



Troop 40 Houston Operating Guide

Adopted in 2023 to put into writing basic practices of Troop 40
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Fast Facts About Troop 40

Introduction

These Fast Facts are from our Troop Handbook, we strongly encourage you to browse through the Handbook.

"A game with a purpose"

Lord Baden-Powell, founder of the Scouting movement, famously said that "*Scouting is a game with a purpose.*" In the words of Troop 40's mission statement, we view that purpose as helping Scouts (i) grow into "responsible, compassionate, self-reliant citizens of God's world" who live by the Scout Oath and Scout Law, and (ii) have a lot of fun in the process. We place great emphasis on having a "Scout-led" Troop.

Troop 40 serves boys aged 11 to 17. As with most average size scout troops, we expect to have between 25 to 35 registered Scouts organized into small patrols. Our Scouts are expected to attend many different public and private schools and come from a variety of faiths.

Whom to Contact

A Scout's first point of contact with questions, concerns, etc., should always be his Patrol Leader, or failing that, his Patrol Assistant Scoutmaster ("PASM"). A parent's first point of contact should be his son's PASM or, if a problem persists, the Scoutmaster. (The Scoutmaster is usually very busy on Troop meeting nights, so if possible, please pick another time to speak to him about your son's advancement, etc.) For all summer camps, the single designated Scoutmaster / Trek Leader for that camp from Troop 40 is a parent's first point of contact for issues related to that trip. If you need further help, contact the Troop Committee Chairman.

Use of Email

Troop 40 makes heavy use of email; addresses and other contact information is taken from ScoutBook. Therefore, it is important to keep contact information of all registered participants up-to-date in ScoutBook. ** In Troop 40, the Scoutmaster does not use Scoutbook. Any email sent from the Scoutmaster require attention to read and detail.*

Uniforms

See the Uniforms section in this Troop Handbook. Uniform items and other Scouting items can be purchased at the Scout Shop, on the southeast corner of the North Loop (inside the loop) and East T.C. Jester, 2225 N Loop W. For placement of patches, see the BSA's official Insignia Guide on the Web.

Troop Meetings

The Troop's weekly meetings are on Tuesday nights throughout the year, at 7:30 pm in the East Hall at St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church, our chartered organization at 3600 Brinkman Street. Scouts should strive to attend as many weekly Troop meetings as possible. Our meetings are run by the Scouts themselves, with discreet coaching by adult leaders only when needed.

Campouts

The Troop plans monthly campouts throughout the calendar year, as part of an annual program that is planned and executed by the Scouts themselves through the Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) meeting. The equipment list in the online Troop Handbook will give you an idea what you will need to buy for your Scout.

Summer Camp

We also plan to go to summer camp at some awesome places, from merit-badge camps for all Scouts and to High Adventure camps for the more-experienced scouts. Summer camp is highly encouraged – Scouts have a ton of fun, earn advancement and merit badges, and literally grow up at summer camp. With Scoutmaster approval, we welcome adults who are willing to go to summer camp as Assistant Scoutmasters; they must take the required training.

Advancement; Merit Badges

Scouts advance in rank at their own pace by completing the requirements for each applicable rank (see the Scout Handbook for details). The Troop plans to do a lot of organized advancement activities; see generally the Advancement and Merit Badge sections of the online Troop Handbook for more information. The Advancement Chairman is responsible for the advancement program in Troop 40.

Registering with Troop 40

Boys between the ages of 11 and 17 (inclusive) may join Troop 40. Cub Scouts boys who have completed the Arrow of Light may join the Troop at age 10½. See the online Troop Handbook for a list of forms that you and your Scout will need to complete.

What Troop 40 Provides

The Troop provides each new registered Scout with our custom Troop 40 patch, neckerchief, and neckerchief slide which may be worn on/with the Class A Uniform. All other personal gear is the responsibility of the Scout and his parents. The Troop

furnishes each patrol with a stove, propane, cooking gear, a dining fly, and a lantern owned by St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church. St. Rose of Lima also owns our fleet of canoes, 2 storage containers, troop trailer, and all other gear and equipment associated with Troop 40.

Dues and Expenses

The Troop Dues are \$52 per year per Scout (\$1.00 per week paid by the scout to his patrol). The BSA recharter fee varies per year, but can range from \$60 - \$80 per year. Each registered scout is also required to have one parent or guardian as a "member" by paying the annual adult recharter fee (around \$50-\$60). In addition to dues, each Scout should expect to pay approximately the following: Uniform: \$80. Campouts: \$20 per campout for food, plus \$10 to \$15 per campout for travel meals, spending money, and sometimes \$15-\$20 for travel transportation. Summer camp: Typically, \$400 for a week of merit-badge summer camp (excluding transportation). High-adventure camps for older Scouts normally will cost more.

Financial Assistance

Scouts have opportunities to participate in Troop fundraising activities which can assist with payments for High Adventure or overdue scout dues. A scout is never denied an opportunity due to lack of the ability to afford it. Scouts who need financial assistance should request assistance from the Scoutmaster.

Special Needs Scouts

Make the Scoutmaster and your Scout's PASM aware of your son's special needs.

Troop Committee

The Troop 40 Committee meets the 3rd Monday of each month at 7:00 pm at St. Rose of Lima, subject to change. All parents of scouts and Adult leaders are encouraged to attend.

Core Committee Members

- Committee Chairman
- Advancement Chairman
- Chartered Organization Representative
- Treasurer
- Membership
- Quartermaster
- High Adventure
- Flag Fundraising

Adult Involvement

We need YOU! As with any troop, the "official" adult leaders can't possibly do it all. We have both "outdoor" and "indoor" adult jobs. We're friendly and supportive, we'll train you, and we absolutely, positively guarantee you'll have a great time. Experience shows that, the more involved a Scout's parent is in the Troop's adult leadership, the more likely the Scout is to remain in Scouting and someday earn the rank of Eagle Scout.

Active Participation

The advancement requirements for each of the Scout ranks (as set forth in the Scout Handbook) includes some requirement that the Scout be active in his troop and patrol. The BSA Guide to Advancement defines that "Active Participation" requires that:

1. The Scout is registered.
2. The Scout is in good standing.
3. The Scout meets the unit's reasonable expectations; or, if not, a lesser level of activity is explained.

Set forth below are a set of guidelines outlining Troop 40's reasonable expectations for participation. These guidelines articulate a minimum set of expectations for Active Participation.

As outlined in the Guide to Advancement, if a Scout falls below these minimum expectations, a special Board of Review will decide whether the Scout meets the requirement of participation in order to advance.

