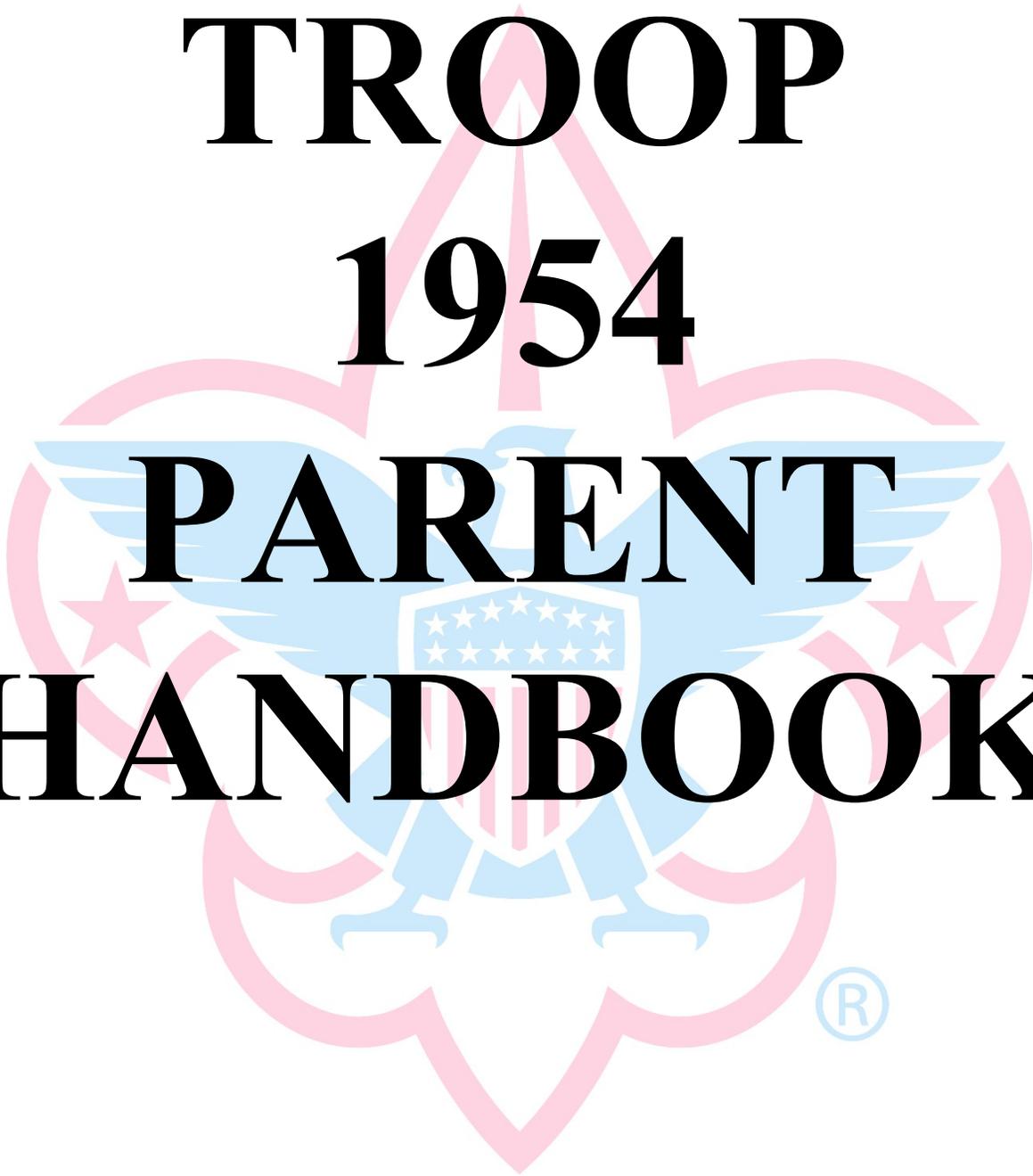


**TROOP
1954
PARENT
HANDBOOK**



SCOUT TROOP 1954 - PARENT'S HANDBOOK

Introduction and Welcome

Thank you for selecting Troop 1954 as your choice for you and your child to experience scouting over the next few years. The Troop Committee, Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, and members of the troop welcome you to a new or continuing experience in Scouting. We hope that you find Scouting to be as rewarding as we and countless others have over the past 100 years.

We offer this Parent Handbook to help you feel more comfortable with the Scout program as a whole, and in particular, to make your tenure with Troop 1954 as rewarding as possible. This handbook contains basic information that we think will be helpful. You will find the following in the handbook: basic troop information, the Troop's goals and objectives, an overview of the troop program and costs, advancement procedures, how you can help your Scout advance, our expectations of the Scouts and parents in order to make the Troop program successful.

Please take time to read this handbook and then go over the information with your Scout. You will also want to keep this handbook handy for occasional reference throughout the year. Scouting is designed to be a safe, fun, and fantastic learning experience. We are sure you will find your family's experience in Scouting with Troop 1954 to be fun and fantastic, too.

When you finish reading this handbook, please fill out all appropriate paperwork as detailed in Appendix E. If you would like to become an adult leader or Merit Badge Counselor you will also need to fill out a merit badge counselor application as well.

Again, welcome! We look forward to experiencing scouting together with you in Troop 1954!

Chartered Organization Representative

Committee Chair

Scoutmaster

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Troop Goals and Philosophy

The goals of Troop 1954 follow those of the Scouts of America. We help direct the development of young men and women in their citizenship responsibilities, shape their moral strength and character, and enhance the development of their physical, mental, and emotional fitness. We recognize with pride the achievements of our Scouts who attain Eagle, Scouting's highest rank. We are equally proud of those young men and women who set and achieve goals of gaining self-reliance, proficiency in Scoutcraft skills, and development into responsible active citizens.

Scouting succeeds because of the proven approach of utilizing the talents and skills of older, more experienced Scouts to teach and develop the talents and skills of less experienced Scouts. Even though the advanced Scouts who teach other Scouts may not be recognized immediately by others in the Troop, the knowledge and compassion they learn will remain with them throughout their lives. Experienced Scouts have a unique opportunity to be a role model for the less mature Scouts. Adults learn BSA philosophy and method in all the leadership-training forums (e.g., Scoutmaster Fundamentals, Youth Protection, monthly Roundtable Meetings, and Wood Badge).

