



BOY SCOUT

TROOP 8

WEYMOUTH, MA

Welcome to Troop 8 Weymouth!

We are part of the Squanto District, Mayflower Council of the Boy Scout of America.

Troop 8 has been a fully chartered Boy Scout Troop for over 50 years and continually shares the common Scouting goal of building character, learning citizenship, and developing personal fitness through outdoor experiences. These values are further described in the **Scout Law**, the **Scout Oath** and the **Scout Motto**. This handbook contains some important information about the operation of our Troop and our activities.

Scout Law

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

Scout Oath

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

Scout Motto

Be Prepared

MISSION STATEMENT

Troop 8 has six main goals for our Boy Scouts:

- Growth in moral strength and character
- Participate in citizenship and service
- Be comfortable in and appreciate outdoor activities
- Develop an interest in and understanding of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
- Foster Leadership skills
- HAVE FUN

Our program will give him the fundamental tools to be successful in whatever path he chooses in life. These skills are learned by Scouts, working together and doing things for themselves. It is the goal of our Troop to teach the boys how to live by the Scout Law and Scout Oath.

Last, but not least, our goal is to have fun. We have prepared this parent's handbook to answer many of your questions. The following pages describe the organization of our troop and how it functions. We encourage you, as parents, to engage our Leaders if you have any questions or comments. Finally, we would like to welcome you and your family to a wonderful atmosphere that is not only fun, but safe.

THE PATROL METHOD

The core of the Boy Scout program is the Patrol Method. Each Troop is divided into Patrols of 8 to 10 boys with similar interests. The boys in each Patrol work together as a team and are responsible for the success of their respective Patrol. Each Patrol sets up their campsite, prepares meals and cooks together at Troop outings. The smaller nature of the Patrols allows each boy a chance to lead his peers in time, fostering leadership skills amongst the boys.

One critical benefit of the Patrol method is that the older boys in the Patrol teach Scout skills to the younger boys. A properly functioning boy-led Troop is self-sustaining. Through the constant care and attention of the Scoutmasters and the boy leaders, new Scouts who enter the Troop learn by both emulating the older Scouts and being directly taught Scouting skills by these older boys. It is for this reason that consistent participation of boys at all age levels is critical. Without boys of differing ages regularly participating, there is a gap between older and younger Scouts, and the Patrol method becomes strained.

The Patrols join together and reflect the operation of the Troop. As our program is boy-led, there is a hierarchy of Boy Leaders who all contribute to the success of the Troop. The positions are generally elected yearly, by the boys.

SCOUT LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Boy Scouts strives to develop life and leadership skills through its activities. Crucial to this process is a 'Boy-Led' Troop, whereby the boys perform the primary leadership functions amongst themselves, with oversight, input and guidance from adult leaders. To achieve this, there are several Scout level leadership positions:

Senior Patrol Leader (SPL)

The leader of the Troop. He is responsible for the Troop's overall operations. He runs the weekly meetings, patrol leader's council and all troop activities. This is an elected position, voted yearly upon by all Scouts.

Assistant Patrol Leader (ASPL)

Appointed by the senior patrol leader. Troop 8 currently has two ASPLs, each in charge of different areas depending upon how the senior patrol leader sets up his leadership team. Usually, one manages the patrols and the other manages other leadership positions, such as the Troop Quartermaster.

Patrol Leader (PL)

The leader of a patrol. Elected by the patrol periodically, as directed by the SPL or Scoutmaster.

Troop Guide

The Troop Guide mentors a newly formed patrol of new Scouts. A Scout must be First Class or higher rank to be elected as a Troop Guide.

Quartermaster

The Troop's supply boss, he keeps tabs on the Troop's equipment. The Quartermaster inventories all Troop equipment before and after each outing to ensure all equipment is in good working order.