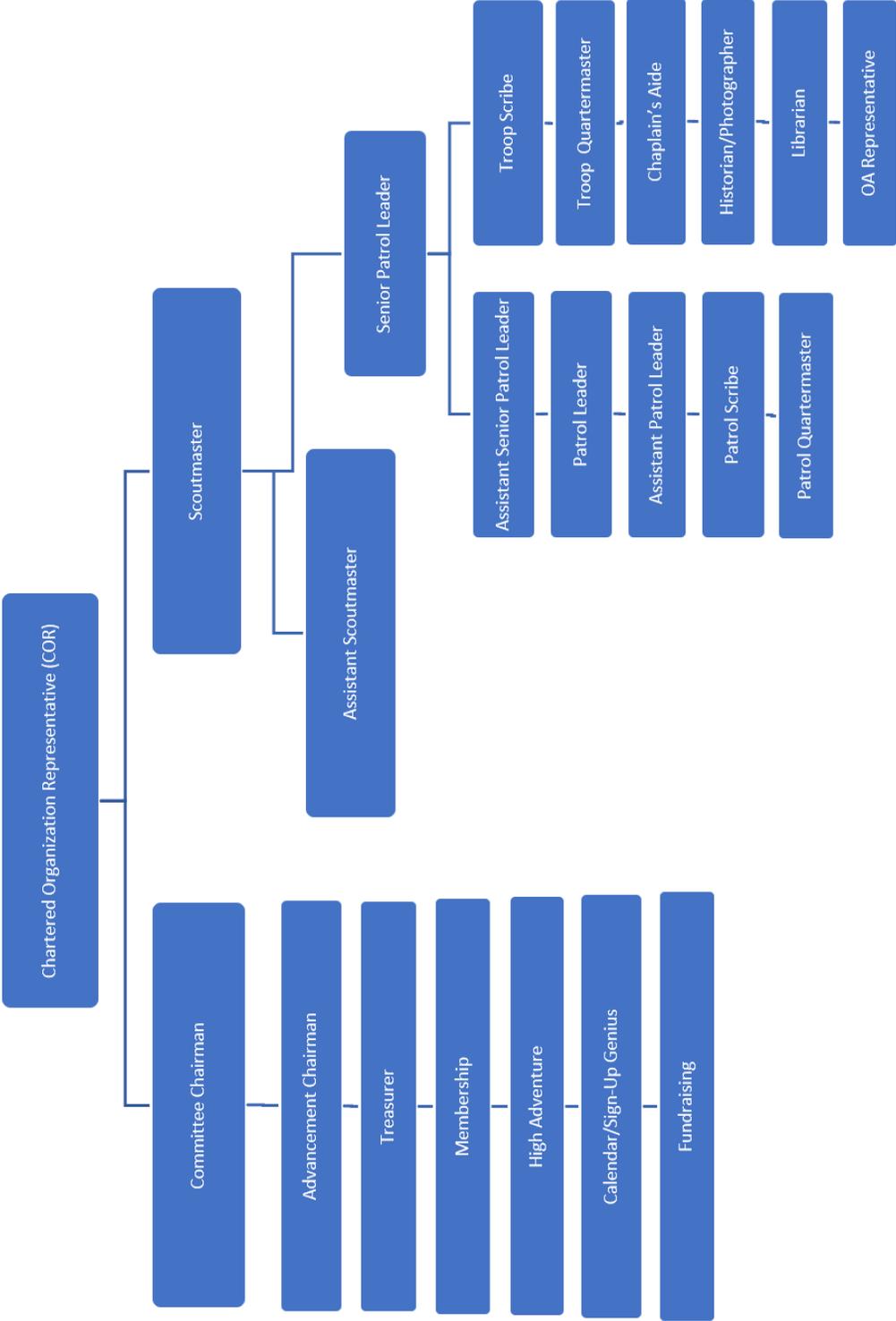
Troop 40's minimum expectations for active participation:

- For advancement to Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class, active participation is specifically defined in the Scout Handbook. For example, for Second Class, a Scout must, "since joining, have participated in five separate troop/patrol activities (other than troop/patrol meetings), at least three must be held outdoors." Possible troop/patrol activities include, e.g.,

Campouts, Service Projects, and are signed off by the Scout's PASM. Troop Activities does not include a merit badge class, or Cub Scout Pack or Den activity.

- For advancement to Star, Life and Eagle, the Scout Handbook requires more broadly that the Scout "be active in [his] unit (and patrol if [he is] in one) for at least [X number of] months as a [Prior Rank] Scout."

Leadership Model Chart



Adult Leader Registration

Adults wishing to serve in any leadership capacity in Troop 40 must register as BSA adult leaders. The BSA registration application is available from the Troop Membership Coordinator, and can also be completed through BeAScout.org. The application requires the applicant's Social Security number as well as contact information for three references. It also includes a mandatory authorization for the Sam Houston Area Council to conduct a criminal background check. The Troop Committee Chairman and the Troop's Chartered Organization Representative are each required by BSA policy to review and approve all adult-leader registration applications. BSA policy requires that a certification of completion for Youth Protection Training ("YPT") must be submitted together with each new adult registration application. This means a new adult leader must complete YPT and print out the completion certificate before giving his or her registration application to the Troop Committee Chairman for processing. Registration can also be accomplished via BSA online registration tools with all the same approval requirements.

Adult Leader Training

Troop 40 strongly encourages all parents to take the Scout leader basic training courses listed in the BSA document, "What Makes a Trained Leader." This training helps all parents understand and assist in achieving the Troop's program and goals. NOTE: Youth Protection Training, which is one of these introductory courses, is required for any adult leader having direct contact with Scouts. It can be taken either online or in person. The BSA's Guide to Safe Scouting has a good summary of its youth-protection guidelines. (Parents would also benefit from taking the Troop Committee Challenge online training.) All but two of these introductory courses can be taken online in about 30 minutes to 1 hour each. The one exception is Introduction to Outdoor Skills (or IOLS) which is in-person/overnight training, and required for Scoutmasters and Assistant Scoutmasters.

Advancement

General Advancement Information

See the Scout Handbook for the specific requirements to advance to each rank; those requirements are also available at the MeritBadge.org website. See also the BSA Guide to Advancement and the Advancement Policies handbook at MeritBadge.org. Scouting's advancement program is a self-paced individualized program. Parents should familiarize themselves with the advancement program, **but it is essential that parents step back and allow their Scout to experience and learn from the safe failures, recoveries, and successes of the advancement program.**

Advancement: The Scout's Responsibility

Each Scout should set a specific target date for a Scoutmaster conference and then a Board of Review for his next rank, then work backwards from that final target date to set interim target dates for completing the various requirements. Scouts are responsible for keeping track of their own progress, setting their advancement goals, and designing their own course and pace. The adult leaders and parents will encourage them, but success or failure is up to the Scout himself. Each Scout can check his advancement status through the approvals in his own Scout Handbook and on the Troop website, www.Troop40Houston.org.

A Scout should follow these basic procedures for advancing in rank:

1. Meet the requirements for the advancement or award; have all required spaces in his Scout Handbook signed by the appropriate adult leader(s). Unlike Cub Scouts, **parents do not sign off on their sons' advancement work.**
2. Make an appointment for a Scoutmaster conference. The Scout himself should do this, not the parent. The Scoutmaster or Advancement Chairman will kindly remind the parents to have the Scout contact them for their advancement requirement.
3. Ask the Advancement Chairman to schedule a Board of Review. The Scout himself should do this, not the parent. When a Scout completes a requirement for rank advancement or a merit badge, it's his responsibility to make sure that his book (or merit-badge card) is signed off by the Scoutmaster. When a Scout advances to the next rank or completes a merit badge, the completed merit badge should be submitted to the Advancement Chairman who records it appropriately in our electronic database. If a Scout completes a "partial" on a merit badge, that too will be recorded in our database. But to repeat, it is the Scout's responsibility to make sure this happens.

Advancement Timetable (suggested)

Although the Scout advancement program is self-paced, the following is Troop 40's suggested time frame for minimum time and experience for rank advancement.

First Class: 12 to 24 months active.

Star: roughly 36 to 48 months active; with high level of participation.

Life: 4 to 5 years active; with high level of participation and leadership.

Boards of Review

In Troop 40, each Scout must personally contact the Advancement Chairman to arrange a time for a Board of Review, except for his Board of Review for the Eagle Rank. (A board of review for Eagle rank is scheduled by the Troop's Committee Chairman after the Sam Houston Area Council has approved the Scout's Eagle Application. The District Eagle Scout Chairman must be a representative on the Eagle Board of Review for the Lonestar District.) Parents and adult leaders are encouraged to participate as members of Boards of Review; the review process can be very rewarding for both the scout and the board member. Parents may serve as board members, however they may not serve on the Boards of Review for their son. The Troop 40 Board of Review members are chosen carefully by the Advancement Chairman.

For an overview of how to conduct a Board of Review, see "Boards of Review" at MeritBadge.org, based on the BSA publication Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures, #33088B. Some key points: A board of review cannot be conducted until the Scoutmaster conference for that rank has been completed. A board of review is made up of at least three and not more than six members of the Troop Committee. The Scout must present himself at the scheduled time with his Scout Handbook properly signed for the requirements for rank to which he is advancing. The Scout should be in full "**Class A Uniform**". Unless excused because of other circumstances approved by Scoutmaster or Board of Review Chairman. The review is not an examination; the board does not re-test the candidate. The Scout should be asked where he learned his skill, who taught him, and the value he gained from passing this requirement. For each rank, the Scout is expected to portray a level of growth. The Scoutmaster may not sit on Boards of Review.

- The decision of the Board of Review is arrived at through discussion and must be unanimous.
- The Chairman of the Board of Review fills out a Board of Review Report Form and gives it to the Advancement Chairman.

Scout Handbook

Each Scout should safeguard his Handbook by (i) clearly marking his name on the outside, and (ii) protecting it from "the elements", for example, with a cover available for purchase at the Scout Shop. The Handbook contains a wealth of practical information needed for advancement. Each Scout should carefully study the relevant section(s) of the Handbook when working on rank advancement.

A Scout's advancement is recorded in the pages at the back of his Handbook. Each Scout is responsible for asking the Scoutmaster (or his assistants) to sign his Handbook as soon as he completes any requirement. Even though advancement data is entered into the Troop's electronic Scoutbook.com database, the Scout's Handbook is the official and primary advancement record and should be safeguarded in case of database problems. Before each campout or advancement session a Scout should photocopy all signed advancement pages of his Handbook in case the Handbook gets lost.

Buddy system (activities)

The buddy system for Scout activities is very simple: Never leave your buddy nor let him leave you. If the buddy system is good enough for Navy SEALs, it's good enough for us. The buddy system should be used:

- for all water activities;
- when outside immediate camp area; or
- if separating from the main group when traveling.

If you get caught without your buddy at a "buddy check," there will be consequences. For example, if you are swimming, both you and your buddy will have to get out of the water for a while. The buddy system for merit badge work is slightly different; see that section for more details.

Campouts

Troop 40's Weekend Campout Program

The Troop expects to camp at least 10 times per year; which included monthly camping, summer camp, and high adventure.

Each campout is organized around a program theme, for example:

- Canoeing and kayaking in the Hill Country, lakes, and the Colorado River.
- Backpacking and climbing at Enchanted Rock.
- Shooting with shotguns, BB guns, .22 rifles.

Campout Transportation

The Troop expects to travel to all campouts via motorcade leaving from St. Rose of Lima on Friday around 6:00 pm. A travel cost may be needed on longer camping trips and will be included in the campout registration. Adult drivers are strongly encouraged to take as many Scouts with them as possible (always observing the two-deep rule for youth protection). The Troop trailers are pulled by an adult driver.

Campout Food ("grub")

Both Scouts and adults (the "Mickey Mouse Patrol") cook by patrols. Each patrol's designated grubmaster for the campout is responsible for planning the weekend menu, buying food, and supervising the cooking. The Mickey Mouse Patrol should plan to model good camping practices by cooking foods that Scouts could cook with their standard patrol gear. If a Scout or adult signs up for a campout and food is purchased, the Scout or adult is responsible for the grub fee even if he ends up not attending the campout. TIP: Before your new Scout's first campout, have him do some cooking and clean-up at home (ideally, together with his patrol); that will make it easier for him to cook and clean up at their first campout.

Campout Jobs

Everyone works at a campout, Scouts and adults alike. Each Patrol Leader designates individual Scouts to be in charge of planning patrol menus, collecting money, arranging transportation, preparing equipment, buying food ("grubmaster"), cooking and clean up. Every patrol, including the Mickey Mouse Patrol, should have a duty roster covering the entire campout weekend.

Campout Schedule

The typical schedule for campouts is approximately as follows:

- Friday night: Arrive at the campsite, set up camp, have a snack.
- Saturday: Breakfast. Morning activities. Lunch. Afternoon activities. Free time / advancement work. Dinner. Campfire.
- Sunday: Breakfast. Scout's Own chapel service. Break camp: clean up patrol equipment; inspection and stowage of patrol equipment. Clean sweep of the campsite. Depart for home.

Camping Equipment

Each Scout is responsible for his personal gear; see the list of recommended personal gear. Troop 40 provides shared patrol gear, including lanterns, stoves and cooking equipment, for each patrol. A Patrol Quartermaster (Patrol QM) (who is a Scout) is responsible for his patrol's cooking gear on each campout. Generally, that Scout will check his patrol gear prior to a campout. The Patrol QM should check for missing items, and clean the gear if needed. He should clean it thoroughly and restock the chuck box before returning it to the Boy Scout Container at the following meeting. (Patrol members should help clean up patrol gear before leaving the campout.) No food should be left in the patrol equipment box between campouts. **Take care of your equipment, and it will take care of you.**

Campout Rules

The following rules apply to all Scouts and adults. The Scout Oath and Scout Law govern everyone in camp, including both Scouts and adults, at all times.

Sign-ups: Everyone, Scouts and Adults, must be signed up in advance to attend any campout. Troop 40 uses SignUp Genius.

Just showing up at camp or at the departure point is not acceptable.

Uniform requirements: Scout and adult leaders are to wear their Field (Class A) uniform to and from the campout and to flags and dinner. Scouts should wear the Activity (Class B) uniform for the remaining time, except for sleeping or activities that require different attire. See the Uniform section on this Handbook for more details.

Camping is by patrols: At campouts, patrol members camp together in the location designated for their patrol. Sharing of tents by Scouts within a patrol is expected. **Adults do not share tents with Scouts, including their own sons, and generally avoid the area of their own son's patrol.** Adults (the "Mickey Mouse Patrol") ordinarily will camp in their own designated campsite.

Stay out of other patrols' areas: Scouts should request permission before entering another patrol's campsite. Adults should request permission before entering any Scout patrol site (general checks of a patrol campsite may be conducted by the Scoutmaster without notice). Adults should discourage Scouts from being in the Mickey Mouse area unless they have a specific need to be there.

Hands off: Don't touch someone else's equipment, tent, or belongings, unless you have the owner's prior permission.

Everyone works: All Scouts and adults are expected to do their share of patrol duties in accordance with the duty roster.

Keep the campsite squared away: All campers are to continually keep 'shipshape' their tents, personal gear, and patrol- and troop gear. The entire Troop assembles for a "clean sweep" of the camping area at the end of each campout.

Fire safety: Scouts may build and light ground fires (cooking and campfires) only when and where authorized by the Scoutmaster and Land Owner. No unauthorized fires are permitted. Fire safety rules will be strictly enforced. A fire must never be left unattended.

No electronic equipment, liquid fuels or other prohibited items. The use of liquid fuels by Scouts for starting any type of fire is prohibited. EXCEPTION: If the Scoutmaster has previously authorized the use of backpacking stoves at a campout, liquid fuel will be dispensed and re-collected by the quartermaster or his designee at the campout. No Scout or Mickey Mouse, except the

quartermaster or his designee, shall travel to or from a campout with liquid fuel in a backpacking stove tank. (See also the list of prohibited items and Mobile Communication Device Policy)

No flames in or near tents. No fires or open flames (including stoves, lanterns or propane bottles) are allowed in or near tents.

Buddy system. The buddy system is simple: Never leave your buddy nor let him leave you.

Vehicle rules. Keep vehicles out of the campsite at all times, including when loading and unloading Scouts, adults and their personal gear, except as specifically authorized by the Scoutmaster or Land Owner. Leave cars in the designated parking areas.

Water-safety rules. Scouts and Mickey Mouse are to follow Safety Afloat and Safe Swim Defense procedures and policies at all times for all water activities. All Scouts and adults must take the standard BSA swim test to determine how they can participate in aquatic activities.

Hazardous Weather: during a campout a unit may experience hazardous weather situations including thunderstorms, flash floods, excessive heat, ice, and/or snowstorms. To mitigate the risk of such situations, the Scoutmaster will adjust plans and activities as necessary and as prescribed by BSA's Hazardous Weather training (which is required for all Assistant Scoutmasters and Scoutmasters).

Lights Out: All Scouts are to be inside their tents at 10 pm (or otherwise at the Scoutmaster's discretion). Lights will be out and talking will stop by 10:30 pm. No Scout should leave his tent (except for brief trips to the latrine or to report illness or other emergency) until reveille the next morning.