The troop is run by Scout leaders under the supervision of Scouters. The Senior Scout leader in any Troop is the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL). The SPL is elected by the Scouts in the Troop at a semi-annual election, usually in March and September. Each patrol consists of Scouts of different age levels and assigned by the SPL. Other leadership roles are Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL), Quartermaster, Scribe, Den Chief, Historian/Librarian, Webmaster, Bugler and Chaplain's Aide. They are appointed by the SPL, with approval from the Scoutmaster. The only other offices not assigned by the SPL are the Assistant Patrol Leader, who is voted upon by the Patrol. Instructors, Troop Guides, and Junior Assistant Scoutmasters are certified and appointed by the Scoutmaster.

In Scouts, the Scouts run the program. This requires some adjustment in expectations when compared to Cub Scouting where the adults do the planning and running of the program. Those who have come from the Cub Scouts are accustomed to the dependability and consistency of adults running the program. Therefore, some Scouts and parents may not be completely at ease with the Scout leadership aspect of the Scout Program. We encourage new parents to seek the counsel of more experienced parents and our volunteer leaders for help and guidance.

Key Three

Scouting utilizes a Key Three organizational structure in the management of each unit. In a Scout troop, the Key Three consists of the Chartered Organization Representative, the Troop Committee Chair, and the Scoutmaster.

The Chartered Organization Representative, appointed by the chartering organization, appoints a Troop Committee Chair in consultation with the Troop Committee. The Troop Committee Chair appoints the Scoutmaster who is charged with implementing the scouting program on behalf of and with support

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from the Troop Committee and Chartered Organization. The Key Three meet regularly to discuss and evaluate the scouting program in the Troop.

Troop Organization

District, Council, Regional, and National Organization

The Rio Grande Council serves five counties: Cameron, Hidalgo, Willacy, Star and Zapata. The council is made up of 4 districts: Tip-o-Tex, Arroyo, Arrowhead and Rio Bravo. Troop 1954 is one of the Troops within the Arrowhead District comprised of units within Hidalgo County, including McAllen, Delmita, Edinburg, Garciasville and Mission. The Rio Grande Council office is at 6912 W. Expressway 83, Harlingen TX 78552 Phone: 956-423-0250. The Scout Shop is also located at the same location and office hours may be found on their web site: riograndecouncil.org

Chartered Organization

The National Scout organization charters or “licenses” its program to a wide variety of organizations. St. Joseph Catholic Church of Edinburg is the charter organization of Troop 1954; Troop meetings are held at the portable building (a.k.a. Eagle’s Nest) located at 114 W Fay St, Edinburg, TX 78539. In addition to supporting the Troop with qualified adult leadership it also provides a meeting space. We are allowed every opportunity to run a successful program. The Chartered Organization Representative is our liaison between the troop and the church. He/she communicates our needs and program direction to the church. They keep the Troop informed about upcoming programs and assists with the annual re-chartering. The Chartered Organization Representative appoints the Troop Committee Chair in consultation with the Troop Committee.

Troop Structure

As of 2018 we have 30+ Scouts registered and a number of registered adult members. The Scoutmaster, with the help of the Troop Committee, the Assistant Scoutmasters (ASM’s) and other parents, our Troop has continued to provide boys with one of the most successful Scouting programs in the area. While Troop 1954 prides itself on the number of adult leaders, we are always looking for more assistance! Parents are encouraged to serve as Merit Badge Counselors and to become Assistant Scoutmasters or members of the Troop Committee.

Troop Meetings

Troop Meetings are typically held on Monday evenings at 7:00 PM. at the Eagle’s Nest. The complete designated Class A Uniform is required for troop meetings. Please refer to the Scout Handbook for uniform specifications. Also, in the Scout Handbook Appendix B, is a list of recommended personal camping gear. Having an official Scout Handbook is mandatory. This handbook should be well marked with the Scout’s name and brought to every meeting. It is a basic text of resource and outlines the requirements and serves as a place to record each boy’s advancement.

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Weekly Troop meetings are organized around specific themes, providing an opportunity for the Scouts to learn new skills and to prepare for an upcoming camping trip or activity. Troop meetings have several parts: Pre-opening, Opening Ceremony, Skills Instruction, Patrol Meetings, Inter-Patrol Game or Activity, and Closing. The meetings will be over at 8:30 p.m. Guest experts, older Scouts, and parents with expertise in particular areas provide the skills instruction portion of the meeting. For this reason, we ask that all adults indicate their areas of knowledge on the Troop Resource Survey (Appendix C) and return it to the Troop Committee. Especially needed are those related to the required Merit Badges (MB's) on the trail to Eagle.

The Patrol

The Patrol is the core of Scouting. It is the nucleus of the Troop. The patrol size is based on the natural group of Scouts that would hang out together as determined by Baden Powell, the founder of Scouting. Patrol members camp together, participate in activities together, and learn new skills together. This opportunity to experience group living teaches Scouts cooperation and the acceptance of increasing responsibility. Everyone pitches in, and the Scouts quickly learn to take pride in their patrol's accomplishments. Each patrol has an identity (name, call, flag, and patch).

The patrol is an important part of the Scout's life in Scouting. It is in the patrol that the Scout learns how to live, work, and have fun with others in the outdoors and in his community. A Scout quickly learns the importance of belonging to a group-patrol and how to work toward common goals. As a Scout, working together with the other members of his patrol over a period of time, builds in himself a spirit that will keep him going even in the worst conditions. The relationships established in his patrol can last a lifetime. That is why Troop 1954 and the Scouting program place such an emphasis on the patrol, the patrol method, and patrol spirit. Patrols stay together and operate together as a unit on camping trips, troop meetings and other activities.

Patrol Method

This method is used because of its beneficial results. In a small, controllable organizational structure, youth live and learn citizenship, how to organize and execute a successful program, and to take responsibility for someone beside themselves. The patrol is a group of Scouts who belong to a troop and who are probably similar in age, development, and interests. In this way, the Scouts teach and learn from each other. New Scouts will be placed with a Troop Guide and older Scout involvement to help them acclimate to the Scout Program and learn basic Scout Skills as learned between the ranks of Tenderfoot and First Class.

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Troop Committee

The Troop Committee consists of adults, many of whom are parents of Scouts in the troop. The Troop Committee is responsible for securing the proper adult leadership for the troop and assisting the Scoutmaster in executing the Scouting program. The Committee approves the overall annual program and provides administrative support to the Troop. Specific functions include Committee Chair, Troop Treasurer, Committee Secretary, Advancement Chair, Outdoors Activities Coordinator, Fund Raising Coordinator, Eagle Advisor, and Chaplain. The Troop Committee typically meets monthly. Meetings are posted on the troop calendar. All are welcome to attend.

