

PANHANDLE

SENIOR

TRAVELERS

BYLAWS

Revised August 2023

PANHANDLE SENIOR TRAVELERS

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I. Introduction and Purpose:

This all volunteer travel club was organized in the summer of 2005 for the purpose of providing travel opportunities at affordable prices to members 50 years of age and older. The secondary purpose is to provide the opportunity for fellowship and social activities. This organization shall be known as the Panhandle Senior Travelers (PST) and herein be referred to as “The Club”.

A. Club Government:

The Club will be governed by a Board of Directors.

B. Members

All travel is planned, organized, and escorted by volunteer members. The Club can offer attractive travel opportunities at very reasonable prices due to the following:

No salaries

Minimal administrative expenses

Group rates

This is your Club. There are three (3) basic components necessary for a successful travel club. One is to adequately describe The Club’s objectives and to have a plan that describes how to reach those objectives. Another is to have members willing to contribute their time and talents to implement and carry out those plans. The last and most important ingredient is you. Members must be willing to contribute their effort and ideas for the continued success and betterment of The Club. Above all, each member must be willing to make a commitment, sometimes many months in advance, by signing up for trips and adhering to this commitment.

Bylaws updated August 2023

Approved by the Board

Guy Beard, President _____
signature

Date: August 07, 2023

II. CLUB RULES

A. Membership and Dues:

Membership will be open to individuals age 50 and over who pay their annual dues established by the Board and verify their acceptance to these policies and procedures by completing and signing a membership form. A senior's spouse may be under the age of 50.

Membership is a privilege and not a right! Therefore, the Board may, as deemed necessary, address situations and take appropriate action including but not limited to the suspension of a member for conduct deemed incompatible with Club goals, safe group travel, persistent delinquency in payment(s), noncompliance with Club rules, or other causes deemed to be contrary or harmful to The Club's objectives. In accepting membership and when taking trips, members agree to abide by the Rules and Regulations of the Panhandle Senior Travelers.

Membership dues are \$15.00 annually due January 1 of each calendar year. The Board will determine and authorize an annual increase as deemed necessary. Any approved increase in dues will be announced at the November General Meeting.

B. Meetings:

Meetings will be held on the third Tuesday of each month at 3:00 p.m. unless temporarily altered by the Board. The business portion will normally start at 3:00 p.m. with sign-ups starting 30 minutes earlier. Sign-ups may also be conducted after the meeting is adjourned. The December meeting may be held as a holiday party. At one other time during the year, a meeting may be designated as a luncheon, picnic, or other type of social activity.

C. Trips and Tours:

The Club will endeavor to contract for trips at prices that represent good value and are of interest to the members. The Club's objective is to maximize the purchasing power of the group. All trips will be planned and approved by the Board and presented to the membership. Trip prices and itineraries are presented to the membership based upon the trip planner's best knowledge and judgment. Changes made by service providers are generally beyond the control of the trip planner/escort. The trip planner and/or the escort may be current or former members of the Board or a member at large with specific approval by the Board. Each will travel at half price on overnight trips. This is based on double occupancy price of each trip. If the trip planner does both jobs, that person will travel free.

D. Sign Up:

All trips will be announced in advance of sign up. Sign-up sheets should be available at 2:30 p.m. on the announced meeting day and at following meetings. Sign up for trips will be on a first-come/first-serve basis. All sign ups must include the required deposits. Some trips may have a maximum number of travelers, so signing up early is highly recommended.

E. Payments:

All payments from members for dues, trips, and social events (picnic, Christmas party, etc.) will be paid by separate checks. Include trip identification or reason/purpose on the check. The name of the person for which the expense is being paid must be printed on the check. Cancelled checks will serve as the member's receipt.

F. Cancellations:

After contract with a service provider has been paid in full by The Club (usually 30 days prior to the trip), no refunds will be given to anyone who cancels unless substitutes are found. Any amount for refund, including trip deposits, will be held until after the completion of the trip. *The Club strongly recommends the purchase of travel insurance. However, The Club does not endorse any particular insurance company.*

G. Financial Audits:

At the November meeting, the President, with the approval of the Board, will appoint a financial audit committee of two members. One may be a member of the Board. The committee will conduct its internal audit of the books for the year and make its report to the Board and the members at the January General Meeting. Financial Records will be kept through the end of seven (7) complete calendar years.

