Awards presented since the last convention, no later than 120 days before the convention so the committee can list the awards in the Biennial Awards Booklet distributed at the convention. The official, national announcement of regional awards should be a part of the convention. The booklet may serve as the announcement.

B. Selection

1. The Regional Director may appoint a regional awards committee to assist in review of regional level award nominations.
2. The Regional Director should consider the recommendations of the regional awards committee (if appointed) prior to approving or disapproving nominations.
3. The Regional Director may delegate the awarding of Certificate of Appreciation Awards to State Organization or Club Presidents.
4. The Regional Director will notify nominators if nominees for Region Level Awards are referred for different awards before awards are announced.

3.05 APPROVAL AUTHORITY FOR AWARDS

- A. Authority to approve AVA Awards and Recognitions and IVV Honors is given to the AVA President, the National Executive Council (NEC), the Regional Directors or the IVV.
1. The AVA President is the Approval Authority for the President's Award.
 2. The NEC is the Approval Authority for the Hall of Fame, Distinguished Achievement, Trailblazer, and Ted Ballman Youth Awards. The NEC is also Approval Authority for IVV Honors nominations.

3. The Regional Directors are the Approval Authorities for Meritorious Service, Certificate of Service, and Certificate of Appreciation Awards.
 4. The IVV Presidium is the Approval Authority for IVV Honors.
- B. The NEC may make special presentations in addition to those established in policy.
- C. The NEC may recall any AVA Award, Special Award, or Recognition if the recipient is determined to have committed serious violations of bylaws or policy, or acts that bring discredit to the Association. IVV Honors can be recalled by the Presidium or by the Congress of Delegates for similar discretions.

SECTION 4: VOLKSSPORTING IVV EVENTS

(Note: In these Policies, the word "club" is used generically to designate any Regular Member Club, State Organization, or the AVA National Headquarters)

4.01 AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE

The American Volkssport Association (AVA) as a member of the International Federation of Popular Sports (IVV) is the only organization in the United States authorized to sanction volkssporting IVV events. This allows validation of participation for use in the IVV Achievement Awards Program. Within the AVA, these volkssporting events are classified as Regular, Year Round and Seasonal.

4.02 REGULAR VOLKSSPORTING IVV EVENTS

I. GENERAL

Regular sanctioned volkssporting events are those events conducted by Member Clubs, State Organizations, and the AVA National Headquarters using routine ninety day sanctioning procedures outlined in Section 4.07, Event Sanctioning.

II. POLICY

- A. Regular Walking Events are also known as Walks/Runs and Volkswalks. Guided Walking Events are also known as Guided Walks. Night Walking Events are also known as Night Walks and Evening Walks.
 - 1. Regular Walking Events. Sponsoring clubs must offer at least one short and one medium distance at an event. Instead of a medium distance, clubs may allow participants to walk the short distance trail twice at no additional charge. They may also offer a long distance. The distance requirements are:
 - a) A short distance walk must be a minimum of 10 kilometers (km) and less than 20 km in length. Along with the short distance walk, a small distance walk (minimum of 5 km and less than 9 km) may be offered. A checkpoint must be located on the small distance walk. The small distance walk must be laid out as a circular route with the start and finish at the same location. Permitting the small distance to be walked twice in lieu of a 10 km walk is not allowed. The small distance walk is allowed on Year Round and Seasonal Events.
 - b) A medium distance walk must be a minimum of 20 km and a maximum of 30 km in length.
 - c) A long distance walk must be more than 30 km and must be approved by the AVA National Headquarters.
 - d) A marathon must be 42 km in length.

2. Guided Walking Events. Clubs conduct these events using one or more designated guides familiar with the predetermined route. They should offer only one distance, either short or medium. Clubs normally do not mark the route nor provide maps and directions. The guides must be familiar with the route or carry a map or directions of the route. All participants should start at approximately the same time. The club may form several groups with their start times staggered. Guides must carefully watch the slowest participants to ensure they are not left behind. Use of a rear sweep guide is required.
 3. Night Walking Events. Clubs may use a marked route, written and map route directions, or guides. They should only offer a short distance, but may include a small distance. Clubs must require participants to bring a flashlight, and the use of a rear sweep guide is required.
- B. Bicycling Events are also known as Volksbikes and bike events. A minimum 25 km trail is required. Along with the short distance ride, a small distance ride (minimum of 13 km) may be offered. Clubs may offer longer distances. A 13 km trail may be offered in conjunction with a 25 km trail. A checkpoint must be located on the 13 km trail. Permitting a 13 km trail to be biked twice in lieu of a 25 km trail is not allowed. Participants may use tandem bicycles but may not use motorized vehicles. Helmets must be worn by all participants.
- C. Skating Events are also known as Volksrolls and Volksskates. Skating events may be either roller-skating, roller-blading or ice-skating. The event will have at least a short distance (10 km) but a club may offer longer distances. Participants may walk the event for event and distance credit if the sponsoring club deems the route safe for walkers. Helmets must be worn by all participants.
- D. Cross-Country Skiing Events are also known as Volksskis and Skiwanderings. Cross-country skiing events must offer a minimum 5 km trail. Clubs may offer longer distances.
1. If a Cross-Country Skiing Event is scheduled for one day or two consecutive days and there is no snow, participants may walk the event for event and distance credit if the sponsoring club deems the route safe for walkers.
 2. A Cross-Country Skiing Event scheduled for more than two consecutive days is called an All Season Cross-Country Ski Event. This type of event is not considered a Seasonal Event and does not fall under the policies for Seasonal Events. Participants may not walk the event except on the last weekend of the event. Participants may walk the course and obtain event and distance credit if there has never been an opportunity to ski the course because of poor ski conditions.

The authorization to walk the course is contingent upon the sponsoring club deeming the route safe for walkers. The brochure for this event must state the event will be open during the stated times if safe skiing conditions exist. Participants will receive one event credit for participation in the event. They may receive distance credit for each time they complete the course.

