

Troop Bylaws

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

TROOP 507

LEXINGTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Section 1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

Troop 507 BYLAWS establishes troop policies, procedures, and guidelines as expressed in the Boy Scout Handbook and other official BSA publications. Some information contained herein is in addition and supplemental to the charter and bylaws of the Boy Scouts of America and is intended to provide guidelines for Troop operations.

1.2 Scope

The Troop 507 "BYLAWS" describe how Troop 507 does things under the higher policies of the BSA rules and guidelines. In the event that any guideline set forth in this document contradicts a guideline set forth in any official BSA publication, the BSA publication will always take precedence. Any contradiction should be reported to both the Scoutmaster and the Troop Committee.

These Procedures apply to all members of Troop 507, and to all authorized guests of members of Troop 507, when engaged in any sanctioned troop activity.

1.3 Annexes

Annexes are part of the BYLAWS, but may be updated individually and distributed separately, subject to Committee approval, without effect on the rest of the BYLAWS.

1.4 Responsibility

The Troop Committee is responsible for the content of Troop 507 BYLAWS and for all modifications to the same. Recommendations for changes or enhancements to this document should be made in writing to the Troop Committee Secretary for consideration by the Troop Committee.

Section 2. Troop Organization

2.1 Troop

2.1.1 The Troop will be composed of one Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), one or two Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders (ASPL's), and one or more patrols, each with a Patrol Leader.

2.1.2 The Senior Patrol Leader is elected to his position twice a year, in December and June, by members of the troop present at the meeting during which the election is held, after at least a one-week notice of the forthcoming election. Included in this election notice will be a list of those scouts who have met the criteria for SPL. Candidates for the position of SPL and ASPL must be at least Star rank, and are subject to the approval of the Scoutmaster. No Scout can hold the position of SPL for two consecutive terms without Scoutmaster approval, which can only be granted

when there are no other qualified Scouts wanting to stand for the SPL election. A new SPL takes his post on the January 1st or July 1st following his election.

2.1.3 The Senior Patrol Leader appoints one, or two, Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders. Like the SPL, ASPL's are subject to Scoutmaster Approval.

2.1.4 The following troop positions of responsibility will be appointed by the SPL after approval by the Scoutmaster: Troop Librarian, Troop Scribe, Troop Historian, Troop Bugler, Troop Quartermaster, and other troop positions as may be created by the SPL in consultation with the Scoutmaster. All of these selections should be reviewed with affected Patrol Leaders prior to conclusion.

2.1.5 Troop Guides, Troop Instructors, Den Chiefs and OA Representative will be appointed by the Scoutmaster.

2.2 Patrol

2.2.1 As described in the Boy Scout Handbook, each patrol shall consist of no more than ten scouts who enjoy scouting together, but should contain no fewer than five Scouts in order to efficiently use troop camping equipment.

2.2.2 All Scouts will be members of a patrol, except the SPL and his one or two ASPL's who are temporarily out of their patrols while serving as SPL or ASPL.

2.2.3 Each patrol will have one Patrol Leader, one Assistant Patrol Leader, and shall have other positions of responsibility as follows: Patrol Scribe, Patrol Quartermaster, Patrol Grubmaster and other patrol positions as may be created by the Patrol Leader in consultation with the Scoutmaster.

2.2.4 Patrol Leaders are elected to their positions twice a year, coinciding with election of the SPL, by members of their patrol present at the meeting during which the election is held. Candidates for the position of Patrol Leader must be at least First Class rank (except in the case of first-year patrols), and are subject to the approval of the Scoutmaster. No Scout can hold the position of Patrol Leader for two consecutive terms without Scoutmaster Approval, which can only be granted when there are no other qualified Scouts wanting to stand for the Patrol Leader election. The new Patrol Leader will assume his role on July 1 or January 1.

