

Big Sky Mountain Hosts



Welcome to the Big Sky Mountain Host Program

Dear Hosts,

A warm welcome to all of you, we hope Big Sky's mountain environment and working atmosphere will make you feel welcome and at home.

Your role as part of the host program puts you in close contact with our guests. Your role makes all the difference in a guest's vacation. A positive experience will encourage the guest to return to Big Sky Resort.

You have chosen a unique profession where you must care for people as well as be passionate about facilitating participation in outdoor mountain adventures. You are looked upon as an authority in the outdoor education and recreation industry and your enthusiasm will be inspiring for our guests and your peers. Your professional conduct will grant you the respect of your guests, peers, and supervisors.

We will make every effort to make your work experience as safe, fun and successful as possible. If you have concerns or suggestions, please bring them to our attention at the proper time and place. Your respectful input will be appreciated and considered. It is important to know and understand our policies, procedures and methods.

Our programs emphasize guest-centered, highly qualified hosting and professionalism. With your commitment to providing the best possible performance, we will grow to be recognized and respected as being one of the finest outdoor recreation venues as well as the Basecamp to adventures in the greater Yellowstone National Park area.

We wish you a happy, healthy and successful season.

Neil Johnson

Mountain Services Director

JC Estensen

Mountain Host Resort Liaison; External website; Large Tour Coordination; Tour Training

Steering Committee

Mike Boyer – Team Roster & Emergency Contact Info & Tenure Tracking

Rebecca Appenzeller – Recruiting & Hiring & OnBoarding

Dave Carlson – Passes & Vouchers, Tour Training

Jan Barr – Scheduling & Trades & HomeBase

Jim Maddock – Internal Website Updates & Maintenance; Tour Training

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Personal Responsibilities

You are responsible for the following:

- Reading and being familiar with the Big Sky Resort Employee handbook and Mountain Host Handbook. Each employee should have a copy, know its contents and should sign where appropriate to indicate having read it and being familiar with the contents.
- Finding suitable accommodations, reliable daily transportation, a cell phone and access to email.
- Having a watch or a device synchronized to real-time.
- Your own personal property. The corporation will not provide reimbursement for theft, loss or damage thereof.
- Locking your locker

Appearance

Please read, know and comply with specifics in the Big Sky Resort Team Member Handbook.

As a host you are a part of a highly visible group and an important link between Big Sky's guests and the resort. It is, therefore, imperative that you have a clean, well-groomed, professional appearance.

First non-compliance: Host written up. Host must comply prior to work time.

Second non-compliance: Potential suspension from work and riding privileges.

Third non-compliance: Termination

Presentation

You are a professional Host for Big Sky; with that title comes the expectation of the highest level of professional communication. From the way you organize your group, to the comments you make to guests and fellow employees, you are in the spotlight. For this reason, be careful to speak to your guests, especially children, with respect and tact. Using bad or inappropriate language or chewing gum, sunflower seeds or tobacco while conversing with guests is not professional behavior and as such will not be tolerated.

Expectations

If you have joined our team for the right reasons

- Love of the mountain environment and desire to explore and improve.
- A genuine desire to pass on your knowledge of the area and inspire others to enjoy it.
- Genuinely enjoying the sometimes challenging task of making sure your guests have fun and learn in a safe environment.

...the following list of expectations will seem like common sense.

- You should have and display a genuine interest in the mountain experience and in the profession of guiding it.
- You should behave in a cooperative and friendly manner toward all fellow Big Sky Resort employees.
- You should strive to remain approachable and convey a professional, friendly, courteous, diplomatic and understanding attitude toward guests.
- Your appearance should be clean, well-groomed and professional (see Uniforms and Appearance).
- Every effort should be made to be punctual and guide activities to their appropriate length.
- Indicate the benefits of other resort offerings.
- Thank your guests at the end of the day, remind them of what they have accomplished and inform them of what else is available.
- You should not show off in front of guests or treat them in a condescending manner and never put down your peers.
- You should show respect to your peers and help your co-workers throughout the resort look good.
- You should carry the following items: pen, seasonal trail map, activities brochure and sunscreen (if needed). Please carry items safely and avoid carrying items that may cause injury if you fall.
- If you have a disagreement or an issue with a supervisor or fellow employee, choose an appropriate time to resolve the situation. Please avoid confrontation or discussion in front of guests or in the office area.

