



# Scouts BSA Troop 103

## Guide Book

### Burlington, Massachusetts

Sponsored by the Burlington Firefighters Local 2313

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#### [1.0 WELCOME](#)

#### [2.0 NEW SCOUT CHECKLIST](#)

#### [3.0 ORGANIZATION](#)

- 3.1 Leadership
- 3.2 Scouts
- 3.3 Adults
- 3.4 Troop Organization Chart
- 3.5 Boy Scouts of America (BSA) Organization

#### [4.0 SCOUTING ACTIVITIES](#)

- 4.1 Troop Oriented Activities
- 4.2 Uniforms
- 4.3 Order of the Arrow (OA)
- 4.4 National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT)
- 4.5 Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops (ILST)

#### [5.0 ADVANCEMENT](#)

- 5.1 Scoutbook
- 5.2 Ranks
- 5.3 Position of Responsibility (Leadership)
- 5.4 Service Time
- 5.5 Merit Badges
- 5.6 Sign-offs
- 5.7 Record Keeping

#### [6.0 COMMUNICATION](#)

#### [7.0 YOUTH PROTECTION AND SAFETY](#)

- 7.1 Rules
- 7.2 Knives and Matches
- 7.3 Medical
- 7.4 Scout Transportation

## [8.0 EXPECTATIONS OF BEHAVIOR AND POLICIES](#)

### 8.1 Other Policies and Information

## [9.0 FINANCES](#)

## [10.0 ADULT OPPORTUNITIES](#)

## [11.0 ACRONYMS](#)

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## [Appendix 1: Troop Leadership Positions](#)

## 1.0 WELCOME

Welcome to Scouts BSA Troop 103! Scouts BSA is a Boy Scouts of America (BSA) program for all youth between 11 and 17 years of age. Scouting will help you grow by emphasizing three basic goals:

- building character,
- fostering citizenship, and
- developing physical, mental and moral fitness.

With over 80 events during the year, you will find plenty to do.

Scouting is fun. If you're like most youth, you like to learn about things you are interested in by actually doing them. Scouting builds on the love of the outdoors, will teach you to survive in under less than ideal conditions, and to respect the environment that surrounds you. This program lets the Scout explore, develop new interests, increase his/her knowledge, and progress in rank and leadership at his/her own pace. It must be emphasized, despite the abundant help available to Scouts from the adult leaders, other unit members, and their parents that it is up to the Scout how much or how little he/she gets out of Scouting. Scouting is NOT a babysitting program.

This guide will answer many of your questions regarding operation of the Troop and Scouts BSA in general. While it is particularly useful as a quick introduction for new Scouts and their families, older Scouts will also find clarification of many topics useful to them. The BSA has grown to currently serve 2.7 million youth members and includes many opportunities for fun and learning. Be sure to ask questions, as such an extensive program cannot be fully explained in such a short document. Additional information may be found on the [Troop 103 Burlington](#) website. Scout leaders may adjust policies from time-to-time to deal with special situations, and will notify parents and affected parties in these cases.

The Spirit of Adventure Council (SAC, which includes Troop 103) wishes to make the benefits of Scouting available to a wide audience. The SAC on Inclusion, Diversity and Equity:

### ***Vision Statement:***

Building youth of character, no matter where they come from, where they live, what they look like, or how they identify.

### ***Mission Statement:***

We are dedicated to being open, evolving our culture, and learning together as we build an inclusive landscape around universal access. Steeped in its root that everyone is invited who wants to participate and benefit from the experiences that it can offer, Spirit of Adventure is committed to unlocking the value of Scouting to the widest expanse of diverse communities and individuals as it can possibly reach.

## 2.0 NEW SCOUT CHECKLIST

New Scouts need only a few items to start and can add as they grow or do more complex activities. This is a checklist of items every Scout needs eventually. Most of these items are available at the Scout Shop. Visit the [Troop 103 Burlington](#) website for the [Camping Checklist](#) and other resources under the “Forms tab”.

### Items to get soon:

- Scouts BSA Handbook – Spiral binding (optional cover recommended)
- Uniform
  - Class A (khaki shirt)
  - Class B (T shirt available from troop)
  - Scout pants (long leg with zip off legs). Nylon is fast drying, but the canvas pants are less expensive and probably more durable. We sometimes have old uniform shirts and pants that scouts have out-grown.
- For recent Webelos/AoLs, here is how to convert your Webelos shirt to a Scouts BSA shirt:
  - Keep your Arrow of Light badge under the left pocket. [no change]
  - Use the new Troop 103 neckerchief and slide you receive at the crossover.
  - Replace your Pack number (usually red/white ‘105’; or ‘555’) on the left sleeve with tan/green;103.
  - Replace blue epaulet (shoulder) ribbons with green ribbons.
  - Remove your Webelos badge.
  - Remove your Webelos colors and activity pins.

### Items for first camping trip in September:

- Sleeping bag. Eventually you will want a bag rated for 0 degrees F, and synthetic (better than down when wet).
- The troop has tents – no need to get this.
- Sleeping pad (not an air mattress)
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Simple backpack (such as your school pack)
- Rain gear
- Mess kit (plate, cup, utensils)
- Water bottle

### Items to get as needed:

- Merit badge sash (wear to all Courts of Honor once you have merit badges)
- Sturdy pair of hiking boots
- Camping Pack (makes for a great holiday present)

## **3.0 ORGANIZATION**

### **3.1 Leadership**

One of Scouting's primary goals is to teach leadership. As such, Troop 103 is a youth-led organization, and works hard to give the Scouts the opportunity to directly control their own advancement and to influence decisions about what is done as a Troop and how it's done. The Scouts plan the meetings and events. Adult leaders, Committee members, and parents help with guidance, resources, and support. It is very tempting to jump in when your child or another youth is struggling but our leaders are trained in coaching and providing enough support so the struggle turns into a learning experience. Our objective is to teach them teamwork and leadership.

### **3.2 Scouts**

The Patrol is the basic unit within the Troop and the cornerstone of Scouting (the 'patrol method'). Each patrol is composed of about eight Scouts. A Patrol will create a name, flag, and cheer and elect its leader (the 'Patrol Leader' or 'PL'). The Patrol Leader, with the help of his/her Assistant Patrol Leader will organize their patrol to work as a team during meetings and in preparing for campouts (meal planning, duty roster, activities, etc.). An adult Assistant Scoutmaster is assigned to help guide each patrol. New Scouts will also have an older Scout (Troop Guide) working with their patrol for additional guidance.

The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) is elected by the Troop and is in charge of running Troop meetings and outings. The SPL leads the development of plans and their execution. When questions or issues arise, Scouts should consult their PL or SPL first.