2.2.5 The Patrol Leader appoints an Assistant Patrol Leader, subject to Scoutmaster Approval, and can fill other positions of responsibility in his patrol (as identified in item 2.2.3 above) from members of his patrol in any manner he chooses, with Scoutmaster Approval. However, care should be taken to allow all Scouts an opportunity to contribute in as many different capacities as possible, over time, in an effort to enhance their experience and leadership growth

2.3 Patrol Leaders' Council

2.3.1 The Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) is the planning and decision-making team within the troop made up of junior leaders.

2.3.2 The PLC, with guidance from the Scoutmaster and his adult assistants, prepares suggestions to present to the Troop to complete their annual program planning held in April.

2.3.3 Within the framework of the annual plan, the PLC plans the monthly campout, and other outdoor activities as scheduled during the year, as well as the weekly meetings leading up to those campouts and outdoor activities.

2.3.4 In addition to planning, the most important thing members of the PLC do is provide junior leadership to the rest of the troop.

2.3.5 The PLC addresses the needs and concerns of each Scout, each patrol, and the troop as a whole, in its decision-making and planning process.

2.3.6 As the top junior leader in the troop, the Senior Patrol Leader, with the advice of the Scoutmaster, leads the PLC and chairs its meetings.

2.3.7 Besides the Senior Patrol Leader, other voting members of the PLC include: assistant Senior Patrol Leaders, Patrol Leaders and Troop Guides.

2.3.8 Each Patrol is represented by its Patrol Leader on the PLC. The Troop Quartermaster, Troop Scribe, Troop Historian, and Troop Librarian are further represented by the ASPL's vote.

2.3.9 Although he has no vote, the Troop Scribe should attend PLC meetings to keep a log of each meeting. Other Scouts in positions of responsibility may be invited to PLC meetings on an as needed basis. (See section 6.2, Patrol Leaders' Council Meetings).

2.4 Adult Scouters

2.4.1 Scouters are the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, Chartered Organization Representative, Troop Committee Members and any registered adult.

2.4.2 Scoutmaster is the adult leader responsible for the image and program of the Troop.

2.4.3 Scoutmaster and his assistant Scoutmasters are appointed by the Troop Committee with approval from the head of the chartered organization.

2.4.4 Scoutmaster and his Assistant Scoutmasters work directly with Scouts in implementing the troop program.

2.5 Troop Committee

2.5.1 Committee shall function in accordance with the National Committee Guidelines.

2.5.2 Committee elections.

- Elections shall be held annually in May for all terms completed or unfilled positions.

- Election slate will be established by a sub-committee of the committee. The sub-committee shall be proposed by the Committee Chairperson and approved by the Committee. The sub-committee shall:
 - The committee shall vote on each position. Prior to the vote, the Chairperson shall determine if there are nominations from the floor. If there are, the additional name(s) shall be added to the slate.
 - A person may hold multiple positions (up to two).
 - Once nominations are closed, the vote for the position will occur. All committee members are allowed one vote. Each individual must be present to cast a vote unless extenuating circumstances exist. When extenuating circumstances apply, the Committee may approve use of absentee ballot (s) by majority vote. The vote shall be by secret ballot unless there is only one person slated for the position. A voice confirmation vote is all that is required when there is only one person on the slate for a position. The committee Chairperson shall reserve his vote for tie-breaking. A majority vote is required. If there are more than two individuals running for a position, and no individual receives a majority, the person receiving the least number of votes will be eliminated and a second vote will be taken to select between the remaining individuals. The process will be repeated until an individual receives a majority vote. If the two lowest individuals on any vote receive the same number of votes, the tie shall be broken by the Committee Chairperson.
 - New Committee leaders will be installed at the July meeting unless circumstances require earlier change of selected positions.
 - Each Committee Officer will serve for one year.
 - If any officer cannot serve his full year, the Committee Chairperson will select an individual to complete the term. The replacement officer must be approved by a majority vote/voice approval of the Committee.
 - The Scoutmaster and Assistants will be selected when needed by consensus between the new and the incumbent Committee Chairperson after conducting an advisory vote within the committee. Participation for the advisory vote is the same as for other Committee positions. The candidate's name shall be submitted to the Chartering Organization Representative for approval.

