

# New Parent and Scout Orientation Handbook

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## Boy Scout Troop 154

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Mansfield, New Jersey

## **Scout Oath**

On my honor I will do my best  
To do my duty to God and my country  
And to obey the Scout Law;  
To help other people at all times;  
To keep myself physically strong,  
Mentally awake, and morally straight

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## **Scout Law**

A Scout Is:  
Trustworthy  
Loyal  
Helpful  
Friendly  
Courteous  
Kind  
Obedient  
Cheerful  
Thrifty  
Brave  
Clean  
Reverent

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## **Scout Motto**

Be Prepared

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## **Scout Slogan**

Do a good turn daily

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## **Outdoor Code**

As an American, I will do my best to...  
Be clean in my outdoor manners,  
Be careful with fire,  
Be considerate in the outdoors  
And be conservation minded

## Welcome Letter

On behalf of the scouts, parents, and leaders of Boy Scout Troop 154 I would like to extend a warm welcome to both you and your son as new members of the Troop 154 family. You are about to set out on the grand adventure of Scouting!

This handbook was written and compiled to introduce you to both Scouting in general and our troop program and operations in particular. It addresses such topics as meetings, the annual program, parent participation, uniform requirements, equipment, advancement, dues and much more.

Your understanding of the troop's mission, procedures, and activities will help ensure a meaningful and productive Scouting experience for both you and your son.

We look forward to working with your son over the coming years as he advances, grows and matures, and to your support of Scouting and our Troop.

Yours in Scouting,

Mr. Dan Kuster  
Scoutmaster Troop 154

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# About Scouting

## History

Scouting was founded by Lord Robert Baden-Powell in England in 1907. By the end of 2008, there were more than 28 million youth and adults involved in Scouting in 160 countries worldwide.

The Boy Scouts of America was founded in 1910 by William D. Boyce, followed by the Girl Scouts of America in 1912.

Over the years, many former Scouts have gone on to make notable achievements and contributions to society. They include a former President of the United States, current and former Supreme Court Justices, current and former Cabinet Secretaries, numerous astronauts (including 11 of the 12 who walked on the moon), highly decorated soldiers, scientists, congressman, senators, governors, novelists, directors, successful businessmen, as well as 4 Nobel Laureates.

Scouting is non-governmental, non-partisan, non-military and non-denominational. Scouting is open to all, regardless of race, creed or national origin.

## Scouting Mission

According to the Boys Scouts of America (BSA), the goal and purpose of Scouting is to develop:

1. **Character** – including honesty, courage, integrity, compassion, discipline, self-reliance, self-confidence, and self-respect
2. **Citizenship** – an understanding of our duty and relationship to others, our family, school, religious institution, community and nation
3. **Fitness** – including physical, mental, emotional, and moral fitness

## Scouting Methods

It is a rare boy who would willingly join an organization whose sole purpose is to “make him a better person.” In the case of Scouting, this pill is sugar coated with a fun and exciting program built around the eight tried and true *methods of Scouting*:

1. **Advancement** – Scouts work at their own pace on learning new skills, earning badges, and advancing in rank. The Scout is rewarded for each achievement, and builds self-confidence and self-reliance as he progresses.
2. **Association with Adults** – Boys learn a great deal by watching how adults conduct themselves. Scout leaders strive to be role models and mentors for members of the troop.
3. **Ideals** – The Scout Oath, Law, motto, slogan, and outdoor code define what it means to be a good Scout and a good citizen. They are guidelines for living, and the standards by which each Scout is judged.
4. **Leadership** – The Boy Scout Troop is youth-led. Scouts will learn leadership skills, such as planning, organizing, and decision making. Every Scout will have the opportunity to serve in an elected or appointed position.
5. **Outdoor Program** – Scouting is designed to take place outdoors, and the outdoor program is the reason most boys join Scouting. It is where skills are learned, practiced and put to the test. It also develops an appreciation and respect for nature and the environment.
6. **Patrols** – A patrol is a small group of Scouts of similar age, development, and interests. They camp together, cook together, work together and play together. They learn teamwork, cooperation, and responsibility.
7. **Personal Growth** – Scoutmaster conferences, service projects, and increasingly challenging camping and leadership opportunities encourage a Scout's growth towards manhood.
8. **Uniform** – The uniform signifies Scouting unity, while also letting each Scout display his individual achievements. Over time, a Scout will take great pride in his uniform.

## A Word About Safety

Whether camping, hiking, swimming, boating, or simply meeting as a troop, the Boy Scouts of America and Troop 154 leadership place the greatest importance on creating a safe and secure environment for our youth members.

All leaders and **all activities** must comply with the regulations and guidelines set forth in the BSA's ***Guide to Safe Scouting***.

In addition, all adults having direct contact with youth members (whether leaders or parents) **must** complete the ***Youth Protection Training*** online course.



Youth protection policies and principles include:

**Two-deep leadership is required on all outings.** Two registered adult leaders or one registered leader and a parent of a participant, or other adult, one of whom must be 21 years of age or older, are required on all trips and outings.

**One-on-one contact between adults and Scouts is prohibited.** In situations that require personal conferences, such as a Scoutmaster's conference, the meeting is to be conducted in view of other adults and youths.

**Separate accommodations for adults and Scouts are required.** When camping, no youth is permitted to sleep in the tent of an adult other than his or her own parent or guardian.

**Privacy of youth is respected.** Adult leaders must respect the privacy of youth members in situations such as changing clothes and taking showers at camp, intruding only to the extent that health and safety require. Adults must protect their own privacy in similar situations.

**Inappropriate use of cameras, imaging, and digital devices is prohibited.** While most campers and leaders use cameras and other imaging devices responsibly, it has become very easy to invade the privacy of individuals. It is inappropriate to use any device capable of recording or transmitting visual images in shower houses, restrooms, or other areas where privacy is expected by participants.

**No secret organizations.** The Boy Scouts of America does not allow any secret organizations as part of its program. All aspects of the Scouting program are open to observation by parents and leaders.

**No hazing.** Physical hazing and initiations are prohibited and may not be included as part of any Scouting activity.

**No bullying.** Verbal, physical, and cyber bullying are prohibited in Scouting.

**Youth leadership is monitored by adult leaders.** Adult leaders must monitor and guide the leadership techniques used by youth leaders and ensure that BSA policies are followed.