Job Responsibilities

- Responsible for the safety and wellbeing of guests during tours.
- Communicate appropriately and effectively with guests, parents, staff and general public.
- Apply sound guiding, group management and risk management methods.
- Work as assigned by supervisors.
- Report to work on time and ready for work.
- Be punctual, beginning and completing trips/activities on time.
- Attend ongoing training throughout the winter.
- Report to work on time and ready for work.
- Be punctual, beginning and completing trips/activities on time.
- Attend ongoing training throughout the winter.

Uniform

- Mountain Hosts are provided a jacket and soft shell to be maintained and stored privately. All other visible pieces (helmet, gloves, etc.) should enhance your professional appearance.
- You are expected to have your own black snow pants as well as all necessary ski gear suitable to the work environment.
- Jackets and other uniform elements identifying as a host should not be used for personal use, but can be worn to and from the workplace
- The uniform needs to be worn neatly and appropriately. Zippers should be closed on all pockets and should be pulled up on jackets or shells at least three-quarters of the way. Hoodies, sweaters and any other undergarments should be fully covered by the uniform.
- If wearing a hat or helmet while in uniform during the winter season, it should complement the uniform.
- During the winter, caps worn should carry the resort logo or other alpine equipment logos.
- Promotional garments for other touring destinations and sports teams **cannot** be worn.
- No smoking while wearing any part of the uniform.
- Maintain professionalism if wearing your uniform away from the workplace.
- Nametags are to be worn while in uniform.
- Uniforms should be cleaned during the season on an as needed basis.

Host Status

Full Time Hosts are expected to:

- Be available shifts throughout the entire course of the season and meet the 112 hour minimum.
- Work additional shifts upon request.
- Adhere to and follow all rules and regulations set forth by Big Sky Resort and Big Sky Mountain Hosts.
- Participate in training and orientation sessions recommended by Big Sky Resort.
- Not wear any part of the resort-provided uniform during days off.

Part Time Hosts are expected to:

- Be available to guide according to prior agreed upon schedule.
- Part time Hosts are hired and expected to pay around \$625 for their pass; this number is subject to change at any point in time.
- Part time Hosts are expected to cover 56 hours each season.
- Be available to fulfill the duties of a full time Host should the situation arise. These openings can and will occur at any point during the season, at this time benefits available to full time Hosts will be extended.
- Work extra days when available during peak times.
- Participate in clinics, training and orientation sessions recommended by Big Sky Resort.
- Adhere to and follow all rules and regulations set forth by Big Sky Resort and the Big Sky Mountain Hosts.
- Obtain up-to-date information.
- Not wear any part of the resort-provided uniform during days off.

Hosting Policy

- Our Hosting and guiding is based on the simple philosophy of Safety, Fun and Learning
- All tours and responsibilities of Hosts are designed to be guest centered, outcome based and guest service oriented.
- You will be Hosting within the framework of the philosophy, mission and method established by Big Sky Mountain Host Program.

Host Training

- You are expected to attend all meetings and trainings throughout the season. In addition, each Host should attend training/shadowing prior to offering tours without supervision.
- It is your responsibility to maintain a high level of technical skill and facilitation proficiency and to further improve your own levels of expertise.

Helmet Policy

Big Sky Resort, operating under the corporate management of Boyne USA, initiated a company helmet policy effective November 1, 2017. Any employee/volunteer who is on duty and is required to, or elect to, ski or bike, in or out of uniform, is required to wear a snow sports helmet or biking helmet. Please refer to the Big Sky Resort Handbook for information on this policy.

Working Conditions

As a Host, you are asked to perform your job in all types of weather conditions. You should expect to be exposed to high winds, wet conditions, heavy snowfall, low visibility and extremes of temperature. Additionally, expect to encounter all kinds of snow conditions. It is important to remain professional and positive no matter the conditions. Your decisions regarding continuing activities in adverse conditions should be based on the wellbeing, safety, fun and learning the guests.

