



## Your Responsibility Code: Understanding Your Duty on the Slopes

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Skiing is an exhilarating sport that draws millions of enthusiasts to mountains worldwide, but with this thrill comes a significant responsibility. The National Ski Area Association (NSAA) created [Your Responsibility Code](#) to promote safety and respect among skiers, snowboarders, and riders, ensuring everyone can enjoy their time on the slopes. Understanding this code is not just about adhering to rules, it's about knowing your responsibilities and duty as a snowsports enthusiast and fostering a culture of safety that protects everyone.

### What is Your Responsibility Code?

Your Responsibility Code consists of a set of guidelines designed to enhance safety and enjoyment for skiers, snowboarders, and riders on the ski slopes. While the specifics may vary slightly by region, the core principles remain consistent. The code typically includes the following key responsibilities:

1. **Always stay in control:** Skiers must maintain their speed and trajectory that allows them to avoid other people and objects; control means being able to stop or change direction as necessary.

2. **People ahead or downhill from you have the right-of-way:** Skiers must be aware of their surroundings; this means keeping an eye out for other skiers, especially those who may be below or beside them on the slope so you can avoid them and prevent collisions.
3. **Stop only where you are visible:** When stopping on a ski trail, make sure you are visible from uphill skiers and out of the way; just under the crest of a roll on a ski trail where you cannot be seen is not a good place to stop; don't stop anywhere where you will restrict traffic.
4. **Look uphill and avoid others before starting downhill or entering a trail:** When entering a trail, look uphill so you don't pull out in front of another skier and cause a collision.
5. **You must prevent runaway equipment:** Your equipment needs to have ski brakes, retainer straps, or some other means to prevent runaway equipment during and after a fall; perform a visual inspection of your gear each day to insure it is in good working order before you hit the slopes.
6. **Read and obey all signs, warnings, and hazard markings:** Skiers need to pay attention to posted signs and warnings; these signs, rope lines, and hazard markings inform and warn the skiing public about conditions, potential hazards, and trail difficulty.
7. **Keep off closed trails and out of closed areas:** Skiers need to stay on marked trails and areas designated for skiing; this helps protect the environment and helps to ensure that everyone is skiing in safe controlled areas.
8. **You must know how and be able to load, ride, and unload lifts safely:** Not only does this ensure your safety and the safety of others, but it also increases the safety for other riders; make sure you are loading a lift that serves terrain than matches your skill level; if you have any questions or need assistance, ask the lift attendant.
9. **Do not use lifts or terrain when impaired by alcohol or drugs:** Skiing and riding while under the influence not only risks your safety but also endangers those around you.
10. **If you are involved in a collision or incident, share your contact information with each other and a ski area employee:** If you are involved in a collision, regardless of who is at fault, it is essential for you to provide your contact information to the other person(s), obtain their contact information, and share this information with a ski area employee (note that ski patrol members can be volunteers and not a ski area employee); injuries from ski collisions are not always immediately apparent.

## **The Importance of the Code**

Your Responsibility Code serves multiple purposes. Primarily, it is designed to prevent accidents and injuries. Skiing can be dangerous, especially in crowded areas where people of varying skill levels are present. Adhering to the code enhances not only your safety but also the safety of others and helps to make sure everyone has a good time on the slopes. Finally, if legal action results from an accident or collision on the ski hill, the Code can be used as a measure to determine if a skier exercises their duty and responsibilities while skiing or riding.

## **The Legal Duty of Care**

While Your Responsibility Code is primarily a set of guidelines, it also carries legal implications. By engaging in skiing or snowboarding, individuals implicitly accept a duty of care toward themselves and others on the slopes. This means that if a skier acts recklessly or fails to adhere to the code, they may be held liable for any resulting injuries to themselves or others.