

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Will's Hope Voluntary Ground Rules for Participation by Military Veterans, Active Duty, First Responders, Public Safety, Healthcare Personnel & Other Participants, Staff & Self-Assessments for 2025 Programs. This document is part of the application.**

As of: 7 Jan 2025

**In this document, for brevity purposes, the term veteran is all encompassing and includes** military veterans, active-duty personnel, first responders, public safety, healthcare personnel and other approved groups/occupations where individuals may be affected by PTSD, TBI & other related conditions; & or as approved by Will's Hope.

**These Ground Rules are provided to facilitate a neutral environment where all participants are comfortable.** We ask that you voluntarily agree to comply with these Ground Rules. With diverse backgrounds and experiences everyone is unique and essential to the success of each program and group. These Ground Rules were developed based on feedback, common courtesy and observations with an overall objective of making the program beneficial to all participants. They illustrate the spirit and intent of Will's Hope. Each participant is expected to voluntarily comply with these Ground Rules.

This document is for prospective participants in Will's Hope Veterans' Programs and staff assisting Will's Hope Veterans' Programs and associated volunteers to use in assessing themselves and anyone they might nominate for the Veterans' Program. It facilitates the application process. A **"Yes" answer**, in the table below, means you will voluntarily comply with the ground rule. **Please initial each line below in the last column** indicating that you have read the question or statement, understand the question or statement and will voluntarily comply with the requirement.

	<b>Voluntary Ground Rules for Participation by Military Veterans, Active Duty, First Responders, Public Safety, Healthcare Personnel &amp; Other Approved Participants, Staff &amp; Self-Assessments</b>	<b>Yes or No</b>	<b>Initial</b>
1.	I have read the <b>"Will's Hope Summary of Programs for Veterans and Other Qualifying Individuals"</b> and agree to its requirements. (This document can be found on the website <a href="http://www.willshopeopportunities.org">www.willshopeopportunities.org</a> at the Veterans page/tab).		
2.	I understand that the term veteran is an all encompassing term for military veterans, active duty, first responders, public safety, healthcare personnel and other approved persons.		
3.	Are you willing to put in the time to <b>prepare and train before the program;</b> and be invested in Will's Hope so that you can be fully engaged and effective?		
4.	Are you able to maintain a positive disposition when you are in the company of others for a week or more as well as being in variety of weather conditions and various activities to include long drives from early morning (e.g., 4:30 AM - 8:00 PM) each day? (Note: Usually, if we have an early morning activity, we try to get back to the cabin in the early afternoon to afford everyone some down time).		
5.	Downtime for everyone may not be at the same time. For example, if it's your turn to help with meal preparation or preparing the vehicle for the next day or some other task you may need to complete the task(s) before downtime. Are you willing to help and forego downtime if it is your turn to help?		
6.	Are you able to consistently and continuously present a positive image and set the example so that you reflect positively on Will's Hope as seen by outside persons and organizations?		

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7.	Can you interact with other participants, staff & others (the public, officials, guests to Will's Hope events, etc.) using appropriate language, appropriate behavior & professional conduct?		
8.	Are you able to handle long drives during the program (e.g., it is not uncommon for activities to require up to 2 hours in one direction; and the drive from Colorado Springs to Gardiner, MT is a 13-hour drive)?		
9.	Can you engage in meaningful conversations without trying to continuously assert your way as being the better way?		
10.	Can you provide the Program Leaders timely, objective and constructive comments and assist with the fix (if necessary)?		
11.	Can you identify the good & positive things in the accomplishments of other adults or in an activity that may appear to be somewhat unstructured & free flow?		
12.	Are you comfortable in an activity or activities that are unstructured (e.g., no formal schedule, no lesson plan, no timeline, etc.) where the activity just meanders based on the participants' reactions, comments and interests; and may vary with the type of activity?		
13.	Are you comfortable in an activity or activities that are structured (e.g., formal schedule, classroom environment, field environment)?		
14.	Are you able to focus and stay on task/subject during group activities without taking excessive time on extraneous or non-Will's Hope topics?		
15.	Can you function without having frequent meetings?		
16.	Are you able to help others without becoming impatient or frustrated?		
17.	Do you love/enjoy the outdoors and the natural world?		
18.	Are you physically fit so you can hike up to 3 miles (or more) with a 600-foot elevation gain? *		
19.	Can you accept direction from the Will's Hope Program Leaders?		
20.	Can you accept constructive criticism or suggestions on how to do something better from peers?		
21.	Can you be genuinely interested in the other participants and provide positive reinforcement?		
22.	Can you provide positive reinforcement after one of your peers does a presentation or excels at doing a task?		
23.	Are you able to look for things to do (e.g., after dinner cleanup, cleaning the van windows) and if the responsibility is not clear help out by taking the initiative?		