The Patrol Leaders Council

The Senior Patrol Leader, his Assistant and the patrol leaders comprise the Patrol Leaders Council (PLC). The PLC meets to plan and organize upcoming meetings and activities. PLC meetings are typically held monthly and these dates are posted on the Troop calendar. Leaders and Parents should be sure to check the troop calendar to insure their attendance.

The PLC serves as the means by which each of the Scouts play an important role in the operation of the troop.

The troop's annual program is developed by the Patrol Leaders Council at a planning meeting in September. At this meeting, the PLC with the support of the Scoutmaster and the Assistant Scoutmasters, review the responses to a poll taken of the Scouts in the troop and develop the plan for the next year. The PLC uses the local school calendar, District and Council calendars, BSA, patrols and adults in the troop as resources to develop a complete annual plan. Following the development of the annual program, the Senior Patrol Leader presents it to the Troop Committee for their approval and commitment of support. Once the approval has been given, the PLC begins administering the program. The monthly PLC meeting is used to review and refine the program. The PLC ensures each month that the annual program meets the current needs of the troop and makes changes where necessary. The PLC reviews the individual patrol's responsibilities and helps ensure that the troop program will take place as planned. The PLC also assures that campouts and other special activities are planned, organized and happen without significant problems.

Part of the Scouting Program is to develop a Scout through varied leadership experiences. Scouting is one of only a few organizations that place the emphasis of developing leadership skills on Scouts 11 to 17 years. Under supervision of adult leaders, scout leaders have the opportunity to plan, organize, and to be responsible for the well being of the other Scouts in their patrol and Troop.

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Sometimes, in this learning-by-doing process, a Scout leader will make a mistake. Making mistakes is natural and a part of being human. When a Scout makes a mistake and learns from it, the lesson learned is more meaningful than either being told how to do something, or always succeeding. The adult leaders of the troop usually allow these mistakes to happen to aid in the learning process, but make sure that mistakes do not affect any of the Scout's health, well-being, or safety.

Parent and adult support is an integral part of a successful Scouting Program. You can help your Scout gain the most from Scouting by talking about the meetings. Find out what he is learning at the Scout meetings and what activities he is planning on attending. Ask what he needs to continue his advancement. Encourage him to participate in all troop activities. Help your Scout set goals that are appropriate for his age and that will help him attain the next rank. The advancement program is set up in steps that enable the Scout to set an achievable goal and succeed in achieving it. Once your Scout has set a goal, encourage and support him in his efforts to succeed in completing that goal. This may mean getting him to a troop meeting a few minutes early to get a requirement signed off or it may mean working with your Scout on a project at home on a weekend. It also may mean driving your Scout to his Patrol Leader's house to work on a requirement.

Communication

The troop mainly uses BAND (web based Troop management system) to get out messages to Members. Phone can be used as well.

1) The Senior Patrol Leader informs the Patrol Leaders and other members of the PLC;
2) Each Patrol Leader informs the members of his patrol, resulting in every Scout being informed. Many times individual Scouts do not get the message for one reason or another. We have found this hierarchy, that builds leadership in the boys, is sometimes frustrating for adults. In addition, you will notice that adult leaders and parents are not mentioned in the above process. The SPL is to call the Scoutmaster who will then inform the other adult leaders. However, there are three sure ways for parents to keep informed:

1) Ask your Scout to keep you informed (which is sometimes difficult),
2) Parents are always welcome to come to a weekly Troop meeting or monthly Committee meeting. In addition, for each activity, we RSVP through BAND for the parent(s) to give permission to attend the outing. These RSVP need to be answered 1 week prior to the activity so transportation, monies distributed and food can be arranged and the PLC can properly organize and prepare. Failure to do so may result in the Scout not being able to attend the activity.

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Overview of Program

Outings and Activities

The program is published in our annual calendar in August and updated regularly. We provide updates to the program as the program changes after the beginning of the Scout Program year. One glance at the calendar shows that Troop 1954 is an active troop with a full schedule of planned events. Our goal is to schedule a major activity each month, such as camping, biking, or backpacking, which is the essence of the Scouting Program. It is said “three-fourths of Scouting is outing.” Campouts are planned at various interesting places throughout the year, and each requires a different level of skill on the part of the Scouts. In addition to monthly campouts, there are other special events that make up the program, including District Camporees, a week of summer camp, community/ church events and yearly high adventure outing.

Service Projects

Scouting also involves participating in service projects. These can be both fun and a meaningful part of a Scout's responsibility as he provides service to his community (“Help other people at all times”).

Service is done by participation in Troop-sponsored service projects such as Church and Community Charities and Eagle Scout Projects. Each Scout is required to give cheerful service by participating in projects for his rank advancement. This need to be pre- approved by the Scoutmaster for the Ranks of Star and Life, and need considerable planning as a Scout undertakes his Eagle project.

Fund Raising

The troop's main fundraiser each year is the chicken BBQ plate sale. This activity is an important part of being a Scout and learning good stewardship. Scouts receive a percentage of each ticket sale on their accounts to cover summer camp expenses, or other scout activities they would like to participate in. The remaining amount is deposited into the Troop account to cover operating expenses. Any changes to the policy are voted on by the Committee prior to sales. All members of the troop are expected to participate in fund raising, as well as the outings and troop meetings. Adults are always needed to serve as coordinators for service and fundraising projects, please speak to the Troop Committee Chair to volunteer your leadership.

Program Cost

Troop 1954 re-charters with the National BSA each January. All youth and adult leaders re-register and pay annual dues – dues that are far less than fees for sports or many other youth programs. National currently charges \$34, plus \$12 for optional Scouts Life Magazine, for Scouts and adults. This pays for registration with the National Office, and insurance fees. The start up fee with the Troop is \$75.00 for Scouts new to Scouting (includes \$34 BSA registration fee, Class B t-shirt, handbook, shoulder loops, neckerchief, troop unit numbers, slide and patrol patch). For transferring Scouts the fee is only \$41.00 and includes all the above. This is less than the amount of money needed to purchase equipment and fully operate the troop. Fundraising and support from other organizations offset operational expenses.

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The Troop Committee Members prepare an annual budget for the year ending January 31. Once approved, any expenses not included in the approved budget must be approved by the Committee and the adult committee members. The Troop uses the fees to purchase patches, awards, tents, stoves and all other items needed to have a quality program. Monthly Dues of \$15 per Scout are collected at the beginning of each month, with the exception of July, or the option of a full payment of \$165 a year is also available. Other expenses for the Scout include costs that will vary from activity to activity, such as camp fees, etc. The adults will have identified the common costs of an activity, such as entrance fees, permits, and supplies, and have calculated a per-Scout fee. If for any reason you have financial constraints, the Troop has a campership program to assist any Scout that would need help with camping, uniforms, etc. Please contact the Committee Chair for further details.

