



BOY SCOUT TROOP 306

ARLINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS

TROOP MANUAL

Troop 306 offers a fun program designed to promote character, fitness, teamwork, and citizenship for boys from 11 to 18 years old. Boy Scouting fosters boys' self-esteem, teaches cooperation, and develops leadership through challenging outdoor activities and opportunities for personal growth and community service. In addition, Troop 306 strives to instill values in young people that will prepare them to make ethical choices throughout their lives and will help them reach their full potential. The values we strive to instill are based on those found in the Scout Oath and Law:

Scout Oath

On my honor, I will do my best
to do my duty to God and my country,
and to obey the Scout Law,
to help other people at all times,
to keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake, and morally straight.

Scout Motto

Be Prepared

Scout Slogan

Do A Good Turn Daily

Scout Law

A Scout is:

Trustworthy
Loyal
Helpful
Friendly
Courteous
Kind
Obedient
Cheerful
Thrifty
Brave
Clean
Reverent

This manual provides answers to some of the most commonly asked questions about Troop 306 and Boy Scouting. In it, you will find information about Troop programs and policy. If you have any questions not answered in this manual, please contact the Scoutmaster, Committee Chair, or another adult leader.

BOY SCOUT TROOP 306

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Joining Troop 306

Troop 306 is open to all boys between the ages of 11 and 18 (or younger scouts who have earned their Arrow of Light). To join the Troop, a scout must complete application materials signed by a parent or guardian and pay registration fees. Upon entering the Troop, each scout receives a troop neckerchief, slide, and boy scout handbook.

Troop Meetings

Troop 306 meets at the First Baptist Church of Arlington located at 819 Massachusetts Avenue every Wednesday night that school is in session, from 7:00-8:00 p.m. (On occasion, our meetings run until 8:30, especially the Wednesday before each outing.) Our Troop meetings are held in the Church's "Junior Room" on the ground level floor, although we will occasionally walk to other nearby locations during our troop meetings, such as the High School athletic field, Town Hall, or Menotomy Rocks Park.

Troop Leadership

A Boy Scout troop is a program for boys that is led by boys. Each month, the Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leaders, and other scouts in the Patrol Leaders Council meet to plan troop activities. These meetings are conducted by the Senior Patrol Leader with the Scoutmaster and other adults present for guidance. Troop 306 strives to be a scout-run program, with adults present to ensure safety, maintain consistency with the Scout Oath and Law, and provide support and assistance when needed. The adults supporting the Troop 306 program have extensive experience and training in scouting, outdoor activities, and first aid and safety.

Participation

Troop 306 encourages all members of the Troop to participate as actively in scouting as they can. Scouts who strive to attend all meetings, camping trips, and other activities, including a week of summer camp each year, will not only get more out of the scouting program themselves, but the overall troop experience for everyone is enhanced when scouts participate on a regular basis. Scouts who serve in pivotal leadership positions, such as Senior Patrol Leader or Patrol Leader, make a special commitment to strive to participate actively, since these scouts provide the leadership for the troop.

Troop 306 fully understands that scouts often have other commitments or activities which conflict with the scouting calendar. We simply encourage scouts to participate when they can. To accommodate other activities, scouts sometimes join up later in the day on camping trips or leave early. Of course, as a courtesy, scouts who know they will be absent, arriving late, or leaving early do make a point to inform their Patrol Leader or the Senior Patrol Leader in advance.

Troop Communication

At times, the Senior Patrol Leader may request that each Patrol Leader pass along a reminder or change of information about a troop activity. Each Patrol Leader, working with his Assistant Patrol Leader, makes sure that each patrol member receives the needed information.

In advance of each trip or outing, the Senior Patrol Leader distributes a Trip Plan to all the scouts in the troop providing all the essential details about the trip. At other times, information may be distributed from time to time at troop meetings.

In addition, the Troop has an email distribution list for messages containing information about troop events and activities. To subscribe, send your email address to the Scoutmaster.

Parent Support

Parents help in many ways that fit with their schedules and talents, from serving on the Troop committee, helping at Troop meetings and outings, providing transportation, or serving as merit badge counselors. The first Wednesday of each month, parents are

invited to attend the Troop parents' meeting held at the First Baptist Church. The purpose is to review upcoming activities and to ensure the adult support needed for a quality, year-round scouting program that is planned by the Patrol Leaders Council.

Scout Uniform

The official Boy Scout uniform includes the Boy Scout shirt, neckerchief, Boy Scout pants or shorts, Scout belt, and troop cap. Scouts who join the Troop are not expected immediately to purchase all the needed uniform parts, but we do hope that Scouts will be in full uniform at their families' earliest convenience. Holidays and birthdays provide great opportunities for relatives to purchase Scout uniform items and supplies. The Scoutmaster also keeps a uniform exchange which contains various uniform parts.

