



**JOINING**  
— THE —  
**CANADIAN**

**SKI PATROL**

# Welcome

Hello and congratulations for taking the first steps toward discovering more about the Canadian Ski Patrol.

Well known as Canada's leader in certifying ski patrollers and advanced first aid personnel for our on-snow resort partners, the Canadian Ski Patrol delivers advanced first aid, injury prevention and rescue services through a volunteer network that is educated and certified to the highest standards.

Since the 1940s, this organization satisfied a critical need for first responders on the ski slopes, while providing a rewarding and exciting experience for its members. Today, the Canadian Ski Patrol delivers a range of national programs which provide vital advanced first aid skills, certified education and training in outdoor emergency medical care. Many lives are saved each year thanks to the competence of Canadian Ski Patrol member patrollers.

In this eBook, we hope to answer your questions and let you know about the many benefits of becoming a Canadian Ski Patrol member and volunteer.

If you have questions after reading this, feel free to contact us at [info@skipatrol.ca](mailto:info@skipatrol.ca).

We'd love to hear from you to share our story and experiences.

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# The Canadian Ski Patrol – Who Are We?

In 1941, a young Toronto osteopath named Dr. Douglas Firth was asked by the Canadian Amateur Ski Association to establish a first aid and rescue group to patrol ski hills. He had already spent a few seasons in the 1930s rescuing injured skiers from the trails of the Toronto Ski Club. Before long, wherever there was skiing he mobilized first responders - thus forming the Canadian Ski Patrol. \*

Today, more than seven decades later, the Canadian Ski Patrol continues to fill a critical need for first responders on the ski slopes and beyond. Still adhering to our original mandate of excellence in “safety and rescue, injury prevention and service” adopted so long ago, this not-for-profit/charitable organization has grown along with the Canadian ski industry and continues to play a vital role in the community while actively supporting amateur and professional sport, recreation and active, outdoor lifestyles.

Now 4,500 volunteers strong from coast to coast, the Canadian Ski Patrol provides rescue services, first aid, safety programs, rescue toboggans and medical and first responder equipment for more than 220 alpine and Nordic ski areas nationally. Serving more than 19 million members of the public annually, Canadian Ski Patrol members work with and on behalf of their local ski areas to improve the snow-sliding experience for all enthusiasts.

*\*To learn more about the history of the Canadian Ski Patrol, click here or go to [www.skipatrol.ca](http://www.skipatrol.ca)*

# Canadian Ski Patrol General Fast Facts:

The Canadian Ski Patrol...

- ❁ Was founded by Dr. Douglas Firth in 1941.
- ❁ Provides first aid services at 230 alpine and Nordic ski areas across Canada.
- ❁ Has members on national and international ski, first aid, and mountain rescue bodies such as the Canadian Ski Council, regional ski area associations, ILCOR.
- ❁ Is a founding member of the International Federation of Ski Patrols (FIPS).
- ❁ Is governed by an elected national board of directors and operated by a national president/CEO and management committee.
- ❁ Is comprised of 4,496 volunteers from coast to coast in 61 zones and nine divisions.
- ❁ Has a patron; the Governor General of Canada, His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston.
- ❁ Has a medical advisory committee of five physicians, and a pre-hospital care advisory committee with six pre-hospital care (paramedics) or hospital emergency workers.

# Profile of a Canadian Ski Patrol Member:

A typical member of the Canadian Ski Patrol is an adult, 18 years-of-age or older and from any walk of life. He or she could be a student or work by day as an engineer, teacher, fire fighter, entrepreneur, paramedic, police officer, accountant, lawyer, bus driver, carpenter, assembly line worker or insurance broker - to name just a few.

The common motivator from patroller to patroller is a love of the outdoors, a drive to be part of a team and a desire to help others. They can be found on alpine and Nordic trails everywhere, offering their knowledge and skill. Many are active year-round.

## Beyond the Ski Hill:

Renowned first and foremost for its longevity and professional quality of service at Canadian resorts, the Canadian Ski Patrol has expanded its programs over the years to meet demand. Beyond their regular duties, volunteer patrollers have delivered care at Canadian Olympic and Paralympic events (1988 and 2010), Young Canada and provincial Winter Games, Canadian and provincial championships, and dozens of World Cup races held in Canada.