- E. Snow Shoe Events are also known as Snowshoes and Snowshoewanderings. Snow Shoe event distances must be adapted to snow and terrain conditions (no minimum distance). If there is no snow, participants may walk the event for event and distance credit if the sponsoring club deems the route safe for walkers.
- F. Swimming Events are also known as Volksswims and swim events. Swimming events will have a minimum distance of 300 meters although clubs may offer several distances. The sponsoring club must comply with the following:
 - 1. Swimming pools are the preferred location. Clubs may use shallow or slow-moving waters. They may not use water with undertows or strong currents.
 - 2. The depth of the water must allow participants safe movement of their limbs using a variety of strokes. Resting places must be at reasonable distances. This includes a depth where participants can stand or walk the event.
 - 3. Participants can receive only IVV event credit for these events. They will receive no distance credit for a swimming event.
- G. Boating Events include canoeing, kayaking and row boating. The minimum distance for boating events is 1500 meters, but the course may be completed more than once to achieve the event's specified distance. The sponsoring club must comply with the following:
 - 1. Boating events must be conducted in a controlled water environment like a reservoir, a lake, a river with negligible current (rated 1 or less) or other acceptable venue;
 - 2. The course must be an out and back course so the event finishes at the point at which it started;
 - 3. Each participant must wear a life jacket, and;
 - 4. The presence of a certified life guard and course marshal is required.
 - 5. Participants can receive only IVV event credit for these events. They will receive no distance credit for a boating event.

4.03 YEAR ROUND AND SEASONAL VOLKSSPORTING IVV EVENTS

I. GENERAL

The AVA has IVV approval to sanction events of long duration at locations across the United States and other areas under AVA jurisdiction. These events give the volkssporter IVV participant additional opportunities to enjoy our sport and to improve his or her health through regular participation in low-stress sporting activities.

II. POLICY

- A. Year Round Events. Year Round Events (YREs) are events sanctioned for at least eleven continuous months during a calendar year. These events will have a continuous start time that allows the completion of the event during daylight hours. In general, the rules for events apply.
- B. Seasonal Events. Seasonal Events (SEs) are events sanctioned for less than eleven continuous months during the year. In general, the rules for events and Year Round Events apply.
- C. Clubs may accommodate requests for Year Round and Seasonal Event trail maps and directions by requiring preregistration, i.e., a signed waiver and payment of fees. Only upon receipt of the waiver and payment may clubs provide walk directions and maps.
- D. Clubs may use pre-registration procedures, i.e., a signed waiver and payment of fees, for Year Round and Seasonal events where placement of walk boxes is impractical. Regional Directors must verify that walk box placement is impractical.
- E. Clubs are required to inform participants of Year Round and Seasonal Events when the registration location of the event and the walk locality for the event are different. The driving distance must be published in the club's walk brochure; on the AVA club listing for events sponsored by the club, and must be addressed at each locality.

4.04 INTERNATIONAL VOLKSSPORT EVENTS

I. GENERAL

As an IVV member country, AVA approves events within the United States, its possessions and territories. In addition, AVA may sanction events in countries where IVV membership does not exist, provided that approval is consistent with IVV goals for promotion of popular sport and international friendship.

II. POLICY

- A. Any AVA club may submit a request for approval of an event in a non-IVV country. Approval is granted only by the AVA President, or the President's Designee.

- B. Rules for conducting events in non-IVV countries are as those shown in Section 4.06, General Rules for Events. The Approving Authority may allow exceptions to event rules to accommodate local cultural requirements.
- C. Rules for submission of requests are as shown in Section 4.07, Event Sanctioning. Submit requests via the AVA Electronic Sanctioning System with a Regional Code of FN, denoting a 'foreign' event. The approving authority may allow a manual request.
- D. In addition to the requirements of Section 4.07, Event Sanctioning, each club seeking approval for an event in a non-IVV country must:
 - 1. Submit proof of liability insurance to protect both the club and AVA. Proof of insurance is required before event approval.
 - 2. Describe how the event meets IVV goals to promote international friendship, noncompetitive sport and creation of organizations that may become affiliated with IVV. This description must be entered into the Justification portion of the automated sanction request.
 - 3. The IVV Certification Stamp for each event must show at least the year of the event, the IVV logo, the initials AVA and identification of the country in which the event takes place, and a stamp number.
 - 4. The club requesting approval may request a custom stamp showing a logo or other identifying mark. The request is subject to approval by the AVA Headquarters. The club shall be billed at the established rate for custom stamps.
- E. Inquiries concerning AVA-approved events in non-IVV countries must be addressed to the AVA President or Executive Director.

4.05 SPECIAL AVA PROGRAMS

I. GENERAL

AVA annually supports and/or sponsors special programs and events that promote volkssporting, volkssporting IVV events and other low stress exercise programs for achieving physical fitness.

II. POLICY

- A. The National Executive Council will approve AVA support and/or sponsorship of all AVA Special Programs.
- B. The National Executive Council may approve and sanction special fund raising and promotional events in accord with requirements periodically set forth by the National Executive Council.

4.06 GENERAL RULES FOR EVENTS

I. GENERAL

The American Volkssport Association (AVA) as a member of the International Federation of Popular Sports (IVV) sanctions volkssporting IVV events in the United States. All events will have unrestricted registration and are open to everyone.

II. POLICY

- A. Noncompetitive volkssport events are conducted by Member Clubs and are intended to provide stress-free activity for everyone. Events are without competition and competitive time keeping of IVV participants will not be allowed.
- B. Other groups, either for-profit or not-for-profit, may co-sponsor volkssporting IVV events provided the events comply with AVA Policies. A for-profit organization will never receive any of the net profits from the volkssport IVV event.
- C. Clubs may offer a volkssporting IVV event one day or on two or more consecutive days. Except for Year Round, Seasonal, All-Season Cross-Country Ski events, and approved special events, clubs may not sanction volkssporting IVV events for more than seven consecutive days.
- D. The AVA will not sanction events on aircraft, trains, ships, buses, or other multiple passenger conveyances. This should not be interpreted to preclude the use of tandem bicycles in sanctioned bicycle events.
- E. Clubs may conduct volkssport IVV events only after the AVA has sanctioned them. Neither the AVA nor IVV will list an unsanctioned event in its Calendar of Events. A club must agree to the following requirements as a condition for an event sanction:
 - 1. A club must prepare and distribute event information free of charge.
 - 2. Clubs are encouraged to provide for pre-registration of participants. Clubs will establish pre-registration fees and day-of-the-event fees; however, the fee for IVV credit-only will be no more than \$3.00. Clubs may allow participants who do not want the event award or IVV credit to walk without paying a fee. If the club holds an event in a facility (such as a State park) or with a sponsor charging an entrance, participation, donation, or use fee, the club will note the required fee in the event brochure.
 - 3. On the day(s) of an event, traffic routes to the start point will be clearly marked. The start point, itself, will be easily identifiable with the IVV logo displayed.