Boy Scout Handbook

The Boy Scout Handbook is used to record progress toward advancement, so scouts are encouraged to bring their books to each meeting and camping trip. Scouts should place their name on their books.

Scout Store

Scout uniforms, equipment, and other Scout supplies are available for purchase at the New England Scout Shop located at 400 Washington Street, Woburn (781-937-4282).

Permission Slips

Troop 306 goes camping or holds at least one major activity once a month from September through June, always with at least two adult leaders or parents. The Troop also attends a week-long summer camp during the summer, again with adult leaders and parents along. To help in case of an accident or illness involving a scout, each scout must turn in a completed permission slip signed by a parent or guardian in advance of each trip or outing.

Campout Menus and Shopping

Before scouts go camping, they plan their menus in their patrols and create a shopping list. The patrol then goes shopping for the food, typically at a time decided by the patrol other than the regular troop meetings. With all the scouts helping with the

shopping, this task goes quickly and works smoothly. Each scout or his family is responsible for food costs for each trip.

Transportation

We rely on scout leaders and other parents to provide car pool transportation for troop outings. In advance of each trip, the Troop's Outdoor Activities Chair must file a tour permit with the Council office with information about each driver. To facilitate this paper work requirement, each parent is asked upon their scout's joining the Troop to provide the necessary license and insurance information to the Outdoor Activities Chair. To keep this information current, parents are asked to update their information with the Outdoor Activities Chair if it changes.

Outdoor Equipment

The Scout Handbook lists the 10 essential items which must be taken any time a person ventures outdoors (pages 207-210). Since the Scout motto is "be prepared," scouts should bring these items on every hike, camping trip, or other outdoor activity. Following the Scout motto, Troop 306's scouts bring rain gear on every outdoor activity, regardless of the weather report.

Scouts in Troop 306 supply their own personal gear for all camping trips. The required personal gear is listed on pages 224-225 of the Scout Handbook, with clothing lists provided on pages 203-204. In advance of each camping trip, scouts plan to bring clothing for a range of weather conditions (which do change unexpectedly here in New England). Although scouts take responsibility for their own packing for camping trips, parents of younger scouts are still encouraged to review the list with their scouts to ensure that they have not missed any essential items.

Troop 306 provides tents, dining flies, and cooking gear for camping trips. Scouts in Troop 306 treat this equipment with care and respect so that it will last. Troop fundraising efforts provide resources to obtain and maintain troop equipment.

The following items are not found on the Boy Scout Handbook's equipment lists, and for safety or courtesy reasons are never brought on outings by scouts in Troop 306:

- Aerosol sprays (including bug spray)
- Electronic devices (walkmans, game boys, laser pointers, etc.)
- Tobacco
- Alcohol or illegal drugs
- Fixed blade knives (only small folding pocket knives are permitted)
- Fireworks
- Firearms
- Pets

- Sticks, when used in any way other than for a hiking staff, pioneering, or firewood
- Any items deemed by adult leadership to be unsafe or used in an unsafe manner

Safety

Troop 306 gives its highest priority to the safety and well-being of its scouts. All activities of the Troop must comply with the BSA's Guide to Safe Scouting, the Safe Swim Defense, the safety rules in the Scout Handbook, and ultimately the Scout Oath and Law.

The Troop strictly adheres to the buddy system. On outings or at camp, scouts must always go with another scout whenever they travel away from the main group.

Certain activities, such as "paintball" or "laser tag," are not activities in which Troop 306 engages. Other activities, such as rock climbing, kayaking, or mountain biking, are conducted in accordance with BSA training, supervision, and safety procedures.

In the case of an accident, the scout's primary insurance coverage is through his family's own health policy or program. The BSA provides secondary insurance coverage for medical expenses resulting from accidents.

Smoking Policy

The Boy Scouts of America prohibits smoking by adults when they are working with scouts during scouting activities or events. If adults must smoke, they may do so only well away from, and out of sight of, scouts. Adults who smoke are asked to dispose of cigarette butts properly and to support the BSA's position of protecting youth from the health risks associated with smoking. Smoking by scouts is, of course, not permitted.

Advancement

Scouting provides opportunities for fun and learning. The advancement program is designed to recognize scouts for learning new skills. All requirements for Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle are found in the Boy Scout Handbook. The requirements are intended to be met as they are printed, and scouts are never expected to do any more or less than what is stated in order to complete a requirement. Scouts can complete requirements for the various ranks in any order (i.e., requirements for higher ranks can be completed before earning lower ranks), but they do not receive the higher rank until having first earned all the prior ranks.