In recent decades, the Canadian Ski Patrol's services have extended beyond the ski hill to include first aid/medical support for a long list of recreational and sporting events. Today, race and event coordinators everywhere see Canadian Ski Patrol members as uniquely mobile, highly-trained and self-sufficient first responders experienced at working in tandem effectively with other volunteers, police, fire and local emergency medical services (EMS). Canadian Ski Patrol members can coordinate the entire medical team, serve as first responders, fill in on bike or foot – or do all three and more.

# What Do Patrollers Do While on Duty?

## A Year in the Life of a Patroller:

### **August/September**

Recruiting occurs all year long, but a great deal of activity occurs in these two months.

### **September/October/November**

Depending on when your ski season starts, this is the time for first aid training (a minimum of 60 hours for new patrollers) or annual re-certification (for returning patrollers) and testing.

### **November/December/January**

This is when you will be required to either complete your on-snow certification (skiing/board testing and toboggan handling) as a new patroller, or re-certify as a returning patroller.

### **January/February/March/April...May?**

Again, depending on where you ski, this is when you get to use all of the skills you've spent the fall training period learning and practicing. Some actually get to do this through May, while others don't ski after the end of March.

### **April/May/June**

Time for instructor certification and re-certification. These are busy months for anyone interested in becoming or returning as an instructor or assistant instructor for next fall.

### **May/June/July/August**

Most have probably hung up their skis by now, but patrollers in many locations are still busy. During the off-season we provide first aid services at many non-skiing events including marathons, bike races, fundraising events, sporting tournaments, concerts etc.

### **August/September**

The cycle begins again with a new patrolling season...



## A Day in the Life of a Patroller:

**07:00 – 08:30:** Morning sweep. Before the resort opens to the public, patrollers systematically check the trails for any hazardous conditions or items that need to be addressed according to local area procedures.

**08:30 – 12:00:** On patrol. Once the slopes are open to the public, patrollers are free to ski, taking into account the resort terrain and patroller coverage. Everyone on duty will interact with ski area guests, promote the area, respond to accident calls, and provide safety tips.

**12:00 – 13:00:** Lunch. So that continuous coverage of the slopes is ensured, not everyone eats at the same time but there will be time for a break.

**13:00 – Closing:** Patrollers continue to patrol the slopes. In the event that someone gets injured, the patrol is ready to respond, working in teams to immobilize any injury and safely transport any patient by rescue toboggan to the first aid room. Patrollers are always busy. If not attending to someone who is injured, they help to find lost children, guide people to runs, and provide valuable safety information to the public.

**Closing – end-of-day sweep:** Patrollers take a final run down each trail, to ensure that no guest is left behind at the end of the day. During this final “sweep” of the ski area, they also report any safety issues that may have arisen during the day so that area management can address them prior to opening the slopes the next day.

**After sweep:** After a long day, patrollers often come together to chat about the high points of the day. This camaraderie is one of the many benefits enjoyed by patrollers.



# Why Join the Canadian Ski Patrol?

## Join For The Training – Stay For The Fun

From the moment you join the Canadian Ski Patrol, you will be volunteering, learning and skiing in a team environment. The advanced first aid training will give you unparalleled competence in managing and treating injuries. The added CPR/AED and on snow training will bring you to the highest standards available in Canada.

## Canadian Ski Patrol Training Fast Facts

The Canadian Ski Patrol...

- ❁ Has an advanced first aid course that is recognized by the federal government (HRSDC) and provinces in Canada.
- ❁ Provides on snow, safety and accident scene management training to members.
- ❁ Has its own advanced first aid course, which is a minimum of 60 hours in length and includes CPR, AED, and WHMIS training.
- ❁ Supports national avalanche programs and offers avalanche training to patrollers.
- ❁ Requires that all patrollers recertify first aid accreditation every year by taking a refresher course (minimum 16 hours) and pass a written, skills and a diagnostic exam.

What many do not know is that the Canadian Ski Patrol is a terrific social organization and the perfect excuse to enjoy skiing on a regular basis. Many, many members establish life-long friendships in the patrol.

The leadership, organization and communication skills you learn as a member of the CSP will be invaluable both on and off the slopes. And don't forget, becoming a patroller means you get to ski for free. Many will tell you that they joined for the free skiing but stayed for the friends they made and the excitement they found.