Troop Scribe

The Troop's secretary. The Scribe keeps minutes of the patrol leaders' council meetings, keeps attendance for campouts and meetings. The Troop's Scribe is also responsible for photo-documenting the Troop's activities.

Order of the Arrow (OA) Representative

Liaison between the local OA lodge (Tantamous Lodge 164) and the Troop.

Patrol Leader's Council (PLC)

The PLC acts as a steering committee for the boys and consists of all Patrol Leaders and Assistant Patrol Leaders. These boy leaders meet periodically to discuss Troop business and activities. Each year, the PLC sets goals and develops events for the upcoming program year. This information is then shared with the Troop Activity Coordinator, who makes the required arrangements.

ADULT LEADERSHIP – PROGRAM POSITIONS

In addition to the Scout Leaders, there are several Adult Leaders who regularly accompany the boys on all outings in order to monitor, mentor and ensure the boys are having a safe, meaningful experience. Here is a short list of Adult Leaders:

Scoutmaster

The Scoutmaster is selected and recruited by the Troop Committee and approved by the Chartered Organization Representative. The Scoutmaster must be at least 21 years of age and a registered Adult Leader with Youth Protection Training and serves at the satisfaction of the Troop Committee and the Chartered Organization Representative. The Scoutmaster is the Adult leader in charge of the image and program of the Troop. The Scoutmaster, along with the Assistant Scoutmasters, work directly with the Scouts to train and mentor boy leaders.

Assistant Scoutmaster

There are typically several Assistant Scoutmasters who help the Scoutmaster operate the Troop. Each assistant Scoutmaster is assigned specific duties and reports to the Scoutmaster. They also fulfill the required two-deep leadership standards set by the Boy Scouts of America. There must be at least two adults present at any Boy Scout activity. An assistant Scoutmaster may be 18 years old, but at least one in each Troop should be 21 or older so he or she can serve in the Scoutmaster's absence.

ADULT LEADERSHIP - TROOP COMMITTEE

The Troop Committee serves as the 'board of directors' for the Troop and is responsible for conducting the business of the Troop. The Committee sets Troop policies and enforces discipline where required, while also guiding and supporting the Scoutmaster in executing the Troop programs. One critical duty of the Committee is to provide adults for periodic Boards of Review. The Troop Committee is comprised of BSA-registered, CORI checked adult volunteers who fulfill various roles, as described below:

Chartered Organization Representative

The Chartered Organization Representative is the direct contact between the unit and the Chartered Organization. This individual is also the organization's contact with the district committee and the Local Council. The chartered organization representative may become a member of the district committee and is a voting member of the council. The Chartered Organization Representative appoints the unit Committee Chair.

Committee Chair

The Committee Chair organizes the Troop Committee to see that all functions are delegated, coordinated and completed, and presides over the monthly Troop committee meetings. The chair is responsible for ensuring that quality adult leadership is recruited and trained; advises the Scoutmaster on policies relating to Boy Scouting and the chartered organization; supports leaders in carrying out the program; is responsible for finances and supports the Scoutmaster in working with problems that may affect the overall program.

Treasurer

The Troop Treasurer acts as the Troop's accountant. He tracks Troop finances, establishes the annual Troop budget, pays the required charter fees, and provides reimbursement for those who expend money on behalf of the Troop. The Treasurer tracks all debts of the Troop and deposits all checks for dues. He maintains Troop Checking and Savings Accounts; keeps the Scoutmaster and Troop Committee informed as to the current financial status of the Troop.

Secretary

The Troop Committee Secretary keeps the minutes of meetings and distributes meeting notices. At each monthly Troop committee meeting, the Secretary reports the minutes of the previous meeting. This person is responsible for maintaining the official copy of record for all of Troop 8's documents such as the meeting minutes and agendas, and policy or guideline documentation. The Secretary also maintains the Troop roster and a contact list of all families.