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24	Are you consistently a team player?		
25	Are you able to let others get the credit, even if you contributed to accomplishing a task or project?		
26	Can you demonstrate humbleness and sincerity in group settings?		
27	When planning for activities the weather will be considered and it is not the intention of the program to deliberately work in an inclement environment. However, there may be activities or situations (e.g., where a storm moves in quickly) where everyone gets wet and cold. Are you able to function and remain positive in inclement weather?		
28	Can you participate in the program knowing that, in general, cell phones cannot be used during the day and can only be used for a limited time in the evening when it doesn't interfere with the Program? Total time usage of cell phones should not exceed 1 hour per day.		
29	Are you able to minimize use of electronics other than cell phones?		
30	Can you sit through a class, briefings, seminars, etc. and pay attention without having side conversations and or using your smart phone (in any manner) and being distracting to the instructor, other participants or Will's Hope staff?		
31	Can you work effectively with and be considerate of others that may appear "ok" but underneath they are sensitive and fragile?		
32	Do you use the words please & thank you frequently?		
33	How are your people skills? A = Outstanding, B = Excellent, C = Satisfactory, D = Less than Satisfactory <b>Please circle the most applicable answer.</b>	N/A	
34	How are your active listening skills? A = Outstanding, B = Excellent, C = Satisfactory, D = Less than Satisfactory <b>Please circle the most applicable answer.</b>	N/A	
35	Do you avoid the use of "I want...", "You must do it this way...", "My way is the best ...." and similar self-serving directives/comments?		
36	If you are in a discussion and you are also one of the main talkers (during a discussion or even throughout the day) can you police yourself and periodically go silent so that others have an opportunity to talk?		
37	Can you abide by the rules specified by the National Park Service, guides, US Forest Service, Will's Hope and other organizations?		
38	Are you willing and able to try new behavior to facilitate your and the group's success?		

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39	Can you be considerate of others' viewpoints, personality and other characteristics (seen & unseen) without criticizing and or causing friction?		
40	Can you strive to make positive comments about other participants?		
41	Are you able to look at this experience as a unique opportunity and wholesome activity where you may receive far more than what you contribute?		
42	Fees that are collected are only a fraction of the \$5,000 or more required for each participant. We rely on donations to Will's Hope to help cover the remaining balance. Once you are accepted Will's Hope is willing and happy to make these funds available for your participation. Another way to look at this is that multiple donors are willing to believe in you and want to help by making an investment in you.	N/A	
43	During long drives to various activities are you able to engage in fun or worthwhile discussions and or educational activities that emphasize using your observational skills to observe wildlife, features or other items enroute? Long drives are also an opportunity to learn more about another veteran (who may become a new best friend) or have discussions meaningful to the whole group.		
44	Can you police yourself if you are starting to be less than positive & enthusiastic?		
45	Can you work & talk in a calm, respectful and courteous manner?		
46	Do you understand that the program (even though it is a lot of fun) is not a vacation, it is not a tour and it is not "just another trip" as you must actively participate?		
47	As a participant I understand that this program is not a tour or "just another trip" and for me to realize the benefits I must comply with the voluntary ground rules, as well as other requirements.		
48	Are you able to help instructors, & staff if they need help?		
49	By being accepted into this program do you agree to participate in all activities such as hiking and doing presentations, etc.		
50	Can you be "in the moment" so that you stay engaged in activities and discussions?		
51	You may have passionate causes that are very, very commendable but don't directly relate to the WH Program/Mission. Are you able to keep your focus on WH activities so non-WH Mission commendable causes are not disruptive to the group?		
52	Will you pay attention to and be knowledgeable of training schedules & related guidance?		
53	Will you identify any special needs you have as part of the application so that Will's Hope knows in advance what they are (e.g., you get car sick and need to sit in a front seat)		

