

BSA TROOP 850

SCOUT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE CONTRACT

Conduct & Discipline: “A Scout is Obedient”

Boys have a great amount of energy and enthusiasm. Sometimes it’s misdirected or uncontrolled: frequently referred to as bad behavior. When they do what they should not, Scouts will be disciplined. It really is that simple. Nothing abusive or harsh, of course, but the Senior Patrol Leader may place offenders on garbage detail or have them clean the latrines. After all, someone must do those jobs. This is a good way to choose whom.

We want Troop 850 to provide a quality program for its entire membership, and to accomplish this goal we need proper behavior during meetings and outings. In addition to abiding by the Scout Oath and Scout Law, and complying with the safety tenets of their Totin’ Chips and Firem’n Chits, all Scouts are expected to know and follow our established guidelines:

- 1. Scout Meetings and events are for Scouting.** All meetings involve some level of instructing and learning. The meetings are not simply social events—if a boy is not interested in scout activities please choose another time and place to get together with your friends. Scouts who disrupt meetings may be asked to leave.
- 2. Treat all with respect.** All leaders, adults and Scouts are to be listened to and treated with respect. This means obeying whoever is in charge and no name-calling or words offending or insulting another. Responding promptly to “signs up” is required and is a good indication of a scout’s respect toward others. Violence will not be tolerated. We want every scout to have a *safe haven*.
- 3. Treat property with respect.** The Montgomery United Methodist Church and other property used by the Troop should be treated with respect at all times. Damage to property will not be tolerated. We are guests wherever we are, and we should behave as such.
- 4. Arrive on time.** Having the whole troop of 30 Scouts and leaders waiting for you is disrespectful.

A few examples of behavior which will not be tolerated include, but are not limited to;

- Violence or the threat of violence toward anyone (a Scout is Friendly);
- Hazing or any other form of humiliating or meaningless “initiation” or ritual (a Scout is Kind);
- Vulgar or profane language;
- Smoking-Scouts may not smoke at all, adults must be out of sight of all Scouts to smoke- (a Scout is Clean);
- Discussion of sexual topics, since there is a range of ages and maturity levels present in a troop (a Scout is Courteous).

Enforcement Policy

The Scoutmaster and his assistants monitor the behavior of scouts in the Troop to ensure that reasonable standards of scout behavior are observed at all scouting events. If an unacceptable situation arises, and junior leaders are unable to restore order to the group, the Scoutmaster or his assistants or a designated adult should intervene. (See *BSA Scoutmaster’s Handbook*.)

The Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, PLC and other designated leaders should follow the procedure outlined below when disciplinary problems arise:

Stage 1) “Coaching” from PLC: The first step is to ask the offending scout respectfully to stop the inappropriate behavior, to describe acceptable alternatives and to suggest that continuation of the behavior will warrant an *official warning*. This “coaching” should come from a member of the PLC, and also ensure that the SPL is informed. The scout should understand that his behavior disrupts a scout activity or interferes with another person’s participation in such an activity. He should acknowledge his responsibility for the actions and try to compensate for their effects. Some examples: A scout might apologize to the affected parties (possibly the entire troop), explain to the Troop the importance of some relevant portion of the Scout Law, replace or repair broken or lost equipment, or make some other reparative effort such as skill or advancement instruction with a younger scout he had mistreated.

Stage 2) Warning from PLC: The second step in the event that the scout continues the unacceptable behavior, or defies an order to stop, is to issue an *official warning* to the offending scout that his behavior is inappropriate: he is told not to repeat the behavior, or risk disciplinary action. The “warner” should be a PLC member, and report the event to the SPL, who will in turn report the event to the Scoutmaster at the earliest possible time. At this stage, the SPL should be actively monitoring the situation, and if necessary, ask the Scoutmaster/Asst. SM for guidance. Leaders must judge for themselves when a scout’s behavior merits an official warning. Moving too swiftly into the disciplinary process may aggravate rather than alleviate a problem. A leader may also, however, judge that an infraction is severe enough to warrant immediate recourse to a later stage in the process.

Troop 850 recognizes that parents are important partners in maintaining discipline within the troop. For this reason, at this stage and all subsequent stages, documentation of the specifics of the incident and parental notification and involvement is required.

Stage 3) Scoutmaster meets with Parents: If the unacceptable behavior persists, or an official warning is ignored, the scout should compensate for any material or psychological damage he has caused. In the third stage the Scoutmaster or appropriate adult leader will contact the scout’s parent(s) or guardian(s) about the problem. The Scoutmaster, at least one Assistant Scoutmaster, and the scout’s parent/guardian(s) will devise a plan the scout should undertake to compensate for his inappropriate behavior. The Scoutmaster should inform the Chair of the Troop Committee of any such actions.

Stage 4) Discipline Conference with Adults: If the scout continues the unacceptable behavior after the application of stage three discipline or refuses to accept such discipline, the Scoutmaster will call for a conference attended by the Scoutmaster and at least one Assistant Scoutmaster, the Troop Committee Chair, the offending scout, and the scout’s parent(s) or guardian(s). The Scoutmaster and at least one Assistant Scoutmaster may suspend the scout temporarily until such a meeting occurs. For example, the Scout may be sent home from a campout. Here the adult Troop leaders review the Troop’s discipline policy, discuss the problems that have occurred, and obtain from the scout and his parent(s) or guardian(s) a commitment to correcting the unacceptable behavior. At the same time, the scout and his parent(s) or guardian(s) can attempt to defend the scout’s behavior or criticize any elements of the scouting program that they believe to justify the scout’s behavior. Participants at such a meeting should then formulate positive goals and devise a plan to resolve the situation. The Committee Chair will only observe and record the proceedings, or offer material and moral support. If there is disagreement among the adult leaders applying the discipline, the Scoutmaster’s decision will rule. Further complaints should be submitted to the Troop Committee Chair.

Stage 5) Parental Supervision or Expulsion: If steps 1-4 above do not result in acceptable behavior by the offending scout, or any party to the agreement reached in the Stage 4 meeting refuses to cooperate, the offending Scouts further participation in Troop 850 will be considered in jeopardy.

Some possible resolutions at this stage of discipline include, but are not restricted to, renegotiating a contract with the scout and his parent(s) or guardian(s), requiring that a parent or guardian attend all scouting activities in which the scout participates, or expelling the scout from the Troop.

It is hoped that no disciplinary situation will reach Stage 5. Such problems should be resolved by agreement between scouts and their leadership, in particular with the cooperation and intervention of the Scoutmaster and his assistants. Failing this, it is hoped that appealing to the scout's parents will resolve any such matter. In rare instances of serious inappropriate behavior, the Scoutmaster shall have the authority and discretion to suspend any Scout from the remainder of the activity. In the event such a suspension occurs, the parents of the Scout are contacted immediately and will be required to make arrangements to take custody of the Scout. The troop shall not be liable for any cost involved; these will be solely the parents' responsibility.

Review of Discipline Steps:

1. Patrol Leader's Council member - COACHING
2. PLC and Senior Patrol Leader - VERBAL WARNING
3. Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster – COACHING; PARENTS NOTIFIED
4. Scoutmasters – DISCIPLINE CONFERENCE with PARENTS & COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN
5. Scoutmasters – SUSPENSION AND CONFERENCE WITH PARENTS, SCOUTMASTERS;
Possible Expulsion.

PRINT SCOUT NAME

I have read, understand and discussed this policy with my parents.

SCOUT SIGNATURE

DATE

I have read, understand and discussed this policy with my son.

PARENT'S SIGNATURE

DATE