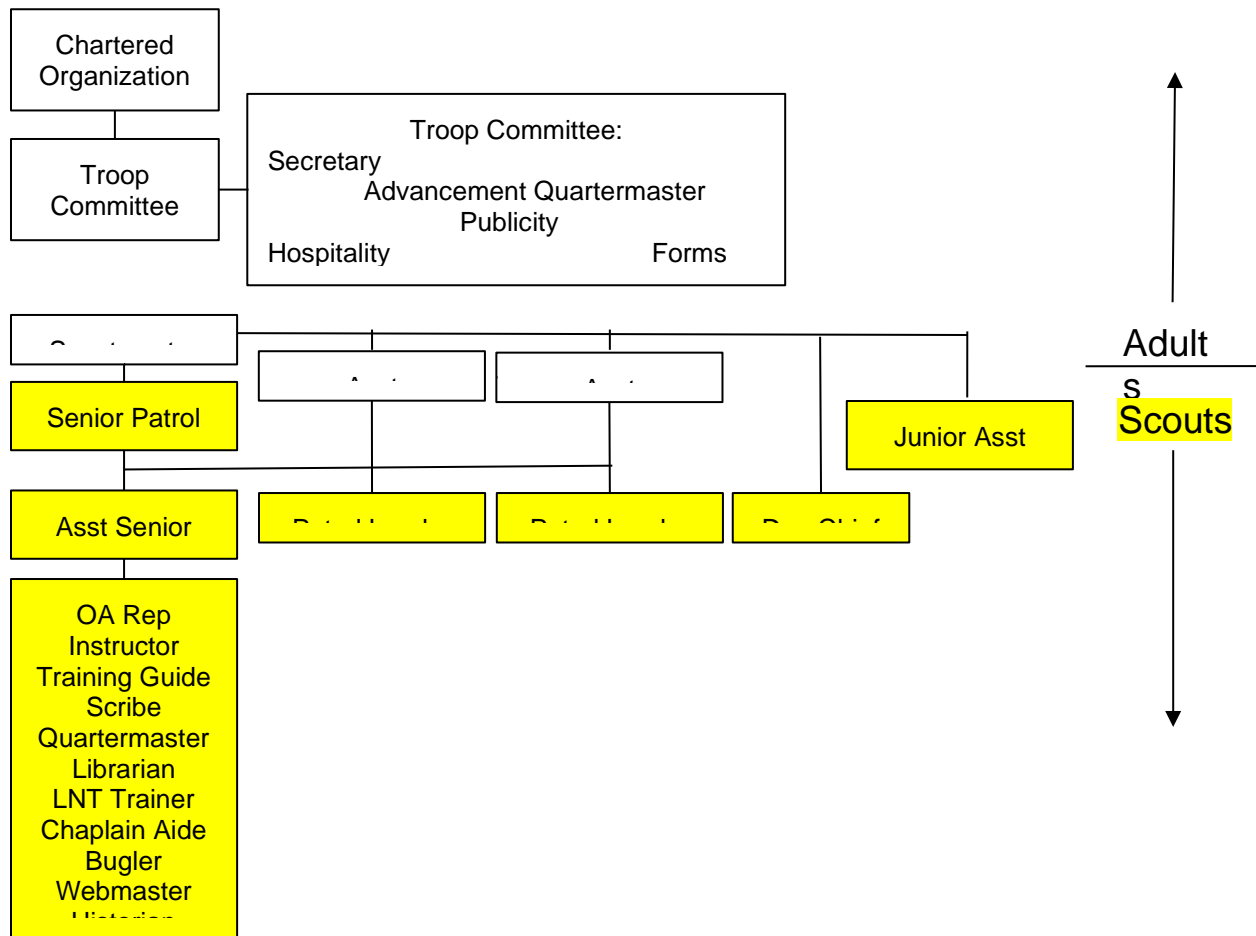
The Scout leadership collectively comprises the Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC). The PLC meets approximately once a month to create the plans for both the weekly meetings and upcoming outings. Additionally, the PLC helps determine long term plans. The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters help with guidance, but the SPL runs the PLC meetings.

### **3.3 Adults**

Adult volunteers are responsible for helping to train and guide Scouts (usually through the youth leadership) as necessary. Additionally, adults will help ensure a safe environment is maintained and BSA policies are followed. The Scoutmaster (SM) is responsible for the day-to-day Troop operations, and oversees all meetings and activities. He/she selects and is helped by Assistant Scoutmasters (ASMs). The SM and ASMs are typically the only adults directly participating in meetings and outings, although other adults may be called upon by the Scoutmaster to help out with specific activities from time-to-time (e.g. teach a specific skill such as canoeing or rock climbing).

The Scoutmaster reports to the Troop Committee, which is led by the Committee Chair. The Troop Committee is a group of adult volunteers that approves all adult volunteers (including the Scoutmaster) and helps provide logistical support to the troop (troop finances, advancement, arranging reservations for outings, equipment purchase and transport, etc.)

### 3.4 Troop Organization Chart



### 3.5 Boy Scouts of America (BSA) Organization

BSA is the United States' national organization within the World Organization of the Scout Movement. The BSA is organized into the following hierarchy.

- **National Council (Irving, TX)** – National sets overall policy and develops the program. It organizes major events such as The National Jamboree.
- **Region (Northeast)** – This is an administrative division with little visible effect on units.
- **Local Council (Spirit of Adventure Council – SAC)** – SAC operates camps, administers local events and training for 77 communities within the greater Boston area. SAC serves 13,000 youth. See [www.scoutspirit.org](http://www.scoutspirit.org) for details. There are 5 councils within Massachusetts. Our council was formed by a merger of the former Boston Minuteman and Yankee Clipper Councils.
- **District (Flintlock)** – Districts provide training, leadership roundtables, and events such as the District Pinewood Derby. There are six districts within SAC. Troop 103 is in the Flintlock District.
- **Unit (Troop 103)** – Units may be a Scouts BSA Troop, Cub Scout Pack, or Venturing Crew. Troop 103 is one of the two troops in Burlington. There are also two Cub Scout Packs (for elementary school aged youth) in Burlington.

### 4.0 SCOUTING ACTIVITIES

There are many kinds of Scouting activities. Each is an important part of the Scouting experience and will provide different benefits. All are “fun with a purpose”. Please note that most Scouting activities are intended for Scouts and registered leaders only. Activities intended to include families (such as Turkey Feast and Courts of Honor) will be explicitly advertised as such.

#### 4.1 Troop Oriented Activities

- **Weekly Troop meeting** - The Troop generally meets at Fox Hill Elementary School, each Tuesday 7:00 - 8:30 pm during the school year. School cancellation (snow day, holiday) will usually mean there is no Troop meeting that night. Weekly meetings typically include using/learning a skill, a presentation, and/or game. The skill is often associated with those needed for rank advancement or for a merit badge. Skills will also be done to prepare for campouts (e.g. cold weather camping/cooking skills). Patrols also plan for upcoming outings during weekly meetings, making sure they have required food and other supplies, and a plan of activities and duties. Scouts should come prepared to every meeting with their Scouts BSA Handbook, and pen and paper for notes on presentations and announcements.
- **Outings** – Outings are a fundamental part of the Scout program. The Troop has at least 10 outings (approximately one each month) during the year. Outings include hiking, biking, canoeing, skiing, etc. Most outings involve one or two nights of sleeping in tents, and require Scouts to plan, buy, and cook their own meals with their patrol. Although the occasional outing will be restricted to Scouts with more advanced skills, most outings are available to all Scouts.
- **Summer camp** – Each summer, the Troop attends a week-long residence camp. Summer camp is a great opportunity to have fun with your friends for an entire week

doing activities such as swimming, archery, rifle/shotgun, hiking, arts and crafts, Scouting skills, etc. Additionally, Scouts may earn a number of merit badges. New Scouts have the special opportunity of participating in “first year program” activities that offer a well structured environment for learning the basics of camp and Scouting, while still participating in Troop activities

- **Major events** – Roughly once every year or two, a more significant event is organized by the Troop, council, or BSA National. These events are advertised well in advance and recently have included things such as National Jamboree, camping on the Charles River, or a week-long trip to Washington, DC.
- **Service projects** – Service to others is an important Scouting value and activity. Service projects usually involve just a few hours of effort at a time, but add up to a big result. Projects are often organized within the Troop, sometimes as Eagle Scout projects. Service hours for rank advancement must be pre-approved by the Scoutmaster. Most service hours for Merit Badge requirements must be pre-approved by the Merit Badge Counselor.
- **Fundraising** – The Troop will occasionally have fundraising activities in order to subsidize large trips or equipment purchases. We expect that all scouts will participate in fundraising and do their best to support the Troop.

The Troop will send out informational notices (and list on the Troop website calendar) for all of the activities noted above. Scouts sign up to most events through the Troop, but some (as explicitly stated in the notice) are a direct sign-up by the Scout. With all events, be sure to watch for emails/BAND posts up to the morning of the event regarding change of venue or time, or cancellation. Turn in required forms by the stated deadline. Scouts bringing forms on the day of an event are likely to be turned away (due to food, equipment, transportation, and event registration requirements).

In order to deal with potential health or other issues, parents (or a designated stand-in) must be accessible by phone whenever scouts are in the care of the Troop.

Any Scout that does not plan to attend an event for which they have signed-up should alert their Patrol Leader and the Scoutmaster **immediately**.

## 4.2 Uniforms

The proper uniform will be specified for each activity and Scouts are expected to wear that uniform. If you are coming from another activity, plan ahead and bring your Scout uniform with you. You would not wear your Scout uniform to your sport event. Likewise, don't wear your sport uniform to a Scout meeting. Only Scouting approved patches and emblems should be affixed to your uniform, and only in approved locations. The following attire may be specified for activities:

- **Class A** – This consists of the khaki Scout shirt, Scout pants, T103 neckerchief and slide.