Advancement Overview

The advancement process is an important part of being a Scout. It is important for you, the Scout's parent, to have knowledge of the steps and the process of advancing in Scouting. The BSA Advancement Program is designed to encourage Scouts to accomplish a progressive series of learning experiences in the areas of citizenship, character development, personal fitness, Scoutcraft skills, and leadership. The process provides for learning and application of knowledge and skills. The advancement process consists of five steps:

Learning - acquiring of knowledge of a subject through participation in activities.

Testing/application - skills are demonstrated to a qualified leader.

Scoutmaster's Conference - process completed, evaluated, new goals set.

Board of Review - to ensure standards have been met and assess the Scouting experience in general.

Recognition - public recognition of achievement at a Court of Honor.

Learning

Specific requirements for advancement to each rank are listed in the Scout Handbook. Advancement may require that the Scout learn skills, earn merit badges, participate in service projects, and serve in leadership positions. As the Scout advances, he earns recognition by being awarded badges of rank. The first four ranks are Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class. It is permissible to work on any of the requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class, or First Class, while at a lower rank. There are no time requirements for these ranks; however they must be earned and presented in the proper order. In earning these ranks, the Scout learns and demonstrates the basic Scout skills, as well as demonstrating good Scout Spirit and an understanding of the Scouting program while earning the ranks of Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class.

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Testing

Testing can be done in one of several informal or formal methods. The Scout normally demonstrates his ability with scouting skills to his Scoutmaster, or Assistant Scoutmaster. Frequently, the Scout is tested without realizing it, such as the case of a Patrol hike or Troop campout. An approved merit badge counselor, associated either with the Troop or District, will normally use the more traditional means of testing for merit badge skills, either by verbal or written questions and answers, demonstrations, or a required written report. **Note: requirements need to be observed by a troop certified leader to be recognized as completed. It is important for new Scout parents to realize that parents DO NOT sign off requirements for Scouts as they did in Cub Scouts. It is the Scout's responsibility to ask the Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmasters for sign off in his book.**

Scoutmaster's Conference

When a young man or woman makes the decision to become a Scout, they will have their first Scoutmaster Conference. For every rank from Tenderfoot through Eagle, a Scout will have the opportunity to sit down with the Scoutmaster. They will discuss his progress in the completion of the requirements to the next rank including Scout Spirit, as well as the setting of goals on how they will continue their progress. These one-on-one conferences are used to encourage and help a Scout focus his attention on their continued development. These conferences can be held at Troop meetings, campouts, or at a special time and place mutually agreed upon by the Scout and the Scoutmaster. The Scoutmaster Conference is designed to be a positive process. A Scout is recognized for the work he has done and the practice of setting and working toward goals is established.

Board of Review

The Advancement Chairman schedules a Board of Review, as necessary, during scheduled Board of Review meetings. After successfully completing the Scoutmaster Conference, it is the Scouts responsibility to contact the Advancement Chair in person, via telephone, or BAND to schedule a Board of Review. To be eligible for a Board of Review, the Scout must have completed all requirements for the rank for which he is to be reviewed, including a Scoutmaster's Conference.

The Scout requesting a Board of Review should remember to prepare for the Board of Review. This includes being punctual, being in complete Troop 1954 uniform, including their Scout Handbook. Not being prepared may hinder the start of the Board of Review. Only Scouts meeting these requirements will be brought before the Board.

For Eagle candidates, a special Eagle Board of Review is convened. An Eagle Board of Review is made up of the District Eagle Board. An Eagle Board of Review is scheduled to be held at a mutually agreed upon place and time, usually in McAllen, upon completion of all the work and requirements for Eagle.

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Recognition

After successfully completing the review process, the Scout will receive his new badge of rank at the next regular troop meeting for Scout through Life. The Scout will also receive public recognition at the next Court of Honor. At this time, the Scout is recognized for his hard work and dedication in front of the entire troop and the parents of the Scout. Courts of Honor are held periodically, usually every three months. It is important that parents and family members attend these special ceremonies to participate in the recognition process.

For recognition of the rank of Eagle, the Eagle Scout and his family will schedule and plan a unique Eagle Court of Honor, as not to conflict with any scheduled Troop function. Upon request, the Troop Committee will assist where needed. Usually family, friends and the Troop are invited to these personal ceremonies. An invitation to all Scouts is optional based on the Eagle's request. Individual Eagle

Eagle Court of Honors are not mandatory. If a Scout so chooses to be recognized at the Troops COH rather than a personal one that is perfectly fine.

When a Scout attains the rank of Eagle, it is the parent/guardians' responsibility to purchase the Eagle emblems (the kit that contains the badge, medal and pins). If the Scout and his family wish to have a separate COH to honor their Eagle this is their financial obligation as well.

Advancement Procedure

Scout: To achieve the rank of Scout after joining the troop, the Troop Guide is to work with the Scout to complete the requirements. In addition, parents need to review and discuss with their Scout, the parent's supplement found in the front of the Scout Handbook. A Scoutmaster's Conference is required, but not a Board of Review.

All Other Ranks: The specific requirements for each rank are listed in the Scout Handbook as well as Scoutbook online. Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class ranks do not require time-in-rank before the next advancement, but do have certain camping requirements that must be completed with the Troop or patrol, (Camping experience while as a Webelo Scout, while attending a church, school, or family vacation do not satisfy these requirements). The ranks of Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class must be earned in order. The ranks of Star, Life, and Eagle not only require time-in-rank, but a leadership position for each rank. As with MB's, it is often more enjoyable for Scouts to work together towards the same rank. The steps for advancement are:

Read the Scout Handbook to determine the specific requirements:

1) For the ranks of Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class, complete the skill requirements and see the Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster for testing and a sign-off. (Legible initials and date).