Section 3. Troop Uniforms

3.1 Uniforms

Troop 507 recognizes two categories of Boy Scout Uniform:

CLASS 'A'

Shirt - Official BSA long- or short-sleeve tan shirt, clean and reasonably pressed, no tears, all proper patches and pins neatly attached in the proper places

Pants - Official BSA Scout pants.

Belt - Official BSA Scout belt and buckle.

Hat - Official BSA Ball Cap.

Neckerchief – any Official BSA Scout neckerchief with any slide unless the Scout is an Eagle Scout. The Scout may then wear the official Eagle Rank Neckerchief. Neckerchief used will be decided by Troop and all Scouts will wear same neckerchief or none at all.

Merit Badge - Official BSA merit badge sash, all proper merit badges neatly Sash attached in the proper places. Required at “dress” occasions such as Courts of Honor for all Scouts that have earned merit badges.

Socks - Official BSA socks.

Shoes - Leather or canvas. Neat and clean.

Class ‘B’

Shirt - Troop 507 T-shirt or any t-shirt from summer camp, Camporee or other official Scouting events. Clean, no tears.

Pants - Clean, solid color pants with no tears.

Belt - Official BSA Scout belt and buckle or Belt/buckle from summer camps or other official Scouting events (Philmont, for example)

Hat - Troop 507 hat.

Shoes - Leather or canvas. Neat and clean.

3.2 Uniform Wear

3.2.1 For normal meetings Scouts should wear Class A uniform without Merit Badge or OA Sashes.

3.2.2 For activities outside normal meetings, Scouts should wear Class A uniforms unless wear of Class B uniform has been approved by the Scoutmaster.

3.2.3 Any Scout unable to comply with uniform and/or scout expenses due to financial hardship should contact Committee Chairman or Chartered Organization Representative for consideration. Committee Chair and/or Chartered Organization Representative will submit information anonymously to Committee for consideration.

Section 4. Troop Meetings

4.1 General Troop Meetings

4.1.1 Troop meetings will begin promptly at 7:00 p.m. every Tuesday night at the meeting place designated by the troop committee.

4.1.2 Troop meeting plans are the responsibility of the Senior Patrol Leader and the PLC. (See Section 10 of this BYLAWS, Troop Planning.)

4.1.3 As allowed for in Troop Meeting Plan Form (see Annex E of this BYLAWS, Planning Forms), the agenda for a regular troop meeting will typically include the following:

- Pre-opening (before the meeting) and set-up
- Opening ceremony (See section 7.2 of this BYLAWS, Opening and Closing Ceremonies, under Ceremonies & Protocol.)
- Skills instruction (Tailored for new and experienced Scouts.)
- Patrol meetings (Patrol corners for patrol business.)
- Inter-patrol activity
- Closing ceremony (See section 7.2 of this BYLAWS, Opening and Closing Ceremonies, under Ceremonies & Protocol.)
- Post-closing (after the meeting) and meeting clean-up

4.2 Patrol Leaders' Council Meetings

4.2.1 Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) meetings are held at least once a month.

4.2.2 See section 2.4 of these BYLAWS, Patrol Leaders' Council, and refer to the Junior Leader Handbook for a BSA description of the Patrol Leaders' Council.

4.2.3 The purpose of the monthly PLC meetings, in general, is to detail plans for the regular troop meetings and for any troop campout or other troop activities scheduled in the coming month.