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54	As a participant I understand it is my responsibility (and not the responsibility of someone else) to keep the program leaders informed of any issue that affects my participation or affects the remainder of the group. I agree to contact the program leaders directly throughout the application process and through the program in the GYE.		
55	As a participant I understand that many of the activities are equivalent to college level seminars and may have been modified for the benefit of the participants.		
56	As a participant I understand it is my responsibility to be prepared to depart from the lodge/cabin or a specific site at the time designated by the schedule or program leaders.		
57	As a participant I agree to focus on the Will's Hope Mission & avoid complaining about things irrelevant to the Mission when my focus should be on nature, Native Americans, educational opportunities, self-healing, bonding with fellow veterans & other important program elements. As an example, complaints about long drives is not a productive use of time. To help in this regard, as an example, participants can switch seats so the tallest person in the group are not always sitting in the back of the van.		
58	Will's Hope is a non-smoking program. There are restrictions on where a smoker can smoke. <b>For non-smokers</b> do you agree that you will not smoke? <b>For smokers</b> do you agree that you understand that there are restrictions and your smoking must be discussed with the program leaders well in advance of the program and that you will comply with any specified restrictions?		
59	As a participant I understand that if I fail to follow the ground rules, engage in disruptive behavior, fail to do my share of work, decide I am not going to do an activity for no valid reason, etc. I may be asked to leave the program and any expenses incurred as a result of this are my responsibility (e.g., I may be responsible for expenses of going home if I am asked to leave). <b>Please note that Will's Hope understands</b> that there may be valid reasons for someone to have reasonable down time for physical, mental, emotional or other reasons and this has occurred on every program.		
60	I understand that travel to GYE and on return are based on scheduled pick-up and drop-off points and that if I request a different pick-up or drop-off point that it may not be agreed to. Additional pick-up & drop-off points may be considered but it will be assessed with respect to the overall schedule as well as commitments made to other participants. I also understand that I will request any schedule deviations well in advance and directly with the program leaders.		
61	I understand that I must be a safe driver if I volunteer to drive. I must provide a <b>hard copy of the declarations</b> in my personal auto insurance policy. In addition, I must confirm with my insurance company that it is valid for rental vehicles (note: when we use rental vans we rent them with loss damage waivers which covers any damage to the rental vans).		

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62	I understand that <b>I must use the Will's Hope Medical Form</b> for the physical and medication list. No other form is acceptable.		
63	Are you able to carry on a professional or friendly conversation with a visitor or other person without revealing confidential personal or other information about yourself or others?		
64	Will's Hope video records most program activities and excerpts may be used in the program video/multi-media produced for the Annual Dinner and Fundraising Event (usually in November). There are no rehearsals or formal preparation for these, other than what the participant(s) decides. This is FYI.	N/A	N/A
65	I understand that it is <b>very important for participants and the group</b> to conform to the spirit and intent of the ground rules and the Will's Hope Program. I also understand that individuals that fail to conform to the spirit and intent put themselves and or the group at risk of not realizing the benefits the Will's Hope Program provides.		
66	If my personal situation changes, I will promptly inform the Program Leaders.		
67	Will you meet the commitments and other requirements required for participation in the Will's Hope Programs?		
68	When the group is doing an outside activity are you able to sit, hike or do other activities using a low voice as not to disturb other humans and wildlife? In bear habitat specific guidance will be provided regarding how much noise the group will make.		
69	Periodically, the group does a "silent exercise" where everyone is to be totally quiet. This may be during lunch, a hike or at other times. Afterwards we process the experience by asking each participant to talk about what they experienced or about something they did (e.g., a sketch they drew). Will you comply?		

\* Hiking & physical requirements may be waived on a case-by-case basis depending on the individual's situation.

**Narrative response required for participation (Please be very legible):**

- A. In one paragraph legibly describe how you will benefit from Will's Hope and why you want to attend (feel free to attach a separate paper for this question):

- B. What qualities are your strongest people-oriented skills (list no more than 2)?
  
  
  
  
  
- C. As a participant or a member of the staff - can you be a positive influence on the other participants?
  
  
  
  
  
- D. Describe what you may have to change about yourself to work effectively with others:
  
  
  
  
  
- E. Describe what you may have to change about yourself to meet the spirit and intent of Will's Hope:
  
  
  
  
  
- F. Describe your leadership style and how you will work with a small team of other participants:
  
  
  
  
  
- G. Describe yourself with respect to being a team player:
  
  
  
  
  
- H. Describe yourself with respect to being a follower when someone else is the leader or in charge of a task:
  
  
  
  
  
- I. Describe how you are a positive person: