

# National BSA Member Fee Increase

Dear Scouting Family,

Today the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America announced an increase to the annual membership fees. These increases are a result of rising operational costs and COVID-19, which has created a substantial unplanned loss of revenue due to mandated Scout Shop closures and shortened high adventure base seasons.

Locally, our council is also facing financial challenges and we are doing our best to address the impact of three months of office closure, activity cancellations, diminished fundraising campaigns, and the loss of some of our summer camp season. We know, however, that our staff and volunteers will continue to do their best to offer high-quality Scouting experiences during these challenging times.

We understand many of our Scouting families are also dealing with similar financial issues. We do not want finances to be a barrier to participation in Scouting, and will do our best to assist families who need it, to the fullest extent possible.

We are aware some of our members may have heard about these fee changes this weekend via social media. The Mayflower Council did not share this information previously because the National Council requested that all councils wait until June 1st before distributing this news. Some councils, unfortunately, chose to share the information prematurely, which may have spawned some confusion. The Mayflower Council apologizes for any inconvenience this action may have caused.

Please review the infographic below. [Click here](#) to view the frequently asked questions about the fee increase. As more

information is released, we will share the most up to date information here.

Thank you for your continued dedication to our Scouts. As Scouting navigates these turbulent times, we stand together to achieve our shared mission: helping young people in our community learn, grow, and thrive.

If you have specific questions regarding these changes, please contact your district executive or email us.

Yours in Scouting,

Mike Rotar  
Council President

Josh Paulin  
Council Commissioner

Bryan Feather  
Scout Executive / CEO



# 2020 BSA National Membership Fees

## ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE

EFFECTIVE



FOR ALL  
NEW  
MEMBERS

EFFECTIVE



FOR ALL  
RENEWING  
MEMBERS  
(RECHARTER)

\$66/YR

Participants in kindergarten through age 20.



\$42/YR



Participants age 10 - 20.

\$42/YR



All registered adult volunteers in unit and non-unit positions. (Volunteers with multiple registrations will continue to pay for only one position).

## NEW-MEMBER JOINING FEE

EFFECTIVE



ONE-TIME

\$25

TO JOIN

Same flat fee no matter when you join during the year. (no prorating)  
New members pay joining fee in addition to membership fee.



No joining fee for adult volunteers, Exploring participants, participants previously registered in any BSA program, or those transferring from one program to another.

## UNIT RECHARTER FEE

EFFECTIVE



\$75/YR

For all new and rechartering units.

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# Background Check Disclosures/Authorization FAQ

*Please note this information cannot be distributed with the original message or in any message with the disclosure forms due to laws specific to the transmission of these documents.*

## 1. Is the BSA doing credit checks on volunteers?

- **No. The BSA will only use these signed authorization forms for approval to obtain a criminal background check.** State and federal laws regulating background checks and consumer credit checks require that both items be mentioned on the form since a full background check includes both parts. **Again, the BSA is only using this form for authorization to obtain a criminal background check.**

## 2. Why is this being done now?

1. Starting in 2020, rechecks will be performed every five years, but it will take several years to recheck all leaders. Unfortunately, technical limitations and changes in the law over the last five years prevent us from using existing authorizations from older applications. As such, new disclosure had to be sent and new signed authorization forms obtained. Rechartering provides the best window to collect and verify they have been received before the council processes the recharter application.

## 3. What about volunteers that are not registered with units?

- All currently registered adults and employees who have not had a criminal background check in the last five years will be rechecked. Mayflower Council will individually track district and council registered employees and leaders, including merit badge counselors.

**4. What about those who did not get the forms by e-mail?**

- Ample copies of the background check disclosure and agreement will be provided November Roundtable meetings and are available on our website at [www.mayflowerbsa.org/recharter](http://www.mayflowerbsa.org/recharter).
- Your unit leader, or the leader responsible for completing your unit's annual charter renewal, will ensure that each registered adult volunteer leader receives both the disclosure form as well as the authorization form. The council will collect all of your unit's authorization forms (we will not need to collect the separate disclosure page) at the time that your unit submits their annual charter renewal packet. District and council volunteers, including merit badge counselors, should submit the authorization to your district executive, mail it to the Marlborough Service Center, 2 Mount Royal Avenue – Suite 100, Marlborough, MA 01752 or you may email it to [membership@mayflowerbsa.org](mailto:membership@mayflowerbsa.org).

**5. What about those with multiple registrations?**

- Only one authorization form per person needs to be collected and retained by the council. An authorization should be submitted with their primary BSA registration.

**6. What happens if a unit leader does not provide an authorization?**

- Leaders who do not provide new authorization will not be able to renew their registration.

**7. Why can't the volunteer just reply to the original e-mail and attach their signed authorization form?**

- The best way for us to ensure compliance is to require that the council registrar verify that a signed authorization form is physically in hand before processing a unit's recharter. This removes much of the potential error and associated penalties that could result from other methods. This will facilitate the process of ensuring that a current form is on file at the council service center before posting their registration.

**8. Are there different forms for different states?**

- Federal and state laws prescribe what must be in the disclosures and how they are to be provided. A form compliant with federal and various state laws was sent to all volunteer leaders except those in California. Leaders with a California home address or whose council territory includes California received California-specific forms due to the specific requirements of California law.

**9. Can the council accept a faxed copy or scanned copy sent via email of the signed authorization?**

- Yes, so long as it is legible and is sent by the individual who signed it.
- Your unit leader, or the leader responsible for completing your unit's annual charter renewal, will ensure that each registered adult volunteer leader receives both the disclosure form as well as the authorization form. The council will collect all of your unit's authorization forms (we will not need to collect the separate disclosure page) at the time that your unit submits their annual charter renewal packet. District and council volunteers, including merit badge counselors, should submit the authorization to your district executive, mail it to the Marlborough Service Center, 2 Mount Royal Avenue – Suite 100, Marlborough, MA 01752 or you may email it to [membership@mayflowerbsa.org](mailto:membership@mayflowerbsa.org).

**10. Can the council accept an electronic signature?**

- Digital signatures from third-party providers are acceptable. E-mail confirmations, permissions or typed names on the form are not acceptable substitutes for wet signatures.
- Your unit leader, or the leader responsible for completing your unit's annual charter renewal, will ensure that each registered adult volunteer leader receives both the disclosure form as well as the authorization form. The council will collect all of your unit's authorization forms (we will not need to collect the separate disclosure page) at the time that your unit submits their annual charter renewal packet. District and council volunteers, including merit badge counselors, should submit the authorization to your district executive, mail it to the Marlborough Service Center, 2 Mount Royal Avenue – Suite 100, Marlborough, MA 01752 or you may email it to [membership@mayflowerbsa.org](mailto:membership@mayflowerbsa.org).

**11. What about unit renewals that have already been processed or will not recharter until after January 1?**

- For unit renewals that have already been posted because the unit renewal date was prior to the email notification or the unit renewal date is after January 1, authorization forms still need to be collected as soon as possible. All new authorization forms should be received by December 31, 2019.

**12. The authorization form states the BSA can share my background with other entities. Which entities are those?**

- Background checks are conducted by the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America and shared with local councils for the purpose of conducting Scouting business. Local councils are separate organizations from the National Council of the Boy

Scouts of America.

**13. Can the council require the forms be collected at the unit level and not sent to the council service center?**

- Yes. The council can require the forms be collected at the unit level or by a designated unit representative.
- We want to clarify what is needed from you, and how this will be handled in our Mayflower Council:
  - **Every registered leader needs to review, sign, and turn in** the “Additional Disclosures & Background Check Authorization” form in order to renew their membership for next year.
  - **If your primary registration is with a unit**, please give the form with your original signature to your unit leader, or the leader responsible for completing your unit’s annual charter renewal, who will submit it with the recharter paperwork.
  - **If your primary registration is NOT with a unit**, please give the form with your original signature to your district executive, mail it to the Marlborough Service Center, 2 Mount Royal Avenue – Suite 100, Marlborough, MA 01752 or you may email it to [membership@mayflowerbsa.org](mailto:membership@mayflowerbsa.org).

Download this FAQ as a PDF

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# Membership Fee Frequently



# Asked Questions

## National Council, Boy Scouts of America Fee Increase FAQ

### **Q: Why are the fees increasing now?**

**A:** While costs increase every year, the Boy Scouts of America has worked to keep the annual membership fee as low as possible to make Scouting available to as many young people as possible by subsidizing core costs, including liability insurance we must carry to cover all official Scouting activities. As the organization's financial situation has shifted, it is no longer possible to subsidize at the level we have in the past, especially as the cost of insurance has increased dramatically.

### **Q: Does this apply to youth members and volunteers?**

**A:** Yes, the new fees apply for youth and adult members. Effective January 1, 2020, the new fees are:

- \$60 for youth members in Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing and Sea Scouts,
- \$36 for youth members in Exploring, and
- \$36 for adult members (includes cost of background check and Scouting Magazine)
- \$60 for unit charter fees

### **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 youth members, the new registration fee amounts to \$5 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:** No. The cost for council-paid membership, sometimes known

as Scouting in Every Neighborhood, will continue to be \$24 for each youth member.

**Q: What will the money be used for?**

**A:** Every dollar of membership fees will go to cover the cost of essential services, including liability insurance for members participating in approved Scouting activities, background checks for adult leaders, program development and training resources, continuously updated youth protection and youth safety training, improved IT/digital experiences and services to our councils nationwide.

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

**A:** No, the cost of background checks is not the prompting the fee increase.

**Q: Why is this being announced now?**

**A:** We recognize the timing of this fee increase creates challenges as units have already begun collecting fees for their 2020 registration renewal process, and we would not make this difficult decision if it were not absolutely necessary. Unfortunately, the cost of liability insurance we must carry to cover all Scouting activities has increased dramatically over the past several months, and the organization is no longer able to offset the cost of insurance. We are committed to supporting you through this process and are making necessary adjustments to the online rechartering system to ensure units can carry out the recharter process.

**Q: Does this increase cover financial challenges the organization is facing?**

**A:** The increase was prompted because the cost of liability insurance we must carry to cover all Scouting activities has increased dramatically over the past several months, and the organization is no longer able to offset the cost of insurance. The national membership fee also enables us program development and

training resources, continuously updated youth protection and youth safety training, improved IT/digital experiences and services to our councils nationwide.

**Q: When will this increase take effect?**

**A:** The new membership fees will take effect starting January 1, 2020 for the 2020-21 program year.

**Q: Is financial assistance available?**

**A:** We are committed to ensuring that all youth can experience the character-building benefits of Scouting regardless of their financial situation. In addition to the many existing council and unit membership assistance funds, we have established the donor-funded Growing Future Leaders Fund to provide financial support to those who need it.

**Q: My council currently requires members to pay a council fee that offsets insurance costs. Does this change mean that fee is no longer necessary?**

**A:** No, the liability insurance that we need to carry for all Scouting activities at the national level is different from local fees that are collected to address local needs, which can include expenses such as local property and accident insurance, as well as unique local programming costs.

**Q: In addition to the national membership fee, my council has implemented a program fee. Is that allowed?**

**A:** Councils currently charging a program fee must ensure that their fee is consistent with new rules for these fees within one year. Councils can choose to charge a local program fee, up to but no more than the national membership fee – up to \$60 for youth members in Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing and Sea Scouts; up to \$36 for youth members in Exploring and up to \$36 for adult members. The local program fee can include local insurance costs (i.e., accident, property, etc.), as well as cost to administer unique local programming efforts.

**Q: What happens if my council's program fee is more than the**

**national membership fee?**

**A:** Councils that are currently charging a program fee more than the national membership fee have one year to adjust their fees in order to be in compliance with the new rules.

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

**A:** In addition to ongoing efforts to streamline and simplify the organization, the national organization has taken a number of steps in addressing its financial challenges, including the recent elimination of more than 35 positions at the National Service Center and ongoing consolidation of departments for the most effective utilization of resources in support of Scouting.

**Q: Will the national membership fee continue to increase?**

**A:** Although no decision about future increases have 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 in May or early in the summer so that they can be announced with as much lead time as possible to allow for councils and units to be able to plan accordingly.

