



BOY SCOUT GUIDELINES

Purpose: To communicate Archdiocese of Atlanta guidelines for relationships between charter-based scout units and parishes; educate parishes regarding scout unit asset ownership, property and liability insurance coverage and banking; and to educate on the necessary compliance with archdiocesan policies, procedures and best practices to limit risk related to developing relationships with third party scouting type activities and groups. While the focus of these guidelines is on the Boy Scouts of America, the guidelines are also applicable to other scouting-like arrangements connected to parishes, more or less so depending on the nature of the relationship and agreement. Further questions can be addressed to the contacts offered at the end of these guidelines.

Charter organization Structure: The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) troops/units (e.g., Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, etc.) are structured as a chartered organization at the troop level in the Archdiocese of Atlanta. A charter enables the parish to use another organization's program under the adult leadership approved by the parish to accomplish its objectives and to serve the organization's youth and families. In the case of the archdiocese, the parish is the chartering organization. An annual charter between the organization and the chartering organization (parish) must be signed. The pastor is the only individual at a parish that has the authority to establish the charter relationship.

Key terms/positions:

Institution Head: used to describe the person who leads the chartered organization; In the case of a parish, it is the pastor.

The Chartered Organization Representative (COR): the direct contact between the unit and the Chartered Organization. For Boy Scouts, this individual is also the organization's contact with the District Committee and the Local Council. The Chartered Organization Representative appoints the Unit Committee Chair.

Catholic Scouting within the context of evangelization and family/youth ministry: Catholic Scouting and similar initiatives connected to the parish are part of a parish's mission of evangelization, especially through family ministry and youth ministry.



- The pastor (through his delegate) should be aware, supportive and kept informed of all Scouting groups at the parish.
- Parish catechetical leaders, especially youth ministers, should be aware of all Scouting groups at the parish and find ways to support and promote where possible. Even though it is generally advisable to have leaders distinct from the youth minister who are responsible for Catholic Scouting troops, it is important to find ways to network and stay informed in order to support a comprehensive vision for family and youth ministry and evangelization. Those catechists or other volunteers who decide to also become scout leaders will have to complete both the Boy Scouts of America Youth Protection Training and the Archdiocese of Atlanta VIRTUS training. See below for details on both.
- **Archdiocese of Atlanta Catholic Committee on Scouting (AACCOS):** The AACCOS serves all Catholic Scouting and similar initiatives connected to parishes. If your parish is looking to start a new troop or group, please contact the AACCOS to let them know and to find out how they can support you.
- **AoA Website:** For more resources related to Scouting in the Archdiocese of Atlanta, visit [Scouting | atlyouth](https://scouting.atlyouth.com).

Safe Environment: All Chartered Organizations should adopt and enforce a zero tolerance policy on sexual abuse or inappropriate sexual behavior of any kind, including without limitation, as respects all scouting related activities within a sponsoring parish.

All those who volunteer and work with Boy Scouts must be Safe Environment compliant. The compliance memo can be found here:

<https://communique.archatl.com/wp-content/uploads/Safe-Environment-compliance-defined.pdf>

In addition to the archdiocesan requirement, scout volunteers must complete Boy Scouts of America training detailed here:

<https://www.scouting.org/training/youth-protection/>

Assets and Insurance: The Chartered Organization is responsible for managing the unit's assets, including all money, real property and personal property (e.g., trailers). Refer to the current charter for most up to date information. In general, the following applies:



- **Property Insurance –**

- **Boy Scouts:** Catholic Mutual provides property damage coverage for Boy Scout troop assets, including trailers, under the auto policy, as long as they are listed. The troop should provide a current list, updated for changes in troop assets including trailers and contents, to the [Catholic Mutual Risk Manager](#). All assets of the troop are owned by the parish, not BSA. If a troop were to cease to exist or transfer to another parish, the assets would stay with the original parish unless the pastor at the new parish requests a transfer of equipment.

- **Liability Insurance –** The Charter must be maintained on a current annual basis to ensure insurance coverage.

- BSA provides liability insurance. See *BSA General Liability Insurance Coverage*
- Scout and volunteer accidents and injuries that occur during scouting activities are covered under the BSA national insurance program.

- **Medical Insurance –**

- **Boy Scouts:** The adult's/parent's medical insurance coverage that may be required in the case of an adult volunteer or scout accident while conducting scouting activities is primary; the BSA national program is secondary. Accordingly, it is important that the unit leader register all adults and scouts with the national organization annually.

More information on insurance provided by BSA can be found [Insurance | Boy Scouts of America \(scouting.org\)](#)

- **Banking -** A chartered organization typically does not have its own tax id number under the local or parent chapter (i.e., Boy Scouts of America). Accordingly, the pastor may authorize the unit to (1) use the parish's EIN to open a unit checking account or (2) to use the parish's general operating checking account. The funds should be deposited into the parish's bank account and recorded in an exchange account just like any other ministry.

1. Establish a checking account using the parish's name, address, and tax id# with the following requirements:
 - a. The pastor must grant permission to open the account.



- b. Contact the [Office of Finance, Director of Financial Services](#), to discuss opening a bank account for the troop.
 - c. Pastor is required to be a signer on the account. See the Authorized Check Signer section of the Archdiocese's [Best Practices](#)
 - d. Bank account must be recorded on the parish's books.
 - e. If the bank issues paper bank statements, they should be mailed to the parish. If statements are electronic, the business manager should have access to pull the statements directly.
 - f. Oversight by the Business Manager should include, but not be limited to: review of financial statements, bank statements, bank reconciliations, issue 1099 (if needed), safe environment and other applicable archdiocesan guidelines
 - g. Oversight by the pastor, treasurer, or designated finance council member
- **Archdiocese of Atlanta Finance Policies, Procedures, & Best Practices** – The Boy Scout unit is responsible for following the [Policies, Best Practices & Procedures - Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta | Atlanta, GA \(archatl.com\)](#). The COR should review and implement the policies, procedures and best practices annually.
 - **Archdiocese of Atlanta Internal Audit** – The Boy Scout unit is considered a ministry of the parish as a result of the charter relationship and is expected to have strong internal controls. As a result, the operational and financial process are subject to inclusion in the internal audit of the parish and special audits at the direction of the Archbishop.

Note: A Boy Scout unit that does not hold a charter with an Archdiocese of Atlanta entity may use parish, mission or school property with permission from the pastor or principal. For example, a unit associated with a Methodist Church may use the property for a special event, such as a cub scout summer mini-camp. In this situation, the parish needs to treat the unit like an outside organization, utilize the Catholic Mutual facility usage form, and obtain an appropriate certificate of insurance. This scenario would be rather limited, but can occur.



Summary of Resources:

[Catholic Committee on Scouting for the Archdiocese of Atlanta](#)

[Catholic Mutual Risk Manager](#)

<https://communique.archatl.com/wp-content/uploads/Safe-Environment-compliance-defined.pdf>

[Insurance | Boy Scouts of America \(scouting.org\)](#)

[Policies, Best Practices & Procedures - Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta | Atlanta, GA \(archatl.com\)](#)

[Scouting | atlyouth](#)

Contacts:

These guidelines were drafted by the Archdiocese of Atlanta with cooperation by the Archdiocese of Atlanta Catholic Committee on Scouting (AACCOS) and the offices of Communications, Evangelization and Discipleship (OED), Finance, and Safe Environment. For questions, contact AACCOS, the Director of Evangelization and Discipleship, Internal Audit Manager, Director of Financial Services, or Director of Safe Environment. All pertinent scouting links and resources will be available at [Scouting | atlyouth](#).

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