**Discipline must be constructive.** Discipline used in Scouting should be constructive and reflect Scouting's values. Corporal punishment is never permitted.

**Appropriate attire.** Proper clothing for activities is required. For example, skinny-dipping or revealing bathing suits are not appropriate as part of Scouting.

**Members are responsible to act according to the Scout Oath and Scout Law.** All members of the Boy Scouts of America are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the principles set forth in the Scout Oath and Scout Law. Physical violence, theft, verbal insults, drugs, and alcohol have no place in the Scouting program and may result in the revocation of a Scout's membership.

For more information or to complete Youth Protection Training visit:

<http://www.scouting.org/Training/YouthProtection.aspx>

To view or download the Guide to Safe Scouting visit:

<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/HealthandSafety/GSS/toc.aspx>

## Getting Started

### Introduction to troop 154

Troop 154 was founded in 1967, nearly 50 years ago. We are part of the Forks of the Delaware District, of the Minsi Trails Council, of the Boy Scouts of America.

The Troop is sponsored by the Mt. Bethel Social Club of Oxford.

We welcome any and all boys who have completed the fifth grade or are at least 11 years old. No prior Scouting experience is necessary.

We are youth-led and utilize the patrol method as much as possible. This builds teamwork and mutual respect, and develops leadership skills.

Basic Scout skills are emphasized and practiced in troop meetings and on campouts. As Scouts gain experience, they become more confident and self-reliant.

We strive to develop an appreciation, understanding, and respect for nature, the outdoors, and the environment.

Advancement comes naturally and at the Scout's own pace. We provide the opportunities and encouragement, but expect the motivation and work to come from the individual Scout.

We give back to the community through service projects and conservation projects at least twice per year.

Finally, while we are serious about Scouting and its goals, we always try to have fun!

### General Meeting Information

Meetings are held every Tuesday night from 7:30 to 9:00pm at VFW Post 6701 located at 33 Springtown Road in Washington, NJ.

There are usually three Troop meetings per month. Parents are allowed to attend and observe Troop meetings but not to disturb or interrupt. Please be considerate and talk quietly or take the conversations outside.

The Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) meeting and Troop Committee/Parent meeting are typically held on the Tuesday immediately following a campout. These meetings are held at the same time in different parts of the meeting hall.

The current meeting schedule is posted on the Troop website event calendar.

## Key Contacts

Mark Pettie	Chartered Organization Representative	(908)887-4512
Ed Heyrich	Committee Chairman	(908)209-4125
Dan Kuster	Scoutmaster	(908)303-7450
George Miller	Assistant Scoutmaster	(908)954-8456
Charles Wian	Assistant Scoutmaster	(908)339-1800
David Torres	Assistant Scoutmaster	(908)635-4892
Erech Barron	Assistant Scoutmaster	(908)619-5819
Virginia Warsen	Committee Member, Advancement Chairperson	(908)930-0345
Howard Spitzer	Committee Member, Treasurer	(908)689-5423
Michelle Zignoli	Committee Member, Secretary	(908)475-6334
Paul Heyrich	Assistant Scoutmaster	(908)209-4125

## Troop 154 Website

The primary source of information regarding our Troop and its activities is our website:

<http://troop154mansfield.scoutlander.com/publicsite/home.aspx>

There you will find our event calendar which shows upcoming meetings, outings and camping trips, our Troop roster with contact information for Scouts, leaders and parents, a broadcast email system, downloadable forms and guides, and other useful information.

For privacy reasons, access to our website is password protected. To gain access you must provide the Scoutmaster with your full name and email address.

After being entered into the system, you will receive an email invitation with a temporary password. Once you log in to the website, please create a permanent password and also **complete your profile information, including address and phone number.**

## Fees and Costs

Upon joining, each Scout is assessed a fee of \$50 to cover miscellaneous costs for the first year (troop neckerchief, rank advancement patches, etc.).

At the beginning of each subsequent year, the Troop must re-charter and submit a new application and membership roster to the Minsi Trails Council of the Boy Scouts of America. The amount due for each Scout at this time is \$70, which covers both national BSA and Troop dues. A year's subscription to *Boy's Life* magazine can be purchased for an additional \$12. Dues for uniformed adult leaders and Troop committee members is \$30.

Fees for monthly campouts, if any, vary depending on the program and will be communicated well in advance by the Trip Captain (adult in charge of planning the event). The Troop generally pays any campsite fees. The only additional cost is for the food shared by each patrol. This varies depending on the menu and number of meals, but is usually \$15 for the weekend.

Summer Camp is optional but highly recommended. Cost depends on the selected camp, but is typically \$325 - \$425 for the week.

Depending on interest, the Troop may also plan additional high adventure (Sea Base, Philmont, etc.) or special event (National Jamboree) trips. These are optional and vary in cost.

## Forms

The following forms should be filled out and turned in to the Scoutmaster or Committee Chairman as soon as possible:

- Troop 154 Code of Conduct. Please review with your Scout and sign where indicated. Available at <http://www.scoutlander.com/securesite/securecustom.aspx?UID=9287&CUSTOMID=84925>
- Parent Resource Survey. Available at <http://www.scoutlander.com/securesite/securecustom.aspx?UID=9287&CUSTOMID=84925>

- BSA Annual Health and Medical Record Parts A and B. Available at <http://www.scoutlander.com/secure/site/securecustom.aspx?UID=9287&CUSTOMID=84551>
- BSA Youth Application Form. Available at <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/524-406A.pdf>

## What Do I Need To Purchase?

To get your new Scout started, you will need a few key items and pieces of gear. We recommend limiting your purchases to these items until you gain more experience and have a chance to consult with the Scoutmaster(s) on any additional items or equipment needed.