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- 2) For all Rank requirements refer to the Scout Handbook. The Handbook has a listing of each Rank along with a checklist of the requirements for service hour(s) and MB's. See the appropriate individuals, Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmasters for sign-off. (Legible initials and date).
- 3) Scouts should keep accurate records of their individual service hours and camping experiences (which are required for certain ranks). This should include date, number of hours or number of nights, location/place and description/explanation. This can be added and tracked in the back of your BSA handbook. The Scout needs to receive approval for the type of service hours he wishes to complete with the Scoutmaster before he undertakes the service hours. A form can be requested from the Scoutmaster to complete and receive approval.
- 4) Arrange for a Scoutmaster's Conference with the Scoutmaster for all ranks. A Scoutmaster's Conference will be held after all the requirements are completed.
- 5) See the Advancement Chair to set up a Board of Review.
- 6) For the rank of Eagle Scout, the Scout should consult the Scoutmaster before the Scout begins his Eagle project to obtain specific guidance on the advancement procedures. This can be started after completing the Life Board of Review. When all requirements have been met, the Eagle Scout Coordinator and/or the Troop Advancement Chair is notified that all merit badges, leadership position, service project, and time requirements have been completed. He will provide advice on the application process, and review all necessary paperwork (including the Eagle project report). The paperwork is also reviewed by the Scoutmaster and the Eagle Advisor for accuracy and style. The Scout must contact the District Eagle Board of Review Chair to arrange the Board of Review.

Merit Badge Procedures

Merit Badges (MB) are an important part of the advancement program and deal with skills in specific areas requiring a greater base of understanding than the requirements for Tenderfoot through First Class. Merit Badges can be earned in any order, with a few exceptions. In looking at the requirements for Star, Life, and Eagle, one observes that the number of required merit badges increases with each higher rank. It may be more fun to work on badges with a friend. The Scouts should plan to work on specific badges at summer camp and should pay particular attention to getting those required for the next rank advancement. Scouts may also attend Merit Badge University events, for example UTRGV MBU, to obtain a MB. The Scout Leaders help to steer the Scouts to those merit badges that will both expose them to a wide variety of experiences as well as those that will best enable them to advance with regularity. We recommend that the Scout earn the Eagle required merit badges as soon as they are able. Some merit badges require a great deal of time to complete (up to 6 months). If these are left to the last months before the Scout turns 18 years old, they may be impossible to complete due to scheduling conflicts, school commitments, and the time required to complete the work.

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Steps to earn meritbadges:

- Study the list of merit badges in the Scout Handbook; review the more detailed information in the Scout Requirements Book, or Scoutbook. Choose one based on your interests or requirements for your next rank. Find a buddy who is interested in working on the same merit badge.
- Obtain the Scoutmaster's approval on a blue merit badge application card before you start to work on a merit badge. **Be sure to get the blue card before you begin**, as only work accomplished after you receive the blue card will be credited. Get the merit badge pamphlet on your subject from the Council Service Center, public library, troop library or search online.
- Contact the Troop Advancement Chair for the list of MB Counselors within the troop and district. Select and contact a counselor prior to starting the requirements. Make an appointment for you and your buddy to see the counselor as is necessary. Some merit badges can be signed off in one session, while others require more appointments. Scouts of America requires Scouts to go in pairs or with an adult/parent to see the counselor.
- Learn and do the things that are required. Go as far as you can to fulfill the requirements on your own. Try to type the reports or papers, if any.
- When ready, you meet with the counselor to go over the important points of the subject. If he/she is satisfied that you have completed the requirements, he/she will sign and date both portions of the blue card. (The blue MB application card must be signed and dated by the MB Counselor when the requirements have been met). If not, you will be told what remains to complete the merit badge requirements.
- Show the completed card to the Scoutmaster and return the card to the Advancement Chair. You will receive your Merit Badge at the next Court of Honor. You need to hold onto the applicant's portion of the card in a safe place. You may need it when you are preparing your Eagle Application

Leadership, Service and Advancement

Upon achieving the rank of First Class, the Scout should be ready to accept the responsibilities of leadership in the form of Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Instructor, Den Chief, Quartermaster, Chaplain Aide, Historian, or Scribe. These positions satisfy leadership requirements for Star and Life, and are rotated every six months. In these positions, the Scout gains self-confidence and an understanding of the responsibilities of leadership. While serving in these positions, the Scout assists others with advancement. Scouts in a patrol should be able to go to their PL for advice, counsel, and for the learning and testing of skills. In completing the requirements for Star, Life, and, even Eagle, the Scout learns and demonstrates leadership at both the patrol and the troop level. While working on more advanced skills that will serve his own advancement, he recognizes the importance of demonstrating Scout Spirit, service to others in his everyday life.

Scouts working on Star and Life must more specifically work on service projects for these ranks. These projects must be pre-approved by the Scoutmaster and require the Scout to participate in providing significant service within the Troop or community.

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The highest rank in Scouting is Eagle Scout. In addition to the required merit badges and fulfillment of the leadership responsibilities, an Eagle candidate must plan, develop, and provide leadership in the completion of a significant service project on his own. Once the candidate decides on his Eagle Scout service project, he meets with the Scoutmaster and a member of the group his project will serve and develops a written plan. Upon the completion of the plan, the Scout presents his project at the monthly Troop Committee meeting and obtains their approval. After receiving the Troop Committee's approval, the Scout meets with a representative of the District Eagle Board and receives approval to begin work. While a Life Scout, the young man is provided with additional support and direction in completing this requirement and the supporting paperwork by the Eagle Advisor.

What Is Expected of Parents

Just as you expect the troop leadership to provide a challenging, safe, rewarding and appealing program for your Scout, there are certain responsibilities expected from you, the parents, to ensure a successful program:

1) Please encourage and support your Scout as he embarks on his Scouting adventure, for it will truly help him to grow as a person – physically, mentally and spiritually. Please go over the pertinent portions of this handbook with him, so that he will know how this program is set up and to whom he should go if he has any questions. We don't want him to feel lost or overwhelmed!

2) It is important to know that the Scout Handbook now contains a tear out section entitled "How to

Protect Your Children from Child Abuse and Drug Abuse: A Parent's Guide". This 21-page section contains excellent advice on how to prevent disastrous occurrences and is designed for you, the parents. As a condition of joining Scouts, you are required to complete this section with your prospective Scout. It is the only item that you, the parent(s), sign off in the Scout program. Another resource is Youth Protection Training that can be done online at myscouting.org and this is mandatory of all leaders and parents. As a chartered Troop of St. Joseph Catholic Church we are required to complete the course Protecting God's Children that is offered during our Monday meetings when scheduled, as well as undergo a criminal background check, and agree to/sign the Diocesan Code of Ethics.

