



## TROOP 77 NEW PARENT & SCOUT ORIENTATION GUIDE

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### INTRODUCTION

This document explains the operation of Troop 77. Both parents and scouts should read its contents. The information will help the Scout and his family understand Scouting and effectively involve them in the troop.

### YOUR SCOUT IN TROOP 77

The first time a new Scout registers and pays his dues, the Scoutmaster will assign him to a patrol. This grouping of Scouts will number eight to twelve and is the basic working Scout unit. When each member of the patrol carries his share of the workload, then the patrol can function smoothly.

A Patrol Leader is elected by his Patrol members. The Patrol Leader leads the patrol in all activities. He is responsible for task assignment, keeping the patrol members informed, helping patrol advancement and leading his patrol in the Scouting patrol method. He represents his patrol at the monthly meeting where boy leaders plan activities and formulate troop policy.

### THE TROOP 77 BSA UNIFORM

Whenever a Scout wears his uniform, it reminds the boy that he is a Scout and that people will expect him to act like one. The uniform is an outward sign that he believes in certain values and is willing to reflect them in his behavior. His uniform gives him a reason to take pride in the way he looks, and in the badges and awards he displays that testify to his achievements in skills and leadership. A well-uniformed troop can build a sense of troop identity and spirit. It can attract new members, leaders and parents. You will note that the Scoutmaster and other adult leaders set the example and wear their own uniforms.

**Scouts must wear the Class "A" uniform to EACH SCOUT MEETING** to all public Scouting events. Class "A" uniform is mandatory for Scoutmaster Conference, Boards of Review and Courts of Honor. Scouts not in uniform will not be able to participate in the activities listed above.

### Class "A" Uniform

Due to national BSA insurance requirements, Class "A" uniform must also be worn while traveling to/from all Scouting events. This is worn for dress occasions; weekly scout meetings, campfires, Boards of Review, and Courts of Honor, and during trip travel, Church, ceremonies, etc.

- BSA Dress Shirt
- \*BSA Troop Neckerchief
- BSA Pants (long or short) -- or equivalent
- BSA Socks
- BSA Belt

- BSA (Troop Cap) *optional*
- Patches sewn on uniform (see inside cover of Scout Handbook for patch locations)
- Hiking Boots or other appropriate footwear

### **Class "B" Uniform**

This is worn for daily routines during Scout functions, campouts, car washes, and any "work" type of Scout activity. Basically the Class "B" is a "fill-in" uniform for when the Class "A" is not appropriate. The Patrol Leader will decide if these are required for a particular meeting or event, or if others will be permitted.

- \*BSA T-shirt
- BSA Pants (long or short) -- or equivalent
- BSA Socks -- or equivalent
- BSA Belt
- Hiking Boots or other appropriate footwear

\*Troop 77 has Neckerchiefs and T-shirts designed and fabricated specifically for the troop. These may be purchased through the Troop Quartermaster at any of the Wednesday night troop meetings and are priced as follows:

Neckerchief: \$8.00

T-Shirt: \$15.00 (some shirts may be available at lower prices)

### **These are things not to wear when in Class "A" or "B" uniform:**

- Non-BSA Hats
- Blue jeans with Class "A". (Although the Patrol Leader may approve with Class "B" only, for certain work activities)
- Imprinted/logo T-shirts other than BSA worn with Class "B",
- Sandals or open-toed shoes with uniform

### **SCOUT BEHAVIOR**

Each Scout is expected to act according to the promises he makes in the Scout Oath and the Scout Law. Developing good character, leadership, and positive attitudes are the primary goals in Scouting. While most Scouts have good behavior habits, occasions may require disciplinary action.

Gross misbehavior by a Scout while involved in a troop activity can result in immediate dismissal from the activity. This may require that parents will have to pick up their Scout from the activity, including camp-outs. Severe cases or continued misbehavior can result in expulsion from the Troop by the Troop Committee. In situations where the conduct of a Scout affects the operations and safety of the Troop, the Scoutmaster and/or his assigned Assistant(s) must bring the matter before the Troop Committee. A flyer outlining our disciplinary policy is available at Scout Hall.

If a Scout observes such situations, he should report them to the Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster(s). If a Scout fails to correct his behavior and repeats the activity, a specific course of action will be taken:

- **Second occurrence:** A Scoutmaster Conference with the Scout.
- **Third occurrence:** A meeting between the Scoutmaster and Parent/Guardian and the Patrol Leader's Council notified.

- **Fourth occurrence:** Referral to the Troop Committee for a course of corrective action and/or possible dismissal. A conference will be held with the parents of the Scout explaining the reason for suspension or dismissal.

#### **ALWAYS:**

1. Scouts live by the Scout Oath and Law.
2. Scouts remain in the assigned Scout activity area.
3. Scouts eat and tent with their own patrol.
4. Patrols gather, cut and use their own firewood.
5. Patrol Leaders have the right to ask anyone who is not a member of his patrol to leave his patrol site.

The Troop Committee should consider the Scoutmaster's or Patrol Leader's council recommendations, using the Scout Oath and Scout Law as a guide.