4.2.4 An agenda for a PLC meeting can include the following:

- Opening (by Senior Patrol Leader)
- Roll Call (by Troop Scribe)
- Previous PLC meeting log review (by Troop Scribe)

- Patrol Leaders' reports (on patrol activities and advancement progress since last PLC meeting)
- Scribe's report (on troop finances, optional)
- Quartermaster's report (on troop equipment, optional)
- Review of any old (unfinished) business
- Review/finalize plans for upcoming events (troop meetings, campouts, etc.) and discuss any other new business
- Scoutmaster's minutes and meeting adjournment (by Senior Patrol Leader)

4.2.5 Additional PLC meetings can be called by the Senior Patrol Leader for planning purposes. Such meetings must be announced in advance so that participants can make the necessary arrangements. These meetings, when called, require adult Scouter support.

4.3 Annual Planning Conference

(See Section 8 of this BYLAWS, Troop Planning)

Section 5. Ceremonies & Protocol

5.1 This section describes Scoutmaster Conferences, Boards of Review, and Courts of Honor. It also defines associated protocol with respect to uniforms, hats, and saluting in accordance with policies and guidelines stated in the Boy Scout Handbook, and as practiced by Troop 507.

5.2 Scoutmaster Conferences

5.2.1 A Scoutmaster conference is a formal review of a Scout who is a candidate for rank advancement conducted by the Scoutmaster in an open, public area.

5.2.2 Scout is responsible for initiating a Scoutmaster conference when he is ready (See Section 4, Rank Advancement, for detailed description of rank advancement procedures.)

5.2.3 Scout can wear any uniform authorized for troop meetings to a Scoutmaster conference, but he must wear a uniform.

5.2.4 Unless unavoidable, a Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster should never conduct a Scoutmaster Conference for his own son. This avoids any conflict of interest and gives the Scout the opportunity to interact with other adults.

5.3 Boards of Review

5.3.1 A Board of Review is a formal review of a Scout who is a candidate for rank advancement conducted by a board of at least three adults drawn from the troop committee.

5.3.2 Advancement Chairperson will normally schedule on a regular basis a Board of Review as set forth in section 4.6.7.

5.3.3 Scout is responsible for "being prepared" and attending his Board of Review as scheduled. A Scout may only advance one rank at a Board of Review.

5.3.4 Scout must wear a Class 'A' uniform to a Board of Review.

5.3.5 Unless unavoidable, a Committee Member should never serve on a Board of Review for his/her own son. This avoids any conflict of interest and gives the Scout the opportunity to interact with other adults.

5.4 Courts of Honor

5.4.1 A Court of Honor is a major troop ceremony conducted quarterly for the purpose of formally recognizing Scouts for rank advancement, merit badges and other awards earned since the last Court of Honor.

5.4.2 Courts of Honor may be planned and conducted by Scouts working on the Communications merit badge. The Senior Patrol Leader must arrange for such a Scout, or Scouts, to organize each Court of Honor. When no Scouts are available for this task, the Senior Patrol Leader can solicit assistance from the Advancement chairperson and/or Scoutmaster.

5.4.3 A Court of Honor requires, at least, an opening, and a closing as well as participation by other Scouts and presentation of awards.

5.4.4 Scouts are required to wear their best Troop Class 'A' uniform to a Court of Honor and it should be clean and complete. This is a formal occasion!

Section 6. Troop Campouts and Activities

6.1 Rules

6.1.1 The following rules apply on troop campouts:

- Pillows must be in a Scouts pack or luggage and not loose.
- Campsites must be kept clean, neat and safe.
- All garbage must be secured nightly, and during the day if left unattended.
- Waste water must be disposed of properly.

- Food must be properly stored in containers and coolers.
- Cooking equipment and eating utensils must be cleaned and stowed after each use.
- Troop, patrol, and personal items must be stored neatly when not in use.
- Unauthorized items on a campout will be confiscated and returned to the Scout's parents after return from the campout.
- Physical obstacles in a campsite must be removed or marked.
- Always wear shoes (except when sleeping!). Footwear used outside the campsite must have a closed toe.