Activity Coordinator

The Activity Coordinator works with the Scoutmaster and PLC to plan all outings. Prepares, collects and organizes permission slips. This person obtains any permits or permissions required for all Troop activities; makes all reservations, and acquires and works with the Treasurer to forward requisite deposits. The Activity Coordinator keeps track of long-term reservation requirements (summer camp, skiing trips, etc.), and arranges transportation to and from all outings. The Coordinator prepares detailed how-to guides after the event for future reference, and forwards to the Scoutmaster for archiving. The Troop Coordinator does not need to be an ASM or someone who goes camping, but requires good organizational skills. Most importantly,

the Activity Coordinator maintains contact with the PLC to develop upcoming program, often more than a year in advance.

Advancement Coordinator

The Troop Advancement Coordinator uses and maintains the Troop records program (currently www.Scoutbook.com). The Coordinator performs updates and data entry for Scout advancement on a regular basis. He generates Advancement Reports for Boards of Review and other advancement functions, and relays same to Council Headquarters. The Advancement Coordinator works with the Scoutmaster to coordinate awards (patches, cards, etc.) and maintains Advancement Charts for Scouts. He purchases and maintains inventories of merit badges, rank patches, cards, etc. Maintains files on all Scouts, including Troop copies of Merit Badge cards. Prepares advancement lists for Courts of Honor.

Life to Eagle Advisor

The Life to Eagle Advisor informs Life scouts of the Troop's Life to Eagle policies and advises Life Scouts on the general process of attaining the Eagle rank. He also acts as a resource to guide Life scouts on appropriate Eagle service projects and provides guidance on paperwork preparation. An important duty of the Life to Eagle Advisor is to assist families of Eagle Scouts with Eagle Court-of-Honor planning, as needed, and he coordinates with the Advancement Coordinator in making requests for Eagle letters of congratulations from dignitaries. The Life to Eagle Advisor should be an Eagle Scout, or the parent of an Eagle Scout who has knowledge of the process.

Fundraising Chair

The Fundraising Chair makes recommendations on fundraising activities. He works with the leaders to provide Fundraising training for youth and families. The Fundraising Chair also helps the Troop Committee and leaders with other Fundraising events and provides sufficient Fundraising opportunities so that boys can offset the costs of basic Troop events..

Troop Equipment Coordinator

The Troop Equipment Coordinator supervises, maintains and helps the Troop procure program appropriate equipment to work with the Troops goals. He works with the Troop Quartermaster on inventory and the proper storage and maintenance of all troop equipment. He makes periodic safety checks on all Troop camping gear, and encourages Scouts in the safe use of all outdoor equipment. The Troop Equipment Coordinator reports to the Troop Committee at each meeting.

Troop Committee Meetings

The Committee meets monthly, typically the second Tuesday of the month. While Troop Committee positions are appointed by the Chartered Organization Representative, we encourage parent attendance and participation. Additionally, members of the Troop Committee are called upon to help out with Scout advancement. Members may be needed outside of typical Committee meeting days for Boards of Review so the Scouts can advance. The Troop Committee circulates meeting invitations for the upcoming Committee meeting, along with a proposed agenda at least 2 days prior to the meeting.

The success of any Troop depends on the involvement of parents, either in active roles (Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster or Committee Members), or in a less active role (fundraising, transportation).

Whatever your desired level of involvement, it is important for us to have parents, Leaders and Scouts who are willing to help.

TROOP OPERATION – MEETINGS

The Troop meets every Tuesday evening from 7:15pm to approximately 8:30pm. In the event of a Holiday or cancellation, where possible, the Scoutmaster or Troop Committee will send notification, via email, at least one hour in advance. Pre-openers, service patrol, patrol meetings for programs or camp prep, etc. start at 7:00pm. Scouts should arrive on time and prepared for the meeting. All Scouts should bring their Scout Handbook to each meeting. Scouts should wear Class A uniforms to the weekly Troop meetings, though Class B uniforms are acceptable during the summer months at the direction of the Scoutmaster or Senior Patrol Leader.