4. The start/finish area should have free water, garbage containers and restrooms available. If restrooms are not available at the start/finish, a notice will be placed in the event information. The club should ensure that restroom facilities are available approximately every ten kilometers along the selected trail.
5. If the actual length or rating of the trail is different from that advertised, the club will place a sign at the start showing these differences. The club must award any additional distance.
6. Clubs must set start times and finish times so that each participant can complete the offered distance without stress.
 - a) Clubs must offer continuous start times for all events. Start times for all events, except swimming, should be at least three hours (e.g., 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.). They may shorten this time to allow for such factors as a night walk or extreme weather conditions. If the club offers more than one distance, they may shorten the length of the start time for the longer events.
 - b) Except swimming events, clubs must offer participants a minimum of three hours after the close of the start point to complete a short distance event. The club must offer at least six hours to complete a medium distance event and nine hours to complete a long distance event.
 - c) For swimming events, clubs must offer participants at least one hour after the close of the start point to complete the distance.
7. Event trails will be clearly marked. The markings will be distinctive and easily recognizable by the participants. In locations where clubs cannot use trail markers, they must provide the participant a map and/or directions for the route. For Year Round Events and Seasonal Events, the participant shall be provided with written directions and a map description of the route.
8. Clubs must secure and maintain at the start area the original, signed Waiver of Liability forms as required. These original signed Waivers are to be retained on file by the club for seven years after the last day of the event.
9. Clubs will use start cards to record participation, to control distribution of event awards, and to control the issuance of IVV credit. Start cards must show the participant's name and registration status. Participants paying a fee to participate will be registered as;

- a) receiving an IVV award which includes IVV credit,
- b) receiving IVV credit only, or
- c) not receiving either (called non-IVV participants).

Clubs will issue start cards for pre-registered participants only to the individual named on the card. Participants must obtain a start card each time they go out on the trail. The only exception is if the participant is completing the same short walking trail twice on the same day instead of the club providing a medium distance walk.

- 10. Clubs will use manned checkpoints to monitor and help participants if necessary. Clubs will mark start cards at the checkpoints with any kind of stamp or punch. Self-checkpoints may replace manned checkpoints if the club has another means of monitoring participants. For long distance events, to include marathons, clubs will establish manned checkpoints no more than six kilometers apart. Additionally, for long distance walks, to include marathons, telephone and/or radio communication must be available between manned checkpoints and the start/finish area.
- 11. During all events, medical assistance will be reasonably accessible. For long distance events, including marathons, medical assistance must be readily available and must be directly accessible by telephone and/or radio.
- 12. Free water should be provided at each checkpoint or participants must be required to carry water. The club will note any requirement for the participant to carry water in the event brochure. For long distance events, to include marathons, AVA recommends that clubs make available, free of charge, a non-sugared, sodium-restricted drink. Clubs should consider hot drinks or soups when the temperature is less than 40 degrees F. They must ensure that there are garbage containers available at all checkpoints where possible.
- 13. IVV Record Books and New Walker Packets must be available for purchase at all Regular Events except Year Round and Seasonal Events. Clubs may also sell items that are necessary for the comfort of the participants, items that promote volkssporting IVV events, and refreshments.
- 14. A club may set up one or more workers' events to allow workers to become acquainted with the start/finish and the trail. These events can also allow them the opportunity to earn the award and IVV event and distance credit for the event. However, the IVV stamp may be placed in a worker's event and/or distance book only on the day of the actual sanctioned event.

4.07 EVENT SANCTIONING

I. GENERAL

AVA and IVV require an event sanction for an event to have official status. The sanction allows the publication of the event in AVA and IVV Calendars of Events and includes the event for AVA provided liability insurance. The sanction authorizes the use of an official IVV certification stamp to record participation in the event.

II. POLICY

- A. All event sanctioning shall be submitted through the AVA Electronic Sanctioning System (ESS). Each club is assigned a login/password code for access. These codes are available from the Regional Director.
1. Any club that does not have access to the Internet will make provisions with the Regional Director for submitting sanctions, revisions, and other data.
 2. A club that wants to conduct a volkssport IVV event will submit an AVA Electronic Sanction Request (ESR). This submittal will initiate the electronic process for review, approval, assignment of event number, and fee billing. Instructions for completing the ESR are shown on the AVA web site. Contact your Regional Director with questions.
 3. The Regional Director, or the Regional Director's Designee, (Sanctioning Authority) will approve the event sanction only after ensuring;
 - a) the club is in good standing,
 - b) the club will follow the rules for events, and
 - c) that the sanction request is complete.
 4. Clubs may appeal sanction denial first to the AVA President and then to the National Executive Council.
- B. The club decides the type, location, and date(s) for an event. The club will submit a separate AVA Electronic Sanction Request for each event.
1. For each Regular volkssporting IVV event the club will submit an ESR. This request is to be entered into the AVA ESS no later than ninety days before the event. A sanction request is required for each route. Each route may have different distances or deviations to accommodate persons with special needs (e.g., to avoid stairs) and pets (e.g., to bypass pet prohibited areas), but separate routes require separate sanction requests.

