

Policies and Procedures
Troop 97 BSA
[‘Combined’ Troop 97 for Boys & Girls]



Westminster Presbyterian Church
1709 W Elizabeth St
Fort Collins, Colorado 80521

Major Revisions (10/2006, 5/1989, 5/1984)

Original: 4/1981
Current: 10/2024

Summary of 2024 Changes & Updates

[approved by troop committee 10/2024]

General—Use of term ‘chairman’ changed to gender-neutral ‘chair’.

1.7—Wording adjusted to match current BSA terminology; Leadership Development aim added.

2.5—Added note that the term ‘parent’ also includes ‘legal guardian’.

2.8/2.9—Minor changes to reflect current troop practices and to cover ‘combined’ patrols.

4.1.1(A)—Changed reference from ‘linked’ troops to ‘combined’ troop.

4.1.1(D)—Minor change to reflect updated BSA policy on required adult registration.

4.2—Merit badge counselor registration information removed as not applicable.

4.2.2—Re-numbered; minor rewording to Parent Involvement to match the reality that some parents will refuse to be involved.

4.3.3—Added a second (camping) option for parents to be considered active, which has been troop practice for some time.

4.3.5—Removed Board of Review uniform restriction as unnecessary.

4.3.7—Added note about BSA requirement that parents must be BSA-registered to attend overnight activities.

5—Updated wording and information to match current BSA policies and troop practices. Moved some policy information to new Chapter 11. Removed Family Outing section, since overnight family activities are largely prevented by current BSA registration policies. Removed Adventure Weekend section since current BSA adult registration policies can prevent parents from attending, and because out-of-state summer camp travel does not allow time for an Adventure Weekend.

6.3/6.5—Updated to match current BSA advancement requirements.

8—Updated/simplified to reflect current financial practices, including Zelle.

9—Removed redundant & excessive details.

9.2.1—Added King Soopers cards to list of cash-based credits.

10—Minor updates to reflect current BSA & troop practices.

10.3—Section rearranged, with added info about the troop’s BAND app.

10.3.8—Alumni communication section removed, as this has not been practical.

10.3.8—New section added to describe opt-out option for Scout photos on the website.

11—New chapter to cover some recent BSA policy changes, especially ones that may not be clear to all adults, and to consolidate troop policies formerly in Chapter 5.

12—Updated Chapter 12 (formerly Chapter 11) to remove ‘linked’ troop information that is no longer applicable, and add appropriate ‘combined’ troop information (which greatly simplified & shortened the chapter).

Table of Contents

Chapter 1—Overview and Troop Goals

1.1—General	1
1.2—Enforcement and Changes	1
1.3—BSA Policies.....	1
1.4—Troop Philosophy	1
1.5—Challenge and Adventure	1
1.6—Leadership Development.....	1
1.7—BSA Aims and Methods	1
1.8—Values	1

Chapter 2—Troop Organization

2.1—Troop Program Year	2
2.2—Troop Organization	2
2.3—Chartered Organization (Sponsor).....	2
2.4—Troop Committee	2
2.5—Parents.....	2
2.6—Uniformed Adult Leaders	2
2.7—Patrol Leader Council	3
2.8—Regular Patrols	3
2.9—New Scouts Patrol	3
2.10—Senior Scout Programs	3

Chapter 3—Scout Leadership

3.1—Leadership Development.....	4
3.2—Elections.....	4
3.3—Scout Leadership Positions	4
3.4—Requirements for Office	4

Chapter 4—Membership Standards

4.1—Membership	6
4.2—Entry Requirements	6
4.3—Standards of Membership.....	6
4.4—Discipline.....	8

Chapter 5—Troop Activities

5.1—General	9
5.2—Meetings.....	9
5.3—Short-term Outings.....	9
5.4—Summer Camp	10
5.5—High Adventure ‘Treks’.....	10

Chapter 6—Advancement

6.1—General	11
6.2—Ranks	11
6.3—Active Service	11
6.4—Basic Scout Skills.....	11
6.5—Merit Badges	11
6.6—Leadership	11
6.7—Service Projects	11
6.8—Scoutmaster Conference	11
6.9—Board of Review.....	11

Chapter 7—Uniform

7.1—Significance of the Uniform	12
7.2—Full Uniform Required	12
7.3—Uniform Exchange.....	12
7.4—Uniform Components	12
7.5—Special Troop 97 Uniform Components.....	12
7.6—Troop 97 Neckerchiefs	13

Chapter 8—Finances

8.1—Finance Responsibilities	14
8.2—Troop Checking & Savings Accounts.....	14
8.3—Fund Raising	14
8.4—Annual Family Expenses.....	14
8.5—Payment Deadlines and Penalties	14
8.6—Refunds	15
8.7—Annual Fee	15
8.8—Summer Camp Fee.....	15
8.9—Adult Expenses	15
8.10—Other Expenses	15
8.11—Payments	15

Chapter 9—Family Accounts, Credits, Financial Assistance, and Cash Awards

9.1—Scout Family Accounts.....	16
9.2—Credits	16
9.3—Using Credits.....	16
9.4—Financial Assistance	16
9.5—Cash Awards	16

Chapter 10—Miscellaneous

10.1—Troop-owned Equipment.....	17
10.2—Handbooks	17
10.3—Troop Communications	17
10.4—Banned Items	18
10.5—Alcohol, Tobacco, and Illicit Drugs.....	18
10.6—Caffeinated Beverages.....	18
10.7—Smartphone Use by Scouts	18
10.8—Searches	19
10.9—Advertising.....	19

Chapter 11—Safeguarding Youth (BSA Policies)

11.1—Adult Registration Requirements	20
11.2—Tenting	20
11.3—Buddy System	20
11.4—Activity Policies	21

Chapter 12—Operation as a ‘Combined’ [Coed] Troop

12.1—Current Troop 97 Status.....	22
12.2—Definitions.....	22
12.3—Pilot Program Time Frame	22
12.4—Mixed Gender Considerations.....	22

Chapter 1

Overview and Troop Goals

1.1–General (2014)

These Policies and Procedures are not rigid rules, but provide guidelines and goals for the operation of Troop 97 BSA, sponsored by Westminster Presbyterian Church, Fort Collins, Colorado. They are not intended to cover every possible eventuality. We must apply them using common sense and fairness. The Policies and Procedures devote much space to the Scoutmaster's responsibilities, because the Scoutmaster's performance is the key to a successful troop, and because all other troop adult jobs support the Scoutmaster's efforts.

1.2–Enforcement and Changes (1989)

As the troop's executive officer, the Scoutmaster is empowered to enforce and to waive all policies, in the best interest of Troop 97 and its members. The troop committee has final authority over any question of interpretation. The troop committee must approve all changes to the Policies and Procedures.

1.3–BSA Policies (1989)

The Scoutmaster needs the training, knowledge, and initiative to make sure that Troop 97 operates in full accord with the Charter and Bylaws and the Rules and Regulations of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) and with all applicable BSA policies and procedures. The troop committee needs to acquire the training and knowledge to meet their responsibility to ensure that the Scoutmaster so operates the troop. Primary resources for Scouting knowledge are the *Scout Handbook*, *Troop Leader Guidebook*, and *Troop Committee Guidebook*.

1.4–Troop Philosophy (1989)

Today, too many people are satisfied with mediocrity. Too many people are casually dishonest, unethical, and immoral in their everyday conduct. Too many people are satisfied to follow rather than lead. In Troop 97, we want to teach our Scouts to be leaders, to set the example, to stand up for what they know is right. We want our Scouts to be honest, to set high goals for themselves, and to be achievers.

1.5–Challenge and Adventure (1989)

Scouting magazine described Troop 97 this way: "The *Official Boy Scout Handbook* promises adventure, and the leaders of Colorado's Troop 97 deliver it." Challenge and Adventure, too often missing in adolescent life today, are vital elements to maintain the interest of the Scouts and to help them develop leadership and self-confidence. We must do everything we can to include these elements in every aspect of our troop program.

1.6–Leadership Development (1989)

Scouting teaches leadership. And the only way to learn leadership is to practice it by holding leadership responsibilities. As Scouts mature in the troop, they become directly responsible for the development of the younger Scouts. First Class Scouts plan, execute, and evaluate the troop program, under the watchful guidance of the Scoutmaster.

1.7–BSA Aims and Methods (2024)

Troop 97 uses all the eight Methods of Scouting to achieve the four Aims of Scouting, as explained in the *Troop Leader Guidebook*.

SCOUTING'S AIMS:

- Character Development
- Citizenship Training
- Personal Fitness
- Leadership Development

SCOUTING'S METHODS:

- Advancement
- Association with Adults
- Ideals (Promise, Law, Motto, Slogan)
- Leadership Development
- Outdoor Programs
- Patrols
- Personal Growth
- Uniform

1.8–Values (2014)

We expect all troop leaders and parents to stress traditional moral and ethical values, in Scouting and in their daily lives as an example to the Scouts, especially by doing their best to live in accordance with the Scout Law and Scout Promise.

Chapter 2

Troop Organization

2.1–Troop Program Year (2006)

Troop 97 plans its program from September through August, matching the school year. The troop activity calendar is planned annually a few months in advance of the beginning of the program year, to allow time for research, and for approval by the troop committee. The troop sends a brief annual report, annual calendar, and annual statement of account to each family at the end of each program year. The beginning of the school year is a time for Scouts, families, uniformed leaders, and troop committee to re-evaluate their activities and make plans for a new year.