No fighting, hazing, harassment, or excessive roughhousing: There will be no hazing or harassing (physical or verbal) of any kind. Fighting, hitting, wrestling, or rough horseplay are not permitted. A Scout will not put himself or another Scout in physical danger.

No early departures unless excused: Scouts are strongly encouraged to attend the entire campout. Scouts may not leave the immediate camp area without the express permission of the Scoutmaster, and must check out with the Scoutmaster and Senior Patrol Leader just before departure. Unless a Scout has an urgent need to leave early, and has been excused by the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) and Scoutmaster, all Scouts are to remain in camp until dismissed by their Patrol Leader after the Troop's "clean sweep" of the campsite.

No alcoholic beverages permitted (it's BSA policy) or **illegal drugs** (it's the law).

No non-Troop 40 siblings / youth: Non-Scout siblings are not welcome on campouts. Their presence tends to detract from the program focus and undermine enforcement of campout rules.

Consequences of failing to abide by the camp and Troop rules may include time-outs, extra work detail, calls home, being sent home, or in severe cases being suspended or even expelled from the Troop. Parents may be required to travel to camp at their expense and take a Scout home who fails to abide by the Troop and camp rules. A warning system will be in effect for minor inappropriate behavior problems. Consequences will be assigned as warranted. The most severe consequences may be assigned directly without assignment of less-severe consequences first. In the case of a situation requiring disciplinary action, only the Scoutmaster or single designated Trek Leader for a summer camp should be having those discussions with the Scout and/or their Parent(s). The Troop Committee Chairman may be included, as necessary.

Trail Camp (February Troop Campout)

Trail camp is designed to be the first campout new Scouts attend when joining the Troop. Cub Scouts from Pack 40 crossover in February and therefore they first join the Troop at the beginning of February. Trail Camp is usually held the 3rd or 4th weekend in February depending on the availability of the troop calendar and the Land Owner. Trail Camp is 'themed-based'. Each year is designed around a different theme and Scouts and adult Scouters dress as characters related to the Trail Camp theme (*examples of past themes are pirates, star wars, knights, avengers, etc*). The yearly theme is announced at the beginning of February. Adults are assigned certain characters to play and the Scouts must correctly 'investigate' and discover which character is which adult. Scouts earn and win coins throughout the weekend by learning and competing in scouting skills (*such as: fire building, knots, team building, orienteering, first aid, etc*) and the patrol with the most coins on Sunday wins Trail Camp. The winning patrol is granted 'bragging rights' and a 1st Place Prize, which varies from year to year.

Trail Camp is a great time for the new Scouts who just joined the Troop to submerge themselves in a troop camping experience that will allow them to fully join and become part of the Troop 40 Family. Trail Camp is a special time for both Scouts and adult Scouters, including new dads who just crossed over or joined with their son.

We highly encourage and expect dads of Scouts to be involved in their son's scouting journey. No previous scouting experience is required to be involved as an adult.

Campout Personal Gear

Scouts should strive to bring the minimum gear necessary to a campout, and to pack it so that all gear can be carried by the Scout to his patrol's campsite in a single trip. Print out the list below and use it as a checklist for each campout. The Scout Handbook also has helpful information on camping and camping gear, especially its list of Outdoor Essentials that should be taken on any hike or other activity.

Scout Handbook for advancement work (make a photocopy of all advancement pages that have signatures; leave the photocopy home in case the Handbook gets lost)

Scout uniform –wear the Field (Class A) uniform to and from the campout and at flags and dinner; wear the Activity (Class B) uniform the rest of the time

Sleeping bag — should be "backpackable," with a stuff sack, and sufficient for 20-degree weather, e.g., at Enchanted Rock Ground pad for sleeping bag, or inflatable Thermarest®

Backpack (internal- or external frame)

Tent (no larger than 2- or 3-person size; 10-person tents are not allowed). May be shared, but only with a Scout in the same patrol and no more than 2 years apart in age.

Groundcloth for tent

Water bottle(s) or Camelbak®-type water sack with drinking tube (sized to carry a minimum of 2 liters)

Reusable cup, plate/bowl, knife, fork and spoon – the Troop does not use paper plates, plastic utensils, etc., except on rare occasions

Folding knife (up to 4" blade; no sheath knives)

Sturdy rain jacket and pants — ponchos do not provide sufficient protection, especially in wet winter weather

Head lamp using small 2 AAA batteries (preferred) or small flashlight (head lamps are very handy for after-dark work in camp, e.g., pitching tents, cooking, dishes, etc.)

Waterproof or water-resistant boots (not typical athletic shoes or sneakers)

Scout Handbook, pen, notebook

Small towel, toiletries (soap, toothbrush, non-aerosol insect repellent and sunscreen)

Synthetic or wool hiking socks *

Synthetic t-shirts or shirts *

Extra underwear, including synthetic "long johns" for cold-weather camping.*

Synthetic fleece jacket or pullover *

Synthetic pants, either fleece or nylon, with good pockets — zip-offs are best *

A warm hat (not a baseball cap) that will shed water

Swim suit (swim shirts, quick dry shirts or other appropriate clothing for activity)

* Parents please note: Cotton clothing is a very poor choice for camping and swimming; it's bulky, cold and slow to dry when wet, which can contribute to hypothermia. Layers of quick-drying synthetics such as Supplex®, are much better. Polartec®, or a similar synthetic fleece, is excellent for layering and remains warm even when wet. Certain dangerous or disruptive items are prohibited at campouts; see the list of prohibited items for details.

Chartered Organization

Scout troops do not exist in a vacuum. Every troop is sponsored by a church or other community organization that has been granted a one-year charter by the Boy Scouts of America ("BSA"). Troop 40's chartered organization is St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church, often referred to as "St. Rose of Lima". The church received its first BSA charter for boy Troop 40 shortly after the parish was established in 1950, and has been continuously rechartered since that time.

The Chartered Organization Representative (COR) is a member of the chartered organization designated by its head to serve as a liaison between the chartered organization and its Scouting units.

Courts of Honor

Advancement is recognized at a formal Troop Court of Honor held throughout the year in May, September, and December. The Court of Honor provides an opportunity for Scouts to be acknowledged for their work and advancements. At a Court of Honor, each advancing Scout will receive a card for each rank advancement, rank certificate with pins, and merit badges they have earned. This proves receipt of the award — if other records are lost or incorrect, these cards and certificates could be the Scout's last-resort way of verifying his advancement. It's a good idea to collect and store these cards in a safe place in the unlikely event of other records being lost or incomplete.

Families are strongly encouraged to attend as the Court of Honor is a special occasion. The Courts of Honor are a formal occasion where the entire Troop, both Scouts and adults are expected to wear full Class A Uniform. Parents are asked to stand with their Scout as he receives his rank award. The Courts of Honor program is planned and coordinated by the Advancement Chairman.

Expense Reimbursement

The Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, Troop Committee members, and other volunteers who have or will extend personal funds for Scout activities, and expect to receive reimbursement for those funds, must know that such funds are: 1) to be within the established budget which is approved in the fall of each year or; 2) approved by the Troop treasurer or Troop Committee Chairman as funds which are available, but which are not so budgeted. This means that Adult Leaders who have responsibility for monthly camping activities, summer camps, or other such activities must project costs and assess participants for the expenses associated with that specific activity in order to not exceed any budgeted funds which may be available from the Troop Committee. Adult Leaders for summer camps are expected to create a budget and collect sufficient assessments from the participants so that the entire activity will be self-supporting. Otherwise, those who spend personal funds on Troop programs do so at the risk that they might not be fully reimbursed. All matters related to reimbursement should be addressed to the Troop Treasurer.

Fundraising

Troop 40 Flag Fundraiser

Troop 40 operates a Flag Fundraiser as our main yearly fundraiser. In cooperation with Pack 40, the Troop and Pack share responsibility for the Flag Fundraiser throughout the year. The Flag Fundraiser consists of building new flags, placing flags in customer yards, picking up flags, and keeping proper storage of flag in the Troop and Pack containers. The profits from the Flag Fundraiser are split between the Troop and Pack. Scouts earn money into their Troop Account by signing up to work the Flag Fundraiser.