#### **IMMEDIATE DISCIPLINARY ITEMS**

For the benefit and safety of all troop members, any Scout committing any of the following acts during any Scouting activities will be suspended by the Scoutmaster immediately, and the incident will be presented to the Troop Committee and the Patrol Leader's Council, by the Scoutmaster, for possible dismissal.

- Intentional commission of an act that will endanger the safety of others.
- Illegal drug, alcohol or tobacco use of any kind/form.
- Lewd or immoral behavior.
- Possession of any unauthorized dangerous material or substance.
- Commission of any crime.
- Unsafe operation of any vehicle or violating BSA vehicle restrictions.

#### **PARENT RESPONSIBILITY**

When a boy joins Troop 77, his parents also became part of the program. Parents are expected to give their support and help to the troop. This will vary from serving as Assistant Scoutmaster or Merit Badge Counselor to holding a Troop Committee office or serving as a chairman or leader of a particular event. There is a place for everyone. Parent participation is the best way to show support for your son and Scouting. **Parent participation makes Scouting go and your son GROW!**

In addition, every parent must be willing to:

- Be aware of their son's progress in rank advancement and provide encouragement and support to continue advancement.
- Help with the troop program as requested.
- Attend all troop parents' meetings.
- Attend troop Courts of Honor and Eagle Courts of Honor.
- Serve on the Troop Committee or help with adult leadership of the troop.
- Drop off their son promptly in full Class "A" uniform at 7:30 and pick up their son at 9:00 PM on Troop meeting nights.

- Drive to or from weekend camp-outs and summer camps attended by their son.
- Work on any fund-raisers that benefit their son.
- Know the troop adult and Boy Scout leaders.
- Complete a Troop Resource Survey questionnaire.

### **CAMPING AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES**

Scouting is intended to be an activity mainly in the outdoors and in all four seasons. Troop 77's camping program takes the Scouts camping nearly every month on the 3rd weekend of the month between September and June. The traditional camping trips can sometimes incorporate other outdoor adventures. This broadens Scouting skills and keeps the fun in Scout outings.

**Information on these activities is distributed from the troop website at <http://www.troop77bsa.com/>.**

Email messages are also sent on a regular basis to remind scouts and parents of upcoming events. Please help us make sure we have your correct email addresses and phone numbers. Our goal is to provide timely information on the outings to help you plan your activities while maintaining active participation in the Troop.

Parents should be aware that outdoor activities entail some degree of risk. These risks are minimized when Scouts are prepared with the right equipment and training. **Every outing requires at least two parents and one registered adult scout leaders to be along.** We encourage you to accompany us on any of our outdoor activities. All parents attending over night campouts must view and be registered as having completed the Child Protection Course on a 1-hour video offered on a VHS tape or online through the council office website, which is <http://www.scouting.org/pubs/ypt/ypt.jsp>.

For most camp-outs, the patrol prepares its own menu, buys its food and cooks as a unit. It is recommended that the Scouts do all of this themselves, because this is how they develop responsibility, self-confidence, and outdoor skills and earn advancement. The patrol lives as a group on a camp-out.

### **ADVANCEMENT**

The Boy Scouts of America has a very specific advancement plan. Leaders encourage scouts to participate and master a challenging series of skills that prepare them to enjoy the outdoors. It is a progressive series of learning experiences leading to achievement by advancement in rank and completion of merit badges. The plan also provides a specific means of measurement and recognition. This plan is specified in detail in the rank advancement record section of the Boy Scout Handbook.

### **FOUR STEPS IN BOY SCOUT ADVANCEMENT**

1. Learning by doing
2. Being tested
3. Participating in a Scoutmaster Conference and appearing before the Board of Review
4. Being recognized

#### **1. LEARNING BY DOING**

The Scout practices his Scouting skills by taking an **active part in the Troop meetings and outdoor programs**. Required skills are taught during Troop meetings and camp-outs. The adult and boy leaders supervise presentation of these skills. Summer camp is also a vital part of the Troop's outdoor program. It is the best opportunity for learning Scouting skills and completing merit badges for advancement. Nothing can replace the experiences the Scout receives at

summer camp and on monthly camp-outs.

Merit badge work is to be completed under the guidance of a merit badge counselor (an adult who has an understanding of or experience relating to the merit badge material and who has a desire to counsel the Scout and at least one other Scout concurrently or separately). A list of Troop merit badge counselors is posted on the Troop website. The Scout fills out a "blue card" and gets it authorized for a desired merit badge. He obtains a counselor and the merit badge booklet. This booklet may be borrowed from the Troop library or may need to be purchased at a Scout supply store such as the "Scout Shop".

## **2. BEING TESTED**

If the Scout is completing a skill requirement, he is tested when his leaders see that he has mastered a given skill and he has satisfied a given requirement. This leader may be his patrol leader, the Senior Patrol Leader, instructor, Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster. They tell the Scout when he has met the standard and they record his achievement in the Scout's Boy Scout Handbook.