These friendships can continue in the off-season too. There are many opportunities for patrollers to volunteer their skills at non-skiing events covered by the CSP. Many patrollers are outdoor enthusiasts such as mountain bikers, cyclists, runners and adventure racers. Instead of on skis, patrollers at these kinds of events patrol on bike or on foot.

# Membership Benefits

**Canadian Ski Patrol members receive many tangible benefits, such as:**

- ❄️ Advanced first aid (AFA) training and certification
- ❄️ Hands-on experience
- ❄️ Electronic monthly newsletter "5/5"
- ❄️ Legal support
- ❄️ Insurance coverage
- ❄️ Terrific skiing/snowboarding nationally
- ❄️ A long list of pro-deal/CSP supplier discounts
- ❄️ Volunteer hours

**The list doesn't end here. There are also countless intangible benefits, such as:**

- ❄️ Camaraderie, many patrollers build lifelong relationships on the patrol
- ❄️ Area access privileges
- ❄️ Personal development and a feeling of confidence in your abilities
- ❄️ The pride of being involved in your community and helping others
- ❄️ A good reason to get out and stay active (year-round)
- ❄️ Technology support
- ❄️ International affiliation
- ❄️ Public recognition
- ❄️ A relationship with the local Canadian Ski Instructors Alliance
- ❄️ Access to cutting edge research
- ❄️ Ongoing professional development
- ❄️ Social events
- ❄️ Uniform

# How To Get Started?

When you click JOIN NOW, you will be taken to a website where you will indicate what part of the country you are in and identify which Canadian Ski Patrol division and zone you wish to join. We will then put you directly in touch with the people who will bring you through the process of joining that specific zone.

You will be able to choose which resort you would like to join as a patroller. Since each resort has slightly different needs and requirements regarding the number of duty days required etc., it's best for you to receive that information directly from the patrol leader for that specific resort.

The Canadian Ski Patrol is always looking for outdoor enthusiasts from all walks of life who are interested in volunteering their time to help others and want to have fun. To join, you must be a strong team player, 18 years of age or older, and be prepared to work in a variety of weather conditions. Note that the cost of membership is an average of \$200 annually. Also, the Canadian Ski Patrol requires that patrollers cover some or all of the cost of their uniform and first aid kit or vest.

## Sign Up and Training Process

The first step, once you have registered in your specific zone, will be to select which 60-hour advanced first aid course you wish to take. Courses are offered between September and December each year. There will be a schedule available for you to look at and the selections for courses will include weekday evenings or weekends. At the end of that course, you must pass a multiple choice written exam with a 75% to 80% minimum.

Skills and diagnostics testing comes next, an opportunity for examiners to witness just how good their teaching skills are and see how you have integrated practical skills such as bandaging, splinting and patient assessments.

At this point, you are almost there... next comes the Basic Life Support (BLS) training which includes CPR and AED training. Finally, once the snow flies and you're actually on the slopes, you will go through your on-snow training to master the skills involved in handling a rescue toboggan with a loaded patient. This portion of our certification is re-examined every three years.

We hope to see you soon!

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Q. What is the age requirement to join the CSP?**

**A.** New members must be 18 years of age as of December 1 of the current year to become a certified patroller. Under special circumstances, some resorts permit patrollers at age 16 if qualifications are met, however, restrictions may apply. Check with your specific resort for further details.

## **Q. How much first aid do I have to know when I join?**

**A.** None! We will teach you. Our advanced first aid courses start at various times in the fall. Each course consists of class demonstrations, lectures, hands-on practical work and CPR training. Courses are offered weekday evenings or full days on weekends.

## **Q. I already have first aid certification. Do I have to take the Canadian Ski Patrol Advanced First Aid (AFA) course to become a regular member?**

**A.** Yes, our training is very specific and applies to providing services at ski areas. Our training is ranked at a higher level than regular first-aid courses. We include CPR, oxygen therapy, AED procedures, airway management and blood pressure technology. If you have a credited CPR course valid for the current ski year you need not re-certify your CPR. A regular member must successfully complete the advanced first aid (AFA) requirements annually. Individuals with medical qualifications, or holding a first aid certification from another organization, recognized by the CSP, must successfully complete the Advanced First Aid - Modified (AFA – Modified) course to become a regular member.

## **Q. Are there paid patrolling jobs offered?**

**A.** Yes, there is always a need for paid patrollers. First, we suggest that you make contact with the patrol services director of the ski area where you would like to become a paid patroller. We can help you with contact information.

