

RESOLUTION ON ADULT LEADERSHIP STANDARDS

WHEREAS, it is the mission of the Boy Scouts of America to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law:

Scout Oath

On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

Scout Law

A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent.

WHEREAS, the vision of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare every eligible youth in America to become a responsible, participating citizen and leader who is guided by the Scout Oath and Scout Law;

WHEREAS, the values set forth in the Scout Oath and Scout Law are fundamental to the Boy Scouts of America and central to teaching young people to make better choices over their lifetimes;

WHEREAS, duty to God and duty to country are core values and immutable tenets of the Boy Scouts of America;

WHEREAS, the Scout Oath begins with the duty to God and the Scout Law ends with a Scout's obligation to be reverent, and Scouting respects and defends the rights of others to practice their own religious beliefs without criticism;

WHEREAS, the duty to country recognizes that America is made up of countless families and communities, and that we should all work hard to be good family members and good citizens by striving to make our country better, obeying its laws, and serving our communities;

WHEREAS, the Boy Scouts of America teaches youth members to be helpful, friendly, courteous, and kind to all and to respect those whose beliefs—in particular religious beliefs—differ from their own;

WHEREAS, for more than 105 years, programs of the Boy Scouts of America have been delivered to youth members through cooperation with chartered organizations that select adult volunteer leaders who meet the chartered organization's standards as well as the leadership standards of the Boy Scouts of America;

WHEREAS, the Boy Scouts of America believes it should allow members and parents to choose a Scouting unit, chartered to an organization with similar beliefs, that best meets the needs of their families;

WHEREAS, the Boy Scouts of America recognizes the sincere religious beliefs and freedoms of religious chartered organizations and will not require any religious chartered organization to act in ways inconsistent with that organization's mission, principles, or religious beliefs;

WHEREAS, Scouting is a youth program, and any sexual conduct, whether heterosexual or homosexual, by youth of Scouting age is contrary to the virtues of Scouting;

WHEREAS, the Boy Scouts of America has adopted membership standards to ensure that youth have the opportunity to join Scouting and to be served by qualified volunteer adult leaders selected by the chartered organization, all of whom are subject to the provisions of the Boy Scouts of America's Youth Protection requirements;

WHEREAS, notwithstanding any other provision of the Boy Scouts of America's Bylaws, no Scouting unit may deny a youth membership in the Boy Scouts of America on the basis of sexual orientation or preference alone;

WHEREAS, the current adult leadership standard of the Boy Scouts of America states:

The applicant must possess the moral, educational, and emotional qualities that the Boy Scouts of America deems necessary to afford positive leadership to youth. The applicant must also be the correct age, subscribe to the precepts of the Declaration of Religious Principle (duty to God), and abide by the Scout Oath and the Scout Law.

WHEREAS, the Boy Scouts of America's Declaration of Religious Principle states:

The Boy Scouts of America maintains that no member can grow into the best kind of citizen without recognizing an obligation to God. In the first part of the Scout Oath or Promise the member declares, "On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law." The recognition of God as the ruling and leading power in the universe and the grateful acknowledgment of His favors and blessings are necessary to the best type of citizenship and are wholesome precepts in the education of the growing members. No matter what the religious faith of the members may be, this fundamental need of good citizenship should be kept before them. The Boy Scouts of America, therefore, recognizes the religious element in the training of the member, but it is absolutely nonsectarian in its attitude toward that religious training. Its policy is that the home and the organization or group with which the member is connected shall give definite attention to religious life.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The standards for selecting adult leaders of the Boy Scouts of America are as follows:

Adult leadership positions in the Boy Scouts of America are open to adults who meet the requirements set forth in the Bylaws, the Rules and Regulations, and the policies of the Boy Scouts of America.

Adult leaders in the programs of the Boy Scouts of America must (a) subscribe to and abide by the values expressed in the Scout Oath and Scout Law, (b) subscribe to and abide by the precepts of the Declaration of Religious Principle, and (c) demonstrate at all times behavior that exemplifies the highest level of good conduct and respect for others and that is consistent with Scouting's values and codes of conduct.

No adult applicant for registration as an employee or non-unit-serving volunteer, who otherwise meets the requirements of the Boy Scouts of America, may be denied registration on the basis of sexual orientation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

The Boy Scouts of America hereby adopts the following statement on sexuality and adult leaders:

Matters of marriage, family, and sexuality raise profound social, moral, and theological questions. The Boy Scouts of America has always been deeply respectful of the religious and moral beliefs of its chartering organizations, including religious organizations.

The Boy Scouts of America affirms that sexual relations between adults should be moral, honorable, committed, and respectful. Adult Scout leaders should reflect these values in their personal and public lives so as to be proper role models for youth. The Boy Scouts of America affirms the right of each chartering organization to reach its own religious and moral conclusions about the specific meaning and application of these values. The Boy Scouts of America further affirms the right of each chartering organization to select adult leaders who support those conclusions in word and deed and who will best inculcate the organization's values through the Scouting program.

The Boy Scouts of America rejects any interference with or condemnation of the diverse beliefs of chartering organizations on matters of marriage, family, and sexuality. The message of Scouting is one of toleration and respect for different religious and moral conclusions in this matter, acknowledging that reasonable minds may honorably differ. Any effort to exclude or penalize chartering organizations based on their beliefs or policies regarding marriage, family, or sexuality is contrary to the Boy Scouts of America's commitment to religious freedom and respect for the beliefs and convictions of its chartered organizations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

No local council may refuse to process or approve a charter application or in any way limit the participation of a Scouting unit based upon the chartered organization's exercise of its right to select adult leaders as provided in this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

The Boy Scouts of America will defend and indemnify to the fullest extent allowed by law any bona fide religious chartered organization against any claim or action contending that the chartered organization's good faith refusal to select a unit leader based upon the religious principles of the chartered organization is in violation of the law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

This resolution shall be effective from the date of ratification by the National Executive Board.