Drug/Alcohol Policy

Consumption or possession of alcohol or illegal drugs while at work or in uniform is not allowed and will result in termination. Consumption or possession of illegal drugs on Boyne Property is not allowed and will result in termination. Being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol (this includes residual affects) while in uniform or while at work is not allowed and may result in termination.

Personal Phone Use

Acceptable use of a personal phone is to call Ski Patrol or your supervisor. Texting or talking on your phone while hosting should be kept to a minimum. It is recommended to have Ski Patrol (995-5880), Basecamp (995-5769) and your supervisor's phone numbers saved on your phone. Radio use is for scanning and relaying pertinent information to other hosts. Communication over the radio is for EMERGENCY USE ONLY. If possible, the use of a cell phone should occur, instead of a radio. Hosts are expected to check their email/texts regularly to stay up to date on current resort and host events/information.

Accidents/Workers' Compensation

Accidents that results in injury while at work or that may result in lost work time should be reported to ensure accurate record keeping. It is important that staff report all accidents, regardless of how minor the injury may appear.

Therefore, we have developed the following as a guide for all to follow:

1. Accidents should be reported immediately to the Safety/Ski Patrol Department and Mountain Host Resort Liaison.
2. Supervisor will have you fill out an incident report as well as well as workers' comp report.
3. Bring workers' comp report to the Human Resources Department.
4. All other accidents (guest/visitor or traffic related) should be referred to the Safety Department.
5. Accident reports are recommended for all incidents and will be completed by the Safety Department.
6. When presenting the prescription or the doctor bill, indicate that you did this work for Big Sky and the prescription and the doctor bill are for a Workers' Compensation Claim.

Failure to properly report an accident may result in denial of benefits and disciplinary procedure.

As a Big Sky Resort Employee, if you go skiing or snowboarding beyond the scope of your employment, and are injured while skiing or snowboarding, your claim may not be covered by Workers' Compensation. If you choose to ride or ski during your break period, lunch or at a time you have been relieved of your job related duties, you are operating outside of your prescribed duties. Even though you may be on the clock at the time you are injured, if you are free skiing or snowboarding as defined above when you are injured, your claim may be denied. The determination of whether you are free skiing beyond the scope of your employment will be made by the insurance carrier based upon Montana Workers' Compensation and Occupational Disease Statues and case law.

I understand that as a Big Sky Resort employee, if I go skiing or snowboarding outside of my prescribed duties, and am injured while skiing or snowboarding, I may not be covered by Workers' Compensation. If I choose to ride or ski during my lunch, break period or at a time I have been relieved of my job-related duties, I acknowledge I do so at my own risk and may not be covered by Workers' Compensation. I also understand, even though I may be on the clock at the time I am injured, if I am free skiing or boarding the claim may be denied. The determination of whether your claim is accepted or denied will be made by the insurance carrier based upon Montana Workers' Compensation and Occupational Disease Statues and case law.

Montana Ski Areas Association (MSSA) DUTIES OF A SKIER (See BSR Employee Handbook)

Locker Room

- The locker room is reserved for the use of Hosts and other Mountain Services Personnel.
- Friends, family, etc., are prohibited from entering or using the locker room. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Disregard of this policy may result in termination.
- Remove snow or mud from all equipment before entering the building.
- Thoroughly clean the tuning bench and vicinity immediately after using.
- Respect others' space and property.
- Use locks to secure lockers.

Duty Stations:

- Plaza duty: Greet and assist guest as they come up the stairs from the shuttle. Help Mountain Services expedite the ticket lines when called upon.
- Rental duty: Direct guests that come down the stairs by the Mountain Sports School into the rental shop for returns through the appropriate door
- Shuttle duty: Help organize guests using the shuttle to stand on the downhill right side of the stairs and other guests looking to access the parking lot to use the downhill left side of the stairs. **This has shifted to be more of a Parking Lot Assistant role, but Hosts may be asked to help.**
- Tour duty: Guidelines will be addressed in detail during your on-mountain training, Hosts are only allowed to provide tours once they are checked off by an appropriate member of the Mountain Host Steering Committee.
- Lift duty: While guiding tours is priority, assisting lift lines to assure full chairs can be asked of the Hosts. Should a lift closure occur, assure guests that there will be an exit strategy provided by the resort and not to attempt to walk out of an area or “hole” at the base of a lift.
- Mountain duty: Also known as “Working the Mountain,” assist guests around the mountain with any appropriate help while remaining within the guidelines of the Host program. Hosts need to remain in high traffic areas and remain within the restrictions of their ski assessment provided by an appropriate member of the Mountain Sports School.