Meeting Place

Troop 8 is fortunate to have a meeting room in the basement of Old South Union Church at 25 Columbian Street, South Weymouth. We are still guests in the hall and are expected to behave as such. Scouts are not allowed to be out of the meeting room without another Scout *and* permission from the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster.

Attendance

We expect Scouts to be at the meetings each week and participate in as many of the weekend trips as they can make. We understand that family and school obligations are of primary importance and may cause the Scout to miss some meetings or events. Please call or email the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) or the Scoutmaster (SM) to tell them that you will not be able to attend the next meeting.

Uniforms

It is expected that all Scouts will wear the Official BSA Scout uniform to all meetings. The uniform (Class A) consists of:

- BSA Khaki short-sleeved shirt
- BSA shorts / pants
- Troop neckerchief
- Troop hat (if applicable)

Patrol Meetings

Troop 8 operates using the Patrol Method. An essential part of this process are regular Patrol Meetings where all Patrol members can have a say and help plan upcoming events. Patrol meetings are usually held at a time outside of normal Troop meeting, though they may sometimes occur before a Troop meeting. As these are critical to your son's experience in Scouting, please try to arrange for all Scouts to be present. If a Scout finds his Patrol Leader is not having regular Patrol meetings, he should alert the Senior Patrol Leader.

TROOP OPERATION – CAMPOUTS AND OUTINGS

One of the tenets of the Boy Scout program is education and development of leadership skills through controlled outdoor experiences. To that end, Troop 8 endeavors to go camping as often as possible; typically once a month. Camping trips normally start on a Friday night and end the following Sunday morning. There are instances where we do not have enough transportation to get all Scouts to the campsite and back. When this occurs, we ask adults who have a vehicle and are able to provide transportation to please coordinate with the Scoutmaster. Parent help is greatly appreciated.

Uniform

Class A uniforms are not generally required at weekend camping trips, though Scouts should bring weather-appropriate clothing. There will be occasions such as camporees, where Scouts should pack their Class A uniforms, but generally, the Class B Troop T-shirts are acceptable on these trips. All uniform questions should be directed to the Senior Patrol Leader, Scoutmaster, or an Assistant Scoutmaster prior to the outing.

Boots must be worn on all camping trips or hikes. Sneakers or other footwear can be brought to wear around the campsite, but boots are a requirement in order to ensure the safety of the Scout.

Permission Slips

The Troop requires parental / guardian permission before a Scout may participate in any Troop activity. As part of new Scout registration, a BSA Activity Consent Form and Approval by Parents or Legal Guardian document should be signed, giving the Scout permission to attend most single-day activities. This permission is valid for his tenure in the Troop. However; individual permission slips are required for specific campouts or other outdoor activities. These individual permission slips are typically distributed to the Scouts during regular Troop meetings one to two weeks prior to the event and must be signed by a parent or guardian and returned to the Scoutmaster at the Troop meeting on the Tuesday prior to the event. Payment is also due at this time. In order to allow for the proper supplies to be purchased in time for the weekend outing, the Troop requests cash payments if you submit payment on the Tuesday prior to the event.

Medical Forms

In addition, all Scouts must complete parts A, B and C of the Boy Scouts of America Annual Health and Medical Record (BSA document 680-001). This form is only valid for 12 consecutive months and must be re-filed with the Troop each year. Additionally, if there have been any changes to a Scout's health condition (i.e. allergies, changes in medication, medical coverage, etc.), please inform the Scoutmaster or Committee Chair as soon as possible so we may update the Troop records. A link to current BSA Medical forms can be found on the Troop website – www.Troop8Weymouth.com.