1. **Boy Scout Handbook.** MUST be the new, 13<sup>th</sup> Edition Boy Scout Handbook containing the updated 2016 rank advancement requirements. The handbook contains everything you need to get started, and all the information needed to learn the skills for ranks through **First Class**. It also contains the rank requirement sign-off lists for all ranks and serves as your advancement record. We recommend the spiral bound version of the Scout Handbook as it is more durable, but whichever one you choose consider also purchasing the protective cover. These handbooks get a lot of use and abuse over the years.
2. **Official BSA Uniform Shirt.** This is the tan, button-down, short sleeve uniform shirt with the BSA pocket embroidery and American Flag patch on the arm. You will also need to purchase:
  - Unit number patches – ‘1’ ‘5’ ‘4’
  - Minsi Trails Council shoulder patch
  - Boy Scout (forest green) shoulder loops (2)
  - Neckerchief slide

The inside front and back cover of the Boy Scout Handbook contains templates showing proper uniform insignia placement.

3. **Troop 154 Neckerchief.** Supplied by the Troop.
4. **Camping Equipment.** For campouts, each Scout will need:
  - Sleeping bag suitable for the expected weather conditions

- Sleeping mat or pad
- Mess kit – can simply be a plastic bowl or plate and cup, and plastic knife, fork, and spoon
- Flashlight
- Rain gear
- Water bottle

Consult the Scout Handbook for a more extensive list of camping gear you may wish to consider.

BSA items such as handbooks and uniforms can be purchased from:

Minsi Trails Scout Shop: <http://www.minsitrails.org/about-us/scout-shop/60154>

Patriot's Path Scout Shop: <https://ppcbbsa.org/about-us/shop/>

Flemington Department Store: <http://www.flemingtondepartmentstore.com/Boy-Scouts.inc>

**NOTE:** *No boy will be denied membership in Boy Scouts because he cannot afford to purchase a uniform.* Please contact the Committee Chairman or Scoutmaster if this is a concern. This matter will always be kept strictly confidential.

## General Program Information

Our Troop annual program runs from September through June of the following year. While we generally do not hold troop meetings during the summer, we do attend a week of summer camp and may plan additional events, such as a high adventure trip, family picnic, or annual program planning retreat.

The Troop program consists of, but is not limited to, the following activities:

### Annual Planning Conference

Sometime in the summer before September 1<sup>st</sup>, the Troop will hold an annual planning conference or weekend retreat. Here, the Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) consisting of the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL), Patrol Leaders (PLs), and Troop Guide(s) will meet with the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters to create

the Troop calendar for the next 12 months. This annual plan will be comprehensive, and include themes for the Troop meetings and destinations for the monthly campouts.

Prior to the conference, the Patrol Leaders will get input from their patrols about the activities, outings, and campouts that they are interested in. The PLs will bring those ideas to the conference for consideration.

After the PLC has drafted the annual program plan, it is submitted to the Troop Committee for final approval. The purpose of this review is to ensure that the calendar provides a quality program that meets the goals of Troop 154 and the expectations of the Boy Scouts of America.

After approval, the plan will be entered on the Troop website event calendar and distributed to all Scouts. An adult Trip Captain will be assigned to each month's outing to help with planning and logistics.

### **Troop Meetings**

Scouts are expected to arrive at Troop meetings on time in class A uniform with their Scout Handbook, a notebook and a pen.

A typical meeting agenda includes:

- Opening ceremony
- Skills instruction
- Patrol meetings
- Work on advancement
- Activity or game
- Announcements / Scoutmaster's minute / closing

It is our hope that the meetings will be fun and productive. Meeting topics frequently focus on preparation for the next camping trip. Troop meetings are run by the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) with the help of the other youth leaders.

### **Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) Meetings**

The youth leaders, namely the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL), Patrol Leaders (PL), Assistant Patrol Leaders (APL), Troop Guides, Scribe, and other Senior Scouts make up the Patrol Leaders Council (PLC). The PLC meets once a month to review the results of the last campout, to plan the Troop meetings and activities



for the coming month, and to discuss and resolve any issues that may be arising in the Troop. The PLC meetings are chaired by the SPL.

### **Troop Committee/Parent Meetings**

The Troop Committee functions as the Board of Directors for the Troop, overseeing the uniformed adult leadership and overall operations. It acts as the administration and support organization for the Troop, ensuring that a successful, safe, and sound program is delivered to our Scouts.

The committee meets once per month and meetings are run by the Committee Chairman.

Parents are invited to attend and bring their questions, concerns, and ideas.

Parents may join the Troop Committee by becoming registered Scouters. Contact the Committee Chairman for an adult application, or download from:

<http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/524-501.pdf>

### **Monthly Outings**

Campouts are fun and exciting events for our Scouts, and we make every effort to camp at least once per month throughout the year. Scouts are expected to take responsibility for planning the trip, setting up camp, cooking their food, washing their dishes, and building their campfires. Older, more experienced Scouts teach and assist the younger ones, and the Scoutmasters provide guidance as needed and ensure safety.

Monthly campouts may be one night (Friday to Saturday, or Saturday to Sunday) or two nights (Friday to Sunday morning) depending on the activity.

In addition to camping, cooking, knots, and other basic Scout skills, the boys will learn leadership, how to get along with others, and how to work as a team to accomplish a common goal.

Participation in camping trips is particularly important for early rank advancement, as many requirements are related to outdoor skills which cannot be completed during a Troop meeting.

Scouts should keep a record of their camping trips by logging them in their Scout Handbook.

### **Court of Honor**

The Court of Honor (CoH) is a special ceremony held twice per year or as needed in place of a normal Troop meeting to officially recognize each Scout for his accomplishments, and to

present him with the badges and ranks he has earned since the last CoH. This is a formal occasion, and Scouts are expected to attend in their class A dress uniform. The ceremony is run by the PLC and presided over by the SPL.

All troop families are invited and strongly encouraged to attend these ceremonies, as this helps to make these evenings special for our Scouts.

### **Service Projects**

Community service, helping others, and conserving our natural resources are among the key ideals of Scouting. Also, certain ranks require service hours to be performed as a requirement for advancement.

Throughout the year, Scouts will be invited to participate in service projects specific to the Troop, as well being made aware service opportunities outside of the Troop.

In addition, Scouts working towards the rank of **Eagle** need to plan and conduct a large service project. These projects provide another opportunity to log service hours, and to help a fellow Troop 154 Scout. The Eagle candidates very much appreciate it!

Be sure to log your service hours in your Scout Handbook.