- **Class B** – This consists of the Troop 103 T shirt (available from the Troop), and Scout pants.
- **Merit Badge Sash** – This sash will generally be required at our most formal events (along with Class A uniform), such as a Court of Honor. Wear this if you have even one merit badge.
- **Order of the Arrow (OA) Sash** – This sash is only for OA members that are taking part at a specific OA event. It is never worn at the same time as the merit badge sash.
- **Camping clothes** – These may be specified for hikes and outdoor activities. Meeting requirements of comfort, quick drying, warmth, etc. will determine what to bring.

### 4.3 Order of the Arrow (OA)

The OA is Scouting's national honor society dedicated to cheerful service and camping promotion. The OA has activities such as an annual Conclave that brings together Scouts from across the Northeast for a weekend of fun. Additionally, the OA organizes service opportunities that provide both comradery and valuable help to the Scouting and surrounding communities. Typically, Scouts have been in Scouting for two or three years before joining the OA.

OA eligibility requirements include:

- 15 days and nights of Boy Scout camping that include exactly one long-term (6 days, 5 nights) camp.
- First Class or higher rank
- Scoutmaster approval
- Elected by Troop (elections are held once per year at a Troop meeting)

The OA is organized into lodges of which there is one per council. More OA details may be found at: [Order of the Arrow](#); our [Spirit of Adventure Lodge: Pennacook Lodge](#).

### 4.4 National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT)

NYLT is an excellent weeklong course in Scout (and life) leadership skills. Scouts will spend a week during the summer in patrols composed of Scouts from across the council at a Scout camp learning how to really work together as a patrol and troop. Activities include classroom and (mostly) practical training in leadership and group skills. Scouts must be First Class or higher, at least 13 years old, and be recommended by their Scoutmaster to be eligible for NYLT. All Scouts in this category should strongly consider this excellent opportunity.

### 4.5 Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops (ILST) [appx 6 hour in-person course]

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 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 Scouts and is a replacement for Troop Leadership Training. Completion of ILST is a prerequisite for 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.

## 5.0 ADVANCEMENT

### 5.1 Scoutbook

[Scoutbook](#) is BSA's online unit management tool and helps Scouts, parents, and leaders track advancement and milestone achievements along the Scouting trail. To enforce Youth Protection Policies, parent(s) must accept the Troop's invitation to register for Scoutbook and then invite your Scout to register. Scouts then have access to record their completed requirements as they are signed off by the SM/ASM. Scouts are also able to view how far along they are in each rank and what is left for requirements. Additionally, Merit Badge counselors (once invited) are able to log in and record completed merit badge requirements for Scouts that they are counseling. The Troop generally does not utilize the communication features in Scoutbook (switched to primarily using BAND app in May 2022 - See more below.)

### 5.2 Ranks

Advancement is the process by which Scouts progress from rank to rank in the Scouting program. Advancement helps track your growth as a Scout. As a Scout advances, they become eligible for Troop leadership positions, high adventure camping trips, and honors such as election to the Order of the Arrow. Each Scout is challenged to follow the road to Eagle Scout. This internationally recognized achievement will help prepare him/her for a successful future in family life, citizenship, outdoor living, and career. Requirements for each rank are in the Scouts BSA Handbook. Scouts progress in the following order of ranks.

Many requirements specify doing something at a Scout or Troop event (e.g. camping or hiking). In these instances, activities done outside of Scout events are not acceptable. Other requirements specify a 'Scoutmaster approved' activity. To avoid disappointment, it is strongly recommended to get this approval prior to the activity.

Note – BSA updates rank requirements from time-to-time, so your Scouts BSA Handbook may be out-of-date. The latest requirements must be used when starting any new rank. These may be found at [BSA Advancement and Awards](#).

- **Scout**- Learn the very basics of Scouting (Scout sign, oath, law, and similar). Scout is usually earned within Troop meetings the first month of being a Scout. Parents are required to go over the [child abuse prevention pamphlet](#) at home with their Scout.
- **Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class** – Earn these ranks by learning and demonstrating skills and knowledge in these and other areas: first aid, camping, swimming, and outdoor cooking. A very active Scout may earn all these ranks in their first year, but more typically it will take two or three years. Virtually all of these ranks' requirements can be completed in troop meetings, troop campouts, along with some

service work. It is also fine to work on requirements outside of Troop activities and then demonstrate proficiency to a Scoutmaster or assistant. An active Scout can easily earn all three ranks by the end of their second year. At this point, Scouts should be fully aware of Troop and Scouting procedures, be able to readily set up and cook at camp, and start to help newer Scouts. Additionally, Scouts should earn their Totin' Chip (permits use of knives/axes) and Firem'n Chit (permits fire starting) during their first year of Scouting.

- Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class Notes:
  - The Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class requirements may all be worked on simultaneously. It is not necessary to complete one rank before starting some of the other requirements.
  - The Second Class 'earn/save money' requirement should be done over at least a 30 day period. Having well defined tasks to earn an allowance at home is one reasonable way to meet this requirement.
  - For the First Class 'invite someone to a meeting' requirement it is important that the person actually shows up to a meeting. If not, you must have a very good description of a serious recruiting effort.
- **Star, Life** – These ranks require earning a minimum number of merit badges, demonstration of leadership skills while holding leadership positions within the troop, and service work. Merit badges may be earned in a variety of ways, as noted elsewhere in this document. Each of these ranks might take one or two years to attain.
  - Star, Life Notes:
    - Other than merit badges, the requirements for Star must be completed while a First Class Scout.
    - Other than merit badges, the requirements for Life must be completed while a Star Scout.
    - Be careful to not overlook the Life Scout EDGE teaching requirement which was added in the 2009 handbook edition.
- **Eagle** – This requires almost double the number of merit badges as Star and Life, in addition to significant leadership. Additionally, the Scout must plan and lead a significant project involving multiple people. Eagle rank often requires two or three years of effort. An exceptionally ambitious and active Scout might attain Eagle in five years, but it is more usual that an Eagle Scout finishes just before they turn 18.
  - Eagle Note - Several Eagle required merit badges (personal management, personal fitness, family life) require doing activities over a ninety-day period. Do not wait until the last minute on these!

## Scoutmaster Conference

When a Scout feels he/she has completed requirements for a rank, he/she will have a Scoutmaster conference. Conferences often take place after or during meetings or campouts, but can be done anywhere. The Scoutmaster (or ASM) will speak with the Scout for 15-30 minutes to verify that all requirements have been completed successfully, understand how the Scout's experience is going and set new goals. If the Scoutmaster agrees that requirements have been met, the Scout then (for all ranks above 'Scout') will proceed to a Board of Review.

The Scout must ask the current Advancement Chair to schedule a Board of Review. This could take several weeks to coordinate with other adult volunteers.

### **Board of Review (BOR)**

At a BOR, the Scout will meet with a group of at least three adults from the troop. BORs never include the Scout's parents, Scoutmaster, nor ASMs in order to help the Scout be more candid in his/her comments.

The following must be true in order to have a Troop 103 Board of Review:

- Fulfill current BSA requirements for the rank of interest.
- Be properly registered with Troop 103.
- For Star, Life, and Eagle ranks: serve actively in Troop 103 in one (or a combination of several) of the rank specified Scouts BSA positions of responsibility (POR). The requirements of the specific position, as defined by T103 must be met. The time period need not be consecutive months, nor the most recent months in rank. Serving in multiple positions simultaneously does not allow for 'double counting' at any time.
- For Star, Life, and Eagle ranks: be active in Troop 103 for the period specified in the rank requirement. For a Scout to be considered active for a given month, they must attend at least one Troop event (e.g. T103 meeting, T103 campout) in that calendar month.
- Scouts transferring into T103 from another troop will have all properly completed requirements transferred with them.
- The Troop encourages Scouts to participate in the type of Scouting unit(s) they believe will provide the best overall experience and growth for them. Participating in multiple units (e.g. both a Troop and Crew for older Scouts) is great! However, for a Scoutmaster Conference/Board of Review in T103, the POR and 'active' requirements must be fulfilled within Troop 103 ('your unit'). If you wish to fulfill these requirements in another Scouting unit (such as holding a Venture Crew POR), then you will need to pursue your Scoutmaster Conference, Board of Review, and overseeing of other requirements (such as Eagle project and Merit Badge work) with that unit's leader.