3) We ask that you attend all Courts of Honor. These are scheduled four times a year, with the exception of Eagle Courts of Honor, which are scheduled as required. It is at these Courts of Honor, that we honor your Scout for their hard work and accomplishments. We also recognize the parents at these times and it is important for the Scout to feel the support and recognition of his parents and family! Even if your Scout is not a part of the program at a given Court of Honor, you should still attend since important information will be given out, as well as the opportunity for the troop as a whole to recognize its members for their accomplishments. Your support and attendance sends a message to every Scout – that you are interested in and care about his activities and accomplishments. There is a direct relationship between parents' support of their Scout in the Scouting program and their son's success in Scouting.

4) Attend Troop functions as well. Get to know your fellow Scout families and leaders. Your Scout Leaders will probably be involved with your Scout longer than any teacher or baseball or soccer coach

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he will ever have. These men and women serve as role models for your Scout for several years. Campouts, mini trips, and other troop outings and activities give parents the opportunity to watch and experience their sons grow and mature. Do try to come along and enjoy life with your Scout.

5) The BSA requires a minimum of 2 adults (one of whom must be at least 21 years old) for any Troop function, even if there is only one Scout at the function. If the required number of adults is not present, parents should not leave their Scout until the adults are present, or the activity is cancelled.

6) The need for transportation for weekend outings requires your cooperation and support so the load is distributed fairly. We need to have some adults in our Troop accompany the Scouts on their campouts and outings. There is always the need for drivers. You may be asked from time to time to solicit your support for an activity by either driving Scouts to, or bringing Scouts back from, an outing. We provide maps and directions and ask that you support the Adult Leader in their effort to insure we always have transportation we need. Please make sure that you complete the transportation portion of the Troop Checklist found in Appendix E related to your vehicles and return it to a Troop Committee member. Vehicles used must have minimum insurance coverage of \$50,000/\$100,000/\$50,000. These are typical coverage limits. Adult leaders, 18 years of age are permitted to drive Scouts to activities, as long as there is also an adult over 21 years old, accompanying the 18 year old driver on the trip.

7) The BSA does provide some medical insurance coverage for Scouters and Scouts who participate in Scouting activities. However, this coverage is supplemental to one's own private insurance. In order to allow the troop leaders to deal with any medical emergencies, please complete the Medical Form, parts A&B (part C when you plan on attending summer camp) and return it to the Troop Secretary at the next troop meeting. This will be kept in the troop file to accompany the troop on all of its outings. It should be updated when any of the medical information changes. Yearly physicals are required before summer camp.

8) Please complete the Troop 1954 Resource Survey (Appendix C), one for each parent, indicating your interests and skills in supporting our Troop. Please return it to a Troop Committee member at the next troop meeting. Please feel free to contact any Troop Committee member, the Scoutmaster, any Assistant Scoutmaster, if you have any questions or concerns about the program, or have suggestions for improvement. We welcome anyone who would like to get involved with the troop.

We hope that this handbook has been helpful and that it will be useful throughout your Scout's and your involvement in Troop 1954.

If at any time you have any questions or concerns please contact the Committee Chair or Scoutmaster.

Again, welcome to Troop 1954. We trust that your Scout's scouting experience will be a rewarding and memorable one.

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List of Committee Members & Leaders

Chartered Organization Rep	Bob Schmidt	mailto:bobschmidt1980@gmail.com	(956) 789-2462
Interim Committee Chair	Gicela Suarez	mailto:gicelasuarez@gmail.com	(956) 534- 7090
Scoutmaster	Homer Rios	mailto:judu22@yahoo.com	(956) 533-0407
Assistant Scoutmaster	Phil Hurry	mailto:philliphury@gmail.com	(956) 570-1715
Assistant Scoutmaster	Tony Carrizales	mailto:toniocarrizales@gmail.com	(956) 564-5008
Assistant Scoutmaster	Rudy Lopez	mailto:RudyLopez149@gmail.com	(956) 252-9918
Assistant Scoutmaster	Mark Suarez	mailto:Marksuarez75@gmail.com	(512) 300-9481
Assistant Scoutmaster	Aldo Moro	mailto:aldo_moro@hotmail.com	(956) 655-4646
Assistant Scoutmaster High Adventure	Juan Jara	mailto:jjara@eeisd.org	(956) 739-8361
Assistant Scoutmaster	Paula Rios	mailto:paula.rios825@gmail.com	(956) 369-4376
Advancement Coordinator	Sandra Leal/ April Burner	mailto:chapis007@hotmail.com	(956) 720-1583
Treasurer	Carolina Aguirre/Clarissa Gonzalez	mailto:carofer29@aol.com	(956) 458-2805
Secretary	Gicela Suarez	gicelasuarez@gmail.com	(956) 534- 7090
Training Coordinator	Martha Quintanilla	marthaq82@gmail.com	(956) 655-0786
New Member/Parent Coordinator	Sandra Rodriguez	mailto:srdz20@yahoo.com	(956) 454-4605
Troop Chaplain	Bob Schmidt	mailto:bobschmidt1980@gmail.com	(956) 789-2462
Equipment Coordinator	Rudy Lopez/ Phil Hurry	mailto:philliphury@gmail.com	(956) 252-9918
Outdoor Coordinator	Juan Jara	mailto:jjara@eeisd.org	(956) 739-8361

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Appendix A

Individual Scout's Account - Policy Statement

Provisions have been made by the Troop 1954 Committee for each Scout registered with Troop 1954 to have an individual account in his name. Those monies will be in the Troop 1954 accounts recorded in each individual's name. This provision has been made in the "spirit of scouting" to further the scouting career of the individual. Monies will be accumulated from fund raising activities of Troop 1954. The Troop 1954 Committee must approve proposed fund raising activities.

Examples of acceptable use of the Scout account will be for equipment, food, camp fees, transportation, lodging, etc. for Scout activities, or monthly dues.

The Troop 1954 Committee Treasurer may present invoices of balances of monthly dues. Any question to the Treasurer of proper usage will be directed to the Troop 1954 Committee for discussion. The Troop 1954 Committee will have the final decision on proper usage.

Individual accounts may be redirected to another family member. Procedure to redirect will be the same as an expense.

Once a Scout reaches the age of eighteen, as long as he re-charters with Troop 1954, he may continue to use monies in his individual account for camping, Scout purchases, and activities as previously directed. If a Scout does not re-charter, he will have just thirty days from the re-charter date to use his account. Any balance will then be placed in the general fund for Troop 1954.

Changes to this policy must be made by a two-thirds majority of the registered Troop Committee members.

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Appendix B

Personal Equipment Needed

Troop 1954 requires the following Class A Uniform. We wear class A's when we travel and attend public functions i.e. presenting the colors in school, flag retirement ceremonies and any Scouting functions.