### **Summer Camp**

Summer camp is the highlight of the year for many Scouts. It offers them advancement opportunities and outdoor challenges that they remember for the rest of their lives.

The program is geared towards Scouts of all ranks, ages and abilities. The first year camper program is specifically designed for new Scouts, and focuses on the skills and knowledge they will need to become seasoned campers and experienced Scouts. It covers many of the requirements needed for ranks through **First Class**.

Older Scouts can work on merit badges or participate in COPE (Challenging Outdoor Personal Experience).

During free time, Scouts can swim, fish, canoe, sail, hike, participate in shooting sports such as rifle and archery, make new friends and have fun!

### **Fundraisers**

The Troop requires funds to purchase and maintain equipment, subsidize campouts and activities, and cover other costs such as rank and merit badge insignia.

As the yearly dues collected do not support our program for the entire year, the Troop raises funds through money-earning activities approved by the Troop Committee.

All Scouts are strongly encouraged to participate in fundraising activities, as they introduce and reinforce important concepts of finance, budget and the value and need for money to keep the Troop running.

Past fundraising activities have included bi-annual spaghetti dinners, and printer ink/toner cartridge recycling. We are always looking for new fundraising ideas!

## Attendance and Participation

We track attendance at all Troop meetings, campouts, and events.

**If a Scout is unable to attend a meeting or event, he must notify his Patrol Leader (or Senior Patrol leader, if not a member of a patrol). This is the responsibility of the Scout, not his parent.**

It is expected that from time to time, scheduling conflicts will arise. The Troop has always held that schoolwork, religious education, and family responsibilities are a higher priority than Scouting. There is no penalty for an excused absence for these reasons.

Boys today have many sports, clubs and other activities all competing for their time and attention. We recognize that Scouting may not be a top priority for everyone. At the same time, parents and Scouts must understand that in cases like this they may need to temper their expectations regarding rank advancement.

Higher ranks include a requirement for being **active in the Troop** for a specific period of time. Our current policy requires participation in at least 60% of Troop events.

Star Rank (Requires 4 Months of Active Participation)		
	Total Number	Required Attendance to be "Active"
Troop Events	16	10

Life and Eagle Rank (Requires 6 Months of Active Participation)		
	Total Number	Required Attendance to be "Active"
Troop Events	24	15

Eagle Palm (Requires 3 Months of Active Participation)		
	Total Number	Required Attendance to be "Active"
Troop Events	12	7

Higher ranks also require the Scout to have successfully served in an **approved leadership position**. Leadership positions require a high degree of involvement and commitment. A

Scout with poor attendance would not only be an ineffective leader, but also unlikely to win election or appointment to one of these important roles.

Troop meetings and events are important to the Scout's development. A missed event may mean a missed skill or lesson, or a missed advancement requirement opportunity. To advance, a Scout must participate.

Scouts should try to participate in all aspects of the program, including campouts, service projects, and fundraisers.

## The Role of Parents

***"Many hands make light work."***

Parents are expected to show support for their Scout by taking an active role in the Troop. While we strive to be a "youth-led", it takes a lot of adult supervision and support behind the scenes to provide the resources necessary to run the annual program. Without the involvement and dedication of our parents, the Troop would fail!

Any parent may become a registered Scouter. Adults can help out by serving in a variety of roles, including:

- Assistant Scoutmaster
- Troop Committee Member
- Activity Volunteer
- Merit Badge Counselor
- Trip Captain
- Transportation / Driver
- And more...

To learn more and become involved, **parents are strongly encouraged to attend the monthly Troop Committee/Parent meetings**. Consult the event calendar on the Troop website for dates.

To help your new Scout get off to a good start, parents should also:

1. Be aware of the Troop program and annual calendar (Troop website!)
2. Read the Scout Handbook and understand the purpose and methods of Scouting

3. Attend monthly Troop Committee/Parent meetings
4. Assist, volunteer, become involved!
5. Follow your Scout's progress, and offer encouragement when needed
6. Show support for your son and all of our Scouts by attending Courts of Honor

# **Troop Operations**

## **Troop Organization**

Boy Scout Troop 154 is composed of both youth and adult members. Boys who have completed the 5<sup>th</sup> grade or are at least 11 years old may join as Scouts (youth). Adults (age 18 or older) are classified as either uniformed leaders (Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters) having direct contact with the boys, or non-uniformed adult volunteers and committee members.

The chart on the next page shows how a typical Troop is organized.



## Youth Organization

### Patrols

Boy Scout Troops are structured around the patrol method. Each patrol consists of a group of 4 to 8 Scouts with one Scout elected or appointed as a Patrol Leader (PL) and one as an Assistant Patrol Leader (APL). Patrols are the basic building blocks of Scouting. Patrol members work together as a unit within the larger Troop organization to develop pride in their patrol, learn new skills, help each other to advance and perform most activities as a team.

Patrols split off and meet as a group during Troop meetings, and may schedule and hold their own meetings outside of normal Troop events.

During patrol and Troop activities, the PL may assign specialized jobs to individual Scouts such as quartermaster (responsible for drawing gear from the Troop trailer), grubmaster (responsible for menu planning and grocery shopping), cook (prepares the meal for the patrol), or the ever-popular clean-up crew (wash, dry, and put away pots, pans, plates, and utensils).

Your Scout's Patrol Leader serves as his mentor and coach, and gives him a voice in Troop activities.

### Senior Youth Leaders and Positions of Responsibility

The Troop also elects one senior Scout to serve as the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), and one or more to serve as Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL).

SPL is the top leadership position in the Troop. The SPL is responsible for planning and running all Troop meetings, campouts, and PLC meetings. The SPL coaches, mentors, and works through the PLs.

All Scouts should understand the following roles and responsibilities of the leadership positions available in the Troop. Those being led are responsible for choosing capable leaders!