Base Camp Office Area: Basecamp is designed and designated for our guests.

Tips: Hosts are not allowed to receive tips. Any guest tips will be donated to Eagle Mount Program

Shift Schedule

Shift Schedules are subject to change mid-season:

- 8:45-12:45 (Ba)
- 10:30-2:30 (Bm or Mm)
- Schedule of days working will be determined on a priority basis during the season.
- Refer to the “Cheat Sheet” provided at training for individual shift responsibilities.
- Shift changes are addressed by contacting other Hosts, putting together an email to discuss the trade and sending it to the Scheduling Supervisor with the trading Host copied on the email. The shift is not approved until a response is received from the Scheduling Supervisor. **Do NOT attempt to trade shifts via Homebase.**

Shift Times:

Shift times are an integral and important part of work. Being late for work will result in counseling or coaching as needed, situation dependent (see Big Sky Resort employee handbook).

Time to Remember:

- 10:15 Hosts meet at tour meeting place to exchange information.
- 10:30 Morning tours begin.
- 12:15 Everyone from all shifts meet at the tour meeting place to exchange information.
- 12:30 Afternoon tours begin.

Clocking in and Out:

- Signing in or out should reflect shift times, there is no extra credit provided for working extra shift hours.

Safety Considerations

While it is of utmost importance to ensure your guests are in a safe environment, it is equally important for the guest to be aware of safety considerations and that they themselves feel safe and secure. If a guest does not feel safe (even if you have taken every step to ensure that is the case), that fear may become a danger in itself. For example, if guests do not feel safe, they are unable to focus on the activity, are tense and therefore unable to perform fluid movements. Each is a common factor in causing accidents.

Preventing accidents is a great concern of Big Sky Resort, Mountain Sports and you the Host. Although accidents do occur, we make prevention a primary concern. The following policies are set in place to guide you in preventing accidents:

- Guests with faulty or incorrectly adjusted equipment, including bindings, should be directed to the appropriate repair/maintenance shop for qualified adjustments/repairs. **Under no circumstances are Hosts allowed to adjust the release or size settings on bindings.**
- On cold days, Hosts should watch guests for signs of frostbite, which show as white spots on exposed skin. Necessary steps should be taken immediately in the event of frostbite.
- On sunny days, sun protection in the form of sunglasses or goggles should be recommended to guests; sunscreen is available in the Mountain Sports School office.
- All measures of safe skiing shall be implemented. This includes, but is not limited to, proper terrain selection, awareness of snow/terrain conditions, safe use of lifts and safe group handling.
- All Hosts should have equipment that is in good safe working condition and should be well exercised and in good health.
- Guiding and putting into practice the seven points of the responsibility code will go a long way to help prevent accidents.

The Code

Sliding on snow can be enjoyed in many ways. On the mountain you may see people using alpine, snowboard, telemark, cross country and other specialized ski equipment, such as that used by disabled or other skiers. Regardless of how you decide to enjoy the slopes, show courtesy to others and be aware that there are elements of risk in skiing that common sense and personal awareness can help reduce.

Memorize, Observe and Teach this Code!

- Always stay in control and be able to stop or avoid other people or objects.
- People ahead of you have the right of way. It is your responsibility to avoid them.
- You must not stop where you obstruct a trail or are not visible from above.
- Whenever starting downhill or merging into a trail, look uphill and yield to others.
- Always use devices to help prevent runaway equipment.
- Observe all posted signs and warnings. Keep off closed trails and out of closed areas.
- Prior to using any lift, you must have the knowledge and ability to load, ride and unload safely.