2.2–Troop Organization (1989)

Troop organization includes the following major components:

- chartered organization (sponsor)
- troop committee
- parents
- uniformed adult leaders
- Patrol Leader Council
- regular patrols
- New Scouts patrol
- senior-Scout programs

2.3–Chartered Organization (Sponsor) (1989)

Troop 97 is sponsored and owned by Westminster Presbyterian Church. The chartered organization is obligated by the BSA Charter agreement to provide an adequate meeting place, including storage for troop equipment, and to secure and approve new troop adult leaders. The chartered organization appoints a Chartered Organization Representative (Scouting Coordinator) to be the key liaison between the troop and the chartered organization. The chartered organization has the ultimate responsibility to ensure that the troop operates in full accord with all BSA policies.

2.4–Troop Committee (2014)

The troop committee is composed of a chair and several members with functions as described in the *Troop Committee Guidebook*. Specific jobs should cover:

- advancement
- treasurer
- secretary
- transportation
- troop supper/fund-raising coordinator
- adult membership
- quartermaster
- uniform exchange
- potluck suppers
- merit badge counselors list

All committee members must be registered with the Boy Scouts of America, and must take the applicable online BSA training for committee members. The committee has three primary functions:

- to secure new adult leaders as vacancies occur
- to approve troop programs and activities as planned by the Patrol Leader Council and Scoutmaster
- to provide troop program support as requested by the Scoutmaster, especially transportation and adult leadership for outings

By troop custom, all Troop 97 committee members, uniformed adult leaders, and parents are welcome at regular committee meetings, and are usually welcome to vote on issues discussed at those meeting. The committee chair has the discretion to restrict voting solely to the committee.

2.5–Parents (2024)

[Note that throughout this document, the term 'parent' also includes 'legal guardian'.]

Parents must participate actively if they want their child to succeed in Scouting. Troop records show that most Scouts whose parents are not involved do poorly in Scouting. Troop 97 expects and encourages at least one parent from every family to be actively involved with the troop. It is the responsibility of the Scoutmaster and troop committee to determine what level of involvement is acceptable.

2.6–Uniformed Adult Leaders (2014)

The uniformed adult leaders consist of one or more Assistant Scoutmasters operating under the direction and control of the Scoutmaster. Their duties are to train and guide youth leaders, and to use the Methods of Scouting to achieve the Aims of Scouting. The Scoutmaster has full responsibility for all program decisions of the troop. We expect all uniformed adult leaders to take the basic Scout leader training and to read the *Scout Handbook* and *Troop Leader Guidebook*. See section 4.2 for pre-requisites.

2.7–Patrol Leader Council (2006)

The Patrol Leader Council (PLC, “Green Bar”) plans and conducts the troop program under the guidance of the Scoutmaster, who trains its members and who has ultimate authority and responsibility over all decisions made. The operation of the PLC is a key means of leadership development. Voting members of the PLC are:

- Senior Patrol Leader
- Patrol Leaders
- Troop Guide (senior Troop Guide if there is more than one troop guide)
- senior Scout patrol or crew leader

Non-voting members are:

- Scoutmaster
- Assistant Senior Patrol Leader(s)
- Assistant Troop Guide(s)

The Scoutmaster always has veto power over PLC decisions.

2.8–Regular Patrols (2024)

The patrol method is the most important and distinctive characteristic of Scouting, and it is one of Scouting's eight methods. The Senior Patrol Leader, the Assistant Senior Patrol Leader(s), and any Junior Assistant Scoutmasters are usually members of a special “senior patrol”. The Scoutmaster may choose to assign patrols. Each patrol elects its own Patrol Leader, who represents the patrol on the Patrol Leader Council. Patrols function as described in the *Scout Handbook* and *Troop Leader Guidebook*. ‘Combined’ (coed) patrols are allowed, with Scoutmaster approval.

2.9–New Scouts Patrol (2024)

The New Scouts patrol is a special Troop 97 feature (adopted by the BSA in 1989) that has helped increase retention of younger Scouts. New Scouts are usually placed in the New Scouts patrol upon joining Troop 97, where they receive special training under the guidance of a senior Scout (Troop Guide) appointed by the Senior Patrol Leader with Scoutmaster approval. A Scout gets to choose a regular patrol typically at or immediately after summer camp.

2.10–Senior Scout Programs

2.10.1–General (1994)

Both Troop 97 and the BSA offer several special programs for senior Scouts. Troop 97 organizes some of its senior Scouts into an optional older patrol or crew. The troop organizes a backpack, canoe, or bicycle “Trek” crew each year. In addition, senior Scouts may organize into temporary crews (see the *Scout Handbook* and *Troop Leader Guidebook*). And the Scoutmaster may appoint 16 and 17 year old Scouts as Junior Assistant Scoutmasters.

2.10.2–Senior Scouts (2017)

Troop 97 considers “Senior Scouts” to be any Scout Star rank or higher who is 14 or older OR has gone on a Troop 97 Trek.

2.10.3–Senior Patrol (2016)

Troop 97 Senior Scouts may remain in a regular patrol or join the senior patrol. All Senior Scouts (not just senior patrol members) may take part in Senior-Scout activities. Each Senior Scout should have specific leadership responsibilities in the troop, and we must actively encourage older Scouts to hold key troop leadership positions. The senior patrol is led by an elected Senior Scout as their patrol leader. Senior Scouts wear no special insignia other than any badge of office to which they are currently entitled. The Scoutmaster may appoint one or more Assistant Scoutmasters, and the troop committee chair may appoint one or more committee members, to work with the older Scouts. The senior patrol may plan special, Senior-Scout-only activities appropriate to their age and experience level separate from the troop. The Senior Scouts may plan some meetings and campouts separate from the troop meetings and campouts, subject to Scoutmaster approval.

2.10.4–Trek Crew (2016)

Each year, Troop 97 conducts a special High Adventure “Trek” (described under Outings). Participants must be Star rank or higher (the Scoutmaster has the discretion to allow First Class Scouts to participate), and must meet all other qualifications set by the Scoutmaster. While part of a Trek crew, Scouts remain members of their regular patrol or the senior patrol.

Chapter 3

Scout Leadership

3.1—Leadership Development (1989)

Leadership Development is one of Scouting's eight methods. For Scouts above First Class, leadership and service are more important than earning merit badges. The troop's youth leaders are responsible for planning and executing the troop program.

3.2—Elections (2019)

The two most important troop positions (Senior Patrol Leader/SPL, Patrol Leader/PL) are elected by their peers to six-month terms (nominally 1 February through 31 July, and 1 August through 31 January). Elections for SPL occur in January and during summer camp. The Senior Patrol Leader is chosen by secret ballot of the entire troop (more than half the active Scouts must be present). If no candidate receives a majority, the troop will immediately hold a runoff election between the top two vote-getters. Patrol Leaders are elected in a similar manner by the members of their patrol. PL elections often occur a week or more after SPL elections to allow time for the new SPL to make ASPL and other appointments. If the SPL is unable to attend summer camp, the troop will hold an election prior to camp to elect a new SPL, whose term of office will start at the beginning of the month that includes summer camp and continue through July 31.

3.3—Scout Leadership Positions

3.3.1—Senior Patrol Leader (1989)

The troop is led by its elected Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), who chairs the Patrol Leader Council and leads meetings and outings. The SPL normally serves only one six-month term, to allow as many senior Scouts as possible to hold this leadership position. The Scoutmaster has the discretion to allow an SPL to run for another term.

3.3.2—Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (1994)

The SPL appoints one or more Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders (ASPLs), subject to Scoutmaster approval. ASPLs serve at the pleasure of the SPL, normally for one or more six-month terms.

3.3.3—Troop Guide/Senior Troop Guide (2006)

The SPL appoints one or more Troop Guides, subject to Scoutmaster approval. The Troop Guides work with the New Scouts Patrol(s). Their position is equivalent to an ASPL. The Troop Guides serve at the pleasure of the SPL, normally for one or more six-month terms. When there is more than one New Scout patrol, a senior Troop Guide may be appointed to supervise the Troop Guides.

3.3.4—Patrol Leader (1989)

Each patrol is led by its elected Patrol Leader, who represents the patrol on the Patrol Leader Council. Patrol Leaders are elected to six-month terms.

3.3.5—Senior-Scout Patrol & Crew Leaders (2016)

Like any other patrol, the senior patrol elects its own patrol leader. In addition, any Senior Scout crew set up for a specific Senior-Scout activity may select a crew leader for the duration of that activity. The leader of the annual troop Trek is also a Senior-Scout crew leader.

3.3.6—Instructor/Senior Instructor (2006)

The SPL appoints instructors, subject to Scoutmaster approval. Each instructor is responsible for teaching in one or more skill areas. The instructors serve at the pleasure of the SPL, based on performance and active service. The SPL may appoint a Senior Instructor (equivalent to an ASPL) to train and supervise the instructors.

3.3.7—Junior Assistant Scoutmaster (1990)

The Scoutmaster appoints Junior Assistant Scoutmasters (JASMs). Each JASM has responsibilities similar to the adult Assistant Scoutmasters. The JASM serves at the pleasure of the Scoutmaster, based on performance.

3.3.8—Other Officers (2016)

Each Patrol Leader appoints an Assistant Patrol Leader, subject to the approval of the SPL. The Patrol Leader may rotate the Assistant Patrol Leader job to provide experience to several patrol members. Den Chiefs are requested by the Cub Scout pack, subject to Scoutmaster approval. They serve at the pleasure of the Cub Scout pack. The SPL appoints the troop Scribe, Quartermaster, Librarian, Historian, Bugler, Chaplain Aide, Outdoor Ethics Guide, and Troop Webmaster. These officers have duties as described in the *Scout Handbook* and *Troop Leader Guidebook*, and they serve at the pleasure of the SPL, normally for one or more six-month terms.