**Mayflower Council Registration Fee Increase FAQ**

**Q: Is this fee increase applicable to units rechartering in December?**

**A:** Yes, all Mayflower Council units are subject to the National registration fees. Unit charters are valid from January 1 – December 31 annually.

**Q: Is the council activity fee increasing?**

**A:** The Mayflower Council Executive Board has decided there will be no increase in the program activity fee. It will

remain at \$30 per youth member. Lions, Venturers 18 – 21 and adults are exempt from the program activity fee.

**Q: Can you provide total fees by program for youth & adults in Mayflower Council?**

**A:** Total fees for Scouts and leaders in Mayflower Council will be as follows:

**Lions & Venturers 18 – 21:**

\$60 National registration fee

\$12 Boys' Life Magazine (optional)

**Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Sea Scouts & Venturers**

\$60 National registration fee

\$30 Council program activity fee

\$12 Boys' Life Magazine (optional)

**Adults & Exploring Participants**

\$36 National registration fee

\$12 Boys' Life Magazine (optional)

**Unit Charter Fee**

(Unit Liability Insurance Fee)

\$60 per unit

**Q: Will the council waive the program activity fee in 2020?**

**A:** Because local councils do not receive any funding from National, the registration fee increase will not directly benefit the Mayflower Council. Local costs for insurance and providing program to our participants have not gone down nor are offset in any way by the increase in National registration fees. As a result, the Mayflower Council \$30 activity fee will continue in 2020; unchanged from 2019.

**Q: Is there a discounted membership fee for families with multiple children?**

**A:** The registration fees are set by the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America. The National Council has not

informed the council of any plan to offer a membership fee discount for families with multiple children in the program.

**Q: Will the Mayflower Council be able to assist families who cannot afford the council program activity fee because of the National registration fee increase?**

**A:** The Mayflower Council is committed to ensure that no family is turned away due to financial constraints. The Mayflower Council has created the program fee waiver program to provide financial assistance to deserving Scouts who would otherwise not be able to afford participating in Scouting. The Mayflower Council, in administering funds provided by concerned individuals, foundations, and others, will act as good stewards by offering careful judgment in providing program fee waivers and will act in complete confidence. Visit [bit.ly/programfeewaiver](http://bit.ly/programfeewaiver) to begin the application process.

**Q: Do adults need to pay the council program activity fee?**

**A:** No, the council program activity fee only applies to youth members with the following exceptions, Lions and Venturers 18 – 21 years old.

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## **Youth Protection Update**

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) and Mayflower Council are committed first and foremost to keeping youth safe. Part of that commitment includes continually updating our youth protection policies to help ensure we are always on the forefront of youth safety.

As you know, one of the BSA's many barriers to abuse is a mandatory criminal background check during the adult volunteer

application process. **The BSA will now also perform periodic rechecks of criminal backgrounds to support the continued safety of youth in our programs.**

In order to conduct these background checks, we need a couple things from all registered leaders. Please complete the process listed below at your earliest convenience to help us continue to provide the safest environment possible for our Scouts and leaders. **Please note that these steps must be completed before your 2020 membership renewal and unit rechartering can be processed.**

1. Review the Background Check Disclosure.
2. Then, review the additional disclosures on the "Additional Disclosures & Background Check Authorization" form, then complete and sign it using an ink/wet signature. Note: Digital signatures from third-party providers are acceptable. Email confirmations, permissions or typed names on the form are not acceptable substitutes for wet signatures.
3. Turn in the signed "Additional Disclosures & Background Check Authorization" form promptly depending on your registration.
  - **If your primary registration is with a unit,** please give the form with your original signature to your unit leader who will submit it with the recharter paperwork.
  - **If your primary registration is NOT with a unit,** please give the form with your original signature to your district executive, mail it to the Marlborough Service Center, 2 Mount Royal Avenue – Suite 100, Marlborough, MA 01752 or you may email it to [membership@mayflowerbsa.org](mailto:membership@mayflowerbsa.org).