Overall, the Flag Fundraiser is overseen and controlled by the Flag Fundraising Committee; which consists of the: Troop Committee Chairman, Troop Treasurer, Pack Committee Chairman, and Pack Treasurer. Other members may be assigned as needed by the Troop Committee Chairman or Pack Committee Chairman. In Troop 40, all matters and questions relating to the Flag Fundraiser can be directed to the Fundraising Coordinator.

Mickey Mouse Patrol

At campouts and Troop meetings, all adults present comprise the "Mickey Mouse" Patrol, with the Patrol Leader being the Scoutmaster or his designee.

The Mickey Mouse are expected to operate by the patrol method, in part to serve as a model for Scout patrols, and in part because the patrol method works very well. See also the discussion in the "Troop Meetings" section of this Handbook about the need for the Mickey Mouse to stay out of the Troop meeting per se.

Medications

Scouts who take medications should do so during Troop activities, including campouts and summer camp. We know from experience that Scouts who don't take their meds may well cause problems for themselves as well as for other Scouts and adult leaders.

Parents should regularly update their Scouts' medical forms with all meds being taken or prescribed. Before departure for a campout, etc., each such Scout's parent should give the Scout's meds to the duty Health and Safety Officer (HSO) in a plastic bag and the original bottle clearly labeled with the Scout's name and dosage information. The HSO will often be the

Scoutmaster. (The duty HSO might, but might not, be a physician, nurse, etc.) **To protect our Scouts and our adults, no Scout will be allowed to self-medicate.**

Meetings (Troop)

Scouts who miss meetings also miss out on the fun; they start falling behind their peers in skill development; and often they eventually drift away from Scouting entirely missing the true benefits.

Regular attendance at Troop meetings and activities is required for advancement.

Scouts should let their Patrol Leaders know when they will be unable to attend a meeting or activity. Scouts who miss meetings are responsible for obtaining any information they may have missed.

Scouts sit by patrol at Troop meetings.

The Scout Sign (ask your son to show it to you) is used to call for order, quiet, and attention, and should be observed by both Scouts and adults.

The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) or one of his assistants might schedule different patrol activities or plan upcoming events with other members of the troop. The Troop is a 'boy run' program, therefore the 'boys' do their share in planning the upcoming events and campouts.

While any parent may observe the parent's Scout at any Troop activity, our Scouts have consistently expressed the view that adults should stay out of the Troop meeting per se and let the Scouts take the lead. The Troop strongly encourages parents who are not Assistant Scoutmasters (PASM) to instead attend adult information and training sessions and visit with other adults outside the Scout Room. We also encourage non-Assistant Scoutmasters to inquire about becoming an Assistant Scoutmaster!

Any PASM or other adult who sits in on a Troop meeting should take a seat in the back of the room – don't stand or walk around in the room – and remain quiet as to not in disrupt the meeting at hand.

Merit Badges

[See also the "Merit badge counselors" and Scout responsibilities for advancement sections of this Handbook.]

Basic Information

A Scout wishing to advance in rank above First Class must earn a specified minimum number of merit badges for each rank. For practical advice about earning a merit badge, see the BSA guidance at MeritBadge.org. Here are some useful things to know:

Merit badges work differently than Cub Scout activity badges and pins. BSA policy requires that the Scout must hold a discussion with the Scoutmaster to identify an approved counselor for the merit badge work. That discussion is documented through the Scoutmaster signature on the Application for Merit Badge **blue card**. Due to the nature of some merit badges, attending a merit badge class at a merit badge fair, or museum, may only complete a portion of the requirements for a merit badge. Under these circumstances, the Scout should also identify the counselor he plans to use to complete the requirements.

A Scout should obtain and read the current pamphlet published by BSA (available at the Scout Shop) for the merit badge he wishes to earn. Troop 40 maintains a library of some Merit Badge pamphlets available for download on our troop website. The Troop Librarian should be contacted to update these pamphlets. The latest requirements and worksheets (highly recommended) usually are also available at the MeritBadge.com.

Youth Protection Principles must be followed during all merit badge activities. As a registered scouter, the merit badge counselor must be current in YPT, and adhere to all policies of the BSA.

There are more than 130 merit badges covering a range of hobbies and careers; some are designed to be of interest to younger Scouts and others to older Scouts. How hard a merit badge is will depend on the badge and on the age and experience of the Scout; Backpacking and Environmental Science are quite challenging, while the Fingerprinting and other craft badges are very easy.

In Troop 40, many merit badge counselors work with groups of Scouts (nicknamed "merit badge classes") on a scheduled basis during the year. Announcements and signups for merit badge activities generally take place at Troop meetings and are usually also announced through our Troop email notifications. Other merit badges can be earned at summer camp, merit badge fairs, or on an individual basis from registered BSA merit badge counselors, qualified for that merit badge.

Troop 40 recommends that Scouts work on merit badges appropriate to their ages and experience, as described in the "Recommended merit badge sequence" section.

Troop 40 strongly recommends that a Scout not earn (i) more than three Eagle-required merit badges with any one counselor, nor (ii) more than five total merit badges with the same counselor, nor (iii) any merit badge with the Scout's parent unless the Scout is part of a merit badge class of five or more Scouts being counseled by the parent.

When the counselor is satisfied that the Scout has met each requirement, the Scout should be sure to remind the counselor to sign the blue merit badge card completed. The Scout is then accountable to turn the Application for Merit Badge portion of the blue card in to the Troop Advancement Chairman. At the next Court of Honor, the Scout will receive the merit badge and an achievement card.

Meeting Merit Badge Requirements

A Scout cannot earn a merit badge merely by sitting through a class. Each Scout must individually demonstrate to the counselor that he has met each requirement for the badge. This can often be difficult to do in a class-type setting.

Each Scout is expected to do exactly what is stated in the merit badge pamphlet – no more and no less. If it says "show" or "demonstrate," then just telling about it isn't enough, nor is watching someone else do it. The same thing is true for such words as "make," "list," "in the field," and "collect," "identify," and "label."

Neither the counselor nor the Troop may add or delete requirements for a merit badge. On the other hand, it is always acceptable for a Scout on his own initiative to do more than the requirements call for.

There is no time limit for completion of merit badge requirements, as long as the requirements are completed before the Scout's 18th birthday.

Recommended Merit Badge Sequence

Based upon longstanding experience; Eagle-required merit badges and certain non-Eagle required badges are best earned in the following age-appropriate sequence. An asterisk * indicates an Eagle-required merit badge; a double asterisk ** indicates a merit badge that is one of several choices in an Eagle-required merit-badge group. (This is not an exclusive list of the non-Eagle required badges.)

Level 1 - New Scouts, ages 11-12, 5th-6th grades

First Aid *
Swimming ** (best at Scout summer camp)
Emergency Preparedness ** (First Aid MB required)
Basketry/Woodcarving/Leatherwork
Fishing
Climbing
Mammal Study
Pets / Dog Care

Level 2 - First Class & Star, ages 12+, 6th-7th grade up

Camping * (7th Grade)
Citizenship in the Nation *
Citizenship in the Community * (7th Grade+)
Cooking *
Environmental Science * (7th grade+)
Personal Fitness *
Sustainability**
Pioneering (recommended by Troop for Life rank)
Canoeing
Geology/Nature
Golf/Sports
Home Repairs/Collections
Medicine/Law/Scholarship/Reading
Photography/Radio

Level 3 - Star & Life, ages 14+, 8th-12th grade

Communications *
Citizenship in Society *

Citizenship in the World *
Personal Management *
Family Life *
Lifesaving ** (Swimming MB required)
Hiking **
Cycling **
Backpacking /Wilderness Survival
Rowing /Whitewater
BSA Lifeguard/Auto Mechanics
High Adventure camp (Philmont if possible)

Merit badge counselors

Portions adapted from various BSA publications; see generally www.meritbadge.org.

Introduction

Every parent can help the Scouts by serving as a merit-badge counselor for one, several, or many merit badges. As a "coach" the counselor advises the Scout about steps to take to fulfill the badge's requirements. As a "counselor" he or she evaluates the Scout's performance and determines whether or not the Scout has met the prescribed objectives in the requirements.