## **Q. Are patrollers legally protected for their actions as a patroller?**

**A.** Yes, the Canadian Ski Patrol carries a general liability insurance policy.

## **Q. Is there any way to really see what it is like to be a patroller?**

**A.** Yes, at numerous ski areas across the country we have “ski with a patroller day” programs that match you with a ski patroller for the day. Just go to your local ski area, ask to meet the patrol leader or the person in charge for the day, tell this person you are interested in becoming a ski patroller and that you would like to see what it is like to be a ski patroller.

### **Q. How often will I be required to patrol during the winter?**

**A.** Duty rosters and expectations depend on the local patrol. Some patrols will ask for a certain number of days, others are fixed to a one day a week, or one day every two weeks or a one-weekend-out-of-two schedule. They might ask you for your availability at the beginning of the winter and then make a schedule around your available time. When you fill in the "Join the CSP" form, your information goes to a recruiting officer in the area you wish to join. You will then be called and all your questions about becoming a patroller will be answered.

### **Q. How are ski patrollers recognized at a ski area?**

**A.** Whenever patrollers are on duty, they are in uniform and well-identified as patrollers with the Canadian Ski Patrol.

### **Q. What are the official colours of the Canadian Ski Patrol?**

**A.** When the Canadian Ski Patrol first began, the uniform was Rainier red. In the 1980s, the official colours became yellow and blue. Then, in 2012, the Canadian Ski Patrol's national board of directors initiated a brand review. By August 2013, they had shortened the name from Canadian Ski Patrol System to simply Canadian Ski Patrol, and launched a new image that included an updated logo.

The look of this new logo is similar to the historic yellow cross on a blue maple leaf, but the leaf has been updated, strengthened and incorporated in a new red and white colour scheme. It's a revitalized look that reflects a boldness, professionalism and can-do attitude; integral elements of the Canadian Ski Patrol now and into the future.

You will still see the yellow and blue colours everywhere while the Canadian Ski Patrol goes through this transition. Our new red and white uniform will be rolled out by 2016.

### **Q. Is CSP training recognized by employers and provincial governments?**

**A.** Some provinces recognize provincial Worker's Compensation Board or Workplace Safety accreditation and equivalency. The Canadian Ski Patrol has Basic and Standard First Aid accreditation from the Canadian federal government's Human Resources Development Skills Canada. This accreditation is recognized in the workplace.

### **Q. Can I take the Canadian Ski Patrol first aid course without becoming a ski patroller?**

**A.** In most regions YES. A regular member must complete the advanced first aid requirements. A regular member who has on snow certification and provides patrolling services may be referred to as a patroller. A regular member can provide services off the slopes or trails. In some areas of the country we provide first aid services for many non-skiing events and regular members are always welcomed in these roles.



**Q. What level of skier/snowboarder do I need to be to become a patroller?**

**A.** You need to be a strong intermediate skier. Since you may ski or ride in all kinds of conditions under any circumstances you should be able to competently handle all of the runs on the mountain where you will patrol. You don't need to be an expert, but you will need to be able to handle a toboggan, and meet the minimum rating set out by the local patrol at the particular area you wish to patrol. Ski and snowboard instruction is often available to Canadian Ski Patrol members at little or no cost at the local patrol level.

**Q. I am a snowboarder, can I be a patroller even if I have never skied?**

**A.** Yes, we certify individuals in first aid and on snow for alpine, Nordic, snowboard, Telemark, and mini skis. We have lots of patrols in Nordic ski areas. In alpine areas, we also accept snow blades, but we strongly suggest you be able to ski as well, that will make toboggan handling easier.

**Q. What is a toboggan?**

**A.** This is our main means of transporting an injured person from the slopes/trails to the base of the ski area.

**Q. Is it hard to transport a patient in a toboggan?**

**A.** No, with proper training we have 100-pound patrollers that can handle a 150-pound toboggan with a 250-pound patient in it. We teach you how to do it and with a little practice it will become something fun.







# JOINING THE CANADIAN SKI PATROL

Discover the beginning of the Canadian Ski Patrol, learn about those who founded the patrol and how that legacy has been carried into the modern world. Find out how you can get involved and enjoy all the benefits the Canadian Ski Patrol has to offer in this exciting free eBook!