In Case of an Accident

In the event of an on-hill accident, you should follow the following procedure:

1. Secure the accident area by placing crossed skis or laying a snowboard (binding down) in the snow where visible from above.
2. Do not move the injured person, however see to it that the person is as comfortable as possible.
3. Notify Ski Patrol, (406) 995-5880 or (406) 995-5881, immediately by using a cell phone, radio (only in emergency situations) or sending another skier or competent guest to:
 - a. A lift station (to make call).
 - b. Mountain Services or Basecamp if it is in close proximity (to make call).
4. Provide the following information:
 - a. Exact location of the accident including:
 - Name of slope
 - Upper, middle or lower area
 - Which side of the slope
 - Lift tower number, etc.
 - Document the facts, no opinions
 - b. Nature of Injury: leg, back, arm, head etc.
 - c. Description, sex and age of guest.
5. Do not leave the injured person until you have been released by the Ski Patrol.
6. Maintain control of your group, release guests or enlist help if necessary to control of the scene
7. After the accident, contact your supervisor and the Ski Patrol regarding completing an accident report. Follow up with the injured guest and family in the First Aid center or at their accommodations at an appropriate time to express your concern.

Mountain Host Lift Riding Protocols

Whenever possible, ride with your guests. Riding with friends instead of guests while Hosting is unacceptable. Give guests all the help you possibly can. **Do not ride the lift with another on-duty Host.**

Chairlifts

6 and under lift riding protocols:

- Children six and under will have an adult ride the lift with them.

Lift Riding Best Practices:

The best way to minimize accidents involving lift riding is to teach guests how to safely load, ride and unload the lift. They will be safer knowing the expected behaviors and actions.

All lifts at Big Sky Resort can be slowed down to assist in the loading of guests. When possible, manage guests so that a slowdown on lifts other than Explorer is not necessary. If a slowdown or any other assistance from the lift operator is necessary, on all other lifts, the Host should communicate request directly to operator prior to entering the lift maze.

Groups will be organized prior to entering the lift maze.

Loading, riding and unloading chair lifts:

- Use safety bars when provided with tour guests.

Prior to entering the lift maze:

1. Establish a meeting point.
2. Remind guests if needed of the following rules when riding the lift:
 1. Do not swing or bounce the chair.
 2. Sit all the way back in the chair.
 3. Use the safety bar (when provided).

4. Do not raise the safety bar until ready to unload.
5. Remove pole straps from wrists

For Loading and Riding the Lift:

1. Use poles with straps off to maneuver through the maze.
2. Wait at “wait here” sign.
3. Immediately after the chair passes, follow the chair and stand on the “stand here” sign.
4. With poles in the inside hand, look over the outside shoulder and grab the chair as you sit down.
5. During the ride up, stay relaxed and expect occasional stops.
6. As you approach the top of the unloading ramp, lift the safety bar and scoot closer to the edge of the chair.
7. Keep ski tips up.
8. As you are ON the unloading ramp, stand up next to the “unload here” signs; let go of the chair and lean forward.
9. Ski down the ramp and safely out of the way of other lift riders.

Group Management

The Mountain Host Program operates with the philosophy that appreciation for the Big Sky mountain experience will be enhanced by experiencing it in a number of ways. Tours and assistance will be provided to individuals as well as small and large groups. Our job is to provide the best experience each and every time by tailoring the experience to the guests in front of us. We strive to grow guests’ understanding of themselves, help them to do things they never thought they could do and improve their ability to interact with the world around them, both physically and interpersonally. While increasing their comfort zone is a goal, we also recognize that individuals can choose at what level they would like to participate.

Guiding large groups can be challenging and it is to our advantage to understand that an individual’s background affects how he or she will interact in a group setting. Pay close attention to the small signals guests are sending out—your ability to read guests and react accordingly will help in maintaining a safe and fun environment for the whole group.

Remember that you are responsible for managing a safe, fun and enriching environment. Information and a guided experience follow the safety aspect.

Effective group management is part art and part practiced skill. Working toward mastery of group management will enable us to create a safe and fun environment which we all, Hosts and guests alike, will enjoy.