Requirements to Serve as a counselor

Merit badge counselors must be men and women of good character, age 18 or older, who are recognized as having the skills and education in the subjects for which they are to serve as merit badge counselors, as well as the ability to work with Scout-age boys.

The merit badge program in Troop 40 is organized and lead by the Advancement Chairman.

Merit badge counselors are not required to pay a registration fee if they are only registered as merit badge counselors.

Merit badge counselors must complete the Youth Protection Training course, either online or in person, and should also complete the "This is Scouting" online training; see the "Training for adult leaders" section of this Handbook for more details.

An older Scout (who by definition is not yet 18 years old) may assist an adult merit badge counselor in teaching a merit badge subject. The adult counselor, however, must verify that each Scout who works on the badge has completed all requirements for the badge.

Restrictions on Counseling Badges

There is no restriction or limit on the number of merit badges for which an individual may be approved as a counselor.

A merit badge counselor may counsel any Scout, except his own son or relative. However, counselors can counsel their own son or relative if the merit badge is taught in a group setting to other scouts of at least 3 scouts in the merit badge class.

Working with Scouts

Follow the Scout buddy system, discussed below.

The Scout should teach himself the necessary knowledge to the greatest extent possible, using the merit badge pamphlet and other resources. One of the benefits of the merit-badge program is teaching Scouts to teach themselves. ("Give a man a fish and he'll eat today; teach him to fish and he'll eat for his whole life.")

Encourage the Scout to develop a timetable of short- and long-term goals for completing the merit badge. An important objective of Scouting is to teach Scouts to set goals for themselves and to plan and execute the tasks required to reach those goals.

You may find that a Scout needs help in learning particular skills that are required for the merit badge. One of your jobs in that situation is to help teach the Scout the required skills.

If you stop hearing from a Scout who has started but not finished a merit badge, follow up periodically to check on his progress and on his plans for completing the requirements. Again, the Scout should be setting goals; the counselor's job is simply to help the Scout achieve those goals and confirm that he has done so.

Be supportive, not critical – but make sure the Scout has indeed satisfactorily completed each requirement.

Youth Protection and Scout buddy system apply to Merit Badge Work

To protect both the Scout and the merit badge counselor, all YPT requirements apply to Merit Badge work. As a best practice a Scout should have a buddy with him at each meeting with the counselor. A Scout's buddy can be another Scout, a parent or guardian, a brother or sister, or a relative or friend. The meeting between a Scout and a counselor should take place in plain-view for others to see.

In Troop 40, merit badge classes often occur around 6:30pm on Tuesdays prior to the weekly Troop meeting. This being said, merit badge class times are coordinated between the counselors, Scouts, and their parents.

Mission Statements

Lord Baden-Powell, Founder of Scouting

The aim of the Scout training is to replace Self with Service, to make the lads individually efficient, morally and physically, with the object of using that efficiency for the service of the community.

Troop 40

The mission of Troop 40, with the guidance of the Scout Oath and Scout Law, is to surround our Scouts with many examples of genuine, authentic men to learn and grow from, while guiding boys to become independently responsible, self-reliant, and free-thinking citizens of God's world.

Sam Houston Area Council

Leading Youth to Lifelong Values, Service and Achievement.

Boy Scouts of America

The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

Order of the Arrow

The Order of the Arrow (OA) is the 'National Honor Society' for the Boy Scouts of America, based on brotherhood with fellow Scouts and cheerful service to others. Its purpose is to (1) recognize those Scout campers who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives; (2) develop and maintain camping traditions and spirit; (3) promote Scout camping; (4) crystallize the Scout habit of helpfulness into a life purpose of leadership in cheerful service to others.

The Order of the Arrow program is conducted through a separate lodge (in Sam Houston Area Council, the Colonneh Lodge) under the jurisdiction of the local BSA executive.

Scouts are nominated and elected to OA membership by their fellow Scouts in their own troop through an OA Election. They must meet certain entry qualifications, which include: hold a rank of First Class or higher, and have experienced 15 days and nights of Scout camping during the two-year period prior to the election. The 15 days and nights must include one, but no more than one, long-term camp consisting of six consecutive days and five nights of resident camping, approved and under the auspices and standards of the Boy Scouts of America. The balance of the camping must be overnight, weekend, or other short-term camps. More information on the OA can be obtained by contacting the Troop's OA advisor or liaison, or by visiting the lodge website at www.colonneh.org.

"Org charts"

Troop 40 org chart

- Scouts are organized into patrols, each headed by a Patrol Leader ("PL"), a Scout who is elected by the other Scouts in the patrol. New-Scout patrols are coached by two older-Scout Troop Guides appointed by the Scoutmaster.
- The Senior Patrol Leader ("SPL"), a senior Scout, is the "head Scout" of the Troop. He is elected at-large by all Scouts in the Troop. With the Scoutmaster's approval, the SPL appoints one or more Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders ("ASPLs").
- The Patrol Leaders' Council ("PLC") consists of the SPL; the ASPLs; the PLs; and other Scout officers such as the Troop Quartermaster, Librarian, Scribe, Historian, etc.
- Adult oversight is provided by the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters, especially the Patrol Assistant Scoutmasters, all of whom are appointed by the Troop's chartered organization with input from the Troop Committee.

BSA org chart

- Troop 40, chartered to St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church, the chartered organization, is part of ...
- The Lonestar District, which is part of ...
- The Sam Houston Area Council ("SHAC"), which is part of ...
- The Southern Region, which is part of ...
- The BSA National office.

Patrol Assistant Scoutmasters ("PASM's")

[See also Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters.]

Most patrols in Troop 40, especially those with younger Scouts, have one or two specially designated "Patrol Assistant Scoutmasters" or "PASM's" assigned to work with them. The PASM is an Assistant Scoutmaster that has been asked by the Scoutmaster to directly help a particular Scout Patrol.

The roles and responsibilities of ASM (Assistant Scoutmaster) is given by the Scoutmaster based on the needs of the Scoutmaster and the Troop.

The role of the Patrol specific Assistant Scoutmaster, or PASM, is described below.

PASM Duties with the Patrol

1. Supervise Patrol Leader elections, and encourage a democratic election of a Patrol Leader.
2. Advise the Patrol Leader and hold him accountable. a. Help him to remember to attend all the Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) meetings. If he cannot attend, help him assure that the Assistant Patrol Leader or another patrol Scout attends. b. Help him to establish a telephone tree, group chat, etc for contacting all Scouts in the patrol.
3. Assist the Patrol Leader in holding accountable the other Scouts in the patrol, including advising him on his appointments of Assistant Patrol Leaders, etc.
4. For patrols of inexperienced Scouts, make use of Troop Guides to advise the Patrol Leader, and advise the Scoutmaster regarding the Troop Guide's performance in this important leadership position.
5. Help the Patrol to prepare meaningful and interesting programs for the Troop whenever the Patrol is assigned to be the program patrol.
6. Help the Patrol to carry out its duties when assigned as the service patrol. Remember: a. cleanup of Scout Room after troop meetings; b. assuring all Scouts in the Troop have rides home from the meeting. (Get a parent of a Scout in the Patrol to help with this.)
7. Help the Patrol organize to conduct flag ceremonies and meeting openings.
8. Establish a fixed location for the patrol to hold its patrol meetings during Troop meetings.
9. When necessary, help the Patrol Leader maintain sufficient order during Patrol and Troop meetings.
10. Sit with the Patrol during Troop meetings and encourage other PASM's assigned to the Patrol to do likewise.
11. Encourage Patrol events/activities independent of the Troop, to build Patrol spirit (e.g. a movie, game, or other activity).
12. Using advanced Scouts and Troop Guides, teach First Class Advancement to Scouts not yet First Class.
13. Teach the Troop Camping Rules to patrol members and encourage compliance with those rules.
14. Privately discuss advancement, medical, and any disciplinary issues with parents of patrol Scouts, the Troop's Health and Safety Officer, and/or the Scoutmaster.
15. Inform the Scoutmaster of problems and successes of the patrol and its leadership.
16. Preserve the authority of Scouts in the patrol, especially the Patrol Leader, against the intrusions of adults not assigned to the patrol. Direct parents of Scouts in the patrol toward instructing Scouts that are not in the patrol.