2. For each Year Round and Seasonal Event, the club will submit an Electronic Year Round/Seasonal Sanction Request (YRESR). Year Round requests must be entered into the AVA ESS after June 1 and before September 1 of the year before the start of the event. This information must be entered annually. This information also becomes the text for the *Starting Point* book for the next year. Accuracy is critical. Seasonal Events for the next year that are sanctioned during this time will also appear in the *Starting Point* book. Additional Seasonal Events scheduled to begin at least ninety days from the entry date may be entered at any time during the calendar year but may not appear in *Starting Point* book. A sanction request is required for each route. Each route may have different distances or deviations to accommodate persons with special needs (e.g., to avoid stairs) and pets (e.g., to bypass pet prohibited areas), but separate routes require separate sanction requests.
3. Proposed brochures, written route descriptions, and route maps for Year Round Events and Seasonal Events must be submitted to the Sanctioning Authority as instructed by the Sanctioning Authority.
4. The Sanctioning Authority will review all event sanction requests to ensure they are complete and correct. The Sanctioning Authority must approve or not approve an event no less than sixty days before the event; or before October 1 for Year Round Events. Any deviation must be approved in advance by the National Executive Director.
5. Once an event has been approved, the event will be entered in the AVA Calendar of Events. At this time, the individual club shall enter additional or Supplemental information about the event into the AVA ESS. The club shall enter supplemental information at least sixty days before the date of the event. Failure to do so may result in the event being cancelled by the Sanctioning Authority. Instructions for adding additional information are shown on the AVA web site. Approved events will receive the appropriate event material from the AVA National Headquarters.
6. Supplemental information about an event may be changed, expanded, or deleted after initial entry into the ESS. The event date(s) and location can only be changed by the Sanctioning Authority and must be requested by the club to the Sanctioning Authority via paper or email communication. All additional information and changes submitted will be posted to the AVA Events Calendar.
7. A club wishing to cancel or reschedule a sanctioned event must request event cancellation or rescheduling to the Sanctioning Authority via paper or email communication. Only the Sanctioning Authority can cancel an event. Formal event cancellation by the Sanctioning Authority will remove the event from the ESS and all AVA Calendars, and may cancel the billing of fees. For events cancelled within thirty days of the event date, the Sanctioning Authority shall make changes to the event data in the ESS to reflect the cancellation and notify AVA Headquarters to make the formal cancellation.

8. Clubs may reschedule events canceled due to weather or safety conditions, including a government authority's declaration of a state of emergency, by having the Sanctioning Authority change the event date without paying an additional sanction fee. This change of date must be posted to the ESS by the Sanctioning Authority no later than the day of the canceled event. In this case, the club may give a rain check to any person who has already paid the registration fee.
9. Clubs must submit a proposed event brochure and award design for the event to the Regional Director or the Regional Director's Designee for review and approval. These must be postmarked no later than sixty days before the event. If the Regional Director or the Regional Director's Designee disapproves the brochure and/or award, final sanction approval may be withdrawn.
10. A Regional Director may stop shipment of event materials, for cause, by notifying the AVA National Headquarters. The Regional Director may also cancel a sanction before or during an event if there is reason to believe the club is not following the policies for events or if the event is unsafe. Clubs may appeal sanction cancellation first to the AVA President and then to the National Executive Council.

4.08 EVENT LIABILITY INSURANCE

I. GENERAL

The AVA provides liability insurance for all sanctioned events. The insurance covers each sanctioned event for its duration as listed on the sanction request. The insurance provided is liability insurance purchased to pay third party claims against the AVA or its Member Clubs.

II. POLICY

- A. The insurance policy covers only the AVA and the sponsoring club unless the sponsoring club requests a Certificate of Insurance specifically naming cosponsors, property owners, and/or other entities participating in the event.
- B. Requests for additional insured parties for a specific event must be requested electronically by the sponsoring club by completing the Certificate of Insurance request on the ESR supplemental information form. This request shall be entered into the ESS at least sixty days before the date the club needs the certificate. The sponsoring club will be invoiced for any fees charged by the insurance company for each certificate requested. There is an additional fee for applications received by the AVA National Headquarters after the sixty day deadline.

- C. Sponsoring clubs must ensure each adult participant signs a Waiver and Release of Liability and that the parent or guardian of any minor child who participates signs the Waiver and Release of Liability for that child. The adult waiver may be a waiver form provided by AVA, or a locally produced form, approved by the Regional Director, which contains the language required by AVA. The form for Waiver and Release of Liability for a child is provided by AVA. The sponsoring club must keep the original signed copy of completed Waiver of Liability forms on file for seven years after the last day of an event.
- D. All accidents occurring at events must be reported to the AVA National Headquarters within ten days of the accident. A club officer must submit a completed AVA Form 403IR, *Incident Report Form*, a copy of the event brochure, the original signed insurance waiver form, and statements from any witnesses.
- E. For events that are cosponsored with other organizations, specific insurance requirements must be addressed through the Regional Director with the Executive Director.

4.09 EVENT AWARDS

I. GENERAL

The event award provides a memento of an event and is an added incentive for a person to participate in volkssporting IVV events.

II. POLICY

- A. Awards must be in good taste and uphold the reputation of the AVA and Member Clubs. A variety of items such as medals, patches, trophies, figurines, plates, cups, and T-shirts are acceptable. Alcoholic beverages, food and inappropriate types of clothing are not acceptable awards. Clubs may not use copyrighted materials and trademarked items, even if modified, as awards unless they obtain written permission from the owner. All chartered AVA affiliates may use the trademarked AVA logos.
- B. The words *American Volkssport Association* or the initials AVA or AVA/IVV must be on the award. Clubs may not use the copyrighted IVV logo on the award.
- C. Awards may be differentiated by class. For example: bronze for short distances, silver for medium distance and gold for long distances. Awards will not show the number of kilometers unless it is an award for a special event that lasts more than a single day or an event that is more than 30 kilometers long.

- D. Awards may be acquired by participants who have completed the event to the satisfaction of the sponsoring club. Clubs may give awards for distances greater than 30 kilometers only after the participant has completed the actual event distance. The sponsoring club will establish the terms and conditions for participation that will allow event workers to receive the event award.
- E. An award, newly designed for a specific event, will be designated as an *A Award*. Clubs may use awards remaining from previous events as *B Awards*. These awards may appear in the event brochure if the club identifies them as *B Awards*.
- F. Awards remaining from previous events may be purchased in addition to the current event *A Award*, offered as an award for credit only events, purchased in unlimited quantity by event participants, donated to related sports events (e.g., Special Olympics), or traded between clubs.
- G. Selling of awards to non-participants is strictly prohibited.
- H. A club may limit the number of awards available at a specific event provided the club publishes the limit in the event brochure.

4.10 EVENT INFORMATION

I. GENERAL

Event information, whether printed or electronic, and the AVA web page are the AVA's and the clubs' most effective, grass-roots advertising medium. This publicity provides the new walker with an introduction to volkssporting and the active volkssporter a snapshot view of an upcoming event.

The information is the formal announcement from the club of conditions and requirements for participation in the event.

II. POLICY

- A. Clubs must produce information for each event. They may include more than one event and/or more than one club. The publication of event information in state volkssporting publications does satisfy the requirement. Details of each event shall also be posted by each club to the AVA web page.
- B. As a minimum, event information as published must contain all the information listed in the required section of the *AVA Checklist for Event Brochure*.