3.4—Requirements for Office

3.4.1—Requirements for All Positions (2014)

All officers must receive the Scoutmaster's approval in advance, and all must be actively attending meetings and campouts in order to fulfill the job requirements. The PLC and Scoutmaster may change requirements for troop offices as the needs of the troop change.

3.4.2—Senior Patrol Leader (2014)

- Star rank or higher
- Must be attending most meetings and outings
- Have been a member of Troop 97 for a minimum of one year
- Have been a Patrol Leader, ASPL, or Troop Guide in Troop 97 for a minimum of six months

3.4.3–Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (2014)

- Star rank or higher
- Must be attending most meetings and outings
- Have been a Patrol Leader or Troop Guide in Troop 97 for a minimum of six months

3.4.4–Senior-Scout Patrol Leader (1994)

- Same requirements as Senior Patrol Leader

3.4.5–Troop Guide/Senior Troop Guide (2014)

- Star rank or higher
- Must be attending most meetings and outings
- Have been a member of Troop 97 for a minimum of six months

3.4.6–Patrol Leader (1992)

- First Class rank or higher
- Must be attending most meetings and outings
- Have been a member of Troop 97 for a minimum of six months

3.4.7–Instructor/Senior Instructor (2006)

- First Class rank or higher (Star for senior Instructor)
- Willing to accept specific instructional and leadership responsibilities

3.4.8–Junior Assistant Scoutmasters (2006)

- 16 or 17 years old (BSA requirement)
- should be Eagle, minimum Life rank
- Willing to accept Assistant Scoutmaster-type responsibilities

3.4.9–Other Officers (1989)

- Any qualified, interested Scout
- Preference to Scouts First Class and higher, who need leadership to advance

Chapter 4

Membership Standards

4.1–Membership

4.1.1–Membership Categories (2024)

Membership in Troop 97 consists of the following categories:

- Scouts
- uniformed adult leaders
- troop committee members
- other BSA-registered adults
- member families

(A) Troop 97 Scouts are boys or girls who meet BSA age requirements, are currently registered with the BSA as Troop 97 Scouts, and are currently active in the troop. See Chapter 12 for details about the national BSA ‘Combined Troop Pilot Program’, of which Troop 97 is a part.

(B) Uniformed adult leaders are adults who meet BSA age requirements, are currently registered with the BSA as Troop 97 Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmasters, and are currently active in the troop.

(C) Troop Committee members are adults who meet BSA age requirements, are currently registered with the BSA as Troop 97 Committee Chair or Committee Members, and are currently active in an assigned area of committee responsibility.

(D) Other registered adults are adults registered with BSA solely for the purpose of providing leadership on overnight Scout activities as required by BSA. Use BSA registration **code 91 (Unit Scouter Reserve)** for these adults.

(E) For the purposes of troop membership, **member families** are the parents and minor siblings of Scout members, or the spouse and minor children of registered adult members. While other relatives and friends are welcome at Courts of Honor, most other activities are restricted to one or more member categories.

4.1.2–Active/Inactive Members (1995)

A Scout is considered active if his attendance at meetings and campouts meets the Active Scouts standard below (4.3.2). Uniformed adult leaders, troop committee members, and parents are considered active if they meet the Active Adults standard below (4.3.3). Active members have full membership privileges. Inactive members may be denied certain privileges, including attendance on some activities, advancement, and leadership.

4.2–Entry Requirements

4.2.1–Scouts (2006)

Any interested youth who meets the membership requirements above may register as a Scout in Troop 97, subject to the restrictions in this section. The Scoutmaster and troop committee may limit the number of new Scouts admitted each year to

maintain overall troop size at a level that allows for a quality program, based on current membership, the number and quality of adult leaders, and anticipated membership losses. The most desirable entry period is from January through May, so that new members can attend summer camp shortly after joining. The troop always admits younger siblings/children of present or former members in good standing regardless of the present membership level.

4.2.2–Parent Involvement (2024)

Troop 97 expects at least one parent of every Scout to be actively involved with the troop, which helps the troop as well as that parent’s child. The Scoutmaster and troop committee shall publish a list of parent job opportunities and set standards for active involvement.

4.2.3–Scoutmaster / Assistant Scoutmaster (2014)

Anyone desiring to become Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster with Troop 97 must meet the following requirements:

- Be approved by the chartered organization, the troop committee chair (in consultation with the troop committee), and the Scoutmaster (in consultation with the other uniformed leaders);
- Have completed all BSA training for the position;
- Have been actively involved with Troop 97 for a minimum of 6 months.
- The first 6 months as a ‘uniformed leader’ is a probationary period; during that time either the troop committee chair or Scoutmaster may ask that leader to step down without additional process.

4.2.4–Troop Committee Members (2014)

Anyone desiring to become a member of the Troop 97 Committee must meet the following requirements:

- Be approved by the chartered organization and the troop committee chair (in consultation with the troop committee);
- Complete basic BSA online training for committee members.

4.3–Standards of Membership

4.3.1–General (1995)

To retain full membership in Troop 97, a Scout must be active, must wear a full uniform, and must meet the behavior standards of the troop.

4.3.2–Active Scouts (2018)

A Scout must be active to reap the full benefit of Scouting. Because camping is the heart of Scouting, the troop expects its Scouts to attend overnight camps winter and summer, and to make every effort to attend the annual week at summer camp. Scouts are considered active if they attend a minimum of three weekend campouts plus either summer camp or troop trek. There are no excused absences since the standard is intended to allow sufficient leeway for such things as illness, school activities, family activities, sports, etc. Inactive Scouts may be charged higher annual fees, and participation on 'special' activities such as the annual troop trek is subject to special approval by the Scoutmaster or troop committee. The period used to measure active involvement is the troop activity year (September through August). Active involvement of new Scouts (who typically join partway through the activity year) is measured starting the September after they join.

4.3.3–Active Adults (2024)

Parent involvement is vital for each Scout, and vital to the overall troop operation. Parents and adult leaders are considered active if they fulfill a designated responsibility within the troop program (as determined by the Scoutmaster or troop committee), or attend at least two weekend campouts or one weekend plus one long-term campout (summer camp or troop trek). The Scoutmaster may exclude inactive adults from certain activities (such as the annual Trek). Scouts whose parents are inactive may pay higher fees as determined by the troop committee.

4.3.4–Advancement Standard (1995)

A Scout needs to advance regularly to learn the skills and leadership that are central to the Scout program. Troop 97 expects all Scouts to earn First Class within one year of joining, and to continue to advance at least one rank per year after that. The Scoutmaster may restrict certain activities to Scouts holding specific ranks or merit badges as appropriate to the activity or as a reward for advancement.

4.3.5–Uniform Standard (2024)

Troop 97 requires a complete and correct Scout uniform for all Scouts and uniformed adult leaders. Scouts and adults may have a reasonable time to acquire a complete uniform or to replace worn or outgrown components. The Scoutmaster may exclude Scouts without proper or complete uniforms from uniformed activities.

4.3.6–Behavior Standard (1989)

Troop 97 expects reasonable behavior in accord with the Scout Promise and Law. The Scoutmaster should counsel with any Scout whose behavior is disruptive. If counseling fails, the Scoutmaster may dismiss the Scout from the activity and notify the parents of the problem. If the behavior problems continue, the Scoutmaster may suspend the Scout, usually for a period of six months. The troop committee has the final right of appeal.

4.3.7–Removal of Adults (2014)

General—The chartered organization may remove any adult leader, in accordance with BSA policy. In general, the chartered organization leaves such actions within the troop, stepping in only when necessary.

Scoutmaster—The Scoutmaster serves at the pleasure of the chartered organization and troop committee, and may only be removed only by joint action of the chartered organization and troop committee.

Assistant Scoutmaster—Assistant Scoutmasters serve at the pleasure of the Scoutmaster and troop committee. They may be removed by the troop committee or by request of the Scoutmaster to the troop committee. This does not preclude the Scoutmaster's authority to dismiss a leader from a troop activity for cause, pending later action of the troop committee.

Chartered Representative—The Chartered Representative serves at the pleasure of the Institutional Head, and may be removed by action of the chartered organization, or by request of the troop committee to the chartered organization.

Committee Chair—The committee chair serves at the pleasure of the chartered organization, and may be removed by action of the chartered organization, or by request of the troop committee to the chartered organization.

Committee Member—Troop committee members serve at the pleasure of the committee chair. They may be removed only by joint action of the committee chair and the troop committee.

Merit Badge Counselor—Merit Badge Counselors serve at the pleasure of the troop committee. They may be removed by the troop committee, or at the request of the Scoutmaster to the committee.

Parent of Scout—Parents of currently active Scouts are normally permitted full access to troop activities, with the exception of certain activities (like the annual troop Trek) that have necessary adult participation restrictions. The troop committee may restrict parent participation or remove all participation privileges as necessary for the safety and well-being of the Scouts (court-ordered custody restrictions, legal convictions, unwillingness to live by the Scout Law/Promise, etc). Note that BSA requires that parents be BSA-registered to attend any overnight activity.

4.4–Discipline

4.4.1–General (1989)

Discipline needs to be positive rather than negative whenever possible, and it must be applied using common sense and fairness. Troop 97 does not permit corporal punishment or hazing of any kind, nor does it allow disciplining through pushups or other punitive physical exercise. For more serious offenses, the troop may use probation, suspension, and expulsion.

