

The Hardy Plant Society/Mid-Atlantic Group Trip Policy  
Adopted 11/13//2024

The privilege to participate in a Hardy Plant Society/ Mid-Atlantic Group trip belongs to all members. Since these trips are run by member volunteers, it is important that we have a trip policy in place to delineate the responsibilities of both the member participants and of the member organizers.

**1. All Trips - Responsibility of Member Participants**

1.1 All members are eligible for all trips. Membership must be current, and dues paid through the end of the trip. A new member can sign up at the time of registration to become a member and register for the trip.

1.2 Members must be responsible for their mental and physical ability to participate in the trip. Members will be asked if they have a mobility issue and need ADA restrooms and/or accommodations. Best efforts will be made to accommodate this issue but may not be possible.

1.3 Each member participant must have a form of communication that is operable in all trip states or trip country/countries (preferably a cell phone) which enables them to be reached immediately during the trip in the event of an emergency.

1.4 No member's place on a trip is guaranteed until all money requested has been paid and all completed paperwork received.

1.5 During all HPS/MAG trips and events, each member participant is representing the Hardy Plant Society/ Mid-Atlantic Region. We are always respectful of our garden hosts, their property and culture and each other. We abide by the schedule, take only pictures and thank our generous garden hosts.

1.6 Gifts to the trip organizers are not included in the cost of the trip. Gratuities for drivers and hosts are included. Gratuities for hotel and restaurant service are not included.

**2. All Trips - Responsibility of Member Organizers**

2.1 The HPS/MAG board must approve all trips.

2.2 The board should receive a preliminary report on the proposed trip including the destination, date, # of days, a trip planning expense request, and travel agency if involved.

2.3 When determining the budget, the trip organizer needs to determine the number of people to base the budget on but has the option of taking more people than the budget is created for.

2.4 Organizers are required to follow all financial guidelines of HPS/MAG.

2.5 Organizers are exempt from the trip coordination fee, as specified in the trip description, to HPS/MAG.

2.6 A system must be in place to handle reasonable complaints during the trip. The member organizer, with the in-country travel host when available, is expected to address issues and complaints in a timely manner.

2.7 Trip evaluation forms must be submitted to all participants and collected at the end of the trip.

2.8 After the trip, the organizers must submit a detailed report to the Board within 30 days of trip completion. The report will include: 1) complete accounting of all trip monies, 2) summary of all trip evaluation forms and 3) brief summary of the trip including if the organizer(s) expectations were met and if, in their estimation, the participants were satisfied.

### **3. Domestic Trips within the Continental U.S.**

3.1 If a domestic trip is planned without the use of a travel agency, the cost of one member organizer's trip should be covered by the other member participants when calculating the cost. Only the meals included in the advertised trip will be covered by HPS/MAG. If the trip is planned with the use of a travel agency, the cost of the member organizer's trip should not be covered by the other attendees when calculating the cost.

3.2 If the cost of the trip is paid directly to HPS/MAG, the cost of the trip to each member participant will be calculated to include compensation for the MemberClick credit card fee (currently 3% of the trip cost).

3.3 Member organizer should be reimbursed for travel expenses that occur when planning the trip. This includes travel expenses for scouting out gardens and any other pre-trip expenses.

3.4 Member organizer may incur reimbursable pre-trip expenses as part of their work to plan a trip. The member organizer will request advance approval from the HPS/MAG board for the expenses they expect to incur to plan a trip. These expenses are submitted in an 'Expense Reimbursement Form' with required receipts. The member organizer is entitled to be reimbursed for these planning expenses even if the planned trip does not take place. If the planned trip does take place, these planning expenses are treated as a cost of the trip.

3.5 It is recommended that the trip organizer have their own room. They are on call during the entire trip and need to have a break from the trip participants to prepare for the next day.

3.6 A trip coordination fee of \$10 per day per participant for HPS/MAG must be included in the total cost of the trip. The amount of this fee will be specified in the trip description.

3.7 If a person must cancel, their trip coordination fee to HPS/MAG and gratuity contribution will be refunded. If a person must cancel, their payment will be refunded if there is a member who can replace them. If no member fills their spot AND the cost of their hotel room(s) can be canceled without penalty to HPS/MAG, they will receive that amount back. No other monies will be refunded. In no case will the credit card fee assessed to HPS/MAG by MemberClicks (Section 3.2) be refunded.

#### **4. International Trips**

4.1 All international trips will be planned with the use of a travel agency/operator.

4.2 HPS/MAG does not travel to countries designated as Travel Status Level 3 or 4 as per [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov).

4.3 A trip coordination fee per participant must be paid directly to HPS/MAG. If a trip is handled by a travel operator/agency and monies for the tour are paid directly to the agency, a separate check for this trip coordination fee, made out to HPS/MAG, must be sent with the trip application. The amount of this fee will be specified in the trip description; it is currently \$100.

4.4 Gratuities for in-country travel host(s) and driver(s) will be collected with the trip application. The member organizer(s) will convert these monies to the appropriate currency and disperse these funds during the trip.

4.5 If a person must cancel, their payment will be refunded as per the policy of the travel operator/agency. Their trip coordination fee to HPS/MAG and gratuity contribution will be refunded. If there is no member who can replace them, it is possible that the entire trip may need to be canceled if the minimum number of participants required by the agency/operator cannot be satisfied.