6.2 Unauthorized Items

6.2.1 Items not authorized on troop campouts are:

- No folding camp chairs are allowed on campouts. 3-legged stools and dove stools are allowed and should be attached to Scouts pack. This is due to space concerns when traveling.
- Electronics of any sort (radios, Game Boys, Walkmans, etc.) Two-way radios can be used with Scoutmaster Approval.
- Flammable liquids other than propane provided by Troop.
- Carbonated beverages (Pepsis, Cokes, etc.)
- Chewing gum and candy
- Obscene material as defined by the Scoutmaster
- Any knife other than a folding or lock blade knife.
- T-shirts with off-color remarks
- Foul/abusive language
- Bad tempers!
- Bad attitudes!

Section 7. Troop Finances

7.1 General

7.1.1 The Treasurer will maintain all Troop funds.

7.1.2 Two categories of troop funds will be maintained:

1. General funds (checking account), and
2. Scoutmaster Discretionary Fund

7.1.3 Treasurer will provide a written financial report at each troop committee meeting showing new receipts and payments, by category, since the last financial report, and the current balance of each category of troop funds and other reports as requested by the Troop Committee.

7.1.4 Although the Treasurer will maintain all troop funds, he or she will only be directly responsible for budgeting and managing the troop's general funds.

7.2 General Funds

7.2.1 General funds finance all troop expenses incurred throughout the year.

7.2.2 Troop expenses include, but are not limited to troop camping supplies and equipment, training aids and materials, administrative supplies, items purchased for resale, and other items awarded to Scouts as they advance through the program (badges, patches, pins, etc.).

7.2.3 General funds are derived primarily, from annual registration, dues and equipment fees, but also come from troop money-earning projects and donations.

7.2.4 Prior to the beginning of a new troop calendar year, and based upon the Troop's approved annual plan, Treasurer, with assistance from Scouters and other Troop Committee members, will submit a budget for the management of the troop's general funds for the coming fiscal year to the Troop Committee for approval. Specific fund raising targets will be established.

7.2.5 A copy of the approved general funds budget will be kept by the Treasurer to provide guidance in the disbursement of general funds.

7.2.6 A portion of the general funds annual budget will include a petty cash amount that the Scoutmaster can draw upon throughout the year for Scouting purposes without special approval. Although special approval is not needed all expenses should be justified through receipt or other verifiable documentation. The specific amount, as with most items in the general funds budget, will be a function of the number of Scouts who register, or re-register, in a given year.

7.2.7 Other than the Scoutmaster petty cash amount, all general funds will be disbursed from the Treasurer to the designated Scouter or Committee Member, with approval from the Troop Committee, as necessary to finance committee-approved expenditures. Reimbursement of purchases made will be supported by a signed receiving report, invoice, and/or proof of payment.

7.2.8 Prior to expenditures being made (other than routine expenditures such as badges, etc.), a written purchase order shall be prepared and submitted for approval

by both the Committee Chairperson and the Treasurer with method of payment indicated.

Section 8. Troop Planning

8.1 General

8.1.1 Scouts, with advice and support from the Scoutmaster, his assistants, and members of the troop committee, plan and conduct troop activities, including troop meetings, Courts of Honor, troop campouts, service projects, fund raising projects, hikes, and other troop events.

8.1.2 The following resources are available in the troop library from the Troop Librarian, in support of troop planning: Boy Scout Handbook; Woods Wisdom; Junior Leader Handbook; Boy Scout Requirements booklet; Boy Scout Songbook; Troop Program Planning Kit; BSA merit badge pamphlets, copies of Boy's Life magazines; et. al.

8.2 Annual Planning

8.2.1 For planning purposes, the troop year begins in July 1st and ends in June 30th of the following year. The calendar year budget shall be prepared taking into consideration this planning.