4.4.2–Probation (1989)

Probation is a period of evaluation both by the troop and by the Scout under probation to determine fitness or desire to remain in the troop. A Scout under probation may not normally hold any troop leadership position, and is generally barred from certain “special” troop activities, at the Scoutmaster’s discretion.

4.4.3–Suspension (1989)

Suspension is the temporary loss of all membership privileges in the troop, typically for 3 or 6 months. A Scout is not eligible for any advancement during the suspension period. A suspended Scout may be readmitted at the conclusion of the suspension period only after submitting a letter to the troop committee, signed by the Scout and parents, pledging to meet all troop standards fully.

4.4.4–Expulsion (2019)

Expulsion is the permanent loss of all membership privileges in the troop. The troop committee, acting as a committee of the whole or by request from the Scoutmaster, may permanently expel any member for any of the following:

- illegal conduct, in or out of Scouting;
- illicit use of drugs or alcohol, in or out of Scouting;
- bullying (including cyber-bullying), hazing, or harassment of another Scout;
- stealing from another Scout;
- “sexting” or sharing pornographic material or photos with other Scouts;
- misbehavior or refusal to abide by troop policies which is seriously detrimental to the welfare of the troop;
- willful disregard of the Scout Law or Scout Promise, especially by an adult in a position of trust.

Chapter 5

Troop Activities

5.1–General (2019)

Troop activities are divided into meetings and outings. Meetings include troop meetings, Patrol Leader Council meetings, troop committee meetings, Courts of Honor, and the Annual Planning Conference. Outings include day outings, weekend campouts, family outings, summer camp, and the annual “Trek” or other special Senior-Scout trips. We expect all activities to start and end on time, and we expect Scouts and adults to arrive and to be picked up on time.

5.2–Meetings

5.2.1–Troop Meetings (2014)

Regular troop meetings occur on Mondays, usually twice per month, year round, from 7 until 8:15 or 8:30 pm, as designated by the Scoutmaster. The troop generally takes a brief hiatus during July, except for a mid-summer ‘picnic in the park’ meeting, as determined by the Scoutmaster. Scouts and leaders are expected to arrive on time, in uniform, and to be picked up promptly. The Patrol Leader Council plans and conducts all troop meetings under the direction of the Senior Patrol Leader. Attendance is open to all members (Scouts, uniformed adult leaders, troop committee members, and member families) and to visitors who are interested in joining a Scout troop.

5.2.2–Patrol Leader Council Meetings (2014)

The Patrol Leader Council (PLC or “Green Bar”) generally meets about one Monday per month in lieu of a regular troop meeting. At the meeting, the PLC plans the troop meeting and outing programs through the next PLC meeting. Attendance is primarily for PLC members and uniformed adult leaders, but other interested Scouts are welcome.

5.2.3–Troop Committee Meetings (2014)

The troop committee generally meets once per month except during summer. The Committee Chair and Scoutmaster jointly plan the agenda. Attendance is open to troop committee members, uniformed adult leaders, and all interested Scout parents. The Scoutmaster needs to attend to present the plans and needs of the troop as decided at the PLC meeting. The committee may hold additional meetings as necessary to address specific issues, and these meetings may be restricted to official committee members only, at the discretion of the Committee Chair.

5.2.4–Courts of Honor (2018)

Troop 97 generally holds three formal Courts of Honor per year, typically in September, January/February, and May. The September Court of Honor is often a picnic or potluck supper, while the others are followed by a shared dessert.

Attendance is open to all members (Scouts, uniformed adult leaders, troop committee members, and member families), interested family friends and relatives, and visitors who are interested in joining a Scout troop. Since badges and awards are presented as soon as possible after being earned (and neckerchiefs are presented on campouts), the Court of Honor is a second, formal recognition, in front of the parents, of rank certificates, parent pins, and of all other significant accomplishments that have occurred since the last Court of Honor.

5.2.5–Annual Planning Conference (2018)

Prior to the beginning of each program year, the PLC meets to plan the troop’s annual program. Planning should include monthly theme ideas, dates/places/ themes for outings, and special events. The conference is also an opportunity for the Scoutmaster to conduct junior leader training. Attendance is primarily for PLC members and the uniformed adult leaders (including Junior Assistant Scoutmasters), but other interested Scouts are welcome.

5.3–Short-term Outings

5.3.1–Purpose (1989)

The outdoor program of camping and hiking is the heart of Scouting, and is one of Scouting’s eight methods. A variety of overnight experiences, conducted on a monthly basis year round, in all weather, is essential to a successful Scouting program.

5.3.2–Patrol System (1989)

The patrol system is one of Scouting’s eight methods, and it is central to the operation of a good Scout troop. Troop 97 Scouts should camp by patrols, and the campouts should support the patrol method, to the maximum extent possible.

5.3.3–Attendance on Outings (2024)

All Troop 97 Scouts, uniformed adult leaders, and registered parents may attend most overnight outings, unless the Scoutmaster determines that special restrictions are necessary. See Chapter 11 for additional BSA policies.

5.3.4–Day Outings (1989)

The PLC plans occasional day outings to places of interest when overnight camping is impractical or inappropriate. Attendance at most day outings is open to all troop members (Scouts, uniformed adult leaders, troop committee members, and member families). The Scoutmaster may restrict attendance at some outings as necessary for the troop program.

5.3.5–Weekend Campouts (2024)

The PLC plans a year-round program of weekend overnight campouts providing a variety of outdoor experiences and covering the full range of the Scout program. Attendance at most campouts is open to all Scout members, uniformed adult leaders, and registered parents. The Scoutmaster must make every effort to attend as many campouts as possible. The Scoutmaster may restrict attendance at some campouts as necessary for the troop program.

5.3.6–Adult Leadership on Outings (2018)

To lead a Troop 97 outing, an adult must:

- be BSA-registered with Troop 97
- have current BSA Youth Protection training
- have current BSA Scout Leader Basic Training (or be approved by the troop committee)

If aquatic activities will be involved, at least one adult must:

- have current BSA Safe Swim and Safety Afloat training (other than at a public pool with lifeguards or at a BSA staffed summer camp)

To attend a Troop 97 outing, BSA requires that adults must be BSA-registered with Troop 97. The troop committee and Scoutmaster may also further restrict adult qualifications for specific activities.

5.4–Summer Camp (2024)

The annual week at summer camp is vital to the success of the troop's year-round program. We expect ALL Scouts to make every possible effort to attend summer camp. The Scoutmaster also must make every effort to attend the full week of summer camp.

5.5–High Adventure ‘Treks’

5.5.1–Trek Purposes (2006)

Troop 97 provides an annual one- to two-week “Trek” for senior Scouts. The Trek has three purposes:

- to develop maturity, leadership, self-confidence, initiative, and teamwork;
- to develop the youth leadership team for the coming year; and
- to help maintain older-Scout interest in Scouting.

5.5.2–Nature of the Trek (2006)

This leadership-development experience goes considerably beyond the level of other troop outings in degree of difficulty and challenge, and should be aimed at senior Scouts who have experienced all the more usual troop activities, who can benefit from a more advanced activity, and who are most likely to pass on their new learning to the other Scouts over the coming year.

5.5.3–Types of Treks (2024)

The troop typically offers a “Trek” in even years to relatively nearby areas, and typically offers “Expeditions” and “SuperTreks” in alternating odd years, which are more ambitious backpacking, canoeing, cycling, sailing, or touring treks further afield. The quadrennial SuperTreks are longer and more ambitious than Expeditions.

5.5.4–Role of the Trek Leader (2024)

The trek leader determines appropriate attendance requirements and trip policies necessary for the safety and success of the Trek. The trek leader may limit group size and adult participation based on wilderness area restrictions, and must ensure that proper training is given. The trek leader may make exceptions to these policies, but should do so with great care and in consultation with other experienced leaders. Note that taking youth or adults who are unknown to the trek leader poses potential serious risks to the success and safety of the trip, and note that BSA requires that any such youth or adults be BSA-registered *with Troop 97*.

5.5.5–Participation by Youth (2019)

All youth participants must meet all stated trek requirements, including minimum age (usually 13 or 14). Participation by youth is open only to current active members of T97.

5.5.6–Participation by Adults (2024)

The role of adults is to provide support for the trek goals and to ensure overall safety. All adults must be BSA-registered with Troop 97 (BSA policy), be active with the troop and knowledgeable about our Scouts, and be sufficiently physical fit.

Participation by adults is subject to approval of the trek leader. Note that having too many adults relative to the number of Scouts can create leadership and decision-making issues that interfere with the Scout goals of the trek.

5.5.7–Satellite Phone for Treks (2017)

Due to the remote nature of most troop treks, it is troop policy that each trek crew carry a satellite phone for emergency communications. Cost should be built in to the trek fees; the committee may consider cases where the troop budget should pay for part or all of the phone cost.

Chapter 6

Advancement

6.1—General (1989)

Scouts learn by advancing. Advancement is one of Scouting's eight methods because it teaches useful skills and because it teaches leadership and service. The Scoutmaster may require a specific level of advancement for some activities, due to the nature of that activity or as an inducement to encourage advancement. Troop 97 expects each Scout to advance regularly, to achieve First Class within one year of joining (the BSA standard), and to meet the troop's minimum advancement standard.

6.2—Ranks (2018)

The first four ranks (Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class) emphasize basic skills. The higher three ranks (Star, Life, Eagle) emphasize leadership and service; skills at this level are secondary. Advancement in Troop 97 must operate in full accord with the requirements contained in the current editions of the appropriate BSA literature. Advancement through the six ranks consists of performance in the following seven categories.