Other Duties

Hosts will work closely with Mountain Services personnel, Basecamp, Ski Rental, Mountain Sports School, Ski Patrol, etc. The following discusses some of such duties:

Crowd Control:

Hosts are expected to assist Mountain services with expediting lines for lift tickets as well as riding lifts. This is accomplished by sending guests quickly to open windows, Basecamp or the Mountain Sports School when appropriate. For lift lines, help assure all chairs are full, this can most easily be accomplished by standing by the singles line. If confused, check in with Mountain Sports for direction.

Delayed Opening

- The mountain will not open when the temperature is colder than -15 degrees.
- Refer guests to Mountain Services for assistance on wind hold days.

Shuttle Stairs

- On rare occasions, assist the shuttle service by directing guests using the shuttle to remain on the skiers’ right side of the stairs and guests using the lot down the left side. **This has shifted to be more of a Parking Lot Assistant role, but Hosts may be asked to help.**

Guest Complaints

- Take the time to get guest information if needed and refer to your supervisor.
- Remain positive and friendly, take ownership of assisting the guest.

Ski Rental

- Direct guests into the appropriate door at the bottom of the stairs coming down from the 2nd level of the Snowcrest building.

Ski Patrol

- Call dispatch (406)995-5880 for hazard mitigation. Keep in mind the emergency standpoint of this service and pursue other options such as emailing your supervisor.
- In the event of lift failure, keep guests at bottom terminals assuring that a ride will be provided, don't allow guests to hike out from closures.
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Big Sky Basecamp

Basecamp provides another point of sale for our mountain adventures. It also serves as an information and welcoming center for guests. Basecamp offers the following adventures: zipline trips, high ropes course, guided snowshoe tours, bungee trampoline and climbing wall as well as children's and teen's programs. As Hosts of Big Sky Resort, you may be asked during the season to help sell one of these activities. Each Host should be responsible for knowledge of these activities (i.e. times, duration, pricing, meeting areas, etc.). Info on a few of our offerings follows:

Nature Zip Tour

- Weight range: 45-300lbs
- Duration is 1.5 hours with 3 zips 350-500 ft in length and 30-60 ft in the air
- IF SKIING/RIDING TO THE ZIPLINE SHOULD BE ABLE TO SKI/RIDE BLACK TERRAIN

Adventure Zip Tour

- Weight range: 80-220lbs
- Duration is 2.5-3 hours with 4 zips, over a mile of zipping and speeds up to 34mph
- Ride the Explorer lift up and zip down

Guided Snowshoe Tours

- Offered daily
- Two hour guided nature tour along Moose Tracks Trail

Bungee Trampoline/Climbing Wall

- Bungee weight range: 20-180lbs
- Climbing wall weight range: 45-250lbs

Mountain Sports School

In addition to selling ski lessons, the Mountain Sports School provides another point of sale for our mountain adventures. Each guide should be responsible for knowledge of Mountain Sports products i.e. times, duration, pricing, meeting areas, etc. The Big Sky Resort Website has all up to date Mountain Sports information. Here is a brief overview:

Group Lessons

- Mini Skier Camp (4 - 6 years old)
- Mini Rider Camp (7 - 9 years old)
- Ski Camp (7 - 14)
- Snowboard Camp (10 - 14)
- Adult Group Lessons (15 and up)
- Mini Skier Camp lessons run 9:45 am to 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm to 3:15 pm all other group lessons are from 9:15 am to 12:00 pm and 1:00pm to 3:45 pm

- Lunch is available for all youth group lessons from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm

Specialty Clinics

- Telemark
- Women's
- Martin Bell Race
- Dan Egan Steeps
- Martin Bell Free Ski

Programs for Locals

The following programs start after the New Year. See the website for more information.

- Skiwees
- Madwolf

- Club Shred
- Big Sky Rippers
- Master the Mountain

All Done?

- Please sign and date below.
- Return to your supervisor

I have read and understand the 2022-2023 Big Sky Mountain Host Handbook.
I agree to follow all appropriate guidelines/rules as described within this handbook.

Name:

Signature:

Date:
