

# Parents' Guide



Boy Scouts of America

## Troop 263

Parma-South Presbyterian Church  
6155 Pearl Road  
Parma Heights, Ohio 44130

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## What is Boy Scouting?

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When your son showed an interest in becoming a Boy Scout, no doubt he liked what he saw – boys his own age camping, hiking, swimming, and canoeing – boys having fun. Your son will find more adventure in Scouting than in any other organized youth activity. Scouting is geared to the interests of boys.

Scouting, however, is much more than just fun. Scouting is a movement that is dedicated to the proposition that boys really wish to respond to the best they have in them. They want opportunities to be challenged, to learn, and to become leaders. The idea is to learn these things while having fun. Lord Baden-Powell, the founder of Boy Scouting, once said “*Scouting is a game with a purpose.*” While the boys may not think of it this way, a scout troop is a unique educational setting.

## Becoming a Scout

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### ***Visiting Meetings and Outings***

You are invited to visit a meeting with your son. If your son is a Webelos Scout, you and he will probably be invited to do this as a den activity. Have your son attend several more meetings and one outing. The idea is to have your son give the Troop a try, and then let him judge for himself whether or not he would like to be a Scout.

You and your son are invited to attend one Troop outing before you decide whether to register. Before your son attends an outing, you must attend a parent meeting or make arrangements to meet with the Scoutmaster and Committee Chairperson. You must also complete a registration form and a medical release form. The registration form should be given to the troop immediately. The medical form must be submitted as soon as possible, and before your son can attend any troop activity. This paperwork is held by the Troop pending your decision whether to register.

Once you are sure your son wants to join, you will submit the \$25.00 initial Troop registration fee. The paperwork will be forwarded to the Council office, and your son will be officially registered with Boy Scout Troop 263. Your son will be permitted to attend only one activity before registering. He must be registered with National Boy Scout Headquarters before attending the second activity.

### ***Registration***

Each scout pays an initial Troop registration fee of \$25.00. The fee is paid only once, and covers your son’s initial registration with the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America, accident insurance coverage, a Scout Handbook, and a troop T-Shirt (*when he achieves the rank of Tenderfoot*). The Troop pays its members’ annual national registration renewal fees, and for one subscription to ***Boy’s Life*** magazine for each Troop household, out of its general funds.

# **How Troop 263 Operates**

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## ***The Chartering Institution***

Troop 263 is chartered by Parma-South Presbyterian Church. The church is located at 6155 Pearl Road, Parma Heights, Ohio 44130. Troop membership is open to boys of all faiths. The Chartering Institution provides a Troop a place to meet, and a place to store some Troop equipment and supplies. From time to time, the Troop performs various service projects for the church.

## ***Meetings***

Between Labor Day and Memorial Day (approximately the school year), Troop 263 meets weekly on Tuesdays from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM in the gymnasium at Parma-South Presbyterian Church. Between Memorial Day and Labor Day (the summer months) Troop meetings are held weekly on Tuesdays from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM in the Cleveland Metroparks Snow Road Picnic Area.

## ***Two-Deep Leadership***

Troop 263 operates in accordance with the National Boy Scout Council's Youth Protection policy concerning two-deep leadership. In short, this policy requires that two adults – at least one of whom is 21 years of age or older and trained - be present for all activities and/or meetings involving registered youths members. In the case that the two-deep leadership requirement cannot be met, the meeting or other activity is cancelled or re-scheduled.

## ***The Troop Committee***

Troop operations are conducted with the oversight of the Troop Committee. The committee is comprised of parents of present and past members of Troop 263. All parents of scouts in the troop are invited to become committee members and to attend committee meetings. The Troop Committee generally meets six to eight times each year.

The Troop Committee works with the Chartering Institution to appoint adult leaders for the Troop. Troop activities and program plans are approved by the committee. There are several standing positions on the Troop Committee. These include:

- Committee Chairperson - oversees all Troop and Committee operations, serves as liaison to Chartering Institution, coordinates annual charter renewal with Greater Cleveland Council BSA, and coordinates Troop communications.
- Treasurer - manages all Troop finances, funds and accounts.
- Secretary – keeps records of all Troop Committee meetings. Records decisions made by Troop Committee.

- Advancement Chairperson – tracks all scout advancement for Troop 263. Coordinates rank advancement Boards of Review. Maintains all advancement records for Troop 263. Serves as liaison to Pioneer District and Greater Cleveland Council Advancement Chairpersons. Files necessary advancement reports with Greater Cleveland Council.
- Committee Members at Large – participates in committee meetings. May serve as chairperson for fundraising, camping or other specific activities.
- Scoutmaster & Assistant Scoutmasters – participate in Troop Committee meetings, providing activity reports and identifying Troop issues that need committee attention.