6.3—Active Service (2024)

Although BSA has officially eliminated the active service requirement for the lower ranks, note that the four-week or 30-day fitness requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class, as well as the campout attendance requirements, mean that each of those ranks will require active involvement of a month or more.

6.4—Basic Scout Skills (2014)

The basic Scout skills for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class must be certified (signed off) by Patrol Leaders, instructors, troop guides, or by the uniformed adult leaders. Parents may certify a skill only with the Scoutmaster's approval (the intent of the advancement plan is to let Scouts learn leadership and develop their own skills by teaching other Scouts).

6.5—Merit Badges (2024)

There are close to 140 merit badges. Fourteen specified merit badges are required by the time a Scout achieves Eagle. Eagles must earn an additional seven optional badges for a total of 21. A Scout of any rank may earn any merit badge. The merit badge system is designed to propel the Scout beyond the home, to learn to communicate with strangers, and to learn about a subject from a local expert. Scouts desiring to earn a merit badge must first secure the name of an approved adult counselor from the Scoutmaster. The troop committee is responsible for maintaining a current list of merit badge counselors. Parents may counsel their child on a badge only if they are the approved troop counselor for that badge.

6.6—Leadership (2018)

A Scout must hold one or more approved troop offices and fulfill them in an acceptable manner for at least the minimum period of active service required for Star, Life, and Eagle. For Star or Life, a Scout may also carry out a specific leadership project approved by the Scoutmaster.

6.7—Service Projects (1989)

This is useful service to the church, school, community, or Scouting, performed under the direction of troop leaders or with the Scoutmaster's prior approval. It is important to future citizens to develop the habit of service to the greater community. An Eagle Scout candidate must be the leader in charge during the project, and the Eagle project must benefit the community outside of Scouting.

6.8—Scoutmaster Conference (2018)

Prior to the Board of Review, a Scout meets with the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster designated by the Scoutmaster to discuss past progress and future plans. This conference can happen at any time since the Board of Review for the previous rank, but typically happens after all other requirements for the rank have been completed.

6.9—Board of Review (2018)

After completing all requirements, a Scout is reviewed on work done. The troop committee conducts reviews for all ranks from Tenderfoot through Life, under the direction of the troop advancement chair. No board of review is required for the Scout rank, and the district or Council advancement chair conducts the Eagle review.

Chapter 7

Uniform

7.1—Significance of the Uniform (1989)

Scouting is a uniformed movement. Throughout our society, only certain special people are entitled to wear a uniform. Just as sports uniforms proclaim membership on a team, Scout uniforms proclaim membership in the largest voluntary youth movement in the world. The Scout uniform tends to diminish the importance of individuals' financial, social, and ethnic background, while clearly showing their degree of accomplishment in Scouting. At the same time, the uniform maintains individuality since no two uniforms are completely alike, and they show off each individual's Scouting achievements.

7.2—Full Uniform Required (1989)

The uniform is so important it is one of Scouting's eight methods. Troop 97 requires a complete and correct Scout uniform for all Scouts and uniformed adult leaders, and has a Membership Standard (Chapter 4) on uniforming.

7.3—Uniform Exchange (1989)

The troop committee is responsible for providing a uniform exchange of used uniform items for resale at a reasonable price.

7.4—Uniform Components

7.4.1—General (2018)

Troop 97 has selected the BSA uniform options listed below; no other BSA options are permitted. The troop presents the following components:

- Troop 97 hat
- Troop 97 neckerchief
- Troop 97 Eagle neckerchief
- single-piece numeral 97 with veteran unit ID
- badge of office
- patrol medallion
- Quality Unit / Journey To Excellence badge
- badge of rank
- troop nametag

The troop budget pays for all items.

7.4.2—Standard (“Class A” or “Full”) Uniform (2014)

The standard Troop 97 “Class A” uniform consists of the following components:

- Troop 97 hat (optional at indoor meetings)
- official BSA short-sleeved tan-colored shirt with appropriate insignia (long-sleeved shirt optional but NOT recommended)
- Troop 97 neckerchief or Troop 97 Eagle neckerchief
- any neckerchief slide
- official BSA dark forest-green pants, shorts, or zip-off
- any BSA belt and any BSA buckle

- official BSA dark forest-green socks (low-cut or crew socks, NOT knee socks)
- any shoes or sneakers (socks required; no flip-flops, Crocs, or sandals)—Sandals no longer allowed due to too frequent abuse by adults & Scouts who refuse to wear socks.

7.4.3—Summer (“Class B”) Uniform (2014)

The “summer” Troop 97 “Class B” uniform is the same as the “Class A” uniform **except** that the shirt & neckerchief may be replaced with a Troop 97 T-shirt OR Troop 97 Trek shirt. The “summer” uniform may be worn at most summer troop meetings and during the day at summer camp, as determined by the Scoutmaster.

7.4.4—Standard Shirt Insignia (2018)

The following insignia are required on the official BSA shirt, and must be sewn in the correct position according to the appropriate BSA publications:

- Shoulder tabs—forest green shoulder loops;
- Left sleeve—any Adventure West Council shoulder patch, single-piece numeral 97+veteran unit ID, badge of office (if applicable);
- Right sleeve—American flag, patrol medallion, and current-year Quality Unit patch;
- Left pocket—badge of rank, Arrow of Light (if earned);
- Above right pocket—troop nametag.

Other insignia are optional, but must be sewn in the correct position, if worn.

7.4.5—Adult Leader Uniforms (1992)

Adult leaders wear the same uniform as the Scouts, except they do not wear a badge of rank or patrol medallion.

7.5—Special Troop 97 Uniform Components

7.5.1—Troop-stocked Components (2018)

The troop stocks Troop 97 uniform components, or places an annual order for those components that are too expensive to stock. It is economical to stock “one size fits all” items such as the neckerchief, Eagle neckerchief, hat, one-piece numeral 97, and BSA-restricted uniform insignia (badges of rank, badges of office, Quality Unit badge). Items that require multiple sizes (troop T-shirt, fleece jacket) can be ordered once per year, in the early spring so that new Scouts can order them before summer camp. The troop tries to maintain a small extra stock of T-shirts. Trek shirts are ordered for specific troop Treks. Base color should be royal blue to match the T-shirt, so that Scouts look reasonably uniform at summer activities.

7.5.2–Cost of Components (2018)

The troop gives each Scout and uniformed adult leader a neckerchief, hat, and appropriate insignia for one shirt. Insignia for extra shirts may be purchased through the troop. The troop gives each Troop 97 Eagle Scout a T97 Eagle neckerchief. The troop sells the T-shirt, Trek shirt, and fleece jacket.

7.5.3–Who Can Wear Troop 97 Uniform Components (2016)

Only currently active Troop 97 Scouts and uniformed adult leaders may wear the Troop 97 neckerchief (see below). Only those who earned Eagle Scout as a member of Troop 97 may wear the Troop 97 Eagle neckerchief (see below). Only Troop 97 “Trek” participants may wear the Troop 97 Trek shirt. Any Troop 97 Scout, leader, or family member may wear the Troop 97 hat, T-shirt, and fleece jacket.

7.5.4–Wearing Troop 97 Uniform Components (2016)

The Troop 97 neckerchief and hat are required parts of the standard uniform. Troop 97 Eagle Scouts may choose to wear the Troop 97 Eagle neckerchief in place of the standard troop neckerchief. The Troop 97 T-shirt is required for summer camp and optional at certain other times. The Troop 97 fleece jacket is optional.

7.6–Troop 97 Neckerchiefs

7.6.1–Description (1989)

The Troop 97 neckerchiefs are the most distinctive and unique emblems of our troop. They symbolize the honor and reputation of this troop and should be respected and protected. The light blue color represents the daytime sky and the dark blue color the nighttime sky under which we camp. The mountains on the patch represent both the outdoors and the adventures there waiting for us. The snow on the mountains reminds us of the many winter activities we do in Colorado. The gold circle surrounding the number stands for Excellence and reminds us of our duty to set the example and give leadership to others. Finally, the red ring enclosing the gold circle stands for brotherhood and honor.

7.6.2–Wearing the Neckerchief (2014)

Only Troop 97 Scouts and uniformed adult leaders are entitled to a Troop 97 neckerchief. All Scouts and uniformed adult leaders wear either the standard Troop 97 neckerchief or the special Troop 97 Eagle Scout neckerchief. The standard neckerchief is worn by all members who do not qualify to wear the Troop 97 Eagle Scout neckerchief. The Eagle neckerchief is worn by any Scout or adult who earned the Eagle rank as a member of Troop 97 (it may NOT be worn by Troop 97 members who earned their Eagle in another troop). Other neckerchiefs (OA, etc) should not be worn at Troop 97 functions.

7.6.3–Presentation (1990)

The standard neckerchief is presented only on campouts. New members, including uniformed adult leaders, should receive their neckerchiefs on their first overnight campout, if possible. The Eagle neckerchief is presented at the Eagle Court of Honor.

7.6.4–Sale/trade/replacement (1989)

Neither Troop 97 neckerchief may be sold, traded, or given to anyone not entitled to wear that neckerchief. Members are entitled to only one standard neckerchief, and Eagle Scout members are entitled to only one Eagle neckerchief. Members may purchase a replacement neckerchief for one worn out or lost. Those who earned their Eagle rank in Troop 97 before the Eagle neckerchief was created may purchase one. In exceptional circumstances where an individual has rendered outstanding services to Troop 97, the Scoutmaster has the discretion to present a standard neckerchief to that individual. In no case may an Eagle neckerchief be presented to a non-member. The neckerchief is presented only to individuals; it may not be presented to any organization, camp, building, etc.