AVA TRAIL/ROUTE RATING SYSTEM

The event brochure including the AVA electronic event listing (Walking Events – Event Details) must identify a trail/route rating for all events except swimming, boating and skating events. In addition, any route obstacles or special conditions must be explained to describe the level of difficulty of the event. Participants need to know about major elevation gains, heavy traffic, narrow road shoulders, construction detours, roaming dogs, cattle guards, and the like along the route.

Although any rating system is somewhat subjective, the two-part numerical/alpha rating system will give event organizers a reliable planning tool. Thus, participants will have an idea about what to expect along a route whether it is for walking, biking, cross-country skiing, or snowshoeing.

Also, a trail/route rating system is a safety issue since an improperly/underrated event could have serious consequences for someone who is not physically prepared for more strenuous route conditions.

The sponsoring club needs to decide on an event rating based on the scale given below. The Regional Director should work with chartered clubs to achieve uniformity in the assignment of all trail/route ratings.

Part 1 – INCLINE	Part 2 - TERRAIN
1. Very small hills or very little stair climbing. Probably suitable for strollers and wheelchairs. Elevation gain from Starting Point: up to 500 feet.	A. Almost entirely on pavement. Probably suitable for strollers and wheelchairs.
2. Some moderate hills and stair climbing. Probably suitable for strollers. May not be suitable for wheelchairs. Elevation gain from Starting Point: 500 - 1500 feet.	B. A significant part of the route is on well-groomed trails with very few obstacles. Probably suitable for strollers but may not be suitable for wheelchairs.
3. Some significant hill or stair climbing. Not suitable for strollers or wheelchairs. Elevation gain from Starting Point: 1500 - 2500 feet.	C. A significant part of the route is on somewhat difficult terrain (rocky / rooted paths or soft sand). Not suitable for strollers and wheelchairs.
4. Lots of significant hills or stair climbing. Elevation gain from Starting Point: 2500 - 3500 feet.	D. A significant part of the route is on very difficult terrain.
5. Many steep hills. Elevation gain from Starting Point: more than - 3500 feet.	E. The majority of the route is on very difficult terrain.

Examples:

A route that is mostly on flat pavement would be rated 1A.

A beach walk would be rated 1C.

A route with moderate hills on well groomed trails would be rated 2B.

4.11 AFTER ACTION REPORTING

I. GENERAL

Electronic Event Participation Reports and associated IVV stamp(s) must be forwarded to AVA National Headquarters within the established time limits for a club to remain in good standing.

- A. Clubs that do not have access to the Internet will make provisions with the Regional Director for submitting reports.
- B. After action fees must be paid within the established accounting guidelines.
- C. Free Walker Coupons.
 - 1. Free Walker Coupons received for TRADITIONAL Event participation must be submitted by mail to the AVA Headquarters along with the IVV CERTIFICATION stamp after the event is over.
 - 2. Free Walker Coupons received for Year Round and Seasonal Event participation must be submitted by mail to the AVA Headquarters no later than 30 days after the end of the quarter in which they are reported. Clubs may elect to hold the Free Walker Coupons and not report the coupons in the quarter they were received. Clubs must reports all Free Walker Coupons not previously reported in the final report of the calendar year. These coupons must be mailed and post-marked within 30 days after the close of the calendar year if no Year Round or Seasonal Event IVV CERTIFICATION stamps are being returned to the AVA. Clubs returning Year Round or Seasonal Event IVV CERTIFICATION stamps at the end of the calendar year must include all Free Walker Coupons along with the IVV stamps.
 - 3. All Free Walker Coupons must contain the club number and the five digit AVA Event Number on the back of the coupon.

II. POLICY

- A. The IVV Stamp used for an event must be returned to the AVA National Headquarters after the final day of the event. If post-marked within ten days after the event, the stamp will be considered on time regardless of its arrival date.
- B. Clubs will report event participation as follows:
 - 1. Paid participants will include everyone who has paid a fee to participate in the event. Paid participants will be reported as receiving an IVV award which includes IVV credit, IVV credit only, or not receiving either (This category is called non-IVV participant.). Those paying no fee and receiving no award or credit are called Free.

2. For each Regular Event, an Event Participation Report must be completed after the last day of the event. The AVA National Headquarters must receive this report by the thirtieth day after the last day of the event.
 3. For each Year Round and Seasonal Event, a Year Round/Seasonal Quarterly Participation Report will be completed at the end of each calendar year quarter (March, June, September and December). The AVA National Headquarters must receive these completed reports by the thirtieth day after the last day of the reporting quarter.
- C. Failure to meet these time requirements will result in a club being declared not in good standing. The AVA National Headquarters will assess late fees for failure to meet the original time requirements.

4.12 IVV CERTIFICATION STAMPS

I. GENERAL

The AVA will provide an official IVV Event Stamp with a specific control number for each sanctioned event. This stamp provides certification of an individual's participation in a particular event.

II. POLICY

- A. The AVA National Headquarters will mail the event stamp to the sponsoring club at least thirty days before the event, provided the club is in good standing. If the club has not received the event stamp five working days before the event, the club must immediately contact the AVA National Headquarters.
- B. Clubs may use the IVV Event Stamp only to certify participation in the event for which it was issued. The club may use the stamp only on the day(s) of the event. The stamp normally is placed only in official IVV Record Books; however, clubs may place this IVV Stamp on Special Program Books, internationally recognized event souvenir books, and other event records approved by the AVA and/or IVV.
- C. To receive the IVV Event Stamp, an individual must present his or her IVV Record Books and the event start card with all appropriate checkpoint marks to the personnel at the finish table. The only exception is for functionally disadvantaged persons who may receive the stamp without all checkpoint marks.
- D. The IVV Event Stamp shall be placed in the IVV Distance Record Book each time an individual completes the distance of an IVV event. The IVV Event Stamp shall be entered in the Event Record Book once each day an individual completes the distance of an IVV event.

- E. The IVV Stamp used for an event must be returned to AVA and be postmarked by the tenth day after the final day of the event. The IVV Stamp used for a seasonal event must also follow this guideline.

4.13 FUNCTIONALLY DISADVANTAGED PARTICIPANTS

I. GENERAL

In keeping with volkssporting IVV philosophy to provide everyone the opportunity to participate in a program of un-timed, noncompetitive, family-oriented, participatory, lifetime sports, the AVA is committed to making it possible for functionally disadvantaged persons to take part in as many of its events as possible.