H. Liability:

The Club will plan the trips and activities for the members' pleasure and enjoyment. The Club will attempt to select the best accommodations, restaurants, entertainment, and transportation for the prices charged. The Club assumes no responsibility or liability for delays, losses, accidents, itinerary changes, or damage to persons or property caused by any individual, persons, firms, corporations, or other legal entities providing the service resulting in an incident to the trip or activities. *Each traveler participating in a trip or activity sponsored by The Club understands that The Club as well as the Board members are discharged from any claims of actions on account of the loss or damage to personal property, physical and/or emotional injury, or death.* This does not affect any possible liability of the commercial service providers.

I. Changes to The Club Rules and Procedures:

These rules and procedures may be modified or amended at any time by a majority vote of the Board at any regularly scheduled Board meeting. Changes will be announced to the membership via e-mail, regular mail, and in person at monthly meetings.

III. BOARD POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (see also the Board of Directors' Handbook)

A. Officers and Board Members:

The Club will hold an election every year in November: In odd years, for a two (2) year term, President, Treasurer, Name Tag Chairman, and Trip Planner will be elected. In even years for a two year term, Vice President, Secretary, Membership Chairman and Trip Planner will be elected.

Board quorum shall consist of five (5) Board members.

A nominating committee of three (3) members will be appointed in September by the Board. The Board will approve the nominees at the November Board Meeting. After the nominees are announced at the November General Meeting, additional nominations will be solicited from the floor, and the members attending the November meeting will then vote on the nominations. The installation of the newly elected Board members will take place at the December General Meeting or social function. Outgoing officers will assist with the transition of the new Board members. The newly elected Board will exercise their offices and responsibilities at the January Board Meeting.

B. Minutes of Meetings:

The Secretary shall record minutes of all meetings. The minutes of the general membership meetings shall be distributed via newsletter attachment and approved at the next meeting.

C. Financial Records:

The Treasurer will maintain the financial records in accordance with generally acceptable accounting practices. The monthly financial reports will be prepared and available for the membership at each scheduled meeting.

The Treasurer will also prepare and maintain an accounting of each trip's financial records. A copy will be available for each person who participates in that trip. Overpayments of \$10.00 or more per person will be refunded. The Treasurer and the President are authorized to issue checks. A Tour Escort will be given custody of a check card for the duration of the tour to be used for group payments. All payments will be treated as credit purchases and must be signed by the tour escort. At the conclusion of the tour, all receipts and the check card shall be promptly provided to the Treasurer.

IV. MEMBER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

A. General Information:

When completing the Membership Form, your name, address, home telephone number and/or cell phone number, and email address will be requested.

Each traveling member will have on file, with the escort/trip planner, the completed and signed Emergency Information Form. This form will have the names of two persons to contact in the case of an emergency. It will also state any allergies, current medications, and/or existing medical conditions. The form will be kept in a sealed envelope in the possession of the escort to be opened **ONLY** by escort and/or medical personnel in the case of an emergency.

All payments for dues, trips and other Club activities will be paid by check, except when an agency is involved that allows credit cards (air fares, cruises, etc.). Checks will be made payable to **PANHANDLE SENIOR TRAVELERS (or PST)** and the cancelled checks will be the receipt. Each check is limited to payment for one purpose only.

Club name badges are available to members at cost. Payment for badges shall be in **cash only**. Members are encouraged to wear name badges at all Club activities.

This is a non-smoking Club, therefore a non-smoking policy will be in effect at **ALL** meetings, activities and trips. Because of potential allergic reactions, members are requested to **NOT** wear/use perfumes, colognes, or shaving lotions at the General Meetings and on trips.

B. Payments:

Payment for trip initial deposits, subsequent payments, and payment-in-full must be made by the announced deadlines/dates. Delays in payment(s) could result in the cancellation of one's place. The trip planner has the option to request a deposit from the working fund upon the approval of the Board.

C. Gratuities:

Unless otherwise notified by the escort, gratuities for driver, guides and servers, and donations to attractions, where normally expected, are **included in the price of the trip**. If "Club baggage tags" are required, then tips for baggage handling are included. Tips to hotel room maids/cleaning staff are not included. On cruises and agency tours, the trip escort will advise participants which gratuities are included and which are not covered.