Chapter 8

Finances

8.1–Finance Responsibilities

8.1.1–Troop Committee (1989)

The troop committee approves the annual troop budget, and it approves all expenditures in advance, except those spent by the treasurer or Scoutmaster in accord with the approved budget. The troop committee carefully selects the troop treasurer and oversees the treasurer's actions. The committee is responsible for conducting a simple annual audit of the previous year's income and expenses, assisted by the treasurer and the Scoutmaster.

8.1.2–Troop Treasurer & Scoutmaster (2024)

The troop treasurer must be a registered member of the troop committee. The treasurer is responsible for maintaining adequate records of all troop income and expenses, and provides a written report of income and expenses at troop committee meetings.

At the beginning of each activity year, the treasurer and the Scoutmaster prepare a summary of the previous year's income and expenses and prepare a proposed budget of projected income and expenses for the coming year, for review and approval by the troop committee.

8.2–Troop Checking & Savings Accounts (2024)

Troop funds are kept in a checking account, with a companion savings account for interest when possible, under the name of BSA Troop 97. The troop treasurer is the primary disburser of troop funds, although the Scoutmaster may keep a checkbook of separately numbered checks to use at summer camp and on other activities where the treasurer may not be present. The treasurer and Scoutmaster may also have a troop debit card to use now that writing checks slows down transactions. It is recommended that the treasurer and Scoutmaster be check co-signers, with the Committee Chair as a backup in case one of the others is unavailable.

8.3–Fund Raising

8.3.1–General (1997)

The troop committee is responsible for the conduct of all fund raising. Since 1980, the troop's primary fund raising has been the annual troop supper. We expect all Scouts and families to participate in fund raising efforts. The troop committee will decide how much of any funds earned go to the troop's general budget and how much will be credited to each Scout's account, and for what purpose the funds may be used.

8.3.2–BSA/Council Sales Opportunities (2020)

The troop committee will provide the opportunity for interested Scouts to sell BSA popcorn, Council camp cards, or other similar items for Scouts to earn money. Such sales are optional for our Scouts. Sales profits are credited to each Scout's family account in proportion to the Scout's sales (the troop does not take a 'cut'). [See 9.1 for details about family accounts.]

8.3.3–Affinity Cards (2020)

The troop committee may arrange for Scout families to use affinity cards from Kings Soopers, Safeway, etc, which provide a percentage of purchases to be used for charitable purposes. Card credits are applied as earned to each Scout's family account as troop credits (the troop does not take a 'cut').

8.4–Annual Family Expenses (2024)

Annual expenses for the family of each Scout include annual troop fees, summer camp, annual troop "Trek", food for the monthly campouts, and less frequent expenses such as purchase of a Scout uniform and fees for certain activities (such as camporees). We expect families to encourage their Scouts to develop thrift by requiring them to earn a reasonable part of their Scouting expenses.

8.5–Payment Deadlines and Penalties

8.5.1–Annual Fees (2006)

Annual fees for the next calendar year are payable by the end of the preceding September. Families have the option to pay in several installments as long as they make arrangement with the Scoutmaster BEFORE the September 30 deadline. Families who pay late or turn in their annual signup forms late, and who fail to make arrangement for installment payments before September 30, are subject to a late penalty (see 8.7). This is an inducement to pay on time so that the troop can budget and recharter in a timely manner.

8.5.2–Other Payments (2006)

The Scoutmaster should set reasonable payment deadlines for other payments, and publish them when possible in the troop newsletter. Any Scout who fails to pay by the published deadline may be assessed a late penalty of up to 10% of the applicable fee, or he may be excluded from that activity, at the discretion of the Scoutmaster. All fees are payable in advance of the activity. Those who sign up and then cannot go must notify the Scoutmaster and their Patrol Leader immediately. Scouts who cancel too late may forfeit the cost of food and other non-refundable expenses.

8.6—Refunds

8.6.1—General (1989)

Annual fees for the current calendar year are not refundable. The unexpended part of fees paid toward the next calendar year is refundable at the Scoutmaster's discretion. Fees paid by new members are not normally refundable. The intent of this policy is to encourage families to evaluate their interests carefully and to commit fully to Scouting in Troop 97, as well as to allow the troop to budget adequately. Other monies paid to the troop are refundable on request, if not already spent by the troop, and subject to any other applicable troop policy. The troop may make refunds only after the family requesting them has fulfilled all its other family financial obligations to the troop. The troop committee is the final arbiter on all refunds.

8.6.2—Non-refundable Deposits (2000)

For activities requiring commitment of significant fees well in advance, it is troop policy to require a non-refundable deposit (typically \$100/person, but this may be set this higher or lower as appropriate). In connection with this, the Scoutmaster or tour leader will determine a "signup" deadline and a "final drop" date. The signup deadline should be set as close to the activity date as possible, but early enough to allow adequate planning and reservations. The final drop date should be set at the time the first outside financial commitments must be paid for the activity.

Other fees paid are refundable to the extent they have not been spent, and to the extent that this does not result in costs for others on the same activity increasing to compensate.

8.7—Annual Fee (2024)

The troop committee reviews the fee structure annually. The annual fee generally includes a credit (usually \$100) toward the cost of summer camp, to encourage attendance at camp. New Scouts who join before summer camp pay the full annual fee (less any troop credits, and minus any BSA registration fee paid online). The occasional new Scout who joins after summer camp pays a pro-rated fee for the remaining months of the calendar year. The annual fee covers BSA registration for the Scout, accident insurance (usually provided by the Council), and other general budget expenses. Transfers (new members currently registered in another troop or Cub Scout pack) do not receive credit for fees paid to the previous unit. Those who want to subscribe to Scout Life magazine must pay that cost to the troop. The troop currently collects and tracks troop annual fees and BSA/Council registration fees separately.

8.8—Summer Camp Fee (2014)

The troop fee for summer camp is set as the actual camp fee plus an amount to cover troop expenses. Camp credits are explained in Chapter 9. The troop pays as much of the cost of summer camp for new Scouts as possible.

8.9—Adult Expenses (2024)

The troop pays half or more of the BSA registration fee for all active uniformed adult leaders and for active troop committee members, budget permitting. The cost of registering one parent for each Scout is based on the active involvement of that parent. The troop pays the cost of BSA basic training for active uniformed adult leaders, and the troop pays a portion of the cost of any advanced training for active uniformed adult leaders, as determined by the troop committee. The troop also pays entry and other fees and for meals for adults on outings when the budget permits (as determined by the Scoutmaster). If the budget does not permit paying for all adults, the troop pays for the uniformed adult leaders, if possible. Uniformed adults are responsible for the cost of their own uniforms.

8.10—Other Expenses (2024)

The only expense on most campouts is for food. Scouts generally eat in their patrol groups. The troop collects a preset fee for campout meals, and then reimburses each patrol leader or 'grubmaster' for their meal expenses when they submit their receipts. The costs of summer camp and the annual troop "Trek" are reduced through the troop supper credit and other credits. The budget also normally includes a direct subsidy of the "Trek" costs, particularly the cost of a trip commemorative patch.

8.11—Payments (2024)

We encourage families to make all payments to the troop via Zelle, or else by check. The troop will accept cash payments, but these are made at the payor's risk. The troop accepts credit card payments at the troop Supper and other fund-raising activities, but otherwise avoids these due to the need to use a card reader, and the fees involved. The troop will add a 3% fee to credit card charges not related to fund raising, rounded up to the nearest whole dollar. The troop account is not set up to take payments via Venmo.

Chapter 9

Family Accounts, Credits, Financial Assistance, and Cash Awards

9.1–Scout Family Accounts (2020)

The troop will track each Scout's expenses via a "family account". Families with more than one child in the troop have a single family account. The family account tracks troop income from cash payments and from any credits, and tracks expenses.

9.2–Credits

9.2.1–Cash-based Credits (2024)

Credits backed by cash include profits from the troop supper, sales of BSA products (popcorn, camp cards, etc), and income from affinity cards (King Soopers, etc). Cash credits are a means for Scouts to earn part of their expenses. For the troop supper, Scouts receive 100% of all their ticket sales beyond the base ticket sales amount for that year set by the committee. For other credits, the troop does not take a 'cut', but places all cash profits in the appropriate Scout's family account.

9.2.2–Non-cash Credits (2020)

The troop also provides credits for parent involvement that are not backed by cash income. These credits need to be awarded and tracked carefully so as not to cause a budget deficit. The purpose of these credits is to encourage (or at least reward) parent involvement that benefits all our Scouts. The committee may add or delete these credits, or adjust their value as they see fit.

9.2.3–Scout Fee Discounts (2020)

The troop reduces fees for certain Scouts to encourage/reward their involvement:

- Siblings in Troop—a small reduction to annual fees when two or more siblings are in the troop at the same time
- Senior Scouts—a fee reduction for active Senior Scouts
- Eagle Scouts—a substantial fee reduction for active Eagle Scouts
- Summer Camp—a subsidy of the camp fee for all Scouts, based on the success of the troop supper
- First-year Annual Fee & Summer Camp—a reduction in first-year expenses, when permitted, based on the success of the troop supper

9.3–Using Credits

9.3.1–General (2024)

A family may use its credits for any Scouting expense. Credits go to a Scout's family account and are not paid out as cash, except to reimburse a family for uniform purchases (with presentation of receipt). In special cases the committee may approve purchase of camping or outdoor items.