Personal Equipment - Weekend Outings

Although the Troop provides most of the equipment (tents, cooking equipment) and supplies required for Troop campouts and activities, there are personal items that each Scout must have in order to have a successful outing. These include:

- Scout Handbook
- Sleeping bag / blankets
- Weather-appropriate clothing (depending on the season, weather or program)
- Change of underwear and socks
- Hiking boots
- Mess kit
- Canteen / Nalgene bottle
- Cup / mug
- Fork, knife, spoon for eating
- Pocket knife (only if Scout has earned Totin' Chit)
- Toiletry kit including toothpaste and toothbrush
- Insect repellent
- Sunscreen (seasonal)
- Backpack or duffle bag to contain a Scout's equipment.
- Other items may be required, depending on the nature of the campout. These additional items are discussed at Troop meetings a week or two prior to the Campout.

TROOP OPERATION – SUMMER CAMP

One of the highlights of the Scouting program is summer camp – a weeklong experience to have fun, learn skills, refresh old skills and meet new Scouting friends. Troop 8 has developed a policy of alternating between our Council’s ‘Home’ camp (Camp Squanto) and a camp further away from year to year. Out of state camps may include Camp Roosevelt in Maine, Camp Yawgoog in Rhode Island, Hidden Valley Scout Camp in New Hampshire, and many others. We encourage the boys to bring summer camp ideas to the adult leadership.

Each year, the PLC, with assistance from the Scoutmasters and Troop Activity Coordinator, determine a summer camp location for the upcoming year, though the general pattern has been to alternate destination camps with Camp Squanto in Plymouth every other year. Once a destination has been chosen, the Troop Committee will distribute a payment schedule to all parents, as well as specific details for that year’s summer camp experience. Though the summer camp program may vary slightly from year to year, items that should be packed for summer camp include:

- Foot locker or duffle bag (*should be lockable – combination locks are better than key locks*)
- Scout Handbook
- Canteen / Nalgene bottle
- Sleeping bag / pillow
- Complete Class A Uniform
- Class B Troop T-Shirt
- Toiletry kit, including toothpaste / toothbrush, soap, comb/brush
- 6 pairs each, socks and underwear
- 2 pairs of regular shorts
- 2 regular shirts
- 2 pairs of regular pants
- Sweatshirt or jacket
- Raincoat or poncho
- Hiking boots
- Sneakers
- Extra shoelaces
- Sunscreen, sunburn ointment
- Insect repellent
- Compass
- Flashlight
- Kleenex / handkerchief
- Pocketknife (only for Scouts who have earned Totin’ Chit)
- Bathing suit
- Sandals
- 2 beach towels
- Fork, knife, spoon, cup/mug
- Money
- Books
- Camera
- Paper and pen/pencil
- Watch

****PLEASE STENCIL YOUR SON’S NAME OR INITIALS ON ALL CLOTHES AND PERSONAL ITEMS****

TROOP OPERATION – FINANCES

Dues

Dues are currently \$120 per year. Notices will be sent out to all families at the end of November with all payments due by December 31st. The dues collected help to pay for our registration with Boy Scouts of America, Troop equipment, campsite fees, advancement, awards and miscellaneous Troop expenses.

Other Costs

Along with the annual dues, there are other costs associated with some Troop functions, including, District events, summer camp, or a special event that may require additional, nominal fees from the Scout for patches, etc. Food for weekend camping trips, whether cooked by Patrol or by the Troop, will normally run between \$15 and \$20 per Scout, per weekend, though fees for Camporees and other Council or District events may be slightly more. The money will be collected at the time of the sign-up. A Scout is still responsible for the food expense if he backs out of the trip after food has been purchased. Troop 8 works hard to keep costs as low as possible, while maintaining a quality outdoor program.

Fundraising

Given the broad nature of our program, Troop activities and expenditures cannot be funded by dues alone. Periodically, the Troop will organize special fundraisers to help defray our costs for specific events. For example, cabin rental for a weekend can cost upwards of \$150. These fundraisers are a critical part of keeping costs low for everyone. As such, we expect that all Scouts will participate in these fundraisers.