When a Scout is ready, he requests from the Scoutmaster a conference to review his qualifications and future goals. On completion of a Scoutmaster conference, the scout will be given a date when he is scheduled to appear before a Board of Review.

A Board of Review is held to review a scout's progress before he can advance in rank. The Board does not re-test the scout on every requirement, but reviews the scout's progress and helps the scout set goals. Scouts wear their full uniform and look neat and clean for their Boards of Review. Upon a successful Board of Review, the Scout will be recognized for having advanced in rank and will receive his award at the next troop meeting.

Parents provide an important source of encouragement and guidance for advancement in scouting. Unlike in Cub Scouting, however, only the Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmasters, or those they designate other than the scout's parent or guardian, approve the completion of advancement requirements. Parents will from time to time serve on Boards of Review for scouts other than their own son.

Merit Badges

To work on a merit badge, scouts first request a merit badge application (the "blue card") from the Scoutmaster. The Scoutmaster will present the scout with a "blue card" and give him the name of a merit badge counselor. The Scout then contacts the counselor on his own and informs him of his interest in working on the merit badge. Some counselors will want to meet with the Scout before he begins working on the badge, while others will suggest meeting only after the scout has completed his work on the badge. Scouts normally will wear their complete uniform to meetings with merit badge counselors. Sometimes more than one meeting with a merit badge counselor is necessary to complete a badge.

When the scout has completed the merit badge requirements, the counselor signs the blue card and the scout returns the completed card to his Scoutmaster. The merit badge is then recorded and presented to the Scout at the next troop meeting.

Meetings with merit badge counselors never take place on a one-to-one basis. Scouts should bring along another scout, a friend, or a family member to the meeting.

Courts of Honor

The Troop holds Courts of Honor approximately every three months. These are fun events, usually combined with a potluck dinner, which provide opportunities for all the families of scouts in the Troop to get together and for Scouts to be recognized for awards and accomplishments.

Arrival and Pick Up Procedures

In Troop 306, parents wait until at least two adults are present at a meeting before leaving their scout at a troop meeting or event. After the meeting, scouts wait inside the church for parents to pick them up.

For camping trips and outings, the Troop often meets in the parking lot of the First Baptist Church for both departures and arrivals. Sometimes scouts are dropped off at home upon our return to Arlington.

Registration and Dues

At the time a new scout joins the troop, there is an initial registration of \$60 which defrays the cost of approximately \$50 worth of essential items which we present to the scout in his welcoming ceremony, such as his handbook, neckerchief, troop cap, troop t-shirt, and troop numeral patch. In addition to these items, we must pay a registration fee to the national BSA organization and a Boy's Life subscription fee.

The troop's general expenses are supported by our annual membership dues and fundraising efforts. Annual membership dues are \$60 and they are normally paid each October. For new scouts, these annual dues are in addition to one-time new scout registration and will be prorated for scouts joining after October. Our annual membership dues cover the annual registration with the Boy Scouts of America, insurance, Boy's Life magazine, the patches and awards we present to scouts throughout the year, and basic troop expenses.

Troop 306 is committed to ensuring that each scout can participate actively in all troop events and outings regardless of financial considerations. The Troop can always make alternative payment arrangements or it can provide any support needed to ensure a scout can participate in all our activities. In addition, we are able to obtain substantial camperships from the Boston Minuteman Council and the Arlington Thompson Fund for Scouting, if needed to ensure participation by all scouts at summer camp. Parents are encouraged to contact the Scoutmaster or Committee Chair at any time so that any appropriate financial arrangements can be made.

Fundraising

To provide adequate camping equipment as well as to keep the costs of Troop outings affordable, the Troop participates in various fund-raisers throughout the year.

Youth Protection Policy

Troop 306 is committed to seeing that all scouts have a safe and fun experience in our program. In order to protect the well-being of all our scouts, Troop 306 adheres to several important policies. These policies include:

- ***No one-on-one contact.*** No individual adult is ever to be alone with an individual scout other than the adult's own son.
- ***No secret meetings.*** All scout meetings and outings are always open to all parents.
- ***Two-deep leadership.*** All Troop outings must have two adults present.
- ***Leader Screening.*** All leaders are subject to an extensive review process.
- ***Leader Training.*** Our Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters are expected to complete a special Youth Protection Training course offered by the Boy Scouts of America on an annual basis. All parents in the Troop are strongly encouraged to participate in this training.
- ***Reporting of Suspected Abuse.*** All scouts are encouraged to report improper behavior immediately. All adult leaders are obligated to report any suspicions of child or sexual abuse to the Boston Minuteman Council.
- ***Youth Awareness.*** Parents are encouraged to discuss youth safety issues with their scouts. In addition, the Boy Scouts of America has produced additional training materials for youth, which parents have the opportunity to use with their scouts.