9.3.2–Losing or Transferring Credits (2014)

Credits are earned by each family and are intended to be used solely by that family. When a family leaves the troop, any unused credits are lost. Unused credits may not be transferred to another family, nor may they be taken to another Scouting unit, should a family transfer or move to another town. A departing Scout may request the committee to approve the use of unused cash-based credits toward the cost of summer camp in the new unit the first summer after transferring. The treasurer will make any check payable to the new troop and not directly to the family.

9.4–Financial Assistance

9.4.1–General (1989)

Troop 97 provides financial assistance to needy Scouts to cover fees, campout costs, or summer camp. The troop committee is responsible to determine financial need. The troop requires recipients to be active, to attend a majority of campouts, and to advance regularly; and the troop requires recipients to earn some part of their expenses and pay regularly based on their ability.

9.4.2–Financial Assistance Fund (2020)

Starting in 2019, the troop created a specific fund for helping Scouts who may not otherwise be able to afford Scouting. This fund is tracked separately from other donations. Restricted donations (those earmarked specifically for financial assistance) will be maintained in the fund year to year until spent on financial assistance, and will not be transferred to other uses unless the troop committee makes an 'extraordinary' determination to use part of the fund for a necessary purpose.

9.5–Cash Awards (2016)

The troop will offer any Scout who earns the Eagle award in Troop 97 \$350 to use toward any future Scout activity or trip (high adventure trek, jamboree, Philmont, Sea Base, etc). The money will be available the moment a Scout has successfully completed the Eagle Scout Board of Review, but the Scout must meet the troop's active involvement standard up through the activity for which the award will be used. The troop committee is responsible to determine if the budget may require a reduction in the award amount, or to allow other uses of the money.

Chapter 10

Miscellaneous

10.1–Troop-owned Equipment (2014)

The troop owns the minimum necessary equipment for troop outings, including troop trailer, patrol boxes, stoves, etc. The troop committee is responsible to oversee troop equipment and assess appropriate charges to individuals or patrols for any lost or damaged troop equipment checked out to them. Troop and patrol equipment is intended for use by troop members on troop activities. Equipment may not be loaned to non-members. The Scoutmaster is responsible to determine when equipment may be loaned to current or to former members for non-troop activities; such use should be infrequent.

10.2–Handbooks (2018)

Budget permitting, Troop 97 gives a copy of the *Scout Handbook* to each new Scout. Junior leaders are encouraged to buy their own copy of the *Patrol Leader Handbook* or *Senior Patrol Leader Handbook* (when the troop has provided these for free, they tend to disappear, and are rarely read). The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters are expected to purchase their own copy of the *Troop Leader Guidebook* and read it.

10.3–Troop Communications

10.3.1–Purpose (2018)

Troop communications have four purposes:

- to attract new members
- to inform and enthuse current Scouts & families
- to maintain contact with at least some former members (Eagles, etc)
- to promote the troop and inform the larger community about troop accomplishments and Scouting in general

10.3.2–Forms of Communication (2024)

The troop communicates primarily via:

- Newsletter
- BAND app
- Email
- Website
- Printed Materials

10.3.3–Newsletter (2014)

Because communication is vital to a successful program, the troop publishes a newsletter on a regular basis. The newsletter is mailed first class, and keeps families, Scouts, and adult leaders informed of dates, activities, changes, BSA and troop policies, and other useful information. We expect all recipients to read every newsletter entirely. While electronic delivery is an option, we prefer first-class mail, believing it more likely that multiple family members will read a ‘hard copy’ and perhaps post the newsletter on the refrigerator.

10.3.4–BAND App (2024)

The troop will publish a current calendar and a place for families and leaders to add photos of troop activities via the BAND app. The troop’s BAND app will be private (invitation only), generally open only to current troop members. We expect all troop families to belong to the BAND app, and to check it regularly.

10.3.5–Email Guidelines (2014)

Due to an ever-increasing number of emails, the committee approved these guidelines.

- “All-family” emails should be sent by the Scoutmaster or Committee Chair. If anyone needs something sent to all families, send it to the Scoutmaster or Committee Chair first.
- The troop sends out “all-family” emails using an anonymous broadcast so that recipients cannot ‘reply all’ or harvest everyone’s email address. (Anyone who hits ‘Reply All’ will just send the email back to the Scoutmaster only.)
- Do not use email addresses from the troop roster to send out non-Scouting-related messages. The troop roster is intended for Scouting-related purposes only, and all emails should be sent to the Scoutmaster or Committee Chair first. Those who use email to generate sales for personal business may NOT email anyone in the troop unless they have indicated their willingness to receive such solicitations.

10.3.6–Troop Website (1997)

The troop will maintain an Internet website with appropriate information available to troop families and the general public. The purpose of the website is to inform troop families, promote the troop to potential members, and help other troops and Scout leaders benefit from our experience. Keeping in mind the public nature of the Internet, the troop “webmaster” will take care not to publish names, dates, or other information that could be used to harmful purposes.

10.3.7–Printed Materials (2024)

The troop will create and distribute other printed materials as needed to keep families and Scouts informed, and for handing out to potential members.

10.3.8–Public Photos (2024)

For the troop website and handout materials, photos showing Scouts will not be identified with names, and any readable nametags will be blurred. The troop information sheet that new families complete upon joining will contain an opt-out checkbox for families that prefer their Scout’s face not to appear in troop publications.

10.4—Banned Items (2014)

The following items are banned from all troop activities for all youth and adult participants, unless specifically approved by the Scoutmaster:

- candles or candle lanterns
- non-folding knives (sheath knife, machete, etc)
- butane lighters
- glass containers
- electronic games
- cell phones allowed but use should be kept to a near-emergency minimum

10.5—Alcohol, Tobacco, and Illicit Drugs

10.5.1—General (1996)

As required by BSA policy, the troop will make every possible effort to provide a completely alcohol-free, tobacco-free, and drug-free environment for our Scouts.

10.5.2—Alcohol (1996)

No Scout and no adult may possess or consume alcoholic beverages at any time during any Scouting activity. Violators will be dismissed from the activity and suspended from the troop until they appear at a troop committee meeting (with a parent, if a Scout). The committee will determine any further actions, including the possibility of permanent expulsion from the troop.

10.5.3—Tobacco / Nicotine (2018)

Use of nicotine delivery systems (all tobacco products, e-cigarettes, etc) is not consistent with the Scout Law and Promise. No Scout may possess or use tobacco or 'vaping' products at any time on any Scouting activity, regardless of parental consent. Adults who smoke/chew must do so completely away from the Scouts (we recognize the reality of addiction to nicotine which requires most users to need frequent doses). Violators will be dismissed from the activity and suspended from the troop until they appear at a troop committee meeting (with a parent, if a Scout). The committee will determine any further actions, including the possibility of permanent expulsion from the troop. [Because of the increase in use of nicotine-delivery systems by teenagers, and resultant long-term potential for serious harm, we have chosen to adopt a fairly strict policy, consistent with BSA policies.]

10.5.4—Illicit Drugs and Marijuana (2018)

Troop 97 and the Boy Scouts of America ban the possession or use of illegal drugs (including marijuana, even where otherwise legal), other abusable substances (glue, prescription drugs, etc, except when used for their intended purpose), and drug paraphernalia (roach clips, pipes, etc). Adult violators (age 18 & up) will be turned over to the police. Police involvement for Scout violators will be at the discretion of the adult leader in charge based on individual circumstances. All violators will be dismissed from the activity and suspended from the

troop until they appear at a troop committee meeting (with a parent, if a Scout). The committee will determine any further actions, including the possibility of permanent expulsion from the troop.

10.6—Caffeinated Beverages (1996)

The troop discourages but does not ban the consumption of caffeine-containing beverages (coffee, tea, caffeinated pop) by Scouts. If necessary, the adult leaders may limit consumption by Scouts who drink excessive amounts.

10.7—Smartphone Use by Scouts

10.7.1—Smartphone Use (2019)

Smartphones / cell phones have become standard items for most adults and a majority of Scout-age youth. And many parents want their children to be able to communicate with them at almost any time. We ask Scouts (and adults) to keep smartphone use to an absolute minimum during Scouting meetings and outings. In cases of excessive use, we will take away the phone for the remainder of the activity. This also applies to tablets, laptops, and other electronic devices that can communicate via the Internet.

10.7.2—BSA Personal Safety Awareness (2024)

Personal Safety Awareness (formerly Cyber Chip) is the BSA's online safety program and a requirement for Scout rank and for Star rank. This should be done with a parent. Primary link:

<https://www.scouting.org/training/youth-protection/scouts-bsa/>

10.7.3—Cyber-bullying (2019)

Cyber-bullying is defined as the use of electronic communication to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature. Any such behavior will result in immediate suspension of the Scout. The committee will determine any further actions, including the possibility of permanent expulsion from the troop.

10.7.4—Pornography & Sexting (2019)

Pornography is the portrayal of sexual subject matter for the exclusive purpose of sexual arousal.

Sexting is sending or getting sexually explicit or suggestive images, messages, or video on a smartphone or through the Internet. Sexting includes sending: nude or nearly nude photos or selfies; videos that show nudity, sex acts, or simulated sex; text messages that propose sex or refer to sex acts. In some states, a teen could face felony charges or even have to register as a sex offender for sexting.

Viewing or sharing pornography as well as any attempt at sexting seriously violates the Scout Oath (morally straight) and will result in immediate suspension of the Scout. The committee will determine any further actions, including the possibility of permanent expulsion from the troop.