The members of the Board will have the following objectives in mind when they conduct the Review:

- To make sure the Scout's BSA Handbook and other records are up to date.
- To make sure the Scout has done what he/she was supposed to do for the rank.
- To see how good an experience the Scout is having as an individual, a member of his/her patrol, and as a member of the troop.
- To encourage the Scout to progress further.

The review is not an examination; the Board does not retest the candidate. Rather, the Board should attempt to determine the Scout's attitude and his acceptance of Scouting's ideals.

Scouts

meet the Board individually, not in groups. Review time is typically 15 to 45 minutes, depending on the rank for which they appear. The Scout is then asked to leave the room while Board

members discuss their findings. The Scout is called in and given feedback from the Board, either passing or provided with specific areas for improvement. A Scout has officially earned his/her new rank upon completion of a successful BOR. BORs are scheduled as necessary, but may take a few weeks to schedule after a Scout's request is made.

## **Courts of Honor**

Several (usually three) times each year, Courts of Honor are held to recognize rank advancement, merit badges and other awards earned by the Scouts in the Troop. Courts of Honor are a special evening for the youth. Parents and family are encouraged to attend to show support and motivate the Scouts toward even greater achievements. It is also a great time to meet with other Scout families.

## **Timetable**

There is no specific timetable to earning any rank. It's fine to earn ranks at whatever pace works for you. There are no age requirements for advancement, no need to "keep-up" or "wait for" your peer group, and no advancement minimums. Advancement is entirely dependent upon the maturity, motivation, organization and enthusiasm of each individual Scout. The only time limit is your 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, the maximum age of a BSA Scout. Some Scouts may still be Tenderfoot when they turn 18, and that is perfectly fine as long as they are having fun and getting something good from their Scout experience. Keep in mind that rank requirements can only be met by activities done since joining Scouts BSA (and sometimes only after attaining a specific rank).

## **5.3 Position of Responsibility (Leadership)**

A major goal of Scouting is developing leadership in our youth. Star, Life, and Eagle ranks all require being in a 'Position of Responsibility', commonly referred to as a 'Leadership Position'. The Scouts BSA Handbook lists valid positions to fulfill these requirements. You may be either elected (e.g. SPL) or appointed (e.g. Quartermaster) to a position. The goal of the Leadership requirements is for Scouts to gain experience in understanding and setting expectations of a position and then working to fulfill those expectations. Some positions (e.g. Patrol Leader) will involve explicitly leading others to attain specific goals. Other positions (e.g. Quartermaster) will involve performing duties essential to successful operation of the Troop. In all positions, failures may provide as much learning as successes.

Receiving Leadership requirement credit is not automatically earned by merely holding a position. The Scoutmaster will consider the following when determining if a Leadership requirement is complete:

- **Effort** – The Scout must have exhibited significant effort throughout their term. Trying to do most of the work for a position in a couple of weekends (e.g. Historian) is unlikely to be adequate. Proactively working with Scouts and adult leaders to resolve issues or questions associated with your position and to determine your duties is essential. If you

do nothing because you have not been asked to do something, that does not mean you are doing your job.

- **Example set** – A significant part of every position is to set a good example. If all Scouts in the Troop behaved as you do in meetings or outings, would that be desirable? Wear the complete and proper uniform to all events with a tucked in shirt. Have a good attitude.
- **Attendance** – In addition to regular Troop meetings, Scouts in Leadership are expected to attend 75% of the meetings relevant to their position, for example: Den Chief (Pack and Den meetings), OA Rep (conclave, local chapter and lodge meetings), Troop Guide (campouts with new Scout patrol).
- **Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) participation** – All positions of responsibility (not just SPL and PL) are expected to participate in PLC meetings. Participation is more than showing up. It means coming with ideas and being part of the discussions. If you will miss a PLC meeting, send in your ideas ahead of time and find a replacement if your POR requires work within the meeting. (i.e. Scribe.)
- **Position duties** – The troop is depending upon you to do your best in performing your duties. See the Troop website for a list of duties specific to each leadership position.

Missing some of these expectations can be mitigated, but that should not be assumed. For instance, if you miss a relevant meeting, did you inform the SPL and Scoutmaster ahead of time and find a replacement?

#### 5.4 Service Time

Service to others is an important part of Scouting. Most rank advancement requires some form of service work. Service time is volunteer (non-paid) work done by the Scout. In order for service time to count towards rank advancement, merit badges, religious emblems and other Scouting recognition, the following must be true:

- Work was done to benefit the community (local, national, world), rather than yourself, family, or Troop. Service to individuals such as a neighbor would normally not apply either.
- The service activity was approved by the Scoutmaster. Approval may be after the service, but this runs the risk it will not be approved.
- The amount of time, where, and when it was done (at least approximately) is documented somewhere - ideally in the Scouts BSA Handbook on the table in the back.
- Was done after joining Scouts BSA. For rank advancement, only work done while holding the previous rank will count (i.e. must be Star scout to count towards a Life Scout service project requirement).

The following items would disqualify a service project from counting towards a Scouting requirement:

- The activity is something that is generally expected of most members, or is a regular part of membership in the organization and would therefore not count (i.e. the baseball team repairing the diamond before spring practice).

- No double-counting. A project that was already counted for something else (i.e. service project used for Citizenship in the Community) cannot also be used for rank advancement. Similarly, if service done in a church is expected as part of the confirmation process, it cannot be used towards Scouting requirements. The activity should be above and beyond what is expected of the average member of the outside organization.
- The activity was done for a for-profit entity. Exception: if the activity happens to be in a business but the activity itself was not fundamentally to create profit, it would be acceptable.
- Fundraising for the Troop would not count.

Some examples of Scouting service work are: food pantry, Burlington Town Day booth, religious support beyond normal expectations (e.g. Altar boy), helping on an Eagle project, blood drives, Scout camp service work, etc.

Eagle Scout projects have a number of additional constraints documented in detail elsewhere.

## 5.5 Merit Badges

Merit badges are a fun way to learn about a new interest and also important to advancement. There are over 120 merit badges available in such diverse topics as Welding, Swimming, First Aid, and Kayaking to name a few. Merit badges may be done any time after joining Boy Scouts. However, it is recommended that Scouts focus on getting to First Class rank before spending too much time on merit badge work. Merit badges are only required for ranks above First Class. Expect to spend 10-15 hours (or months for some) to earn your merit badge.

**Where to Earn** Merit badges can be earned in a variety of contexts:

- **Home** – It's fine to read the pamphlet at home and work on requirements either alone or with your fellow Scouts.
- **Summer camp** – During the Troop's week at summer camp, you will typically have the opportunity to earn several merit badges in organized classes run by camp staff. There is also a special 'Eagle week' where a much wider variety of Eagle required merit badges are taught and earned.
- **Merit Badge University** – Each year various colleges host programs to teach and earn up to three merit badges. Typically these meet two or three times and may have field trips. In the local council, both MIT and Harvard offer programs. Additionally WPI offers a program. This is a great way to see what a college campus is like while taking a merit badge course.
- **Troop meetings** – The Troop will typically teach portions of two or three merit badges during the year during regular troop meetings. By design, work outside of meetings is usually required to complete these merit badges.