If a Scout believes he has completed a rank requirement, it is his responsibility to present himself before the proper person(s) to have that completion recorded. His Boy Scout Handbook is the Scout's official document to record his achievements.

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b> - Make a photocopy of the advancement record portion of your son's scout book several times each year! Scout books have been known to walk off!
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The troop also maintains a troop advancement database, which also keeps up with his work. However, it may not contain all records of completed work that are in his handbook. It is worthwhile for a Scout to review his handbook occasionally with the advancement chairman to see that the database records are up to date.

## **3. PARTICIPATING IN A SCOUTMASTER CONFERENCE AND APPEARING BEFORE A BOARD OF REVIEW**

During his completion of requirements for advancement in rank, the Scout (in Class A Uniform) meets with the Scoutmaster for a conference. The purpose:

- Involve the Scout in a review of his progress to date.
- Have the Scout and his Scoutmaster work together in setting goals for further development.

The Scoutmaster does not determine if the boy should advance in rank during this meeting. It is the responsibility of the Board of Review to make that decision.

As a final step in the completion of a rank advancement, the Scout (in Class A Uniform) appears before a Board of Review. He must have completed all requirements for the rank before the review. Then he signs up for a board of review with the Board of Review Chairman.

Three members of the Troop Committee make up the board. The Board of Review has three goals:

- Determine the extent to which the boy has had a positive and effective troop experience.
- Make certain that the Scout meets all advancement standards.
- Encourage further progress.

Their review is not an examination. However, the Board generally does ask the boy to talk about the skills he has learned, and the experiences he has had as a Scout. The objective is to determine the Scout's attitude and his acceptance of the Scouting ideals.

The Board will determine how the Scout meets good performance in all phases of his life. A discussion of the Scout Oath and Scout Law is in keeping with the questioning. This helps the candidate recognize and understand the value of Scouting in his home, school, church and community. Advancement in rank is not automatic. If the Board feels that the Scout is not ready for advancement, members of the Board will give specific and constructive suggestions so he may strengthen areas of weakness and satisfy rank requirements.

#### **4. BEING RECOGNIZED**

Once the Board of Review has certified a Scout, he is awarded his new badge of rank, normally that same evening at the conclusion of the troop meeting. He will be further recognized at a formal ceremony called a Court of Honor. At this event, all Scouts who have advanced and/or earned merit badges since the last Court of Honor are recognized for their accomplishments before an audience of families, friends, and troop leaders.

Troop 77 normally holds three Courts of Honor per year: one in September, the second in January, and the third in May just before school ends. These are important occasions for the Scout and his family. Please attend this important event in your Scout's life, and yours.

#### **TROOP FUNDING**

There are several financial sources contributing to Scouting. The United Way provides a major portion of the funds to operate the Atlanta Area Council. The Friends of Scouting (F.O.S.) campaign also directly benefits the Council and thus indirectly the Troop. Also, many corporations (BellSouth being one) match contributions their employees make to Scouting, so check with your HR department to see if your company has such a program.

However, Troop 77 must provide its own operating funds. Basically the Troop must pay its own way. The annual dues paid in total in September provide the primary funding. The dues amount is set by the Troop Committee and funds badge costs, some training fees, program materials, and maintaining Troop camping equipment.

Troop fundraisers may be held from time to time to support Troop camping equipment purchases.

The troop also has the opportunity to sell popcorn each year as part of council-wide fund-raising. The portion of the Scout's sales that are normally set aside for the troop is placed in an escrow account for the Scout to use to pay for campout or High Adventure expenses.

The Troop Treasurer accounts for the dues for each Scout, other funds earned by the Troop, and all Troop expenditures. All Troop funds are kept in a bank checking account.

#### **THE TROOP COMMITTEE**

The Troop Committee is a group of adults, usually parents, who register with Scouting and function to:

- Establish Troop policy.
- Review and approve the Troop program.
- Support the Scoutmaster and adult leaders in the implementation of the Troop program.
- Provide administrative support to the Troop.

Supporting the Troop program and leaders involves giving final approval to monthly and long-term plans of the Patrol Leaders; informing parents of the Troop program; and providing support for organizing transportation.

The committee also encourages adult leader training, maintains financial and advancement records, buys and maintains quality Troop equipment, and improves Troop membership through outreach and recruitment. **It is now required that at least one adult leader on a camp activity must have participated in the BSA's approved Child Protection video course. It is encouraged as many parents as possible participate in the 1-hour video to receive child protection training.**

The Troop committee usually meets prior to a Troop camp-out or major outing or special event. This is to assure that all plans are complete and supported. Officers are selected and positions filled at the beginning of the Scouting year in September. Parents are welcome to attend Troop Committee meetings and may speak specifically to a topic that interests them. The meetings are business-like in form. Please contact the Scoutmaster or other committee member if you wish to join this important group.

### **Comments**

If there are issues or topics you would like to see documented and addressed or have questions about any of the information in this parent orientation please contact Jim Penland at [jwpenland@jwpenland.com](mailto:jwpenland@jwpenland.com), or at 404-429-7298.