#### **Senior Patrol Leader (Elected position)**

**REPORTS TO:** Scoutmaster

**SPECIFIC DUTIES:**

- Preside at all Troop meetings, events, activities, and annual planning meeting
- Chair the Patrol Leaders Council (PLC)
- Name appointed youth leaders with the advice and consent of the Scoutmaster



- Assign duties and responsibilities to PLs and other youth leaders
- Work with Scoutmaster in training junior leaders
- Coordinate activity calendars (troop, district, school)

### **Assistant Senior Patrol Leader**

#### **(Elected position)**

**REPORTS TO:** Senior Patrol Leader

**SPECIFIC DUTIES:**

- Be responsible for training and giving direct leadership to the following appointed junior leaders: Scribe, Librarian, Troop Historian, Instructor, Quartermaster, and Chaplain Aide
- Help with leading meetings and activities as called upon by the SPL
- Take over troop leadership in the absence of the SPL
- Perform tasks assigned by the SPL
- Serve on the PLC

### **Patrol Leader**

#### **(Elected or appointed position)**

**REPORTS TO:** Senior Patrol Leader or Assistant Senior Patrol Leader

**SPECIFIC DUTIES:**

- Plan and lead patrol meetings and activities
- Keep patrol members informed
- Assign patrol members tasks and help them succeed
- Represent the patrol at all PLC meetings and the annual program planning conference
- Prepare the patrol to take part in all troop activities
- Develop patrol spirit
- Work with other leaders to help the Troop run well
- Know the strengths and weaknesses of patrol members

### **Assistant Patrol Leader**

#### **(Appointed position)**

**REPORTS TO:** Patrol Leader

**SPECIFIC DUTIES:**

- Assist the Patrol Leader in fulfilling his duties
- Take charge of the patrol in the PLs absence
- Represent the patrol at PLC meetings in the PLs absence
- Represent the patrol at all PLC meetings and the annual program planning conference

### **Troop Guide**

#### **(Appointed position)**

**REPORTS TO:** Scoutmaster / Assistant Scoutmaster

**SPECIFIC DUTIES:**

- Help Scouts meet advancement requirements through First Class
- Advise Patrol Leaders on their duties and responsibilities at PLC meetings
- Attend PLC meetings
- Prevent harassment of new Scouts by older Scouts
- Help Assistant Scoutmaster train newly elected patrol leaders
- Guide new Scouts through early troop activities to help them become comfortable in the troop and the outdoors

### **Quartermaster**

#### **(Appointed position)**

**REPORTS TO:** Assistant Senior Patrol Leader

**SPECIFIC DUTIES:**

- Keep records of patrol and troop equipment
- Keep equipment in good repair
- Issue equipment and see that it is returned in good order
- Suggest new or replacement items
- Maintain troop trailer and keep organized

### **Scribe**

#### **(Appointed position)**

**REPORTS TO:** Assistant Senior Patrol Leader

**SPECIFIC DUTIES:**

- Attend and keep a log of Patrol Leaders' Council meetings
- Record attendance
- Perform and document uniform inspections

### **Troop Historian**

#### **(Appointed position)**

**REPORTS TO:** Assistant Senior Patrol Leader

**SPECIFIC DUTIES:**

- Take care of troop trophies and keepsakes
- Keep information about troop alumni

### **Librarian**

#### **(Appointed position)**

**REPORTS TO:** Assistant Senior Patrol Leader

**SPECIFIC DUTIES:**

- Establish and maintain a troop library
- Keep records on literature owned by the troop
- Add new or replacement items needed
- Have literature available for borrowing at troop meetings and camping trips
- Maintain a system for checking items in and out
- Follow up on late returns

### **Den Chief**

**(Appointed position)**

**REPORTS TO:** Den Leader and Scoutmaster

**SPECIFIC DUTIES:**

- Serve as the activities assistant at Webelos den meetings, and help prepare boys to join Boy Scouts
- Project a positive image of Boy Scouts and our Troop

**Instructor****(Appointed position)**

**REPORTS TO:** Assistant Senior Patrol Leader

**SPECIFIC DUTIES:**

- Instruct scouting skills as needed within the troop or patrols
- Prepare well in advance for each teaching assignment

**Chaplain's Aide****(Appointed position)**

**REPORTS TO:** Assistant Senior Patrol Leader

**SPECIFIC DUTIES:**

- Keep troop leaders apprised of religious holidays when planning activities
- Assist the chaplain in meeting the religious needs of troop members while on campouts
- Encourage saying grace at meals while camping or on activities
- Lead the scoutmaster benediction at troop meeting closings
- Inform troop members about the religious emblems program for their faith

**Common to all elected and appointed positions are the requirements that the Scout:**

- 1. Set a good example**
- 2. Wear the uniform correctly**
- 3. Live by the Scout Oath and Law**

**Patrol Leaders Council (PLC)**

The SPL, ASPL, PLs, APLs, Troop Guides, and Scribe together make up the Patrol Leaders Council (PLC). The PLC meets once a month or as directed by the SPL to plan Troop meetings, trips, outings, and to resolve any issues. In addition to the PLC members, other senior Scouts may attend these meetings to observe or offer suggestions.

The SPL runs the meetings, while the Scribe takes notes and records plans and agendas.

If needed, proposals may be put to a vote. Only the SPL, ASPL, PLs, and Troop Guides are allowed to vote on issues. Any other Scouts in attendance are considered non-voting observers.

The Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, or Troop Committee members may occasionally attend PLC meetings to observe or to provide guidance.

## **Adult Organization**

Adults involved in the Troop consist of the Chartered Organization, the Troop Committee, the Troop's uniformed adult leaders, and parent volunteers such as trip captains and merit badge counselors.

### **Chartered Organization (Sponsor)**

Every Boy Scout Troop is created by a sponsoring organization. The Chartered Organization for Troop 154 is the Mt. Bethel Social Club of Oxford.

The Chartered Organization shares the Troop's objectives and oversees the Troop Committee. The Chartered Organization Representative attends Troop Committee meetings and acts as a liaison between the two organizations.

### **Troop Committee**

The Troop Committee is made up of parents and concerned adults who meet monthly to ensure that we provide a quality Scouting program for our boys. They give feedback and guidance to the Scoutmasters, and handle many of the planning and support functions. Important committee roles include:

- Committee Chair
- Treasurer
- Advancement Coordinator
- Secretary
- Eagle Advisor
- Fundraising Chair
- And more...

## Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters

The Scoutmaster is responsible for training and guiding the youth leaders, and for maintaining the safety of our Scouts at all times.