**How to Earn:** The following traditional process will help you earn a merit badge:

- **Select a badge** – Check out the Troop library or go to the Scout shop and browse the [merit badge pamphlets](#). Ask a friend or adult leader what they liked. Look at [www.usscouts.org](http://www.usscouts.org) to find a list of all merit badges along with their requirements.
- **Get a blue card** – Ask the Scoutmaster or Advancement Chair for a blue card for each merit badge you are working on and fill it out. Have the Scoutmaster sign the card. This all takes just a minute. Badge requirements may change from time-to-time. The requirements in effect when the Scoutmaster signs the card determine the requirements you must meet (you may use later requirements at your discretion), subject to the counselor's determination of the work being done in a 'reasonable' amount of time. Do not lose your blue card! It is often the only proof you have that a particular requirement has been met. This will prevent the need to re-do a requirement.
- **Get a counselor** – A merit badge counselor is an adult with detailed knowledge and skill associated with your specific merit badge. They must be Youth Protection trained, and are registered with the BSA through the local council. Ask the Advancement Chair or Scoutmaster to help you select a counselor. Contact the counselor (always with others copied on emails, or with a buddy) to ask if they will be your Merit Badge counselor. Your counselor will oftentimes provide instruction in the merit badge subject area and provide guidance on what they will accept as a completed requirement. Sometimes they may only verify requirements have been met. Typically, you will have many different counselors, one for each badge. Counselors may be adults associated with the troop, or others in the local area.
- **Do the work** – Each merit badge has a pamphlet (usually about 100 pages) describing the subject matter and specific requirements for earning the badge. You can buy the pamphlet at the Scout shop, or ask the [Troop librarian to borrow a copy from the Troop](#). Read the pamphlet. Answer the questions and perform the activities required for the badge. [Merit badge worksheets](#) provide a convenient way to organize your work. Your counselor may provide instruction to help you learn the subject. You may use additional reference materials also to supplement your learning. You can take as long as you want to complete a merit badge (up to your 18 th birthday) or decide to never complete it. If a badge takes inordinately long to complete, a counselor may reasonably require a re-verification of requirements having been met.
- **Show your stuff** – When you are ready, contact your counselor (never one-on-one). The counselor will ask you to show you have met each requirement. Some requirements may require you to actually demonstrate something. Others may have you give answers to various questions. Some may require building. You should come with whatever evidence is required. Pictures of a completed product or activity may be helpful to prove you did something. The completed merit badge worksheet will also be very helpful. The counselor will require no more, but no less than exactly what the merit badge requirements state (e.g. 'demonstrate' means you have to actually do it). The counselor will sign off on each completed requirement on your blue card, and will sign their names when all requirements are complete. Even if you learn about a merit badge as a group, you must individually demonstrate meeting each requirement.
- **Blue card completion** – Once the counselor has signed off, the Scoutmaster must also sign the blue card to indicate completion. Next, give the completed blue card to the Advancement Chair, who will obtain the actual merit badge for you to add to your merit



badge sash, and will update the Troop records with your achievement. Merit badges are usually presented at the next Court of Honor.

- **Scoutbook** – Troop 103 still uses Blue Cards even though National BSA says it is no longer necessary if the counselor is utilizing Scoutbook to record merit badge requirements. Follow the process of requesting a Blue Card from the Scoutmaster or Advancement Chair. Then go into Scoutbook to invite the Merit Badge Counselor (MBC) for that particular merit badge. Many counselors (particularly outside of Troop 103), prefer to only use Scoutbook. If emailed a virtual/digital Blue Card from the counselor, print it and attach it to the hard copy Blue Card with the Scoutmaster's signature. The Blue Card is hard evidence of the completion of a merit badge in case there is a problem with the online system (which is fairly new and still a work in progress with the merit badges).

Note: merit badge requirements can only be met by activities done since joining a Troop in Scouts BSA. Work may be done before getting a blue card, but it is not advisable in order to avoid misunderstandings. The counselor is not required to accept any work done before starting a merit badge (exception: all camping nights since joining Scouts BSA can be considered for the Camping Merit Badge if they meet the specific requirements).

## 5.6 Sign-offs

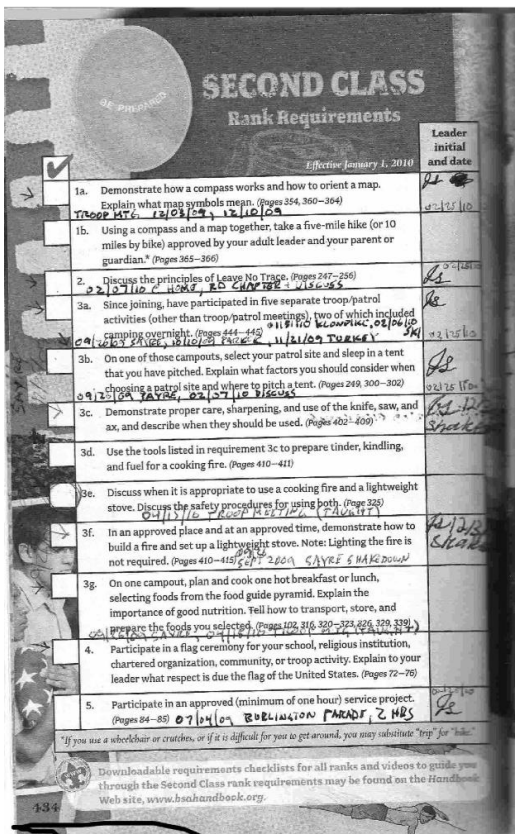
In general, Scouts must have accomplishments 'signed-off' in order to receive credit. The sign-off indicates that a leader has validated the accomplishment was done. The following lists items requiring sign-off, and who is authorized to do those sign-offs:

- **Scout badge (aka 'joining requirements')** [preventing child abuse pamphlet requirement](#). This requirement may only be signed off as completed by the Scout's parent/guardian. This is the ONLY requirement that a parent may sign-off.
- **Scout spirit rank requirement** – This requirement may only be signed-off by the Scoutmaster or Assistant during the Scoutmaster Conference.
- **Service time rank requirements** – Scouts should log this time at the back of their Handbook as well as in Scoutbook. This requirement may only be signed-off by the Scoutmaster or Assistant.
- **Camping rank requirements** – Scouts should log campouts at the back of their Handbook as well as in Scoutbook. The log and rank requirement may only be signed-off by the Scoutmaster or Assistant.
- **Rank requirements not otherwise listed** – Most rank requirements may be signed off by the Scout's Patrol Leader, or Senior Patrol Leader. First year patrol sign-offs must be done under the supervision of the Troop Guide or Assistant Scoutmaster assigned to that patrol. Generally, the rank requirements in place when the rank was started define what must be done. These are often different from what is printed in your Handbook. Note that the requirements to every rank above Tenderfoot have changed over the last couple of years. The current Scouts BSA edition is the 14th – published in 2019.
- **Requirements taught by an Instructor** – When approved by the Scoutmaster, Instructors for specific skills may sign-off the related rank requirement.

- **Merit badge requirements** – Your Merit Badge counselor signs off each completed requirement and also when the entire badge is completed. The Scoutmaster does not validate requirements were done, but does validate that the counselor has legitimately signed off completion of requirements (e.g. that the counselor actually verified the Scout did the requirements).
- **All requirements** – The Scoutmaster or Assistant may sign-off on any rank requirement.

The following guidelines shall be followed by signers:

- Sign-offs shall only be done after validating the Scout has actually learned, demonstrated, or documented the related item.
- Activities in general may only count towards one requirement (no double counting). Activities (including service time) used for merit badges may not be counted towards rank advancement and vice versa. For example, the teaching requirement for the First Aid merit badge must be a different activity than is used for the Life Scout EDGE teaching requirement. However, the following double counting exception is allowed: camping done for rank requirements may also be applied towards the Camping merit badge. If a merit badge or rank requirement explicitly allows for double counting (very rarely stated), then it is also acceptable.
- Parents (unless they are also BSA registered in one of the positions stated above) may not sign-off on anything other than the one requirement noted above.
- Troop committee members (unless they are also BSA registered in one of the positions stated above) may not sign-off any requirements.
- Anyone that is not a BSA registered Scout or BSA registered leader may not sign-off any requirements.
- Leaders not registered with Troop 103 may not sign-off requirements unless they are acting as a merit badge counselor.
- All sign-offs are subject to final approval by the Scoutmaster (usually at the Scoutmaster conference in the case of rank advancement).
- Rank requirements must have a date and location/event where they were done noted in the Scout Handbook. Signers should add the date they signed whenever signing-off.