8.2.2 The Annual Planning Conference has three main objectives:

- Set goals for the troop for the coming year and identify monthly themes.
- Define the calendar of events, activities, campouts, projects, etc., necessary to achieve the goals set for the troop and have fun doing it.
- Identify the resources (human and otherwise) necessary to achieve the goals set for the troop.

8.2.3 The plan produced by the Troop at the Annual Planning Conference is submitted to the Troop Committee by the Scoutmaster for review and approval.

8.2.4 The Troop Committee will review the annual plan produced by the PLC in terms of feasibility, desirability, community and committee support required, and in light of the anticipated troop budget for the upcoming year. When approved, the annual plan is returned to the PLC for implementation.

8.2.5 Once approved, the annual plan, as represented by the troop calendar, should be posted on the troop bulletin board at all regular troop meetings, and a copy of the calendar should be distributed to all Scouts, Scouters, and members of the Troop Committee at the beginning of the troop year.

Section 9. Advancement

9.1 Unless unavoidable a SM/ASM should not conduct a SM conference for his/her own son. Unless unavoidable a Committee Member should not sit on a Board of Review for his/her own son.

Section 10. Discipline

10.1 General

10.1.1 Misconduct is not permitted at any troop event. Scouts who choose to misbehave, and are not living by the Scout Law, Oath, or Outdoor Code are making scouting less fun for everyone.

10.2 Discipline Procedures

10.2.1 Misbehavior is defined as violating any of the Scout Laws by deed, vocal action, physical gesture, an/or lack of action which offends others, shows disrespect or disobedience to those appointed in authority or causes a serious disruption in troop activities. Examples of misbehavior include: cursing; swearing; obscene or indecent language; belittling accomplishments; false statements; obscene or indecent gestures; insults to religious or ethnic customs or traditions; and other such activities which violate one of the 12 Scout Laws. Offenses committed at other than scouting activities shall not be judged as misbehavior under this section unless the unacceptable behavior violates local laws, ordinances, military laws and regulations, or is of such a nature as to bring discredit upon the Troop. The procedures for dealing with misbehavior are as follows:

- Scouts who misbehave will be addressed by the PLC for their first offense. The PLC will assess such restrictions or limits to activities and probation period (not to exceed 30 days) as are reasonable with respect to the offense, with approval of both the Scoutmaster and the Troop Committee Chairman.
- Scouts who misbehave either while performing the terms of their limitations or restrictions assessed by the PLC, or for a second time within the set probation period, will be counseled by the Scoutmaster or Committee Chairperson who will assess more severe penalties, restrictions, or limitations as warranted by the second offense.
- Scouts who misbehave a third time within 45 days of a second offense will be referred to the Troop Committee for further disciplinary action with parental inclusion including dismissal from the Troop if necessary.
- All limitations, restrictions, penalties, and other disciplinary action taken will be limited in nature, but designed to assist the Scout in recognizing the wrongdoing and taking corrective action to address the deficiency. No action will be taken which would ridicule, cause physical injury, or infringe upon personal privacy in correcting a

Scout's misbehavior. Restrictions and limitations will be set for specific periods of time, aimed at next major events, campouts, or other activities.

- A serious offense is anything risking injury or damage to someone or something. Examples of serious offenses include: acts of violence with intent to injure including assault; possession of alcoholic spirits or illegal drugs; possession of a weapon not approved by the Scoutmaster; theft; arson; possession of tobacco products by anyone under 18 years of age; immoral exposure or touching; hazing; and vandalism. A serious offense is grounds for immediate action by the Scoutmaster, which can include sending a Scout home from a troop activity. (Parents must be prepared to pick their son up at any time during a troop meeting, campout, or other activity.) The case will then be considered by the Troop Committee, with recommendations from the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters. Possible actions by the Troop Committee include temporary suspension from troop activities or dismissal from the Troop.

- Activities or behavior not specifically covered here, which violates regulations, attempts to circumvent rules, poses hazards, or offends the common sense and decency of others will be dealt with in an equal manner as offenses listed.