



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
NATIONAL COUNCIL

June 29, 2015

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
REGARDING THE PROPOSED NEW ADULT LEADER STANDARD**

1. Are religious chartered organizations legally protected if they refuse to accept gay leaders?

Yes. See the Memorandum prepared by BSA's outside legal counsel on the constitutional rights of religious chartered organizations to select leaders in accordance with their religious principles.

2. Will the BSA continue to defend the right of religious chartered organizations to select their leaders and indemnify them against claims based upon their refusal to accept gay leaders?

Yes. Religious chartered organizations have always had the right to choose leaders aligned with the organizations' religious principles. That right is secured by the Bylaws of the Boy Scouts of America, the chartered organization agreement, and the organizations' constitutional rights. The BSA will defend the right of bona fide religious chartered organizations – churches, synagogues, temples, mosques, or other places of worship – to select leaders based upon their religious principles and indemnify them against any claim filed against them on this basis. The BSA considers the right of its religious chartered organizations to utilize the Scouting program as part of their youth ministry an integral part of Scouting's ability to preserve duty to God.

3. What will the BSA do to limit discussions related to personal sexuality in Scouting?

The BSA already has training and policy guidance on the issue as well as a code of conduct for youth camp staff and all adult leaders. Advocacy on social and political causes inconsistent with the program is prohibited and may result in the revocation of registration. Adult leaders are trained to refer youth members to their parents or religious advisors to discuss any matters related to sexuality, and the BSA encourages religious leaders to counsel youth in the units they sponsor as part of their youth ministry. The BSA's youth protection program prohibits any leader from one-on-one contact with youth and requires two adult leaders on all outings and activities. Adult leaders are prohibited from engaging in any type of sexual activity while participating in any Scouting activity. These guidelines collectively serve to help monitor conduct

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and detect adult leaders who may attempt to engage in inappropriate conduct with youth.

4. What action will the BSA take if adult leaders engage in inappropriate conduct, such as public displays of affection with a member of the same sex, at Scouting activities?

First, in addition to the BSA code of conduct, units may establish limitations on the conduct of adult leaders. Units may remove an adult leader who refuses to abide by the unit's expectations. The BSA may remove from the program or a leadership position any adult leader who fails to demonstrate the emotional, educational, and moral qualities required of Scout leaders. Just as it has been in the past, inappropriate conduct by leaders of any type, whether heterosexual or homosexual, will not be tolerated. Conduct will continue to be monitored, and inappropriate conduct may serve as grounds for removal.

5. Will chartered organizations be able to refuse to accept gay Scouts in their units?

No. In 2013, the National Council adopted a resolution that prohibits youth from being denied membership merely because they express they are gay. That resolution will not be affected if the adult leader standard is changed.

6. How will the BSA enforce the code of conduct at multiple-unit events, such as camporees and summer camp?

The BSA has policies on the enforcement of membership and conduct standards, and it is the duty of every Scouter to take action if they see violations of youth protection or code of conduct standards. As is the case today, the council Scout executive will continue to be responsible for initiating action to revoke the membership of a youth or registration of an adult leader who violates youth protection or code of conduct policies. However, it is the obligation of every leader if they "see something to say something" by reporting inappropriate conduct.

7. Will there be additional training on acceptable conduct for adult leaders?

BSA training and council- and unit-level supplemental training already establish the expectations for leader conduct. Those trainings can and will be modified to deal with a variety of contemporary issues based upon experience so as to maintain the high standards of conduct the BSA has established for leaders, including changes in policy, bullying, and prohibited discrimination.



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8. Will non-religious chartered organizations be allowed to discriminate based on sexual orientation in connection with their selection of adult leaders?

No, non-religious organizations would not be allowed to reject an otherwise qualified adult leader based on sexual orientation.

9. Why is the BSA changing the adult leader standard to allow gay adult leaders at this time?

The national leadership of the BSA has concluded that the BSA's policy of excluding adult leaders based on their sexual orientation is no longer sustainable for a number of reasons, not the least of which is a rapidly changing societal and legal landscape. The BSA believes that changing the policy but continuing to acknowledge the longstanding right of religious chartered organizations to select leaders based upon their religious principles is the best choice for the BSA and its chartered organizations.