TROOP OPERATION - ADVANCEMENT

Advancement for each Scout is overseen by the Scoutmasters and the Troop Advancement Coordinator. A Scout can advance in rank by completing the requirements found in the Official Scout Handbook. Each Scout must bring his book to the Troop meeting each week in order to work on advancement during the meetings. Advancement tracking sessions are held between the Advancement Coordinator, the Life to Eagle Advisor and the Scoutmaster on the first and last Monday of each month, but can occur at any time with prior notification and approval from all parties. We encourage the parents to periodically look at his son's Scout Handbook and the pace of his advancement; this is an indication of how your son is doing in the program. Our Troop currently utilizes a program called Scoutbook (www.scoutbook.com) to track a Scout's advancement. Please contact the Scoutmaster or Advancement Coordinator to obtain login credentials for the site.

Boards of Review

In order for each Scout to advance to the next Rank level, he must be successfully complete a Scoutmaster Conference, where his scouting goals and performance are discussed; and a Board of Review, where he meets with the Troop Committee to discuss his thoughts on, and performance with the Troop. Boards of Review and Scoutmaster Conferences are typically held on the first and last Monday of each month, though extenuating circumstances may dictate other times. All dues must be paid before any advancement will be awarded.

Board of Review Checklist

- Are dues paid?
- Has your son been regularly attending Troop meetings?
- Has your son regularly attended special activities (Eagle Service Projects, fundraisers, etc..)?
- Has your son attended most campouts?
- Has your son performed as a leader in the Troop? (older Scouts only)
- Has your son attended Junior Leader Training? (older Scouts only)
- Has your son attended Patrol Meeting, or if he is the Patrol Leader; has he held regular Patrol meetings?
- Does your son have any merit badges which need attention?

TROOP OPERATION – COMMUNICATION

A Boy Scout Troop is a complex organization, and as such, it requires communication to plan, coordinate and execute its activities. In general, event announcements and planning occur at the weekly Troop meetings. Each weekly Troop meeting begins and ends with sharing of upcoming events and their specific details. This puts some responsibility on the Scout to share pertinent details with parents. Understanding that each Scout is a work in progress, and that Scouts may not be at all meetings, we have established several methods for communicating details to parents. It should be noted that while we try to keep all avenues current, the most current information is provided at the weekly meetings.

Weekly Email

We do our best to provide a weekly update email to all parents and Scouts on Sunday or Monday before each meeting. This message typically contains details for activities, as well as forms, lists or maps related to our events and a look ahead of the next few events to help families plan.

Troop Website

Our website will not only keep you informed of upcoming Troop events, but there are photos of past camping trips, pertinent forms and lists, fundraising information, as well as links to other useful Scouting websites. We try to update the website weekly, so please check it frequently. The Troop website address is www.Troop8Weymouth.com.

Troop Facebook Page

Troop 8 also maintains a closed Facebook group for communicating and sharing additional Troop information. As this is a closed Facebook Group, each parent must request membership from one of the Facebook page administrators to access its content. The Facebook group is 'Troop 8 Weymouth MA'.

Troop Notifications – Scoutbook

Troop 8 has recently transferred its advancement, merit badge tracking and some communication features to a program called Scoutbook (www.scoutbook.com). Please contact the Scoutmaster or Committee Chair for login credentials to access your son's Scoutbook record. As this is a service provided by an outside vendor, please check with any spam or junkmail filters you may have to ensure you receive messages from Scoutbook.

Photo Release Form

As part of the Troop operations, the Troop Scribe or an authorized adult may take photographs of Scouts engaged in Troop activities. To ensure the highest level of protection for the boys, Troop 8 has a policy of not posting the names of boys in the photographs, and requires parental permission to use these photos in Troop publications or communication. The Troop Committee will keep a record of all photo release forms, and strive to adhere to the wishes of the parents. If you haven't yet signed this form, please speak with the Scoutmaster, or Troop Committee member.