The image to the left is an example of a properly filled out handbook page. Under each requirement is a description of when and where the Scout fulfilled the requirement (e.g. "Troop meeting 12/03/09"). This must be in place before a requirement is signed-off. While parents cannot sign-off requirements, they can work with their Scout to help legibly fill in the "when and where" information. The Scoutmaster and Assistants can help with dates and events based on the Troop attendance records. The Scout was careful not to write in the "Leader initial and date" box. The signer (in this case the SPL) met with the Scout, verified the requirement was met, then initialed each completed requirement in the box to the right. Each signature is dated for when the sign-off was made (not when the requirement was done).

## 5.7 Record Keeping

Upon completion of requirements, Scouts need to log in to Scoutbook and record what requirements were completed. This can be done before or after having the Handbook signed off. Once the Handbook is signed off, ask the SM to approve the completed requirements in Scoutbook. Scouts should frequently check their Handbooks with what is approved in Scoutbook to ensure both are up to date.

Scouts should be diligent in tracking their progress also in the following ways:

- **Rank requirements** – Note when and where each rank requirement was done in your Handbook. Have the appropriate leader sign-off on completed requirements.
- **Make a copy** – Occasionally copy the Handbook pages associated with ranks, in case you lose your Handbook.
- **Save your blue card section** – When you are presented with your merit badge, it will be accompanied by a blue card section indicating your completed status. Save this for future reference in case there is a dispute on dates or which badges were completed. [It is recommended that you have a binder for all scout rank cards and blue cards. They fit perfectly in the baseball card sleeves.]
- **Service time tracking** – Use the log pages in the back of your Handbook to log service work location and time. These will be important for rank advancement. Also record them in Scoutbook.

- **Campout tracking** – Use the log pages in the back of your Handbook to log each campout you go on and number of nights. These will be important for rank advancement and Order of the Arrow eligibility. Also record them in Scoutbook.

## 6.0 COMMUNICATION

Scouts are responsible for ensuring they make and receive necessary communications. The Troop will not chase you down for missing forms. You will be informed via the BAND app. If you do not turn in required items by the required deadlines, you will miss out on opportunities.

The following communication channels are used:

- **BAND app Posts** – Each week, typically one or two posts will go out to the Troop 103 Band account. Each Scout family must have at least one person monitor our Band account. Ideally, all parents and the Scout will have access to the Troop 103 Band account. Multiple family members may join. It is a closed group and an invitation must be sent to join. Please see the Scoutmaster to receive the invite. The parent and Scout must be registered in Scoutbook (see SM, CC, or Advancement Chair for assistance). For each activity (meeting or outing), the Scoutmaster and/or SPL will send at least one BAND post describing the activity, sharing any necessary forms, and listing any preparations required. It is assumed Scouts will read the BAND post in a timely fashion. Everyone should avoid casual use of Band. Never use these lists for non-Scouting events without prior approval of the Scoutmaster.
- **[Troop 103 Burlington website](#)**. This site maintains a Troop activity calendar, all outing permission slips, various other forms, packing lists and gear guidelines, useful information about the Troop, its operations, and Scouting pointers.
- **Meeting announcements** – There will be announcements at the end of every meeting regarding upcoming events, sign-ups required, etc. Scouts should have pen/paper at each meeting to note any items of interest. Parents may wish to arrive slightly early for pickup to hear these also. Scouts that miss a meeting should contact their Patrol Leader to determine what they may have missed.
- **Phone** – The Troop instituted a new phone policy in May 2022. Scouts are allowed to have phones at meetings and outings but must use them appropriately (eg: for Scouting purposes). The phone policy is posted in BAND and on the webpage. Scouts should not be contacting parents or friends while on outings or during meetings. If the Scout has an issue/concern at a campout, they are to bring it to the attention of the SM or ASM to be handled appropriately. Parents will be contacted if warranted. Parents, PLEASE, do not contact your Scout via phone/text while he/she is on a scouting activity (particularly an overnight). This causes homesickness and other problems. If you have a concern and need to contact your Scout, contact the SM on the outing. The SM will gladly bring the Scout into the conversation for resolution but it complicates matters to not include the SM with concerns. The phone will be used for emergency contact to/from outings (when within cell range, and only on an adult leader's phone). The Troop will rarely contact you via phone. Email and BAND posts would most likely be used instead.
- **Instant message, Twitter, Facebook, other social media** – The Troop will not use these for any important communications. They may be used occasionally to share 'fun'

information. [Closed Facebook page is BSA Troop 103 Burlington. Ask to join on FB.] The BAND app has a feed just like Facebook and important information WILL be shared there as it is private and invitation only.

- **Troop 103 Parent Google Group** - [parents-of-troop-103@googlegroups.com](mailto:parents-of-troop-103@googlegroups.com) was created for communicating information with parents only. Please check your spam if you have not received the invitation. If you do not have it, simply send a quick email to [troop103burlington@gmail.com](mailto:troop103burlington@gmail.com) stating such from the address you need added. This is a closed group.

Other communication guidelines:

- **No one-on-one** – In all forms of communication, there must be no one-on-one contact between a Scout and an adult. This means a Scout or leader must always ‘cc’ another person on emails, have another person present around for direct conversations (Scoutmaster or merit badge counselor meeting), have a parent in earshot when making calls, etc. On the BAND chat function, Scouts must include another adult when messaging an adult. It is not required between youth but it is preferable to not have any one-on-one chat groups even between youth.
- **After meetings** – Adult leadership is generally available after any meeting for questions or comments.
- **Scouting Resources** – [Boy Scouts of America](http://www.bsa.org) - This website contains information about the latest requirements for each rank and merit badge among many other items. [US Scouting Service Project](http://www.usa-scouting.org) - another great resource for Scouting information.

## 7.0 YOUTH PROTECTION AND TRAINING

Safety supersedes all other considerations in Scouting. The Troop adheres to BSA policies to provide additional security for our members. These policies are primarily for the protection of our youth members; however, they also serve to protect our adult leaders from false accusations of abuse. Scouts are encouraged to report anything that makes them uncomfortable to the Scoutmaster, parent, or other trusted adult.

All Scouts, as part of the joining requirements, must go over the pamphlet: [How to Protect Your Children from Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide](#) (included in the Scouts BSA Handbook).

### 7.1 Rules

All adult volunteers are required to take [BSA Youth Protection Training](#). An online version of this course may be found here: <https://www.scouting.org/training/youth-protection/>. The following rules will be followed in all Scouting events:

- **Two-deep leadership** - 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. Additionally, one registered female over the age of 21 years of age MUST be present anytime female scouts are attending.
- **No one-on-one contact** One-on-one contact between adults and youth members is not permitted. All meetings are to be conducted in view of other adults and youths. This also

applies to transportation; adults may not be alone in a car with one Scout unless it is their child.

- **Respect of privacy** - Adult leaders must respect the privacy of youth members in situations such as changing clothes and taking showers at camp, and intrude only to the extent that health and safety require. Adults must protect their own privacy in similar situations.
- **Separate accommodations** - When camping, no youth is permitted to sleep in the tent of an adult other than his own parent or guardian (which is generally also greatly discouraged).
- **Proper preparation for high-adventure activities** - Activities with elements of risk should never be undertaken without proper preparation, equipment, clothing, supervision, and safety measures.
- **No secret organizations** - The BSA does not recognize any secret organizations as part of its program. All aspects of the Scouting program are open to observation by parents and leaders.
- **Appropriate attire** - Proper clothing for activities is required.
- **Constructive discipline** - Discipline used in Scouting should be constructive and reflect Scouting's values. Corporal punishment is never permitted.
- **Hazing prohibited** - Physical hazing and initiations are prohibited and may not be included as part of any Scouting activity.
- **Youth leader training and supervision** - Adult leaders must monitor and guide the leadership techniques used by youth leaders and ensure that BSA policies are followed.
- **Buddy system** - Scouts are required to be with a buddy (within easy hearing or visual distance) at all Scout activities.
- **Illness or injury** – In the event that a Scout has an illness or serious injury, First Aid (or more significant medical care) will be applied as necessary. A course of action will then be determined with the contact listed on the permission slip.

## 7.2 Knives and Matches

Knives and matches are very useful and often essential tools for scouts participating on camping trips.