II. POLICY

- A. Clubs sponsoring events will make every effort to ensure functionally disadvantaged participants may safely participate in those events. When possible, clubs will identify a section of the trail for the functionally disadvantaged and apply a specific trail rating.
- B. Functionally disadvantaged persons will receive IVV event participation credit for each event in which they participate, no matter the number of checkpoint stamps obtained or distance accomplished. They will receive IVV distance credit based upon the number of actual kilometers completed.

APPENDIX A: AVA STANDARD FORMS

Note: American Volkssport Association Forms are periodically revised and the official revised forms are posted on the AVA web site.

Please ensure use of current forms by comparing with, or downloading forms on the web page.

APPENDIX B: AVA FEE STRUCTURE

Charter Fee	\$50.00
Annual dues for new clubs are prorated by quarter depending on when they come on board: Jul – Sep ..\$50.00; Oct – Dec ..\$37.50; Jan – Mar..\$25.00; Apr - Jun ..\$12.50.	
Annual Dues	\$50.00
Late Fee	\$25.00
Clubs and State Associations made inactive if not paid by November 1.	
Sanction Fee (except Globals)	
Regular Walking Events	\$30.00
All Other Regular Events	\$20.00
Year Round Events/Seasonal Events	\$20.00
Global Sanction Fees	
Walk	\$115.00
Bike, Swim, etc.....	\$65.00
After Action Fees (Per Paying Participant)	\$1.25
Late Fee	\$10.00
Year Round/Seasonal Walking Event Quarterly Processing Fee	\$5.00
Stamp Late Fee	\$10.00
Lost Stamp Fee	\$25.00
Damaged Stamp Fee	\$25.00
Insurance Certificates	
Requested <i>more</i> than sixty days before need by date	\$10.00
Requested <i>less</i> than sixty days before need by date	\$15.00
Handbook Prices	Please call for current prices.
TAW Advertising Fees	Subject to size, placement and color. Setup charges equal to cost of ad.
Rush Processing On Any Item (not guaranteed by shipping company)	
Next Day Air (minimum + normal shipping charges)	\$25.00
2nd Day Air (minimum + normal shipping charges)	\$15.00
3 Day Air (minimum + normal shipping charges).....	\$10.00
Restocking Fee (any item except record books)	15%
Returned Check Fee	\$25.00

APPENDIX C: AVA DUE DATES

Charter Fee.....with application

Annual Dues..... by July 1, no later than November 1
Late fee billed if payment not received by September 1

Sanction Request

Regular Events at least ninety days prior to event date

Year Round Event/Seasonal Eventsby September 1

New Year Round Event/Seasonal Events at least ninety days prior to event date

Stampwithin ten days after event

Late fee billedif not postmarked within ten days after event

Event Participation Reports (Regular Events) within thirty days after event

Late fee billed after thirty days

Quarterly Event Participation Reports (YRE/Seasonals)..within thirty days after quarter

Late fee billed after thirty days

Club Officer Changes, etc..... as soon as possible after change

Merchandise Ordersat least thirty days prior to need by date

50 State Certificate Requestsat least thirty days prior to presentation date

TAW Articles and Display Advertisements

Camera ready six weeks prior to month of distribution

Not camera ready eight weeks prior to month of distribution

TAW Classified Advertisements..... nine weeks prior to month of distribution

APPENDIX D: STATE ORGANIZATION POLICY

I. MISSION OF THE STATE ORGANIZATION

State Organizations promote the creation and growth of strong and active clubs and the growth of participation in volkssport events within the state, in coordination with the regional and the national organization.

II. GOVERNING DOCUMENT

The AVA Bylaws state that State Organizations are responsible for:

- A. Coordinating and carrying forward the AVA program of activities within the state;
- B. Maintaining a liaison among AVA members chartered within the state to the appropriate Regional Director, the National Executive Council, and the AVA National Headquarters;
- C. Reviewing applications from prospective members and recommending action on chartering the prospective member to the appropriate Regional Director;
- D. Approving volkssport event dates for AVA members within the state;
- E. Reviewing After-Action Reports and Monthly Delinquency Reports and following up to ensure that all reports have been submitted and debts have been paid to the AVA;
- F. Implementing disciplinary action against AVA members in the state for violation of AVA or IVV Rules;
- G. Promoting development of new members by visiting, corresponding with, and making presentations to interested groups;
- H. Developing and implementing programs, with the assistance of the AVA, for the mutual benefit of the AVA, IVV, and members within the state.

III. INTERACTION BETWEEN REGIONAL DIRECTOR AND STATE ORGANIZATION

Performance Expectations will be discussed and drawn up by consensus between the Regional Director and the State Organization yearly and upon change of the Regional Director or the state officers. This will clarify roles and expectations and allow the chance for exploring skills and training needs.

IV. DUTIES OF STATE ORGANIZATIONS

A. Creation and Growth of Strong and Active Clubs.

This includes creating new clubs and keeping existing clubs strong and active. Methods State Organizations can use to create and strengthen active clubs include:

1. Publicity.

Publicity equals growth. It is the key element to fulfilling the State Organization's mission of creating and strengthening clubs. A State Vice President for Publicity and Public Relations should be identified in the State Organization's structure. This may be a Publicity Chair position rather than a Vice President. This individual must ensure event publicity and marketing is occurring and provide support where needed for all events in the state. The following tools must be considered:

a) Event Information.

- (1) Approve all official event brochures, checking for adherence to AVA brochure standards. Clubs must submit brochures sixty days before the event. The State Organization will respond to a club within ten days with approval or suggested improvements.
- (2) Coach clubs to produce attractive information with appropriate content.
- (3) Ensure an adequate number of the brochures are produced and distributed to publicize the event to non-volkssporters in the local area of the event.

b) Joint Publications. Encourage and support clubs to work together to produce attractive publications listing events for volkssporters and others who attend events.

c) Presentations and Exhibits. Arrange for speakers and displays on volkssporting for interested groups, health fairs, etc.

d) Point-of-Contact. Provide an address/phone number/email address where people can request information. Place a listing in the Yellow Pages as able and appropriate. Explore fax and internet options.

e) Press Releases. Coach clubs to ensure press releases announcing events are being produced and sent to media.