D. Traveling:

On motorcoach trips, the departure times quoted ARE the departure times. Participants should be on board and seated prior to that time.

On motorcoach trips, baggage is limited to one checked suitcase-sized bag and one carry-on sized bag. If baggage handling is included, one Club baggage tag will be furnished to each traveler to be attached to the checked bag. All other bags and name tags are the responsibility of the traveler including the carryon bag if stowed in the bay. The escort will announce the details for the time and placement of the baggage. On cruises/agency tours, the escort will state the policy for baggage.

Seat rotation will take place each morning. All members must rotate except the escort and one assistant. Seat “name signs” will be moved two seats at the end of the day’s travel in a counter clockwise manner . All personal items should be promptly moved to the new seat location, including items in, under, and above the seats.

Departing from the motorcoach for break stops, tours, etc. will be determined by the placement of the “flag”. The side of the motorcoach where the flag is placed will unload first, then the other side will unload from the back proceeding to the front.

Unassigned seats in the back of the bus are for the use of everyone to get a break and stretch their legs. Morning or afternoon (half day) is the time limit. There will be a sign-up sheet for the empty seats on every trip. Everyone will have an opportunity to sign up before any individual can sign up a second time. Anyone who wants a single seat for the entire trip will pay the single price for the trip.

Any losses or expenses that are the result of illness or health related conditions during a trip will be the responsibility of the member.

E. Physical Requirements and Trip Expectatons:

When signing up for a trip, each traveler is required to review the physical requirements/demands and the difficulty levels of that trip. If you are uncertain as to what those requirements, etc. are, please ask the trip planner.

When traveling by motor coach/bus, each traveler must be able to board the coach without additional assistance. If a traveler requires a cane, a walker, or crutches (all are permitted), that individual must still be capable of maintaining the pace of the group. Any “mobility aid” that cannot fit either in the overhead compartment or at a traveler’s feet **MUST** fit and be stored under the coach with the luggage.

If a wheelchair or other unique care is required at any point during the trip, the person requiring these specialized services/care **must make arrangements in advance (prior to the trip)** for a designated caregiver to push him/her to each location and/or administer the unique care. This caregiver **MUST** be a member of the Panhandle Senior Travelers (PST) in good standing, **OR** join PST for the purpose of this assistance, **AND** this caregiver must sign up and pay for the specific trip that requires this arrangement by the established deadlines (deposits and final payment).

Making these arrangements and any expenses incurred are **NOT** the responsibility of PST, its officers, or its members; **it is exclusively the responsibility of the traveler and/or caregiver.**

Numerical Difficulty Levels:

1-Easy; 2-Easy to Moderate; 3-Moderate; 4-Challenging; 5-Ultimate Challenge

A trip may have a combination of these levels.

V. EMERGENCY PROTOCOL FOR THE TRIP ESCORT

- A. The escort, in consultation with the motorcoach driver, will determine if a 911 emergency exists.**
- B. If an emergency exists, the escort instructs the driver to call 911.**
- C. A meeting point is established by the driver and EMS/ambulance.**
- D. The EMS/ambulance will meet the motorcoach at the agreed rendezvous.**
- E. The driver will remove the traveler's stowed luggage to go with the traveler.**
- F. The escort will retrieve the cabin belongings to send with the traveler.**
- G. The traveler's roommate is designated to accompany the ill traveler. If the roommate declines, or there is no roommate, a volunteer will be asked to accompany the traveler.**
- H. The traveler departs for the hospital/healthcare provider's office.**
- I. The escort will call the designated emergency contact and will give them the traveler's location and the companion's phone number.**
- J. The escort is to stay with the bus and the rest of the travelers.**
- K. Before each trip, the escort will designate a backup escort.**

When a traveler becomes ill or injured during a trip, the escort and the motorcoach driver will determine if it is in the best interest of the entire group to continue the trip with or without the ill or injured traveler.

The tour escort, OR the traveler's roommate, OR a volunteer traveler will assist the injured or ill traveler to make any alternative travel arrangements. THE ALTERNATIVE TRAVEL IS AT THE MEMBER'S EXPENSE. For this reason, the PST Board highly recommends members purchase trip insurance to cover the costs of "trip interruption" and/or "medical evacuation."