



Program Standards for Excellent Scouting Programs

Scouts Canada has developed Program Standards for each of our sections. Having these minimum standards in place, and working with leaders to meet or exceed them, will ensure that leaders deliver programs at a high level of consistency across the country.

In past years, it has been very difficult to judge program quality levels with certainty from section to section. Scouts Canada knew what it wanted youth and adults to receive in terms of excellent programs, but couldn't guarantee that members would receive this. With program standards, Scouting will be able to ascertain many quality factors, such as number of outings, number of camping trips per year, and linking opportunities.

Set Nationally

The National Program Services Committee (made up of volunteers representing the program sections) established the Program Standards several years ago after consulting Scouters in each province. Provincial commissioners endorsed the new standards.

Members of the National Program Services Committee believe that the standards have been set at a reasonable level to guarantee that youth receive the fun, challenging, outdoor program for which they joined Scouting.

Scouting recognizes that, in fact, most of our groups currently operate programs that in many ways exceed these standards. This is excellent, and Scouts Canada encourages this to continue. However, Scouts Canada also recognizes that some groups do not currently meet these standards. The new standards provide guidance and direction to these groups.

The Program Standards will allow leaders to more consistently plan and conduct their programs, and explain to parents and youth what they can expect to receive when they join.

Bring on the adventure! Make sure your group meets or exceeds Scouting's Program Standards.

Check Off the for Excellence



The standards (in English and in French) are presented in this month's *Sharing*, *Paksak*, *Patrol Corner*, and *Venturer Log* columns (pages 20-29).

Each requirement has a check box opposite it for leaders to use when they're planning and evaluating their programs. When all check boxes are filled, leaders know that they are delivering a program that meets all Scouting requirements.

Scout Quality Program Standards

As adult volunteers, we have made a commitment to deliver a quality program to our members. Scouts Canada is pleased to provide volunteers with this checklist to ensure the program that is being delivered meets quality standards.

Program Planning

Troops have:

- short-range (one month),
- medium-range (three months),
- long-range (one year) program plans which reflect the program goals as outlined in *B.P.&P.*
- Weekly programs are typically conducted as described in the *Scout Leader's Handbook*, and incorporate appropriate safety precautions.

Outdoors

Opportunities are provided for Scouts to participate in outdoor activities as often as possible. Scout minimum standards require:

- One regular meeting per month outdoors
- One weekend outing every two months
- Six nights at camp annually
- All activities follow Policies and Accepted Practices, as outlined by *Camping/Outdoor Activities, Section 10000, B.P. & P.*

Youth Input

- Scouts are regularly consulted and utilized in program planning and delivery;
- Patrol leaders and assistants form essential parts of the leadership team.
- A Court of Honour is employed on a regular basis.
- Youth are actively engaged in the creation of their section's Code of Conduct.

Badge/Award Program

- The program provides Scouts with regular opportunities to engage in and complete requirements of the Scout Badge/Award system.
- Using the information from "My Path to the Chief Scout's Award," all Scouts create personal plans.

Environmental Awareness

Opportunities are provided, as often as possible, for Scouts to participate in activities which increase their understanding and awareness of their role in preserving the environment.

- Minimum standard: one project annually.
- All activities are conducted in a manner which reflects appropriate environmental awareness and practices.

Spiritual Emphasis

- Spiritual emphasis is regularly incorporated throughout the program. Examples may include, but are not limited to:
- Opening and Closing Prayers
- Use of Promise, Law and Motto
- Scouts Own and Scouter's Five
- Religion in Life Award program

Community Service

Opportunities are provided, as often as possible, for Scouts to participate in community service projects/events.

- Minimum standard: two held annually.

Membership/Retention/Growth

- No youth who is willing to subscribe to the Promise and Law is denied membership (i.e. Scouts Canada does not want any waiting lists).
- Leaders personally invite Scouts back at the beginning of each year.
- Those not returning at any time of the year are contacted by a leader to determine the reasons why.
- One activity per year focuses on increasing membership.

Linking

As often as possible, opportunities are provided for Scouts to interact with Cubs and Venturers, with the minimum standard being:

- One regular meeting and one other activity with a Cub pack annually.
- One regular meeting and one other activity with a Venturer company annually.
- A Scout is selected to serve as a Kim with a Cub pack.
- Senior Scouts of advancement age have at least one other opportunity to interact with a Venturer company.

Family/Parental Involvement

Opportunities are provided for family/parent involvement as often as possible.

- Minimum standard: two events annually.
- Parental involvement is encouraged.
- Regular communication occurs to inform parents of program plans through contacts such as meetings, phone calls, calendars and newsletters, etc.

Training/Leadership

- Scouts Canada expects all leaders to achieve Woodbadge Basic level during the first year.
- Scouts Canada expects at least one Scout leader to have Woodbadge Advanced (Scouts).
- At least one member of the leadership team should hold a current, recognized first aid qualification.
- As well, the leadership team has the necessary attitude, skills, knowledge and/or training required to conduct outdoor programs, or has recruited a skilled resource person(s) with such knowledge to attend the outing/activity.
- Youth members (activity leaders, Scouters-in-Training, patrol leaders, etc.) are included as part of the leadership team.

Administration

The following are performed to administer the troop:

- Maintain current and accurate troop records, including attendance and Scouts' progress records.
- Submit a plan and related budget to the group committee for a year's activities.
- Maintain appropriate financial records, and submit proper financial statements to the group committee.
- Provide an annual inventory of all equipment and property to the group committee.
- Ensure a representative from the section leadership team attends at least 90 percent of group committee meetings.
- Participate in Scouts Canada's official fundraisers.