2. Education.

- a) Be a resource to explain AVA Policies. As a performance standard, the State Organization must maintain a current copy of the AVA Bylaws, all AVA Policies, the last year's issues of *AVA CHECKPOINT* and minutes of National Executive Council meetings.
- b) Follow up with the clubs on any deficiencies such as late reporting, inadequate brochure or publicity, lack of event safety, etc. Use this as an opportunity to coach the club. Contact should be made no more than ten days after State Organization is notified of the deficiency.
- c) Host seminars.
- d) Advise clubs in organizational matters such as incorporation; nonprofit status; parliamentary procedure; how to conduct meetings and how to participate as a member of the AVA.
- e) Promote participation in regional and national programs such as National Volkssport Month, AVA convention, regional convention, photo contest, etc.

3. New Club Development.

- a) Contact all persons in state who have asked for *Start-A-Club* packets.
- b) Visit organizers of new clubs and attend their first meeting to be an on-site resource and to answer questions.
- c) Develop a team that will help with the formation of new clubs. Team members need not be state officers. They should be interested people from around the state.
- d) Make the AVA video available to new clubs and potential new clubs.
- e) Provide assistance and local examples for writing bylaws, incorporating, etc. Help the new club in completing forms for tax-exempt status under AVA's 501(c)(3) Group Exemption.
- f) Find experienced volkssporters to help the club plan, and host their first event and make it successful.
- g) Maintain a list of equipment (measuring wheel, tables, signs, etc.) the State Organization and clubs are willing to loan.

4. Keeping Existing Clubs Strong.
- a) Process Event Sanction Requests (ESR) and other reports that go through the State Organization. As a time standard, items should be sent to the Regional Director or the National Headquarters no more than ten days from date after they are received for approval.
 - b) Regulate the timing, frequency, and location of events. The State Organization may set these policies. They should be developed by vote of the Member Clubs in their state for their mutual benefit. The clubs may decide to not regulate the events. The system should encourage an even distribution of events by date.
 - c) Follow up on all deficiency reports from the National Headquarters such as delinquent payments and reports. The time standard is to contact the club involved no more than ten days after receiving the deficiency report.
 - d) Respond to all questions about policies and procedures and, if necessary, contact appropriate source (Regional Director, National Officer, National Headquarters) for answers. The time standard is to respond back to the club or inquirer within ten days after receiving the questions. This includes interim replies while the complete response is being developed.
 - e) Investigate reported problems, violations of AVA Policies, and conflicts between clubs. The time standard is to begin investigation within ten days of being contacted. It is important in these cases to use tact and search for win-win solutions. An effort must be made to develop personnel who are good at negotiation and conflict resolution.
 - f) Set an example by incorporating the State Organization and ensuring the State Organization is under the AVA's group tax-exempt 501(c)(3) status, if eligible. The State Organization will submit all required 501(c)(3) reports to the AVA.
 - g) Ensure all eligible clubs apply for tax-exempt status under the AVA 501(c)(3) Group Exemption and encourage all clubs to become incorporated in their state. Examples of bylaws and incorporation papers should be made available to the clubs. The State Organization should be incorporated as a not-for-profit association in their state.

- h) Ensure clubs understand that except for pre-existing agreements between states, any club hosting an event outside of its home state will be subject to guidelines, policies, and fees for clubs within the state where the event is being held and not the guidelines, policies, and fees for their home state. The State Organization in the state where the event will be held will explain clearly their requirements at the time of sanctioning or when notified of sanctioning by the Regional Director.
- i) Develop forums where members from various clubs can come together to share information, socialize, and develop good working relationships. This may be accomplished at state meetings, state getaway weekends, joint events, seminars, etc,
- j) Explore developing a state loan fund to help clubs in distress.

B. Promote AVA and Regional Programs and Events.

Methods State Organizations can use to promote AVA and Regional programs and events include:

1. Publications.

The State Organization should help develop, support, and promote AVA and regional publications. Examples in this category include:

- a) *THE AMERICAN WANDERER* available through the Volkssports Associate program.
- b) *AVA CHECKPOINT* available to all clubs, and also on the web.
- c) State and regional event publications.
- d) Regional Director's newsletter or State Association newsletter.
- e) Minutes of state meetings.
- f) *STARTING POINT*, the AVA's Year Round Event Book. State Organizations should consider buying this book in quantity and reselling them within the state.

2. National Programs.

State Organizations must understand these programs and promote club participation in them. The state may want to develop a local committee to coordinate them. These programs include, but are not limited to:

- a) AVA New Walker Program. The State Organization should consider buying *New Walker Packets* in quantity and reselling them within the state.
- b) IVV Record Books. The State Organization should consider buying an assortment of these books in quantity and reselling them within the state.
- c) AVA Recognition Awards
- d) National Volkssport Month
- e) National Physical Fitness and Sports Month
- f) AVA Youth Programs
- g) AVA Special Events Program

C. Support to the State Organization.

1. Structure.

The structure of the State Organization should make it representative of all the clubs in the state. It also should be responsive to all the clubs. In most State Associations, each club has one vote and all constitute the Board of Directors. Elected officers may have a vote. There may be regional coordinators within the state who also have a vote. Avoid structures where there are so many voting officers that they can out vote the clubs.

2. Funding.

The State Organization will not levy fees in excess of those charged by the AVA. For example, no more than a \$1.25 participation fee per paid participant. No charge for free participants. Sanction fees not more than \$30 for walking events and \$20 for other volkssporting events. Fees in excess of these cannot be mandated to the clubs, but they may be voluntary. The total amount a club pays to the State Organization per year or per event cannot exceed the amount paid to AVA. It is strongly recommended that the fees be no more than half of those assessed by the AVA.

3. Budgeting and Accountability.

- a) The State Organization will prepare an income and expense budget to be approved by the clubs of the state.
- b) The State Organization will make at least semi-annual income and expense reports to the clubs of the state.

D. State Organization Rules.

State Organizations will not enact rules, policies, and procedures that are either more restrictive or more permissive than stated AVA rules, policies, and procedures.

1. Amplification on Rules Restriction.

If an AVA rule, policy or procedure says a club or individual cannot do something, the State Organization cannot say they can do it (e.g. the state could not have a state rule saying an individual did not need to carry a Start Card). If an AVA rule, policy or procedure says a club or individual can do something, the State Organization cannot forbid the club or individual to do it (e.g., the AVA says clubs may charge non-credit walkers, so the State Organization can't say the clubs may not charge free walkers).