10.8—Searches (1996)

Scouting is based on trust, and we prefer to trust our Scouts. Unfortunately, a very few dishonest Scouts have abused this trust to bring contraband or to steal from other Scouts. It is sad that the honest majority must pay the price for the unethical few. In view of our obligation to protect our Scouts from harmful influences, and recognizing the difficulty of learning about such influences in a timely manner, we must reluctantly reserve the right to ask anyone to show the contents of their pockets, pack, or tent, or to call in the police to assist. We especially want those few who may be goaded by the temptations of dishonor to know that they may be checked at any time. At the same time, we want to maintain an environment based on trust where we are not tempted to search anyone. Only the Scoutmaster or other adult leader in charge is empowered to conduct a search, upon reasonable suspicion. A minimum of two adults and the Scout must be present during any search. The adult leader in charge has the responsibility to determine if police involvement is required.

10.9—Advertising (1996)

The troop will not accept any kind of commercial or personal advertising in its newsletter or website. This does not prevent the troop from making families aware of sales or other business offerings that may be advantageous to the Scouts. The committee will decide any question of interpretation.

Chapter 11

Safeguarding Youth (BSA Policies)

This chapter attempts to clarify some more recent national BSA policies, and to consolidate key troop safety policies.

11.1—Adult Registration Requirements

11.1.1—All Adults must be Registered (2024)

BSA requires that all adults attending any overnight activity be BSA-registered *with Troop 97* and that they have current BSA Youth Protection Training.

11.1.2—Minimum Number of Adults (2024)

At least two registered adults must be present at all troop or patrol activities, including service projects. At least one registered female over age 21 must be present if any female youth is attending. A minimum ratio of one adult per ten Scouts is required.

11.1.3—Working on Merit Badges (2019)

For merit badge sessions away from a troop meeting or outing, a second adult besides the merit badge counselor must be present. Scouts should work on merit badges in buddy teams (a single Scout may *not* meet outside of a troop meeting with a merit badge counselor).

11.1.4—Adult/Scout Interactions (2019)

When an adult needs to talk privately with a Scout, either a second adult must be present or they must be in plain sight of other Scouts/adults.

11.1.5—Adult Leader in Charge (2019)

If the Scoutmaster is not present on an overnight activity, the adult in charge must be approved by the Scoutmaster and should be a trained Assistant Scoutmaster.

11.2—Tenting

11.2.1—Solo Tenting (2024)

Scouts may tent alone, but tenting with an appropriate buddy is preferred.

11.2.2—Tent Partners (2024)

Tent partners must be the same gender, and within two years of each other's age (see sibling and parent exceptions below). Scouts in combined (coed) patrols must still tent with other Scouts of the same gender.

11.2.3—Tent Partner Exception/Sibling (2024)

Youth siblings of the same gender may tent together regardless of age difference, with parental permission.

11.2.4—Tent Partner Exception/Parent (2024)

When exceptional circumstances warrant, a parent may serve as a tent partner for their same-gender child. The parent must be BSA-registered with Troop 97.

11.3—Buddy System

11.3.1—Requirements (2024)

The buddy system must be used any time youth participants are out of sight of qualified adult leadership or when otherwise required (such as swimming). The adult troop leadership oversees and approves buddies.

11.3.2—Buddy Ages (2024)

Buddies are youth only, within three years of age (within two years for sleeping), except as noted below.

11.3.3—Buddy Pairs (2024)

Scouts buddy by pairs, except as noted below.

11.3.4—Buddy Triples (2024)

Buddy triples (BSA sometimes calls these 'truddies') are allowed if:

- there is an odd number of Scouts (no one should be without a buddy);
- mixed-gender buddy groups must include three Scouts.

11.3.5—Youth Sibling Buddy Pair (2024)

Youth siblings of the same gender may serve as buddies regardless of age, with parental permission.

11.3.6—Parent/Youth Buddy Pair (2024)

When exceptional circumstances warrant, a parent may serve as a buddy for their same-gender child. The parent must be BSA-registered with Troop 97.

11.3.7—Single Youth (2024)

A single female youth may attend an overnight activity if a registered female over age 21 is present and the youth tents alone, OR if she is accompanied by and tents with her registered adult mother. During the day, she may buddy with two other Scouts or with her registered mother.

A single male youth may attend an overnight activity if he tents alone, OR if he is accompanied by and tents with his registered adult father. During the day, he may buddy with two other Scouts or with his registered father.

11.4—Activity Policies

11.4.1—Medical & Permission Forms (2024)

The troop must obtain annually a Health & Medical form (sections A/B1/B2 for day & weekend activities and sections A/B1/B2/C for long-term activities) for each Scout in accordance with BSA guidelines. The troop must also obtain a permission slip & surgical waiver for each Scout on each outing.

11.4.2—Driving Safety Policies (1989)

The troop should provide a copy of the troop driving safety policies once a year to every person who provides transportation for Troop 97 as a volunteer driver. The driving safety policies should list current BSA and Troop 97 policies which the troop committee believes will contribute to driving safety.

11.4.3—Aquatic Activities (2014)

All aquatic activities must function in accordance with the BSA "Safe Swim Defense Plan", BSA "Safety Afloat" plan, BSA "Kayaking Safety", BSA "Scuba Safety", BSA "Snorkeling Safety", or "BSA Whitewater Safety", as appropriate, and must follow BSA and Adventure West Council Water Trip Policies. In addition, it is troop policy that only qualified swimmers (those who have recently passed the BSA 100-meter swimmer test) be allowed to water ski or to be in a canoe, sailboat, or river raft. Anyone swimming in moving water, or from a boat, must wear a lifejacket at all times.

11.4.4—Bicycling Activities (2014)

All bicyclists, adult or Scout, must wear a bicycling safety helmet at all times while riding, including to and from troop meetings.

11.4.5—Horse Riding (1992)

All horse riders, adult or Scout, must wear a riding helmet or a bicycling helmet at all times while riding.

11.4.6—Pets (1994)

No one may bring a pet on any troop activity unless specifically approved in advance by the Scoutmaster.

11.4.7—Guns (1994)

Troop 97 does not allow any Scout or adult to bring a gun on any troop activity. Shooting activities (such as for Rifle Shooting merit badge) must conform to current BSA policies and be conducted at a proper, approved shooting range.

11.4.8—Snow Shelters (1994)

Sleeping in a snow shelter is part of the fun of winter camping. This policy is designed to provide Scouts with the opportunity to sleep in a snow shelter safely. Scouts may not use a pre-existing snow shelter of any kind, because of the uncertainty of the condition and structural strength of a shelter that is not new. Scouts may not build or sleep in a snow cave. Snow caves are risky because: there may be a meter or more of snow above the occupants in case of collapse; it is difficult to provide adequate supervision during construction because snow caves must be scattered (they must be built where the snow has accumulated deep enough); and there is considerable uncertainty regarding the condition of the various layers of old snow that may constitute the structure. Scouts may build "quinzhee" snow shelters, igloos (from snow/ice bricks), or construct a snow trench, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) A designated and qualified adult must instruct all Scouts in the proper construction of the snow shelter.
- 2) All shelters must be located in a designated area.
- 3) One or more adults must provide supervision during construction.
- 4) Pairs/teams building a shelter must work with one person inside and one outside at all times.
- 5) An adult must provide a final inspection of the shelter before Scouts sleep in it.

Chapter 12

Operation as a 'Combined' [Coed] Troop

12.1–Current Troop 97 Status (2024)

Effective 1 September 2024, Troop 97 is no longer a pair of 'linked' troops, but is now a single, 'combined' troop as part of the BSA Combined Troop Pilot Program (see definitions and time frame below). Note that BSA will be sending monthly surveys to pilot troops, which could sometimes include either parents or Scouts as well as troop leaders.

12.2–Definitions (2024)

Scout troops can be boy-only, girl-only, 'linked', or 'combined':

- **Boy-only troops** function independently of other troops, with their own troop committee. This is how traditional Scout troops have functioned since 1910. This describes Troop 97 from its founding in 1952 until 2019.
- **Girl-only troops**, allowed since 2019, function the same way boy-only troops do.
- **'Linked' troops** consist of a pair of boy and girl troops, which share the same chartered partner, may be operated by a common troop committee, and may share the same troop number. This describes Troop 97 from early 2019 through August, 2024.
- **'Combined' troops** are troops that include both boys and girls in one troop. During the pilot phase, only troops accepted into the pilot program may function as combined troops. This describes Troop 97 from 1 September 2024 to present.
- Note that BSA refers to coed Cub Scout packs as 'family' packs, and if the family pack allows coed dens, those are called 'family' dens [because of the family-oriented nature of the Cub Scout program]. Because the troop program is youth-oriented, BSA refers to coed troops as 'combined' troops, and if the combined troop allows coed patrols, those are called 'combined' patrols.

12.3–Pilot Program Time Frame (2024)

BSA is currently testing and evaluating the best way for troops to function with both boys and girls in the same troop, and Troop 97 has been selected as one of the pilot troops. The BSA National Executive Board (NEB) has final authority to continue or end the pilot program, and to approve or deny the recommendations of the pilot program for use BSA-wide.

- The pilot program is scheduled to run from 1 September 2024 through 31 July 2025, unless terminated early by the NEB.
- The NEB will approve or deny the changes at their October 2025 meeting.
- If approved, BSA-wide implementation will occur in February 2026.
- Troops in the pilot program will be allowed to continue as combined troops after the end of the pilot program through the official national implementation date. Should the NEB terminate the pilot program, or disapprove its implementation, combined troops will have 30 days to return to their previous status as linked boys & girls troops.

12.4–Mixed Gender Considerations (2024)

Current BSA policies requiring a registered female adult on any activity where a female youth is present, and requirements for gender-specific and age-appropriate tenting, have not changed. See Chapter 11 for more details.