

Information updated on 6/1/2020 from the National Council of Boy Scouts of America

Over the last few months, we have seen the Scouting community come together, even while physically apart, to bring solutions, relief and comfort to those in need. From making masks to supporting food banks, Scouting has been a vital partner for communities across the country.

The value of Scouting is undeniable for those within the program and the greater public, and we are committed to continuing to offer this unmatched opportunity to young people and families nationwide.

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) has worked to keep the membership fee as low as possible. Unfortunately, operating costs have continued to rise and COVID-19 has compounded the need to increase the fee to maintain the program.

To ensure we have the resources to fulfill the promise of Scouting, the updated national membership fee is

- \$66 for Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing and Sea Scouts participants
- \$42 for Exploring participants
- \$42 for a Youth member Program Fee
- \$30 for council-paid memberships
- \$42 for all adult volunteers (includes cost of background check)
- \$75 for a unit charter fee
- \$25 for a new member joining fee

The membership fees will take effect August 1, 2020, for new members in the 2020-2021 program year. For renewing members, the new fee will take effect on October 1, 2020. The updated unit charter fee will take effect August 1, 2020, for all new and rechartering units.

Starting August 1, 2020, there will also be a one-time \$25 joining fee for *new* program participants (youth and adults) in Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing and Sea Scouts; however, there is no joining fee for Exploring participants, participants previously registered in any BSA program, those transferring from one program to another, council-paid memberships, or adult volunteers.

The national membership fee helps pay for the cost of essential services, including program resources, liability insurance for those participating in approved Scouting activities, youth protection and other local council resources.

National BSA will also continue to develop and improve resources that support our volunteers and youth members through online registration, Scoutbook, and national initiatives that bring us all together like the [National Camp-In](#) and the [Scout Salute](#) partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Across the country and in each of our communities, we know that Scouting remains one of the most valuable investments we can make in young men and women today so they can become the leaders we will turn to tomorrow.

Our dedicated volunteers, staff, and Scouting families make this possible. Thank you for continuing to support one of the most valuable opportunities available to young people today.

FAQ

Q: Why are the fees increasing?

A: The national annual membership fee is increasing by \$6, about 50 cents per month, because the costs associated with Scouting, including the cost of liability insurance, continue to increase and the organization is not able to subsidize the increased costs as it had in the past.

Q: When will this increase take effect?

A: The updated membership fees will take effect August 1, 2020, for new members in the 2020-2021 program year. For renewing members, the new fees will take effect on October 1, 2020.

Q: Is Scouting still a good value?

A: Absolutely! While most extracurricular activities are seasonal, Scouting is a year-round program that remains one of the most valuable investments we can make to support young men and women today so they can become the leaders we will turn to tomorrow. For most of our participants, the new national membership fee amounts to \$5.50 a month, which is an enormous value when you consider that many seasonal extracurricular activities often start at \$100 for programs that last a few weeks.

Q: Does the fee increase apply to council-paid memberships?

A: Council-paid memberships will be \$30 annually for youth members in fully funded council-paid units for low-income communities.

Q: What will the money be used for?

A: The annual national membership fee and new-member joining fee help pay for the cost of essential services, including program resources, liability insurance for those participating in approved Scouting activities, youth protection and other local council resources.

Q: Is this increase being implemented to cover the cost of the additional background checks?

A: While the cost of background checks is paid for by the national organization, that is not the driver of this increase.

Q: Will membership fees go toward funding a victims compensation trust?

A: No. The national annual membership fee and the new-member joining fee will help pay for the cost of essential services, including program resources, liability insurance for those participating in approved Scouting activities, youth protection and other local council resources.

Q: What measures has the national organization taken to offset its financial challenges?

A: In addition to ongoing efforts to streamline and simplify the organization, the national organization has taken a number of steps to address its financial challenges, which include recent furloughs and three rounds of reductions over the past year. These were in addition to ongoing consolidation of departments and elimination of some significant vendors for the most effective utilization of resources in support of Scouting.

Q: In addition to the national membership fee, my council is implementing a Council Program Fee. Is that allowed?

A: Starting August 1, 2020, councils can also choose to charge a fee up to, but no more than, the national membership fee – up to \$66 for participants in Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing and Sea Scouts; up to \$42 for participants in Exploring and up to \$42 for adult members. The council fee can include local insurance costs (i.e., accident, property, etc.), as well as the cost to administer unique local programming. Units can continue to assess activity fees.

*The Indian Nations Council Board of Directors formed a taskforce as a part of its Strategic Long-Range Planning process which made a recommendation to the Executive Board at its May 5, 2020 meeting.

The Indian Nations Council will institute a Program Activity fee of \$42 which includes a \$12 insurance fee for all youth members effective August 1, 2020

Q: Will the national membership fee continue to increase?

A: Although no decision about future increases has been made, the cost of operating our organization and services increases every year. Should it be necessary to increase fees in the future, the National Executive Board of the Boy Scouts of America has agreed to evaluate the needs and make such decisions, whenever possible, at the National Annual Meeting so that decisions can be announced with as much lead time as possible to allow councils and units to plan accordingly.