- Full Scout Class A Uniform
- Scout belt
- Scout hat (optional, but some type of head cover is required)
- Scout socks
- Merit Badge Sash
- Rain gear (as opposed to a poncho)
- Sleeping bag(s) for the appropriate season
- Sleeping pad- a closed cell foam pad helps insulate from cold/wet ground on camping trips
- Waterproof boots/trail runner shoes (highly recommended)
- Backpack
- First Aid Kit, (homemade is best). Small enough to pack in backpack.
- 10 essentials found on page 264 of the old Scout Handbook, page 238-239 in the new Scout Handbook
- Water bottle
- Clothing for each season, cotton is bad.

Note: If a scout does not have gear and clothing appropriate for the camp out/ event and come prepared for the weather they may be restricted from going on the event.

List of websites to help you buy the above items:

www.scoutstuff.org

www.rei.com

www.hikerdirect.com

www.campmor.com

www.amazon.com

www.theoutdoorsource.com

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Electronic Devices

Electronics such as cell phone, hand-held games etc. are only allowed in vehicles going to & from campouts and must remain in the vehicle. They are not allowed to be used at camp or at meetings, etc. unless approved for use by the Scoutmaster. They will be collected by the Scoutmaster and returned at the completion of the campout.

Food Allergies

Food allergies must be brought to the attention of the leadership and if a Scout requires a special diet it is his responsibility to bring his own food and a means to prepare it himself.

Medications

Medications will be given to leader in charge and it is the Scout's responsibility to alert the leader when it is time to dispense them.

Personal Food Items

No extra food, without the consent of the Scoutmasters should be brought by an individual to a camp out. Food is not allowed in tents and backpacks (unless backpacking).

Siblings

It is the policy of Troop 1954 to not allow siblings and non-BSA registered youths on camp outs, field trips, merit badge clinics and other such activities outside of regular weekly troop meetings. We feel this could be a distraction to the programs we are participating in. These youths are permitted at the regular weekly meetings as long as they are with an adult and are not disruptive.

Uniform Inspections

The Scout Uniform has a long and rich history within Scouting. Our Troop expects all Scouts to wear the full Class A Uniform for all meetings, when traveling and all Scouting events and programs. Periodic surprise inspections will occur during Troop Meetings or Special Events to insure all Scouts are wearing the Uniform correctly. *(The Troop has various pieces of the Uniform available for loan as needed).*

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Appendix C

Troop Resource Survey



TROOP RESOURCE SURVEY

Boy Scouting is for adults as well as boys. We invite you to share your skills and interests so the best possible program can be developed for the Boy Scouts in this troop. In making this survey the committee wishes to find way you can enjoy using your talents to help our Scouts. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Welcome to the Scout family of troop No. _____ in the _____ Council.

Please return this survey to _____
(Please print)

Name _____ Home phone _____

Street address _____ Business Phone _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

1. What is your favorite hobby? _____ Occupation _____

2. In what sports do you take an active part? _____

3. Would you be willing to assist the troop leaders and committee members occasionally? _____

4. Please check the areas in which you would be willing to help.

General Activities

- Campouts
- Hikes
- Outdoor activities
- Troop meetings
- Swimming supervision
- Bookkeeping
- Typing
- Drawing/art
- Transportation of Scouts
- Transportation of equipment
- Other _____
please print

Special Program Assistance

- I can participate in boards of review.
- I have a station wagon or _____ truck.
- I have a workshop.
- I have family camping gear.
- I have access to a cottage.
- I have access to camping property.
- I can make contacts for special trips and activities.
- I can help with troop equipment.
- I have access to a personal computer.

5. Please check any Scouting skills you would be willing to teach.

- Ropework (knots and lashings)
- Outdoor cooking
- First aid
- Star study
- Map and compass use
- Conservation
- Aquatics
- Knife and ax handling
- Citizenship
- Camping

Check the merit badges on the other side of this sheet that you are willing to help our Boy Scouts earn.

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Merit Badges

American Business	Fingerprinting	Programming
American Cultures	Fire Safety	Public Health
American Heritage	First Aid	Public Speaking
American Labor	Fish and Wildlife Management	Pulp and Paper
Animal Science	Fishing	Radio
Animation	Fly Fishing	Railroading
Archaeology	Forestry	Reading
Archery	Game Design	Reptile and Amphibian Study
Architecture	Gardening	Rifle Shooting
Art	Genealogy	Robotics
Astronomy	Geocaching	Rowing
Athletics	Geology	Safety
Automotive Maintenance	Golf	Salesmanship
Aviation	Graphic Arts	Scholarship
Backpacking	Hiking	Scouting Heritage
Basketry	Home Repairs	Scuba Diving
Bird Study	Horsemanship	Sculpture
Bugling	Indian Lore	Search & Rescue
Camping	Insect Study	Shotgun Shooting
Canoeing	Inventing	Signs, Signals, and Codes
Chemistry	Journalism	Skating
Chess	Kayaking	Small-Boat Sailing
Citizenship in the Community	Landscape Architecture	Snow Sports
Citizenship in the Nation	Law	Soil and Water Conservation
Citizenship in the World	Leatherwork	Space Exploration
Climbing	Lifesaving	Sports
Coin Collecting	Mammal Study	Stamp Collecting
Collections	Medicine	Surveying
Communication	Metalwork	Sustainability
Composite Materials	Mining in Society	Swimming
Cooking	Model Design and Building	Textile
Crime Prevention	Motor boating	Theater
Cycling	Moviemaking	Traffic Safety
Dentistry	Music	Truck Transportation
Digital Technology	Nature	Veterinary Medicine
Disabilities Awareness	Nuclear Science	Water Sports
Dog Care	Oceanography	Weather
Drafting	Orienteering	Welding
Electricity	Painting	Whitewater
Electronics	Personal Fitness	Wilderness Survival
Emergency Preparedness	Personal Management	Wood Carving
Energy	Pets	Woodwork
Engineering	Photography	
Entrepreneurship	Pioneering	
Environmental Science	Plant Science	
Exploration	Plumbing	
Family Life	Pottery	
Farm Mechanic		

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Scout Code of Conduct

Each Scout in Troop 1954 shall practice living by the Scout Oath and Scout Law in everyday life, as well as at all scouting functions.

The Code of Conduct is as follows:

- 1) I will show respect and pay attention to everyone.
- 2) I will keep from profanity and not be abusive to anyone.
- 3) I will respect all property and be responsible for my actions.
- 4) During all activities, I will keep the area clean and I will not leave it without permission.
- 5) I will properly wear the Scout Class A uniform at every activity, unless told otherwise.
- 6) I understand that serious and/or bad behavior may result in * serious consequences.
- 7) I will strive to work together with others as a TEAM at all times.