He is a mentor to the SPL and PLC and ensures that the patrol method is in effect. The Scoutmaster's role is to coach, support, and work through the SPL, not to provide direct leadership to the Troop.

The SM and ASMs work directly with the youth leaders to deliver a quality program that provides opportunities for advancement, leadership experience, and an exciting outdoor program.

The SM is responsible for using all the methods of Scouting to achieve Scouting's aims and goals.

The SM and ASMs serve as positive role models for the Scouts, and are expected to live by the ideals set forth in the Scout Oath and Law.

## **The Youth-Led Troop**

***“Train Scouts to do a job, then let them do it. Never do anything a boy can do.”***

**Lord Robert Baden-Powell, founder of Boy Scouts**

Implicit in the Troop organization is the basic concept that a Scout Troop should be “youth-led”. For boys and parents coming from Cub Scouts, this is a major difference that may take some time to get used to.

Unlike Cub Scouts, where Cub Scouts come in as boys and leave as boys and parents plan and lead all activities, Boy Scouting is different. In Boy Scouts:

- Scouts come in as boys, and leave as men
- Scouts plan and lead their own activities
- Parents focus on maintaining safety and providing logistical support

It's often said that Scouting is a game with a purpose: Fun is the game, values are the purpose, and learning is the process. In Troop 154, the Scouts plan and decide on the program, run the meetings, manage the equipment, plan and execute the trips, and become self-motivated to advance.

In contrast, the role of the adults in Scouting is to focus not on the destination, but on the journey. That is, our responsibility as parents is to promote the "process" of Scouting.

What is important to us is:

- Not how good the food was on the campout, but that the boys cooked it.
- Not that the Scout had all the right gear for the campout, but that he packed it.
- Not who would make the best patrol leader, but that the boys elect one.
- Not that Johnny learns perfect first aid, but that Billy teaches him.
- Not that we cover everything on the agenda, but that the Senior Patrol Leader runs the meeting.

As Troop adults, our goal is not to get things done, but to create a safe environment with the training and resources that the Scouts need, and then give them the responsibility and room to do things on their own. At times they will fail, but they will learn from their mistakes and help others to learn with them.

This means that meetings and campouts can sometimes be chaotic. **Parents and leaders must resist the urge to jump in and "fix" things.** Allow the process of Scouting to play out, and allow the Scouts to learn by doing. If they don't get it right this time there's always next month's campout. And sometimes, they will surprise you!

### **Advantages of the Youth-Led Troop**

- **Boys learn critical planning skills**
- **Boys learn to lead in a safe environment**
- **Boys learn from mistakes**
- **Boys learn to lead others and work in teams**

- **Boys learn respect when treated with respect**

## The Chain of Command

Another key concept derived from the Boy Scout Troop structure is the chain of command. Unless there is a safety concern, the Scoutmaster generally guides the Troop by working through the SPL. The SPL in turn directs the patrol leaders, and PLs manage the Scouts in their patrols.

If a Scout has a problem or a question, he should ask his PL. If the PL cannot help, he will bring it to the attention of the SPL. The SPL will consult with the SM or ASM only on issues that the boys cannot resolve on their own.

The chain of command is another important method of teaching leadership skills, and it must not be short-circuited. If a Scout approaches an adult asking for instructions or permission, the answer should always be, "What did your Patrol Leader say when you asked him that question?"

Likewise, all significant adult direction should originate from the SM or designated ASM only! It confuses the Scouts and compromises the integrity of the patrol method when multiple adults are giving multiple (sometimes conflicting) orders to multiple boys.

## Advancement

There are many definitions of advancement, but the Scouting definition might well be, simply, "the art of meeting a challenge." For that is exactly what the Boy Scout advancement program asks the boys to do. The Boy Scout advancement program provides a ladder of skills that a Scout climbs at his own pace. As he acquires these skills he moves up through a series of ranks, for which he is awarded badges, starting with **Scout** and then progressing to **Tenderfoot**, **Second Class**, **First Class**, **Star**, **Life**, and **Eagle Scout**. The higher he climbs the more challenging and rewarding his tasks.

Parents must understand that rank is simply a means to an end, **not an end in itself**. Everything a boy does to advance and earn these ranks, from the day he joins until the day he leaves the program, should be a reflection of his personal goals – **not his parents**. We provide advancement opportunities, but never force it—advancement must be the Scout's choice.

That being said, the BSA and Troop 154 strongly encourage Scouts to advance to the rank of **First Class** as soon as possible. A **First Class** Scout has all the skills and knowledge necessary to fully participate in the Scouting program, to be confident and self-reliant in

the outdoors, and to be eligible for important Troop leadership positions such as Patrol Leader. The Troop Guide(s) and your Scout's Patrol Leader are tasked with helping him earn his **First Class** rank.

**NOTE:** Rank in Boy Scouts does not convey any seniority or leadership privileges. For example, a **Life** Scout is not superior to or automatically "in charge of" a **Star** Scout. It is not uncommon for a Patrol Leader to hold a lower rank than one or more Scouts in his patrol. All Scouts are entitled to equal respect. Rank badges are simply badges of honor and personal achievement.

### The Advancement Process

Advancement in Boy Scouts is a four step process.

1. **The Boy Scout learns.** A Scout learns by doing. As he learns, he grows in ability to do his part as a member of the patrol and the Troop. As he develops knowledge and skill, he is asked to teach others. In this way, he begins to develop leadership.
2. **The Boy Scout is tested.** A Scout may be tested on requirements by his PL, Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, or another senior Scout.
3. **The Boy Scout is reviewed.** After a Scout has completed all of the requirements for a rank, he will generally have a Scoutmaster Conference followed by a Board of Review.
4. **The Boy Scout is recognized.** Once the Advancement Chair has recorded a Scout's advancement, he will be awarded his new rank badge as soon as possible during a Troop meeting. He will also be formally recognized and receive his certificate at the next Court of Honor.

### Scout Handbook

It is important for your Scout to bring his Scout handbook to all Scout meetings and camping events for two reasons. The handbook is the primary reference source for rank advancement requirements. It identifies and explains everything needed for all ranks advancements up through **First Class**, and lists all requirements for higher ranks.