17. Recruit parents of Patrol members to assist in organizing "fun" patrol activities away from the Troop, aid you with record keeping, and to act as hall monitors at the Church and assuring that all Troop Scouts have gotten rides home when your patrol is the service patrol.

18. Attempt to maintain some uniformity of approach with other PASM's.

The PASM Job: On Campouts

19. Personally attend as many campouts as possible.

20. Maintain two deep leadership consistent with Youth Protection Training

21. Ensure that an PASM assigned to the patrol attends every campout and is present each night of the campout. If no PASM assigned to the patrol is available, recruit another PASM not committed to another patrol for that campout.

22. Require Patrol Leader to complete a duty roster in advance of all campouts, and provide you with a copy, with definite assignments of all patrol members attending.

23. Require Patrol Leader to post the duty roster at the campout and assist him in assuring its implementation.

24. Help make sure patrol members camp and tent together.

25. Encourage proper cooking and cleaning methods.

26. Using Troop Guides and more-senior Scouts, teach safe and efficient patrol campsite setup.

Patrol Method

"The patrol method is not a way to operate a Scout troop, **it is the only way**. Unless the patrol method is in operation, you don't really have a Scout troop." —Robert S. S. Baden-Powell

[See also "Org Charts" in this Handbook.]

Parents and Scouts alike should carefully read the BSA's discussion of the patrol method on the Web.

A fundamental difference between Scouts and Cub Scouts is the greater responsibility given to the Scouts (vs their parents). The Troop is governed by a Patrol Leaders' Council or "PLC." The PLC comprises the SPL, the Patrol Leaders from each patrol, troop guides, and certain other Troop officers, such as the Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders and Troop quartermasters.* Guided by the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters, the PLC plans the yearly Troop program at the annual Troop program planning conference. It then meets monthly, or more often if necessary, to fine-tune the plans for upcoming events.

(All Troop 40 parents are still encouraged and expected to be actively involved in the Troop. Everyone's help is needed, because a Scout-led troop actually requires more work by adults than you think. Volunteer opportunities and appropriate training exist to match the interest and available time of every adult.)

Parents should also make an effort to meet their Scout's Patrol Leader and Troop Guides (if applicable) and the Troop's Senior Patrol Leader ("SPL").

Prohibited Items

The following items are prohibited on campouts, at summer camp, and at meetings unless specifically authorized by the Scoutmaster on a case-by-case basis:

- Fireworks or explosives of any kind
- Stoves
- Liquid-fuel lanterns, or other liquid fuels of any kind
- Cigarette lighters
- Aerosol cans (of any kind)
- Sheath knives (of any kind or length)
- Folding knives with blade longer than four inches
- Electronic Devices (e.g. Radios, televisions, video games, cell phones, MP3 players, electronic games)
- Tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs
- Firearms or ammunition of any kind (including BB guns)
- Slingshots, clubs, spears, etc.

- Hatchets or axes
- Glass bottles

Mobile Communication Device Policy

Unless waived by the Scoutmaster, Scouts will NOT be permitted to:

A. Use of phones and electronic devices while on Scout trips (i.e. weekend campouts, summer camp). However, Scouts can carry / use phones and electronic devices while in transport to/from those events, subject to:

- Use while traveling must be appropriate for both the scout and others around him.
- Scouts must turn-in their phones and electronic devices to the Scoutmaster upon arrival at camp. Scoutmaster will return at departure
- Phones and electronic devices discovered at or during the event will be confiscated.
- All confiscated devices will be returned only upon conclusion of the event / return to Houston.
- Habitual violations will be addressed by the Scoutmaster.

B. Use of phones and electronic devices during troop meetings, advancement sessions and in-town activities. They may only be used at the conclusion of the activity for communication with parents for pickup.

C. Adult leaders should set an example for scouts by minimizing use of cell phones and electronic devices in all settings in public view.

Scout Shop

The nearest Scout Shop operated by the Sam Houston Area Council ("SHAC") is at 2225 North Loop West, on the southeast corner of the North Loop (inside the loop) and East T.C. Jester. (Google Map)

Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters

The Scoutmaster is the adult leader responsible for the image and program of the Troop. The Scoutmaster is appointed by the head of the chartered organization with input from the Troop Committee.

The Scoutmaster's job is crucial, because the quality of the Scoutmaster's guidance will affect every youth and adult involved in the Troop.

Assistant Scoutmasters are appointed by the Scoutmaster with the approval of both the Troop Committee Chairman and the Chartered Organization Representative. Assistant Scoutmaster may or may not be assigned to directly assist with a Scout Patrol. If an Assistant Scoutmaster is assigned to a Scout Patrol, they could also be referred to as a PASM, or Patrol Assistant Scoutmaster. For more information on the duties of the Assistant Scoutmaster, both patrol and non-patrol, see the section "

Per BSA policy, the Scoutmaster and all Assistant Scoutmasters must successfully complete the required BSA training for adult leaders.

See also the "Patrol Assistant Scoutmasters ('PASM's)" section of this Handbook.

Scoutmaster Conferences

A "Scoutmaster Conference" is a scheduled meeting between a Scout with the Scoutmaster to review a Scout's participation in the Troop. Scoutmaster conferences are required for rank advancement and are in the Scoutmaster's discretion for other reasons.

Procedure:

- The Scout, not his parents, should arrange all Scoutmaster Conferences.
- The Scout should appear in full Field (Class A) uniform and merit badge sash, if applicable.
- Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class rank: Scoutmaster Conferences are conducted by the Scoutmaster.
- Star or Life rank: The Scout should first review his preparation with his PASM, and then seek a conference with the Scoutmaster.
- Eagle rank: The Scout should first review his preparation with the Troop Eagle Shepherd, then seek a conference with the Scoutmaster.
- If the Scoutmaster agrees that the Scout has completed the advancement requirements, he will sign the Scout's Handbook in the place provided, and the Scout should then promptly seek a Board of Review from the Advancement Chairman.

Service Projects

Community service is an integral part of the Scouting program, designed primarily to aid development of character and citizenship. Scouts are required to take part in service projects for at least a specified number of hours for advancement to Tenderfoot, 2nd Class, 1st Class Star and Life ranks. Scouts can earn creditable service hours for these ranks by taking part in any the following:

- Troop service projects;
- Patrol good turns approved in advance by the Patrol Leaders' Council to help qualify a patrol for the National Honor Patrol Award;
- Eagle leadership service projects organized by Scouts who are working on their Eagle rank (**participation in Eagle projects is particularly encouraged**);
- Order of the Arrow service projects, other than those as part of a Scout's Ordeal, and
- Other service projects, **which must be approved in advance** by the Scoutmaster. Service to the Troop itself, such as cleaning the Troop storage shed, do not qualify as service hours for rank advancement. Scouts should not double count service hours for rank advancement, such as those used for merit badge requirements, 50-mile awards, school requirements, or church requirements. Announcement of and sign-ups for service projects generally happen at Troop meetings, by email or Troop newsletter, or via the Troop Website.

Summer Camp

Summer camp is a great time for advancement and practicing the patrol method. Often our Scouts have their greatest leadership experiences and earn memories for a lifetime at our summer camps.

- Troop 40 sponsored summer camps are chosen and planned by the Patrol Leader's Council and supported by the Scoutmaster and the Troop Committee.
- Registration for summer camps is open to all Troop 40 Scouts who meet the age and experience eligibility requirements for the program offered.
- Registration is sometimes limited in number, in which case it is "first-come, first-served" among Troop 40 Scouts who are eligible.