2. State Organizations may establish rules on:

- a) State fees
- b) Scheduling and location of events
- c) Additional safety planning for specific events (more checkpoints, water points, crossing guards, etc.) as needed to ensure safety and prevent liability.
- d) Common procedures and guidelines for the operation of events to promote consistency within the state.

3. State Organization rules will not have the force of AVA rules, policies, and procedures.

These rules should establish local practice only. AVA rules, policies and procedures will always take precedence.

E. Formation and Dissolution of State Organizations.

The formation and dissolution of State Organizations are governed by the AVA Bylaws and Section 2, Membership, of the AVA Policy Manual. State Organizations will include in their Constitution and Bylaws an approved procedure for dissolution of the State Organization.



REGIONAL DIRECTOR AND STATE ASSOCIATIONS PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

The Regional Director of the _____ Region and the State Organization of _____ pledge to work together to promote the American Volkssport Association (AVA) program. Below we have outlined the duties for which we are responsible and accountable for to each other, the clubs in the state, and the AVA.

Regional Director/State President/Other Responsibility:

Event Sanctioning	RD ____	SA ____
Event Scheduling	RD ____	SA ____
Brochure Approval	RD ____	SA ____
Award Approval	RD ____	SA ____
Contact those interested in forming a new club	RD ____	SA ____
Follow-up on club delinquencies	RD ____	SA ____

Answering rule questions from clubs

Regional Director refers to/consults with State Organization

State Organization refers to/consults with Regional Director

Follow-up on complaints against clubs

Regional Director refers to/consults with State Organization

State Organization refers to/consults with Regional Director

Regional Director will do the following to communicate AVA business to State Organization:

Report at State Meeting

Report in State Newsletter

Publish Regional Director Newsletter

Discuss with State President/Officers via meeting or phone

Discuss directly with clubs

Give copies of agenda to State Organization before Executive Council meeting

Discuss Executive Council agenda before meeting with State President/Officers

Other _____

The State Organization will comment on AVA business to Regional Director by:

- State Organization submits Executive Council agenda item request to Regional Director in writing
- State Organization asks Regional Director to draft Executive Council agenda items
- State Organization will provide back-up materials and written comments to Regional Director for items on Executive Council agenda
- State Organization expects Regional Director to convey comments without written back-up
- State Organization expects clubs to provide their own comments and agenda item suggestion to the Regional Director

Other _____

Other Items _____

Regional Director Signature **Date**

State Organization Signature **Date**

APPENDIX E: GUIDELINES FOR ENTERING AND UPDATING YEAR ROUND/SEASONAL EVENTS

All sanctioned events appear on the AVA website where they can be viewed by seasoned volkssporters as well as the curious potential new participant. This provides free advertising to the club. It is the responsibility of the club to provide good information that will interest people in attending the event and enable them to get there.

In addition, events entered as Year Round or Seasonal during the identified sanctioning window are included in the *Starting Point* book published annually by the AVA.

Entering and updating an Event Sanction Request (ESR) is a one-step process in that information that appears in the *Starting Point* book is pulled from this page. Additional information can be entered from the 'Edit' page and will appear on the AVA website only.

To enter an ESR for a new Year Round or Seasonal Event or renew an event of this kind:

Log into the Club Maintenance page; click on 'YREs'. To enter a new event click on 'Create New YRE'. Fill in the blanks using the following guidelines:

Select Region

Open the drop-down menu and click on the region where the event will take place.

Event Dates

Start Date and End Date should follow the MM/DD/YYYY format.

Event Type

Open the drop-down menu and click on the type of event you will be conducting.

State Assn

If the state where the event will take place is governed by a state association open this drop-down menu and click on the appropriate one.

Start Point Only

This is the name of the location where the event registration will take place.

Event Description

This field is virtually unlimited but be frugal when entering information as this will appear in the book. You want to use this field to provide basic trail information and to sell your event. Enter a description of your trail including the basics – the terrain, how that relates to the difficulty, hours of operation of the start point. Then describe the sights along the route. If the event qualifies for any AVA Special Events identify the relationship. Use this space to motivate the reader to attend. If you are offering an award describe it and specify the cost, which should include IVV credit. If there are any additional costs – venue entry fee, parking fee – be sure to state that so people are prepared.

Start Point Address and Driving Directions

Enter the street address of your event registration location including the zip code. Provide driving directions from the closest interstate or major highway.

Event City

Enter the city where the event will take place. Do not enter the state here.

Event State

Open the drop-down menu and click on the state where the event will take place.

Distance

Enter the distance(s) the event will offer – 10K/5K.

Event Website

This should link to a page that is specific to this event, not to the homepage of the club website.

Point of Contact

Enter the Name, Address, City, State, Zip code, Phone Number and Email Address of the person who is an expert about this event and will respond to questions.

Special Information

Designate the appropriate values for each of the icons.

Award Type

Open the drop-down menu and click on the appropriate designation.

Event Rating

Click on the appropriate trail rating.

Stamps (1 or 2 only)

Enter '2' only if you have an alternate start point for this event.

After filling in all of the spaces click on 'Submit'. You will receive a confirmation page – PRINT THIS AND KEEP IT FOR YOUR FILES. This page shows your event reference number. Notify your Sanctioning Authority that you have entered a new ESR and that it is ready for approval. The stamp number will be assigned by AVA Headquarters at the request of the Sanctioning Authority once the event has been approved.

For Year Round Events/Seasonal Events:

From 'Check ESR' page click on the 'Starting Point Listing' to see how your event will appear in the book.

If you have extra information that you would like to enter about the event or the surrounding area return to the navigation page, click on 'Events' then 'Check ESR'. Click on the 'Edit' button for the appropriate event. This field is unlimited; the data entered will only appear on the AVA website.

Once the event has been approved and appears on the list of events look at it again. Click on the link for more details – this is what the public sees. Ask someone who is not familiar with the event to read the information and provide feedback on what is entered.

This information can be edited anytime. Once the sanctioning window has closed the changes will appear only on the website. If something about your event changes make those changes to the website.

To renew Year Round Event or Seasonal Event click on 'YREs' then 'Renew' for the event you wish to renew. You will need to enter a new date. Verify the remaining information; if everything is still current 'Submit' the event. Print the confirmation page and keep it for your files.