The handbook also serves as the tangible record for completion of these requirements, as your Scout's PL and SM/ASMs sign off in the handbook as rank advancement requirements are completed. If your Scout does not have his book, no one can sign him off on rank requirements!



## Rank Requirements

Rank requirements for all ranks are listed in the advancement section of the Boy Scout Handbook. Requirements for *Scout* through *First Class* generally involve reading material in the Scout Handbook, and then demonstrating skills and knowledge during a Troop meeting or on a campout.

The Scout skills required for these ranks enable boys to camp, hike, cook, tie knots, administer basic first aid, perform other outdoor tasks and work as a team with their patrol.

There are no merit badges required for ranks up to and including *First Class*.

Rank requirements above *First Class* include service projects, earning merit badges, demonstrating Scouting ideals, and teaching skills. Refer to the Scout Handbook for details.

## Who May Sign Off On Rank Requirements

The Scoutmaster or a designated Assistant Scoutmaster may sign off on any rank requirement.

Scouts may sign off on rank requirements given the following restrictions:

- For the ranks of *Scout*, *Tenderfoot*, and *Second Class*, a Scout holding the rank of *First Class* or above may sign off
- For the ranks of *First Class*, *Star*, and *Life*, a Scout holding a rank higher than the one being sought may sign off
- Only the SM (or designated ASM) may sign off on service project hours, the requirement to “demonstrate Scout spirit”, and the Scoutmaster Conference requirement

**NOTE:** Unless specifically identified in the wording of the requirement, parents or guardians **may not** sign off on **any** advancement(!)

## Scoutmaster Conference

When all other requirements for a rank are completed and signed off in the Scout’s handbook, the Scout must request, either in person or by phone, to meet with the Scoutmaster for a Scoutmaster’s Conference. The Scout should arrive for the conference in full class A uniform with his handbook. During the conference, the Scoutmaster will verify

that all rank requirements have been completed, and discuss the Scout's progress, participation, and how Scouting influences his life. They may also discuss the Scout's other interests, address any concerns or issues the Scout may have with the Troop, and make a plan for him to start working towards the next rank.

If the Scoutmaster does not feel that the Scout is ready, he may ask the Scout to review certain requirements and to schedule another Scoutmaster Conference at a future date.

When finished, the Scoutmaster will sign off on this and the "demonstrate Scout spirit" requirement, and prepare the Scout for the last step in the advancement process, the Board of Review.

Scoutmaster Conferences can be also be held as needed for other reasons, such as disciplinary issues, code of conduct violations, or lack of advancement.

### **Board of Review**

When a Scout has completed all the requirements for his next rank (other than Eagle Scout), he appears before a Board of Review composed of members of the Troop Committee. The Scout should bring his handbook and present himself in full class A uniform, with a neat appearance, good attitude, and a respectful manner. The purpose of the review is not an examination. Instead, the Board seeks to assess the Scout's attitude and acceptance of Scouting's ideals, to ensure that the requirements have been met for advancement, to discuss the Scout's experiences in the Troop and the Troop's program, and to encourage him to keep working towards advancement.

Once completed, the board members will sign off on the Board of Review requirement and notify the Advancement Chairperson that the Scout has finished all requirements for the rank.

### **Merit Badges**

Scouts are required to earn merit badges in order to attain the ranks of **Star** and above. Some of these merit badges must be from the list of **Eagle** required merit badges, while others may be chosen from any of the over 120 available. The goal of the merit badge program is to expand a Scout's areas of interest and to encourage the Scout to meet and work with adults in a chosen subject.

Merit badges are earned by a Scout working under the supervision of a registered merit badge counselor, who will sign off as the merit badge requirements are completed. Merit badges may be earned at any time during the Boy Scout experience even though they are only required for the ranks of **Star**, **Life** and **Eagle**. Scouts may (and frequently do) work

on multiple merit badges at the same time. Some merit badges are required for the rank of **Eagle**, and are bordered in white instead of green.

To complete a merit badge, a Scout:

1. Selects a merit badge to work on.
2. Checks out a copy of the merit badge book from the Troop library or purchases one from a Scout store. Merit badge books typically cost around \$5.00.
3. Obtains a “blue card” from the Scoutmaster or ASM, fills out the first section, and asks for the Scoutmaster’s signature, which signifies the SM’s approval for the Scout to begin working on the merit badge. **[NOTE: Since merit badge requirements change periodically, it is very important to obtain a signed and dated blue card to establish the date upon which the Scout starts the merit badge, as this identifies the requirements that must be completed to earn the badge.]**
4. Identifies and contacts an approved counselor for the merit badge. The list of approved Troop and District merit badge counselors can be downloaded from the Troop website:  
<http://www.scoutlander.com/secure/site/securecustom.aspx?UID=9287&CUSTOMID=34035>
5. Works on the badge requirements under the guidance of the merit badge counselor. The Scout may meet with the counselor several times while working on the badge.
6. Meets with the counselor one final time after all requirements are completed so the counselor can sign the blue card.
7. Presents the blue card to the Scoutmaster for his final approval and signature.
8. Submits the completed blue card to Troop Advancement Chairperson.

Earned merit badges will be presented at the next Court of Honor.

A list of all merit badges and their requirements is available at: [www.meritbadge.org](http://www.meritbadge.org)

Scouts are encouraged to donate their used merit badge books to the Troop library when they are finished with them.

**Note:** Parents may not serve as merit badge counselors for their own son. Exceptions may be made in the case of group classes.

## Elections

Troop elections are held in September and periodically thereafter at the discretion of the PLC. The SPL and ASPL are elected by the entire Troop. To be eligible for these positions a Scout must be 14 years of age or older and hold **Star** rank or above.

Patrol Leaders are generally elected by the members of their patrol, but may be appointed if the patrol is new or made up of Scouts under the rank of **First Class**. Patrol leaders must be 13 years of age or older and hold **First Class** rank or above. Assistant Patrol leaders are selected by the Patrol Leader.

All other positions of responsibility are appointed by the SPL under advisement from the Scoutmaster.

**Note1:** The Scoutmaster reserves the right to remove any Scout from a leadership or other position of responsibility at any time for code of conduct violations or for failure to perform the duties required of the role.