Scouts may only carry a knife (and use axes and saws) after earning their Totin' Chip. Scouts are limited to carrying a single folding pocket knife or multi-tool with single edged blades that are shorter than 4". Sheath knives are prohibited. The troop provides axes, hatchets, and saws for Scout use when needed. Scouts should not bring these items to meetings or Scout trips. Knives should never be brought into meetings at schools.

Scouts may only carry and use matches and fire after earning their Firem'n Chit. Matches and lighters may only be used with a purpose, not for play, and should never be brought into meetings at schools. Fires (both open and in stoves) are to be lit only under adult supervision. No flame of any sort should ever be in or near a tent. Scouts are never allowed to handle liquid fuel at any Scout activities.

### 7.3 Medical

All Scouts must have an up-to-date BSA medical form on file with the Troop. Additional forms regarding medications and treatment are also required at registration each year.

Prior to any Scouting event (meeting or outing), the Scoutmaster must be made aware of all medications that will be administered at the event. Depending upon the situation (type of event, type of medication, the individual Scout, parent advice), the Scoutmaster will determine who will maintain control of medications (usually an adult leader or camp nurse). At no time may Scouts retain and dispense their own medication, except for inhalers and Epipens. This is for the safety of the medicated Scout and other Scouts in the area.

Scouts and parents should provide medications in an original prescription labeled bottle with the Scout's name and directions for administration to the Scoutmaster prior to the event. Please provide only the amount of medication required for the duration of the event.

### 7.4 Scout Transportation

- **No adult one-on-one** – Adults (leaders or parents) must never be alone with a Scout other than their child, even during transport to/from any Scout activity. Another Scout (such as their child) or adult must be present.
- **Two deep leadership** – When dropping off, make sure there is a registered leader and at least one other adult present before departing.
- **Nonstandard arrival/departure times** – Scouts or adults arriving or leaving at other than the activity specified times must receive explicit approval from the activity leader (typically the Scoutmaster) before the event, and at the time of arrival/departure. In the event of an unforeseen situation, the activity leader must be notified as quickly as possible. Be sure to arrive for all pickups on time.
- **Scout responsibility** – Scouts are responsible for knowing who is allowed to pick them up and not to go with anyone else. Activity leaders will NOT be verifying with whom each Scout departs. If Scouts are uncertain, they shall notify the activity leader, who will in turn call parents/guardians for clarification. If there are Scouts with situations that require special attention, parents/guardians must speak with the Scoutmaster.
- **Outings** – For many outings, Scouts will be picked up at a meeting place in town. Scouts must not leave until they have received clearance from the SPL and Scoutmaster. This will help ensure nothing is left behind and all post-outing activities (e.g. gear cleaning) are properly handled.
- **Seatbelts** – All individuals being transported in association with a Scout activity will wear seat belts.

## 8.0 EXPECTATIONS OF BEHAVIOR AND POLICIES

Scouts are expected to live by the Scout Oath and Law both during and outside of BSA activities. Scouts will show proper respect to all others. Any Scouts that are disruptive, that disregard rules, exhibit dangerous behavior, or are disrespectful will have their behavior

addressed directly and immediately in a constructive way by adult leaders. Corporal punishment is never permitted. Parents will be alerted to significant infractions. The Troop will focus on personal improvement rather than punishment. However, significant or repeated improper behavior may lead to a suspension of: various privileges, opportunities, and rank advancement. In more serious cases, expulsion from an activity or the Troop may result. Parents will be required to pick up a Scout that has been expelled from an activity. The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters, under direction of the Troop committee, shall have the right and responsibility of dealing with individual discipline problems on a case-by-case basis.

The following rules will apply to all Scout activities and will help create a safe and respectful environment for all:

- **Treat others how you would like to be treated** – **NO** fighting, hazing, harassment, threatening, stealing, vandalism, nor verbal abuse. Be quiet after hours. Do not touch or use any other Scout's nor Troop belongings without permission.
- **Be morally straight** – **NO** pornography, nor habitual use of foul language is allowed.
- **Be physically strong** – **NO** tobacco, drugs (other than approved), nor alcohol is allowed.
- **Be safe** – Use sharp objects in an approved method only. **NO** playing with fire. Always be with a buddy. Make sure the activity leader knows where you are at all times; stay in the designated activity area. **NO** firearms nor fireworks are allowed.
- **Contribute positively to the Troop** – Do your best in performing your role as leader or patrol member. Follow directions of Troop and activity leadership and perform your assigned tasks. Wear the uniform correctly and proudly.

## 8.1 Other Policies and Information

**Cell phones and other electronic devices** – The Troop has instituted a new cell phone policy as of May 2022 (see full policy posted on BAND and the webpage). Cell phones may be used appropriately at meetings/outings for scouting purposes. Scouts using phones for non-Scouting purposes or if its use is disruptive, Scouts will be asked to put phones away. Repeat offenders will have to leave phones at home. Parents may contact adult leaders if communication with a Scout is required. Be aware that many activities are not in cell phone range. The only other electronic devices allowed are flashlights, headlamps, and cameras. Check with the SM on other devices. The Troop is not responsible for damage/loss to any devices. Electricity/power to recharge devices is not provided by the Troop at any activity, including summer camp.

**Food on outings** – The Troop has a variety of goals in having Scouts prepare their food on outings: gain self-sufficiency, operate in a sustainable manner, and make healthy choices. To those ends, the following should be observed:

- Never ever bring: pop-tarts, soda, or caffeinated food/beverages (coffee, energy drinks).
- Do cut up meat (especially chicken) before the outing.
- Do not pre-cook meals.
- Do use refillable water bottles (no 6 packs of bottled water).
- Do prepare your meals at the campout (no pre-made meals).



## 9.0 FINANCES

Relative to many other youth programs, Boy Scout expenses are very reasonable. The following items are the main expenses you will incur:

- **Annual registration** – currently \$200. This is paid in the fall each year. Among other things, your registration includes: BSA dues, SAC Adventure Card, advancement and merit badge patches.
- **Uniform** – Class A uniforms (khaki shirt, Scout pants, merit badge sash) are purchased by the Scout at the [Scout Shop](#). Class B (Troop T shirt) is purchased from the Troop. A Troop neckerchief and slide are provided by the Troop upon joining.
- **Scouts BSA Handbook** – Available at the Scout shop, this is probably the most important Scouting purchase you will make. The Handbook provides answers to how to do many things in Scouting (camping, first aid, cooking, etc.). It describes requirements for all ranks and is used to track your progress towards those ranks. Parents and Scouts should both read the Handbook to understand what Scouting is all about.
- **Activity fees** – More costly outings (e.g. ski trip, summer camp, jamborees) are paid for individually by the Scout. Regular campouts oftentimes have a small fee collected by the Troop (see next section).
- **Campout food** – Each patrol will assign a Grubmaster for each outing. Scouts will pay a fee of \$5-\$10 per campout which goes to the Grubmaster for food. (Grubmaster position is a work in progress. The fees may not cover all of the food planned by the patrol.) The Grubmaster of each patrol is responsible for buying their patrol's food for campouts.
- **Personal camping gear** – Scouts will need to obtain a sleeping bag, mess kit, hiking boots, backpack, and clothing appropriate for camping. The Troop provides cooking stoves and fuel, cooking equipment, tents, axes, first aid kits, etc. A detailed packing and gear list is on the Troop website. Other than the uniform, there is no need to buy official Boy Scout equipment. All personal gear (including your Scouts BSA Handbook) should be marked with your name.

Other financial information:

- **Refunds** – Because fees usually go to cover direct Troop expenses, refunds for registration and fees are generally not given.
- **Fundraising** – The Troop has one or two fundraising events during the year to help keep expenses low. Scouts are expected to help out on these events.
- **Financial aid** - Our Troop Committee feels strongly that financial constraints should not prevent a Scout from having the opportunity to participate in Scouting. Several events during the year, particularly summer camp, require a financial commitment. Troop 103 is prepared to find ways to assist Scouts with a financial need. Please speak in confidence with the Scoutmaster or Committee Chairman so that arrangements may be made to address difficult financial situations.
- **Merit badge pamphlets** – The Troop maintains a library of merit badge pamphlets that Scouts may borrow. Scouts are encouraged to donate their old pamphlets to the library. See the librarian to borrow materials.