* Serious consequences COULD result in dismissal from an event or the troop, as outlined on page 133 in Scout Master's Handbook (see next page).

Troop 1954 will maintain the signed copies of the Code of Conduct.

By signing the Code of Conduct, they indicate that they have read, understand and agree to comply with this document to the best of their ability.

SCOUT Name (Print) _____

SCOUT Signature _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

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Appendix D

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

The following verbiage is from the Scoutmaster's Handbook.

Successful Scouting is built upon the scout-led troop and the scout-led patrol. The Scouts themselves hold positions of leadership, develop the program, and carry out projects and activities. They also have the responsibility to establish codes of behavior based on the principles of the Scout Oath and Law.

When a troop member oversteps the boundaries of that code, it is up to the members of the patrol leaders' council to let the Scout know "We don't do that here" or "That is not acceptable behavior for a Scout."

Serious or recurring negative activity might require the involvement of the Scoutmaster and other adult leaders in a firm, fair manner. Instances of cheating, lying, inappropriate language, vandalism, or fighting can sometimes be explored through reflection and counseling.

A Scout who continually disrupts meetings or whose actions endanger himself or others during Scouting activities should be sent home. Contact his parents or guardian, explain the situation to them, and discuss ways that the family and the troop can work together to better integrate the Scout into the Scouting program.

Discipline problems that might lead to a Scout's permanent removal from the troop should be handled by the Scoutmaster and the troop committee and should always involve the Scout's parents or guardian.

Physical discipline is not appropriate. Spanking, shaking, slapping and other forms of corporal punishment should never be used by Scout leaders.

- * If any Scout is not behaving in a Scout like manner, he will be asked to call his parent and explain what he has done.
- * If a scout requires a second call, he will be required to ask his parents to pick him up from the Scouting activity.

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Appendix E

Parent Registration Checklist

Scout Name _____ T-shirt Size (adult size) _____

_____ Emergency Medical Form (Parts A & B & part C)

_____ Registration Form – Scout and Adult leader (if interested) and Merit Badge Counselor Form

_____ Start up fee \$75.00 for Scouts new to Scouting (includes \$34 BSA registration fee, Class B t-shirt, handbook, shoulder loops, neckerchief, troop unit numbers, slide and patrol patch) plus an additional \$12 if you wish to receive Scout's Life. Transferring Scouts the fee is only \$41.00 and includes all the above.

_____ \$165 for Yearly Dues (\$15/month)

_____ Troop Resource Survey (Appendix C)

_____ Code of Conduct Policy (Appendix D)

_____ Diocesan Protecting God's Children Training

_____ Diocesan Code of Conduct

_____ Diocesan Criminal Background Check

Parent Name (s) _____

Home Address: _____

Telephone Number(s): _____

Email Address(s): _____

Year, Make and Model of Car: _____

Driver's License Number: _____

_____ I have a minimum of \$50,000/\$100,000/\$50,000 insurance coverage

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Appendix F

Parent/Guardian Requirements

Troop 1954 is a very active Scout Troop and your guidance will be needed to insure your Scout will be well informed of our Troop policies and plans for Troop functions. This enables our Troop to function at the highest level possible.

BAND Application/ Scoutbook

To provide communication, which is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, our Troop uses an online system to communicate via email, provide documents, and provide the annual calendar. The application is called BAND and is available at this website: <https://band.us/>

Scoutbook has a very good help system, which can guide you, and track tasks such advancement, camp logs, service hours, etc. If you need further assistance contact our Committee Chair.

Upon joining the Troop, you will receive your login information to Scoutbook and Band.

The following items are important to review and understand for you and your Scout so our Troop can be successful:

Contact Information

- Insure you maintain updated contact information for all parents/guardians within the system. This is our only method of keeping up to date contact information so it is critical to remain updated. Please include complete names, addresses, home phone, cell phone, emails, etc.
- Insure you maintain updated contact information for your Scout.

Documents

- All Troop documents are stored on Scoutbook and are accessible via your own log in. These documents will be extremely helpful for Scouts holding leadership positions.

Calendar

- The calendar is all online and available within BAND and has various options for displaying and printing by month or year for your convenience.
- All Troop events are scheduled, planned and Scout RSVP captured via BAND.
- Our preference is to have all Scouts planning to attend an event RSVP before the scheduled PLC meeting of the event. The details of the event, deadline for registration, cost and any special instructions will be within the detail on the calendar.
 - *The PLC meets the Sunday following a weekend event/campout to plan the next month's meetings and events. This would require you to sign up for events 1 month in advance. The PLC has the responsibility to plan all events and knowing the overall attendance is required for proper planning. We would prefer you sign up early and then cancel if family plans change then to sign up "just in time". Some special events will require significant advance planning and an earlier RSVP.*

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Financial Bookkeeping

- In order to properly track the cost of Scouting per scout and their individual involvement at planned events the Troop Committee Treasurer maintains the account balances per Scout.
- This is a very robust system allowing you to review your balances to insure your Scout is paid in full prior to attending any event. You may pay the Treasurer by check or cash.
- It is your Scout's responsibility to pay his way. *From the Scout Handbook - "A Scout is thrifty. A Scout works to pay his way and to help others. He saves for the future. He protects and conserves natural resources. He carefully uses time and property."*
- All costs for any event must be paid in full prior to attending an event. **If the costs are not paid in full prior to the event the Scout is unable to attend the event. There will not be any exceptions.** *(Our Troop has financial assistance available when needed. Please talk with the Committee Chair for details).*

Uniforms

- The Scout Uniform has a long and rich history within scouting. Our Troop expects all Scouts to wear the full Class A Uniform for all meetings, when traveling and all Scouting events and programs. Periodic surprise inspections will occur during Troop Meetings or Special Events to insure all Scouts are wearing the Uniform correctly. *(The Troop has various pieces of the Uniform available for loan as needed. Please see the Scoutmaster for details).*
- Scouts will receive awards, rank advancements and merit badges at times very rapidly. These need to be applied to the uniform and/or sash quickly so your Scout is properly displaying his advancement within the Troop. It will surprise you on how quickly they will grow, much faster than you can imagine. It takes a lot of planning to insure your Scout is wearing an entire uniform which fits correctly, has the various emblems and badges in the proper locations and the uniform is always clean and pressed. Please help your Scout with their uniform to insure they are always prepared and are proud to wear their uniform to all Troop functions.