**Note2:** To receive rank advancement credit for serving in an approved leadership position, a Scout must perform the duties required of that position to certain minimum standards. The Troop leadership will clearly communicate these expectations at the time of the election or appointment.

## Uniform Requirements

In addition to providing a positive youth image in our community, the uniform creates a sense of belonging for your Scout. Information on the Scout uniform and insignia placement can be found in the Boy Scout Handbook. We believe that the uniform should be worn proudly and appear consistent.

Periodic uniform inspections may occur during Troop meetings or patrol meetings.

There are 3 basic types of uniform requirements:

- **CLASS A DRESS** – Required at special ceremonies, courts of honor, and Scout Sunday services. It includes the Scout field uniform shirt (button down), all insignia, merit badge sash, neckerchief and slide, Scout belt, Scout pants, and brown closed toe shoes or clean hiking boots. If wearing Scout shorts then green Scout socks are required.
- **CLASS A** – Required at Troop meetings, flag ceremonies, or when requested. This is the uniform shirt, neckerchief and slide, Scout belt and Scout pants.

- CLASS B – Required for campout activities, projects, and other outings. This is the Troop 154 t-shirt, or any other Scouting related (e.g. summer camp) t-shirt.

## Leadership Training

Formal leadership training is available from the Troop, Council, and national BSA. Starting at the Troop level, *Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops* (ILST) is a 3 to 4 hour course taught by the Scoutmaster, usually before or immediately after elections (or as needed).

After having completed ILST and meeting certain eligibility requirements, a Scout may be recommended for *National Youth Leadership Training* (NYLT) which is taught by the local Council at a special week-long camp.

Finally, those seeking further leadership training and a true challenge might consider the *National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience* (NAYLE) taught at a BSA high adventure base.

### Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops

The purpose of the ILST course is to teach Scouts with leadership positions about their new roles and how to most effectively reach success in that role. It is intended to help Boy Scouts in leadership positions within their troop understand their responsibilities and to equip them with organizational and leadership skills to fulfill those responsibilities. ILST is the first course in the series of leadership training offered to Boy Scouts and is a replacement for Troop Leadership Training. Completion of ILST is a prerequisite for Boy Scouts to participate in the more advanced leadership courses National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) and the National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience (NAYLE). It is also required to participate in a Kodiak Challenge Trek.

### National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT)

National Youth Leadership Training is an exciting, action-packed program designed for councils to provide youth members with leadership skills and experience they can use in their home troops and in other situations demanding leadership of self and others.

For many years, junior leader training (JLT) was an important part of the leadership training continuum of BSA local councils throughout America. In 2003 and 2004, a task force of leadership experts and hundreds of Scouts in pilot courses across the nation reviewed and tested every aspect of the new NYLT syllabus, which incorporates the latest leadership ideas and presents fresh, vital and meaningful training for today's Scouts.

The NYLT course centers around the concepts of what a leader must BE, what he must KNOW, and what he must DO. The key elements are then taught with a clear focus on HOW

TO. The skills come alive during the week as the patrol goes on a Quest for the Meaning of Leadership.

NYLT is a six-day course. Content is delivered in a troop and patrol outdoor setting with an emphasis on immediate application of learning in a fun environment. Interconnecting concepts and work processes are introduced early, built upon, and aided by the use of memory aids, which allows participants to understand and employ the leadership skills much faster.

Built on the legacy of past JLT successes, the new NYLT integrates the best of modern leadership theory with the traditional strengths of the Scouting experience. Through activities, presentations, challenges, discussions, and audio-visual support, NYLT participants will be engaged in a unified approach to leadership that will give them the skill and confidence to lead well. Through a wide range of activities, games, and adventures, participants will work and play together as they put into action the best Scouting has to offer.

### National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience (NAYLE)

National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience is an exciting program that enhances leadership skills and expands upon the team-building and ethical decision-making skills learned in NYLT. NAYLE emphasizes leadership, teamwork, and selfless service, and uses the core elements of NYLT to help youth internalize and strengthen these skills. The National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience course is available at all national high-adventure bases. The material presented is basically the same at all four venues but is site-specific.

## **Equipment**

Troop 154 maintains a Troop trailer equipped with tents, canopies, lanterns, stoves, grills, dutch ovens, cooking gear, lanterns, first aid kits, and other essential equipment needed on campouts.

Each patrol is issued a patrol box from the trailer, which contains a propane stove and all the gear needed for basic meal preparation and clean-up. With its attached legs and fold-down front, the patrol box also serves a prep station and cooking table.

The Troop's gear is managed and maintained by the Troop quartermaster. Scouts are responsible for taking care of all equipment and returning it in working order. Any loss or damage should be brought to the attention of the quartermaster immediately.

## Campouts

During campouts, Scouts will camp, cook, and eat as patrols. At a Troop meeting prior to the campout, each patrol will typically plan a menu and the PL will create a duty roster.

The patrol will also assign a grubmaster, who is responsible for creating a shopping list from the planned menu, grocery shopping, proper food storage, and transporting and loading the groceries onto the Troop trailer.

In addition to grubmaster, Scouts may be assigned one of the following roles during a campout:

- **Head Cook** – Wash hands, decide how to prepare meal from recipe description, assign duties to assistant cook(s). Prepare the meal and advise PL when ready to serve. Portion out servings so that everyone gets “firsts” before allowing for “seconds.”
- **Assistant Cook** – Wash hands, assist the head cook with meal preparation. Boil water for cleanup.
- **Fire Men** – Arrange or clean the fire pit in accordance with Scout policy. Keep a filled water bucket and shovel nearby. Build the fire or start charcoal if needed. Find and stack wood. Keep the fire going throughout the meal, and ensure the fire is completely out when no longer needed.
- **Water Men** – Fill water jugs and refill when needed. Fill the water bucket for the campfire (if needed.)
- **Cleanup Crew** – Wash and dry all pots, pans, dishes and utensils and put them away. Clean all tables and throw away all trash. Inventory and secure the patrol box. Inform the quartermaster of any missing items.

The PL will generally rotate duty roster assignments for each meal, so that each Scout has a chance to fill each role. On occasion, a Scout may be assigned the same role (e.g. head cook) for multiple meals to fulfill an advancement requirement.