"Merit Badge" Camps

The Troop schedules at least one summer camp at a "residence" camp geared toward First Class advancement and merit badge work. An example of such a camp is the Worth Ranch Boy Scout Camp near Mineral Wells in central North Texas. It is particularly important for new Scouts to attend a merit badge summer camp, although any Scout can benefit. Excellent facilities are provided for difficult-to-obtain merit badges such as Swimming, Canoeing, Rowing, Lifesaving, Environmental Science, and several others. Attendance at summer camp may require additional or updated medical forms, including a doctor's exam for the BSA Medical Form Part C.

High-Adventure Camps

The Troop schedules outstanding high-adventure programs every summer, including backpacking treks and often sailing, kayaking, climbing, and other wilderness trips. For Scouts who are 14 years of age and older. Ideally this includes trips to Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico for a two-week wilderness backpacking experience. Other camping adventures for older Scouts may involve the BSA Sea Base in Florida; Northern Tier High Adventure Base; canoeing for ten days in Maine; or backpacking in Colorado and Montana; or even Alaska above the Arctic Circle. Troop 40 engages in a variety of these programs every year. The age minimum for high-adventure camps is generally 14. Many of these camps require that the Scout meet the relevant age limit by the program start date. Attendance at high adventure camp may require new or additional medical forms. Some high adventure programs will require preparation time prior to leaving for camp to properly prepare for the high adventure terrain. For example, for Philmont, crews will be hiking and backpacking many months prior to leaving for New Mexico.

Adult Participation in Summer Camps

New and experienced adult leaders are always needed for summer camps. Merit badge camps are a wonderful opportunity for adults new to the Troop who have completed the required training to "break-in" by spending a week camping with a portion of the Troop. Adult registration for summer camps works differently than for our Scouts. Adults who wish to attend summer camps with the Troop should be aware of the following:

1. All adults attending summer camp are required to complete adult leader training.
2. Selection of adult leaders for our summer-camp programs is up to the Scoutmaster, with the advice and consent of the Troop Committee Chairman.
3. The Troop endeavors to find summer camp leaders that understand and accept the responsibility of providing a safe environment for Scouts and can also guide a Scout-led contingent; while being able to effectively respond to emergencies; and know the applicable BSA standards and commit to following them. Adult leaders for summer camp must agree to demonstrate the principles of the Scout Oath and Law as they represent the Troop for our Scouts and many others at camp and during transit.
4. The Troop usually receives a limited number of slots for high-adventure programs. We try to fill those slots with the maximum number of Scouts and the minimum number of qualified adults needed for a safe outing. Typically, adults who also have sons participating in the high adventure program receive first selection among the adults.
5. Payment of deposits is required for adults, as it is for Scouts. Payment of a deposit does not guarantee a slot for a particular adult (if the adult is not selected to participate, the Troop will refund the deposit).
6. Adult participation in summer camps is not first-come, first-served; **it is a privilege, not a right**. Adult-leader selection, especially for high-adventure programs, takes into account such factors as the following:
 - a. Completion of all training required to be an Assistant Scoutmaster;
 - b. Commitment to live and act in accordance with the Scout Oath and Scout Law. Active and regular participation in the Troop's monthly camping program;
 - d. Any prior participation in Troop 40 summer camps;
 - e. Demonstrated competence and training in skills desirable for the particular high adventure program, for example, Wilderness First Aid; Leave No Trace; First Aid / CPR, BSA or American Red Cross Lifeguard; whitewater canoeing;
 - f. Regular, successful prior experience as an Assistant Scoutmaster;
 - g. Demonstrated success in working with our Scouts and promoting a Scout-led outdoor experience by all Scouts (including their own sons);
 - h. Other needs of the Troop and of the particular program.
7. In addition to the BSA required online Youth Protection Training, some summer camps, such as all those in Texas, may require an additional background-checks and/or in-person YPT class.
 - a. Per YPT requirements, the minimum number of qualified adult leaders needed for a safe outing is 5; but could be more depending on the particular size and type of campout.

Summer Campout Rules

The rules & policies governing Troop 40 scouts & adults at summer camp are consistent with those outlined within this Troop Handbook for weekend campouts & other troop activities. This includes, but is not limited to: Campout Rules, Prohibited Items, Mobile Communications Device policy, Uniform guidelines, Whom to contact, and all else.

Troop Committee

The Troop Committee could be thought of as the "Board of Directors" of the Troop. Its main responsibilities are (i) supporting the Scoutmaster in delivering quality Troop programs, and (ii) handling Troop administration. The Chairman of the Troop Committee serves as something like a non-executive chair person of the board. He or she is appointed by the chartered organization with input from the Troop Committee. Troop 40 expects to have a very active Troop Committee, essentially all of whom are parents and even grandparents of current Troop 40 Scouts. All Troop 40 Scouts' parents are encouraged to participate in the Troop Committee. (Participating parents should register with the BSA as committee members). See the MeritBadge.org "Troop Committee" Web page for a helpful discussion of the role of a troop committee and its various subcommittees and positions. You may also wish to take the Troop Committee Challenge online training.

The Troop Committee oversees important 'behind-the-scenes' matters that impact the overall troop stability and functionality, such as: fundraising and troop financing, advancement (Advancement Chairman serves on the Troop Committee), membership, calendar planning, troop website, high adventure planning, Eagle Shepherd, etc.

Uniforms

Each Scout is expected to wear their Scout uniform to every Scout function.

- Class A uniform is worn from September through May to weekly troop meetings.
- Class A uniform is worn to Special Events, such as the Chili Cook-off and Veterans Dinner.
- Class A uniform is worn to Courts of Honor (May, September, December).
- Class A uniform is worn to Eagle Scout Ceremonies.
- Class A uniform is worn when traveling as a troop.
- Class B (red 4T0 shirt) is worn from June through August.
- Class B (red 4T0 shirt) is worn to service projects such as Eagle Scout Projects.
- Class B (red 4T0 shirt) is worn during campouts

The uniform type worn for scout events is dependent on the formality of the activity and a desire to maintain a clean and neat appearance of the Field uniform shirt. BSA uniform guidelines state that the scout uniform shirt must be tucked in.

For other scout activities not mentioned above, wear the uniform appropriate for the activity to maintain safety and as determined by Scoutmaster.

If wearing the uniform is impractical for whatever reason, then the Scout should be dressed appropriately for the occasion. Appropriateness will be determined by Scoutmaster with a focus on Safety, examples include (but not limited to):

- School uniform would be appropriate if (on limited occasions) it is not possible to change into scout uniform before an indoor meeting
- Wearing proper clothes and gear for expected and probable conditions (no cotton, correct shoes, and rain gear, etc.) would be appropriate for outdoor activities

All uniform questions or problems should be brought to the Scoutmaster's attention. Habitual uniform problems will be handled by the Scoutmaster, as deemed appropriate and necessary, including discussing the situation with the Scout and/or Scout's parents.

A scout cannot advance in rank if he chooses not to wear the correct uniform.

Should a Scout not arrive in uniform for his Board of Review, the Advancement Chairman will determine the appropriate course of action. Scouts are required to be in uniform to advance.

Uniforms can be purchased at the Scout Shop.

Troop Website

Troop 40 owns and uses the website domain, "www.Troop40Houston.org". The website is designed to be an all-inclusive tool for active Troop 40 Scouts to use throughout their time in the troop. The website will contain information such as calendar, upcoming events, adult leadership, youth leadership, health forms, camping roster forms, the "Troop Tradin' Post" (our troop store), advancement information, committee information, and more. This Troop Handbook can also be found on our website. The website is updated often and is controlled by the Troop Committee Chairman. The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) has the ability to update the Scout portion of the website.

Troop Tradin' Post

The Troop Tradin' Post is our online Troop store. The Tradin' Post is linked to our Troop bank account and is a way to directly pay for items such as camping trips, deposits for summer camp, payments for high adventure, t-shirt purchases, etc. The Troop Tradin' Post is updated as needed throughout the year.

Troop 40

Troop 40 is a separate Scouting unit for boys ages 11 to 17. First chartered in 1950, Troop 40 has traditionally been one of the oldest Scout Troops in Houston. In 2025, Troop 40 will celebrate its 75th year anniversary since its creation.