

BSA National Membership Fees and Local Council Insurance Recovery Fees

National Membership Fee

The Boy Scouts of America's (BSA) emergence from bankruptcy represents a pivotal milestone in the BSA's financial restructuring case and solidifies a path forward for survivors and the Scouting movement.

To preserve its mission, the BSA has taken extraordinary steps over the past three years to reposition the organization for the future. The national organization has streamlined its professional staff and volunteer structure, reducing costs throughout the movement while maintaining essential services to support the local councils who were critical partners during the bankruptcy.

To position Scouting for the future, the BSA will be required to increase the national annual membership fees for both youth and adults. This has been a difficult decision that involved the engagement of key stakeholders, but is essential to building a strong, safe, and vibrant Scouting program for our nation's youth.

Effective **August 1, 2023**, the BSA will implement the following national membership fees:

- **\$80** for Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing and Sea Scouting participants (\$5 increase)
- **\$60** for all adult volunteers (\$15 increase to provide general liability insurance and enhanced background checks)
- **\$25** one-time joining fee for new program participants in Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing and Sea Scouting (Not prorated and no change in fee). ***Per information below, the Indian Waters Council is going to pay for this \$25 national joining fee for all youth who join between August 1st and Dec. 15th, 2023.***
- **\$25** for Merit Badge Counselors (New Fee applies only for Merit Badge Counselors not already registered as leaders)
- **\$50** for Exploring participants Youth & Adult (\$5 increase)
- **\$100** for a unit charter/affiliation fee (no change in fee)
- **\$15** for *Scout Life* magazine subscription

BSA Will No Longer Prorate Fees for New Members beginning August 1, 2023

Beginning August 1st, all new youth and adult members who join Scouting will be enrolled in a 12-month membership cycle and BSA will cease prorating fees. Both youth and adults will pay the full annual membership fee and will renew their membership on the anniversary date of joining Scouting. All proration of membership fees will be eliminated. Each registered member of the BSA will receive an email notice with a registration renewal link beginning 60 days before the anniversary date they joined Scouting. Unit leaders will receive a copy of the email and should stay engaged in the membership renewal process just like rechartering.

It is important to note, existing members will renew their membership during their normal registration/recharter cycle through March 2024. Moving forward all members will renew on their anniversary date.

- Existing members' Anniversary date will be their unit recharter month.
- New members' Anniversary date will be the month they joined.

This new process will help streamline the rechartering and membership renewal process for units and councils.

Council Insurance Recovery Fee

In addition to the national BSA membership fees, noted above, the Indian Waters Council's "Insurance Recovery Fee" will also become an annual fee (not pro-rated) and will be **\$20.00** per registered youth and adult member and this will be **effective at the next re-charter cycle**. For most, that re-charter cycle will begin in December or January, and **for those who join Scouting between now and then, the fee will remain at \$12** until their annual re-charter date one year after they join. This increase for 2024 is due to skyrocketing insurance costs that provide great coverage for our Scouting family, which also typically includes our chartered organizations and their officers, and all who participate or host Scouting functions.

The Council Will Cover the \$25 National BSA "Joining Fee" for New Youth Members (through December 15)

For anyone registering as a BSA youth member by December 15, 2023, the Indian Waters Council will automatically pay for their "joining fee" of \$25. This fee cannot be waived by national, but the Indian Waters Council leadership is committed to ensuring that Scouting is accessible for all youth who wish to join.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is driving the youth and adult membership fee increase?

- General Liability Insurance costs to protect volunteer leaders, staff, charter organizations, units, and youth.
- BSA restructuring costs.
- Enhanced Criminal Background check processes and investments in Youth protection and safety programs.

What steps has the National Service Center taken to manage costs?

- Completed a new staff structure and streamlined both the professional workforce and the volunteer structure, while maintaining essential services.
- Reduced the National staff workforce to support essential services.
- Reduced expenses throughout the National organization.

What is the new membership fee for youth and adults? Will the fees go up again?

- The new adult membership fee is \$60, and the youth membership fee is \$80 annually.
- The BSA will continue to evaluate the membership fees and keep our councils and unit leaders informed of any further changes to the fee structure.

What benefits and services are provided to the local council with the new fee?

- Expanded GLIP protections for Chartered Organizations and volunteers.
- Enhanced Criminal Background checks.
- Investments in BSA safety resources and training.
- The employment of a new Youth Protection Executive and support staff.
- The National Council provides the following essential services to councils:
- The use of BSA Intellectual Property – Youth Safety, Cub Scouts, Scouts, BSA, Venturing, Camp Standards, Training and Program development etc.
- Legal
- Human Resources
- Information Technology – Rechartering, Scout Book
- Accounting Resources

- Council Services Support
- Membership & Marketing Support
- Crisis Communications and support
- Safety & Membership Standards Support
- A variety of training support for youth and adult leaders
- Health Insurance & Benefits

What benefits and services are provided to the unit with the registration fee?

- Expanded General Liability Insurance protections for the chartered organization and unit leaders in the event of an incident.
- Program research and development including, Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing and Exploring.
- Access to Youth Protection Training, Incident Reporting and Scouts First Helpline: 1-844-Scouts1.
- Access to leadership specific training for adult leaders.
- Investments in program literature and resource development.
- Ability to purchase Uniforms, Insignia and Recognition for youth and Adults.
- Provides access to Membership, Marketing, and Brand Center resources.
- Provides important technology support including Scout Book, on-line registration, on-line advancement, and rechartering, My.Scouting, BeAScout, and BSA Brand Center for digital assets.
- Access to the four BSA High Adventure Properties including Philmont Scout Ranch, Florida Sea Base, Northern Tier High Adventure Base, and the Summit Bechtel Reserve.