

ECHO Walking Festival 2026

Health and Safety Plan

Coromandel, Hauraki, Matamata-Piako, Western Bay of Plenty

Introduction:

The Echo Walking Festival is a series of guided walks and activities of varying levels of difficulty across the Districts listed above.

This plan relates all activities included as part of the Festival between 20th March and 19th April 2026 and includes:

- Group travel to and from walk starts e.g. car pooling
- The actual activity.

This plan applies to:

- Event Organisation Staff
- Volunteers
- Participants
- Contractors to any of the above

Contents

1) Walk Specific Actions

- A pre-event risk assessment for each walk is to be undertaken, to identify physical hazards. These are to be shared with registered walkers prior to the event
- DOC information pages and local i-SITES will be contacted just prior to the activity date to check for any warnings or additional hazard notifications.
- Note that individuals should also be on alert for other hazards they may encounter
- All other hazards will be identified in pre-walk brief given by the walk guide
- A pre-walk brief to include safety practices i.e. staying together as a group, maintaining sight/sound contact, waiting at any junctions and regular head counts, notifying someone in the group if taking a toilet stop. Reminder to advise the walk guide of any medical conditions and ensure the medical form is complete if already not done so.

2) Weather Suitability

- The weather reports up to and including event date are to be considered carefully prior to the walk/ activity going ahead.

3) Route

- A description of the planned route and a map if necessary should be included with the walk specific risk assessment.
- Guides should be fully familiar and confident to lead the walk/activity.

4) Walk/Activity Management

A contact person, who is not participating in the walk, is to be nominated as an emergency contact and is to be available by phone throughout the period of the walk. An estimated time of return should be notified and the walk guide should contact them on return to confirm that the group has returned safely. If this does not happen then the contact person must inform authorities to initiate a search.

5) Toilets

Toilet locations should be notified to participants and information provided re bush toilet etiquette as applicable.

6) Emergency Procedures

All event staff, volunteers and contractors are to be provided with a copy of this plan and advised of the following emergency procedures.

- Take immediate action as required to keep yourself and the attendee's safe from further harm.
- Staff, volunteers and contractors are to report any incidents as soon as possible to event management.
- Volunteers and contractors are to return immediately to a safe location if they feel that their own safety or that of the public is in danger.

ACCIDENT

In the event of a member of public sustaining serious injury; event staff, volunteers and contractors are to:

- Ensure their own safety first.
- Contact emergency services and follow their directions.
- Stay with the patient if it is possible to do so safely
- Administer First Aid if able to do so
- Ensure the patient is kept warm, dry and calm.

EVACUATION

In the event of an evacuation, volunteers and contractors are to:

- Direct all activity participants and spectators to the nearest vehicle access point designated evacuation area.
- Ensure their own safety if circumstances deteriorate

7) First Aid

- First Aid kits are to be carried by both the walk guide and assistant. Any participant with a medical condition that may affect them whilst on the walk should complete a medical form. In the event of an accident or incident the guide should complete the Incident/Accident report attached.
- First Aid kits are supplied by the ECHO Committee and are to be checked before each walk. They will include survival blankets, oral anti-histamine, pain and anti-inflammatory medication, blister treatment as well as all standard contents.

8) Employees/Contractors of Event Organisation, Entertainment, Stall Holders or Volunteers

For the purpose of this document:

- The term "Volunteer" refers to all unpaid personal working at Echo Walking Festival
- The Term "contractors" refers to all employees/contractors working at Echo Walking Festival

General

- Volunteers are being used to guide walks who are familiar with the track and are experienced at leading people in the outdoors.
- An event briefing for volunteers is to be distributed by each centre Coordinator.
- Volunteers will be provided with high Vis vests to ensure clear identification on the day.
- Volunteers and contractors should be prepared for all weather conditions
- Volunteers and contractors shall be provided with this health and safety plan and other relevant information for this event.
- There is to be NO consumption of alcohol by contractors or volunteers whilst at the event.

General Rules

- Any organisation conducting activities at the event must notify the Event Management of any specific hazard associated with their operations

All Volunteers and contractors are to:

- Report hazards or incidents
- Observe and obey all warning signs/instructions
- Only go where authorised to go
- Report all injuries
- Get first aid promptly
- Report all fires and emergency situations
- Ensure appropriate meal breaks and rest periods are taken to ensure individual(s) is/are not adversely affected
- Only use equipment they are certified trained or have the skill to use
- Dispose of waste in accordance with site rules
- Wear and use safety equipment when required, including appropriate clothing and footwear

9) PERSONAL LOCATOR BEACONS (PLBs)

- Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs) are dedicated rescue devices that are designed to get you out of trouble in an emergency. When activated, they send out a GPS signal to satellites orbiting the earth, which pinpoints your location and sends it to emergency services.
- All of our grade 4 and 5 walks will have a PLB with one of the guides for the day.