- **Uniform exchange** – The Troop has some uniforms that Scouts may have for free. Scouts are encouraged to donate their old uniforms that may no longer fit.
- **Reimbursement** – Before making any purchases for reimbursement, be sure to receive approval from the Scoutmaster or Committee Chair.

## 10.0 ADULT OPPORTUNITIES

All parents are actively encouraged to do something involved with the Troop. This is necessary to help create the many opportunities in Scouting and will help parents understand the program better, which in turn will help them in assisting their child(ren) with the program. Your involvement can be as expansive or as limited as your time allows. Here are a few opportunities available to parents:

- **Driver** – The Troop frequently needs to transport Scouts to and from events. This is something almost any adult can do and only requires one to two hours of time. Check-off the 'I can drive' box for campouts whenever possible.
- **Board of review member** – Scouts must have a BOR in order to complete each rank. Every parent should try to be a member of at least one BOR during the year. All the BORs for an evening usually take less than 90 minutes. The Advancement Chair will help you quickly learn what is required for this. No prior Scouting knowledge is required. SM and ASMs cannot sit on a board so parent participation is crucial.
- **Merit badge counselor** – Can you do anything well (job or hobby)? If so, there is probably a merit badge for it and you can help a Scout with the associated skills and knowledge by becoming a merit badge counselor. This position typically involves only an hour or two every few months. If interested, you might help teach portions of your badge at a Troop meeting. The Advancement or Committee Chair can help get you going with this.
- **Eagle Scout mentor** – Every Scout that is working on their Eagle Rank should work with a mentor. Mentors help by working with the Scout on outstanding requirements, developing and organizing their Eagle Scout project, and review of the many associated documents. Mentors should have a reasonable knowledge of Scouting and Eagle Scout requirements for this position. See the Scoutmaster or Advancement Chair for more details.
- **Troop committee** –The committee provides oversight to the entire Troop's operation in addition to logistical support that enables the program to operate. Positions entail a monthly meeting plus tasks specific to your role, which involve weekly effort (Committee Chair, Advancement), or a single event a year (Turkey Feast subcommittee). Contact the Committee Chair if you are interested in understanding current opportunities.
- **Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster** – These positions allow for direct involvement with the Scouts in most of the Troop's events. The time commitment is very significant, but it is lots of fun. See the Scoutmaster for further information.

The most important thing a parent can do is to be an enthusiastic supporter of your Scout. Read the Scouts BSA Handbook. Become familiar with the program. Read the Band posts and make sure your Scout is taking advantage of the many activities. Find out what they enjoy or might

like to change and help them let the Troop know. Encourage your Scout to talk with the Scoutmaster about their ideas and concerns.

## 11.0 ACRONYMS

[\\*All Scout Positions are listed in Appendix 1](#)

ACRONYM	FULL NAME	SECTION DEFINED
ASM	Assistant Scoutmaster	<a href="#">3.3</a>
BSA	Boy Scouts of America	<a href="#">3.5</a>
ILST	Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops	<a href="#">4.5</a>
NYLT	National Youth Leadership Training	<a href="#">4.4</a>
OA	Order of the Arrow	<a href="#">4.3</a>
PL	Patrol Leader	<a href="#">3.2</a> and <a href="#">Appendix 1</a>
PLC	Patrol Leaders' Council	<a href="#">3.2</a>
SM	Scoutmaster	<a href="#">3.3</a>
SPL	Senior Patrol Leader	<a href="#">3.2</a> and <a href="#">Appendix 1</a>

### Appendix 1

#### Troop 103 – Scout Leadership Positions

**POSITIONS** are required for further advancement in Scouting. Star, Life, and Eagle all require time in a leadership position. This means that the Scout must fulfill the job requirements of this job in order to advance.

**SENIOR PATROL LEADER (SPL)** – elected by Troop (at least First Class Scout)

- Plans (with input from PLC & SMs) and runs all troop meetings, events, activities, and annual program planning conference
- Runs the Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) meetings
- Appoints other Scout Troop leadership positions (not Patrol positions) with advice from SM
- Assigns duties and responsibilities to other Scout leaders

**ASSISTANT SENIOR PATROL LEADER (ASPL)** – appointed by SPL

- Helps the SPL lead meetings and activities
- Runs the troop in absence of the SPL (frequent communication necessary)
- Serves as a member of the PLC (Patrol Leaders' Council)

**PATROL LEADER (PL)** – elected by Patrol

- Plans and leads patrol meetings and activities

- Keeps patrol members informed (frequent communication required)
- Participates in PLC
- Appoints Assistant Patrol Leader

**Assistant Patrol Leader (APL)** – appointed by PL (does not fulfill rank leadership requirement)

- Helps the PL lead patrol meetings and activities
- Runs patrol in absence of PL

**TROOP GUIDE** – appointed by SPL

- Older Scout (usually First Class +) who helps the PL of the new/younger patrol to run the patrol
- Introduces new Scouts to how a troop operates
- Helps new Scouts towards earning First Class rank
- Teaches basic Scout skills
- Attends PLC with the PL

**QUARTERMASTER** – appointed by SPL

- Issues equipment and makes sure it is returned in good condition
- Keeps records on patrol & troop equipment
- Makes sure equipment is in good working condition and let adult leadership know of any issues

**SCRIBE** – appointed by SPL

- Attends and takes notes at PLC
- Records individual Scout attendance at all meetings/activities

**DEN CHIEF** – appointed by SM (approved by Cubmaster & Pack Committee Chair)

- Assists a Cub Scout/Den Leader
- Attends Den Meetings and helps with activities
- Attends Pack Meetings and helps with den's responsibilities
- Meets/talks regularly with Den Leader to prepare for upcoming meetings and knows responsibilities (frequent communication is required)
- Take Den Chief training

**CHAPLAIN AIDE** – appointed by SPL

- Assists the Chaplain (adult) with religious services at troop activities
- Helps plan for religious observance in troop activities
- Encourages/leads saying grace at meals while camping and other activities
- Learn about and tell Scouts about the Religious Emblems program for their faith at least once during appointed term (minimum of once a year)

**HISTORIAN** – appointed by SPL

- Gathers photos and facts about troop activities and keeps them in historical file, scrapbook and/or on Troop website/social media (requires frequent communication with the Webmaster)
- Takes care of troop trophies, ribbons and souvenirs of troop activities

**INSTRUCTOR** – appointed by SPL (may have more than one in troop)

- Instructor is an older Scout proficient in a Scouting skill and has ability to teach that skill to others
- Teaches basic Scouting skills
- Schedule/coordinate with SPL for skills instruction for Troop during troop meeting (requires frequent communication with the SPL)

**LIBRARIAN** – appointed by SPL

- Sets up and takes care of the troop library
- Keeps records of books and pamphlets owned by the troop
- Keeps books/pamphlets available for borrowing (should be brought to troop meetings to be made readily available)
- Keeps a system for checking materials out and follows up on late returns
- Adds new or replacement items as needed after approval from PLC/adult leadership

**WEBMASTER** – appointed by SPL

- Maintains the troop website making sure information is current and up to date (requires frequent communication with Historian)
- Works with various unit members on needed topics

**ORDER OF THE ARROW REPRESENTATIVE** – appointed by SPL

- Must be a member of the local Order of the Arrow chapter/lodge
- Attends troop, chapter and lodge meetings
- Serves as communication link between the troop and chapter/lodge
- Helps arrange annual OA elections between chapter/lodge and the PLC
- Encourages Scouts in troop to participate in camping opportunities

**OUTDOOR ETHICS GUIDE** – appointed by SPL

- Organizes police-line to pick up litter at outdoor events (coordinate with SPL)
- Assures the troop adheres to the Principles of Leave No Trace, Tread Lightly and the Outdoor Code
- Help scouts improve their outdoor ethics decision-making skills to help minimize impacts as they hike, camp, and participate in outdoor activities

**BUGLER** – appointed by SPL

- Plays “Assembly” on bugle/trumpet/instrument to start weekly Troop meetings

- Learns other songs for other occasions such as “Reveille” to wake Scouts on campouts

**JUNIOR ASSISTANT SCOUTMASTER** – appointed by SM (may have more than one)

- Current rank of Eagle Scout
- Performs duties as assigned by SM