

2017 Membership Fee Increase

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

To do this — while delivering the nation's foremost youth development program — the BSA must remain vigilant in controlling costs. Although we have been successful in reducing our expenditures in many areas, it has become necessary to evaluate our annual membership fees.

Based on feedback from both volunteers and employees, the BSA membership fee will increase to \$33 for all registered youth and adult leaders, effective **December 1, 2017**. Membership fees support the services that are necessary to provide Scouting to youth from 7 to 21 years of age. From education to high-adventure experiences you can't get anyplace else, the BSA provides unique growth opportunities at a great value.

Services include primary liability coverage for all volunteer leaders and chartered organizations, ongoing advances in technology, fundraising support, new program development and membership recruiting strategies, and support materials. In 2016 alone, the BSA served 2.3 million youth members through approximately 270 local councils across the United States and its territories.

With the help of all of our volunteers and Scouting parents, we will continue accomplishing incredible things for young people and the communities we serve.

Questions and Answers:

1. Why are you increasing the membership fee? What is the additional money from the fees going to be used for?

To deliver the Scouting program to our 2.3 million youth members, it is occasionally necessary for the organization to increase membership fees to offset rising costs. As a result, the BSA is increasing our membership fee to \$33 for all registered Scouts and adult members effective December 1, 2017.

Membership fees support the services that are necessary to provide Scouting programs to a growing number of youth. Services include ongoing advances in technology, council visits to assist in fundraising, program development and membership campaigns, liability insurance costs, and administrative costs. It is important that we continue to maintain a strong financial position in the future to support and grow Scouting.

2. What is directly contributing to the need for this increase?

There are a variety of factors taken into consideration, all of which have led to an increased cost of doing business.

3. When will the increase go into effect?

The membership fee change for all registered youth and adult leaders will go into effect December 1, 2017. This change will affect Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, Venturing crews, Sea Scout ships, and Exploring posts/clubs. However, it will NOT apply to LDS-sponsored units, nor to those units with council-paid memberships. Note: All November and December 2017 recharterers will have to renew at this new rate (since November recharter renewal actually spans from December 1, 2017, to November 30, 2018).

4. Does the BSA increase membership fees often?

There have been 10 fee increases in the organization's history. Since 1969, the BSA has increased our fee, on average, every five years. The last membership increase took effect on January 1, 2014, and, prior to that, in 2010.

5. How much does it cost to be a Boy Scout?

All youth and adults who wish to become a member or leader of the Boy Scouts of America must pay the annual membership fee. Beyond that, families incur additional costs related to uniforms and the activities of their individual units.

6. Will the fee for Cub Scouts, Exploring, and Venturing/Sea Scouts increase as well?

Yes. This change will affect Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, Venturing crews, Sea Scout ships, and Exploring posts/clubs. However, it will NOT apply to LDS-sponsored units, nor to those units with council-paid memberships.

7. Who gets the membership fee?

Local councils collect — and forward to the National Council — membership fees from each youth and adult who wishes to become a member of the Boy Scouts of America.

8. How is the National Council funded?

The National Council is funded through membership and service fees, investments, *Boys' Life* magazine subscriptions, sales of uniforms and equipment, fees from national high-adventure bases, and contributions from individuals.

9. What does the National Council do for Scouting on the local level?

The BSA's National Council provides program materials and support for approximately 270 local councils that administer the Scouting program, with each covering a specific geographic territory. The following are the key functions of the National Council:

- Provide training to local council volunteers and staff
- Maintain a national training center at Philmont Scout Ranch
- Develop and maintain four year-round national high-adventure bases and execute national events (jamborees, National Eagle Scout Association and Order of the Arrow conferences, and National Council meetings)
- Continue our leadership role in protecting our youth by providing youth protection resources, training, and criminal background checks for all registered volunteers and staff
- Provide local councils with program as well as tools for camp and office planning and evaluation, extensive financial counseling, planned giving and fundraising information, and professional personnel support
- Coordinate a communications network through magazines and literature (handbooks, merit badge pamphlets, brochures, training materials, and professional development training), including providing *Scouting* magazine to all registered leaders
- Make available uniforms, equipment, and program supplies
- Maintain and develop new relationships with chartered organizations that use the Scouting program (religious institutions, civic organizations, labor unions, professional organizations, business, and industry)
- Serve in a leadership role with Scouting associations in other countries as a member of the World Scout Conference
- Set and maintain program standards (e.g., advancement, health and safety, etc.) to ensure consistency of the brand throughout councils across the country

10. With the increase in membership fees, is Scouting still a good value?

The BSA has always taken into consideration the cost of delivering the Scouting program and has worked to keep our fees reasonable.

When you compare the BSA to other youth-serving organizations, we provide unique growth opportunities at a great value. The following are costs associated with other youth activities:

- Tackle football, \$142: In Plano, Texas, second- through sixth-graders who play tackle football pay \$140 for a three-month season. That fee doesn't include equipment.
- Youth orchestra, \$1,000: Members of the prestigious Los Angeles Youth Orchestra pay \$100 to audition, \$1,000 annually (if accepted), and must buy their own instruments.

- Select soccer, \$400: In Cleveland, select youth soccer players ages 15 to 18 pay \$400 a season, plus \$180 for uniforms.
- Youth basketball, \$525: In Queens, N.Y., boys ages 8 to 13 pay \$525 a year, not including uniforms.
- 4-H program, \$25: Participants of the 4-H program in College Station, Texas, pay \$25 a year, not including fees for individual activities.

From education to high-adventure, the Boy Scouts of America provides unique growth opportunities at a great value and we want all eligible youth to receive these benefits and participate in Scouting.