



2014 Membership Fee Increase

Scouting, through its various programs, provides year-round positive experiences, activities, and fellowship for youth ages 7 to 21. From education to high adventure, the Boy Scouts of America provides unique growth opportunities at a great value.

In order to support the delivery of the nation's foremost youth development program, occasionally it is necessary for the organization to increase its membership fees to offset rising costs and prepare for the future. For this reason, the Boy Scouts of America is increasing its membership fee from \$15 to \$24 per year for all registered youth and adult leaders effective January 1, 2014.

Membership fees support the services that are necessary to provide Scouting to youth. Services include primary liability coverage for all volunteer leaders and chartered organizations, ongoing advances in technology, fundraising support, new program development and membership recruiting strategies, and support materials. In 2012 alone, the Boy Scouts of America served 2.6 million youth members through 280 local councils across the United States and its territories. With the help of all of our volunteers and Scouting parents, we will continue accomplishing incredible things for young people and the communities we serve.

Questions and Answers:

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

In order to deliver the Scouting program to our 2.6 million youth members, it is occasionally necessary for the organization to increase its membership fee to offset rising costs. One of the primary drivers of this increase is liability insurance costs. For this reason, and others, the Boy Scouts of America is increasing its membership fee from \$15 to \$24 annually, for all registered Scouts and adult members effective January 1, 2014.

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

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

There are a variety of factors taken into consideration, all of which have led to the increased cost of doing business. Other key drivers include enhancements to technology platforms, administration, and increased costs of criminal background checks.

3. When does the increase go into effect?

The membership fee will increase from \$15 to \$24 annually, for all registered youth and adult leaders effective January 1, 2014. For those who join after the beginning of the year, the fee will be prorated at \$2 per month. This does include units with a December 31, 2013, expiration date, since the effective date of their renewed registration is January 1, 2014.

4. Does the BSA increase membership fees often?

There have been nine fee increases in the organization's history. On average, the fee increase has been 68 percent. Since 1969, the BSA has increased its fee every two to eight years, but averaging every five years.

5. When was the last time the BSA increased membership fees?

The Boy Scouts of America last increased membership fees in 2010. When the fee was increased in 2010, the organization estimated that rising expenses would dictate a review and potential increase in the fee in three to five years. This change comes four years after the last increase.

6. Are you making this change because of the decision to change the membership standards policy?

Absolutely not. The National Executive Committee recommended increasing membership fees well before the decision was made to change the membership standards policy for youth. While the BSA reviews all business factors contributing to the membership fee increase, this was not the determining factor.

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

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

8. Will the fee for Exploring increase as well?

The Learning for Life board of directors is meeting on September 8, 2013, to determine the fee for Exploring youth and adults. The decision will be communicated from Learning for Life as soon as possible.

9. Who gets the membership fee?

The local council collects, and forwards to the National Council, membership fees from each youth and adult who wishes to become a member of the Boy Scouts of America. The local council also pays an annual service fee to the national council, the basis for which has not been increased since 1993.

10. How is the National Council funded?

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

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

Simply put, the Boy Scouts of America National Council provides program materials and support for 280 local councils that administer the Scouting program, with each covering a specific geographic territory. The following are the key functions of the National Council:

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

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

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

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

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

- Select soccer, \$400: In Cleveland, select youth soccer players ages 15 to 18 pay \$400 a season, plus \$135 for uniforms.
- Youth basketball, \$500: In Queens, N.Y., boys ages 8 to 13 pay \$500 a year, not including uniforms.
- 4-H program, \$25: Participants of the 4-H program in College Station, Texas, pay \$25 a year, not including fees for individual activities.

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