If you choose to decline the background check, or if you do not complete and return the Additional Disclosures & Background Check Authorization form, your personal registration for 2020 will not be processed; this may delay

the processing of your unit's rechartering paperwork. **Please note we need a signed authorization form from every registered adult leader.**

Thank you for making this investment of time to help protect our Scouts. We are truly grateful for your continued commitment to keeping youth safe and for helping them learn, grow, and thrive through Scouting programs.

FAQ on the background check disclosures & authorization form

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## **BSA Background Check Update – Additional Info**

This week the National Council sent out an email about BSA's efforts to strengthen our youth protection practices by requiring periodic background re-checks for adult leaders. We want to clarify what is needed from you, and how this will be handled in our Mayflower Council.

- **Every registered leader needs to review, sign, and turn in** the "Additional Disclosures & Background Check Authorization" form in order to renew their membership for next year.
- **If your primary registration is with a unit**, please give the form with your original signature to your unit leader who will submit it with the recharter paperwork.
- **If your primary registration is NOT with a unit**, please give the form with your original signature to your district executive, mail it to the Marlborough Service Center, 2 Mount Royal Avenue – Suite 100, Marlborough, MA 01752 or you may email it to



membership@mayflowerbsa.org.

FAQ on the background check disclosures & authorization form

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# **An Update on Scouting Registration Fees**

As a valued member of our Mayflower Council Scouting family, we know we owe it to you to be transparent and communicate information we receive promptly.

Late Tuesday afternoon, the National Council informed us that registration fees for the Scouting program will increase effective January 1, 2020. This change is primarily due to increasing liability insurance costs associated with delivering a quality program across the country.

While we do not know the exact amount, the National Council committed to having the amount finalized in the next six weeks, once the National Board reviews the recommendations from a task force of volunteers and professionals assigned to review this matter. Unfortunately, this change will impact registration fees to be collected at rechartering.

We sincerely apologize for the timing and the inability to convey the amount of the new registration fee at this time, but felt compelled to quickly communicate what we learned as soon as we learned it. We recognize the timing of this fee increase creates challenges as units have already begun collecting fees for their 2020 registration renewal process.

Thank you for all you do to support and deliver Scouting to the youth of the Mayflower Council.

Yours in Scouting,

Michael Rotar  
Council President

Bryan Feather  
Scout Executive / CEO

Mark Niedzielski  
Council Commissioner

Registration Fee Frequently Asked Questions Document

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## **Planning Your Next Den Meeting Just Got Easier**

If you're a den leader, you're going to love the latest update to Scoutbook! The Boy Scouts of America's online tool for tracking Scouting advancement just rolled out a new update that's going to make it easier than ever for den leaders to prepare for and lead meetings, track advancement and attendance, and more.

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## **Membership Card & Charter**

# Certificate Printing

The Boy Scouts of America is committed to basic operations by putting tools in the hands of volunteers. For several years now, individuals and unit key 3 have had access to print membership cards through my.scouting. In addition, functionality will be added to my.scouting by January 1, 2019, to enable members of the unit key 3 to print their unit Charter Certificate.

This “self-service” functionality allows volunteers to print membership cards and the unit charter certificate in a timely manner and enhances the on-boarding experience for new youth and adults.

Units will need to print their membership cards and charter certificate, instructions for doing so are below.

[How to print a membership card for an individual](#)

[How to print membership cards for a unit](#)

[FAQs and How To's for charter certificate printing](#)

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## Top 10 Scouts BSA Questions Answered

There's enthusiasm for the launch of Scouts BSA everywhere you look. Today, let's look at the top 10 Scouts BSA questions volunteers are asking.

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# Charter & Membership Processing Update

As many of you are already aware, membership registration has fallen behind due to an unexpected and prolonged situation leaving the Council Service Center short handed for several months. A solution through Registration Shared Services with the National Council is now in place and we are working feverishly with their help to get all membership entered. Because of the backlog, your District Executive might ask you for something that has already been submitted. Please understand it is our intention to get through the stack of papers without asking you for something twice but we may fail in this attempt. We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience this has caused for all of our Scouts and units and look forward to the day we serve you with efficiency.

All future registrations can be emailed to: [membership@mayflowerbsa.org](mailto:membership@mayflowerbsa.org).

Thank you for your patience and understanding.