

Adopt-a-Trail Guidelines

General Conditions

1. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and The Virginia Capital Trail Foundation (VCTF) are offering for "adoption" certain one-mile sections of the Virginia Capital Trail. Before offering sections of the Trail, VDOT determines that they are safe and appropriate for adoption.
2. The VCTF's Program Manager is the contact for adopting groups and individuals. Interested persons and groups should contact the coordinator at the VCTF Office at [804-788-6453](tel:804-788-6453) or by emailing AdoptaTrail@virginiacapitaltrail.org.
3. Local businesses, informal groups and formal organizations, such as civic, social or school groups, may adopt a mile of the Capital Trail. VDOT will print the names of the organization or the adopting group in block letters on the blue and white Adopt-a-Trail signs. No slogans or logos are allowed. Each group must complete two cleanups at least one month apart before their sign request will be submitted. Please note, signage installation may take several months.
4. Individuals 18 years old or older may adopt a section of the Trail (please see the "Safety Conditions" below for rules regarding participants under 18 years old).
5. Adopting groups agree to pick up litter on both sides of the Trail at least four times a year.
6. Participants adopt for a period of two years, after which they may renew their contract, modify their contract (example: choose a different section of the Trail), or end their contract.
7. The adopting organization's Contact Person is responsible for ensuring that ANYONE who participates in a pickup under the adopting organization's permit has first received VDOT-supplied safety information, safety vests and trash bags.
8. The organization's Contact Person must visit a VDOT residency or area maintenance headquarters at least a week before a scheduled pickup. At that time, VDOT will supply the Contact Person with safety information, safety vests, and plastic trash bags for every member of the adopting group's cleanup crew.
9. On a group's original application and throughout a group's involvement with the Adopt-a-Trail program, the Contact Person in the group must inform VCTF of the ages of ANYONE under 18 years old who will participate in any of the group's pickups. This requirement includes children of the group's members, or any other children who are allowed by the adopting group to participate in a pickup.

10. The Contact Person also is responsible for notifying VCTF - on the original application and throughout the group's involvement in the adoption - if any of the group's participants has a condition that might necessitate special safety precautions (example: if a pickup participant uses a wheelchair).

11. VDOT will provide large orange "Cleanup Crew Working" signs to place under the Adopt-a-Trail sign during each pick up. These will be picked up by the Contact Person.

12. VDOT will pay for producing, installing and maintaining the blue Adopt-a-Trail signs.

13. If the adopting group does not plan to dispose of the filled trash bags, the Contact Person must notify the local VDOT office of the date and location of the intended pickup so that VDOT can schedule a work crew to dispose of the trash bags during the following week.

14. VDOT and VCTF encourage participants to separate and recycle materials.

15. After each pickup, the Contact Person must complete a Pickup Report Card which can be found online at <https://forms.gle/mmWFKfjF72sQrEVN7> or on the Adopt-a-Trail VCTF Website.

16. VDOT and VCTF encourage Adopt-a-Trail participants to schedule their pickups to coincide with the spring "Earth Day" and the fall "Day to Serve." Or on the official VCTF cleanup dates in the spring and fall.

17. The Adopt-a-Trail coordinator will monitor the program. VDOT and VCTF reserve the right to deny an adoption request or cancel the adoption permit of any group, individual or business, based on any of these criteria:

- A. Concern for the safety of the participants, passing motorists or VDOT employees,
- B. Expenses to VDOT above the normal Adopt-a-Highway program expenses, or
- C. Effectiveness of the participants' litter-control efforts.

18. VCTF reserves the right to limit the number of adoptions for a single group and to limit shared adoptions to areas of identified need. For shared adoptions, each group must file a separate permit and participate in four pickups annually.

19. All adoptees will complete VCTF's waiver before participating in a cleanup with each group's point of contact will receive when their application is approved.

Safety Conditions

1. Before a group applies to adopt a particular section of the Trail, the group's Contact Person should examine the road on the days and during the hours that the group intends to perform pickups to determine if roadside conditions during those times are appropriate for the ages and abilities of the group's members. Once the group has adopted a particular section of the Trail, if at any time it feels its adopted section of the Trail has become unsafe for litter pickups, the group's Contact Person must contact the VCTF's Program Manager. VCTF will assign the group a section of roadway with which it is more comfortable.

2. Participants must hold at least one safety meeting per year to review VDOT-supplied safety information. No one may participate in a pickup unless he or she has attended this meeting within the last 12 months. The participating group may hold the safety meeting immediately before a pickup; however, this meeting must be held in a safe, appropriate area, such as a parking lot.

3. The participants are responsible for putting up or opening the "Cleanup Crew Working" signs before each pickup, and for removing or closing the sign after they have finished that day's pickup. These signs alert passing motorists that Adopt-a-Trail volunteers are on the side of the road ahead. If the signs are left open when no pickups are being conducted, motorists will begin to ignore the signs, creating a serious safety risk for Adopt-a-Highway volunteers when they are on the roadside.

4. Adopt-a-Highway groups must provide at least one adult supervisor for every six children under 18 years old. For example: a group of between one and six children would need one supervisor, and a group of between seven and 12 children would need two adult supervisors.

5. For Children Under 10 years old: Groups with participants under 10 years old may adopt highways only when the residency maintenance manager has determined:

- (1) That the specified roadway is safe and appropriate for adoption by that particular group, and
- (2) That the adopting group and its supervising adults are capable of conducting the pickup in a safe and effective manner.

Refer to the [safety guidelines](#) for more details.