### ***Adult Leadership***

The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters are adult leaders who volunteer their services. These leaders attend and oversee weekly Troop meetings, outings, camping trips and service projects. These are the primary adult leaders with whom scouts interact.

The Scoutmaster is experienced in adult troop leadership, and has completed position-specific leader training. Assistant Scoutmasters are also trained, and fill in when the Scoutmaster is not present, or when the Assistant is better able to handle a particular duty. Our unit leaders have received several awards for their roles in Scouting at the troop, district, and council levels.

### ***Boy Leadership***

Within the Troop, scouts are formed into small groups of four to eight called “patrols.” Each patrol gives itself a name, and elects one of its members to be its Patrol Leader. A Patrol Leader is responsible for representing and leading the patrol. Patrol Leaders report to the Senior Patrol Leader who is in charge whenever the entire troop is together.

The Troop collectively elects a Senior Patrol Leader; usually a boy between the ages of 13 and 17 who has achieved at least the rank of First Class Scout. Whenever the entire Troop is together the Senior Patrol Leader, or “SPL,” is in charge. The SPL runs the weekly meetings, and coordinates and leads many of the activities of the Troop and duties of its members. The SPL works closely with the Patrol Leaders, Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters and Troop Committee to plan and coordinate Troop activities and operations.

Scouts within the Troop and Patrols are assigned other leadership positions by their Patrol Leader, SPL and/or Scoutmaster on an as-needed basis. Some of the positions they may hold include Assistant Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Librarian, Scribe, Quartermaster, Chaplain Aide, Bugler, and Troop Guide.

Boy leaders are guided by the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters. Boy leaders receive training specific to the leadership position to which they are elected or assigned. All scouts in the Troop are expected to respect boy leaders, and the boy leadership system. Boy leaders are expected to carry out their duties efficiently and effectively, and to show respect for the scouts they lead.

### ***Parents' Obligations***

You are welcome and invited to attend all Troop meetings and activities. While that may not fit your schedule, each parent must attend at least one Troop parents' meeting per year. The exact time and location is communicated through the scouts or by telephone or e-mail. Parents are also needed to help organize fund raisers, and to help scouts prepare for activities and outings – particularly in regards to transportation.

At least twice each year, the Troop holds an awards ceremony, called a Court of Honor. Parents should try to be at the Court of Honor to recognize the scouts' achievements.

Parents are expected to cooperate with, and show support for, Troop leaders in all aspects of troop operations and discipline. This includes following Troop policies and procedures and helping scouts do the same.

## **Communications**

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### ***Troop Website***

Troop 263 maintains a website for its members and the general public. The site includes a calendar of events, and news of recent activities. It also includes links to other scouting sites and resources, and various Troop documents and forms for downloading.

### ***Troop Newsletter***

From time to time, the Troop publishes a newsletter. The newsletter is distributed by e-mail whenever possible, but may be distributed in print at a Troop meeting. The newsletter contains specific information about upcoming activities. Permission slips needed for upcoming activities are often attached to the newsletter. Also included is a list of scouts with the status of their dues owed and credits to their accounts.

### ***Troop Contacts***

There are several key people involved with the Troop that you may need or wish to contact. You are encouraged to contact a member of the Troop Committee or one of the Adult or Boy Leaders - as appropriate - any time you have a question. A complete roster of the Troop's scouts and Adult Leaders (including the Troop Committee) is distributed each year during the charter renewal process. The roster includes the leaders' names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses.

# Camping and Outings

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## ***Camping***

There is an old adage that says *“Three quarters of ‘Scouting’ is ‘Outing’.*” The saying largely holds true. Scouts learn a lot on Troop outings, including camping and cooking skills, leadership skills, and how to work as a team. Troop 263 camps often – we try to camp every month.

Most Troop campouts are over weekends – from Friday evening to Sunday morning or early afternoon. We camp at area scout camps, private camp grounds, state and national parks and reservations, or private property. We do most of our camping in tents, but sometimes stay in cabins in late fall through early spring. Weekend campouts usually cost from \$15 to \$25, depending on the location and the menu planned by the scouts.

Each summer, the Troop spends a week to ten days at a Boy Scout resident camp – usually in July or August. Summer camp is perhaps the best opportunity a scout has during the year to work on merit badges and certain outdoor requirements for his ranks. Besides the advancement opportunities, summer camp is a lot of fun. Scouts can try a wide variety of activities including handicrafts, swimming, canoeing, climbing and rappelling, map and compass, first aid, archery, shooting sports, fishing, astronomy, and lots more. All of these activities are supervised by trained scouting staff in accordance with national scouting standards.

Parents are always welcome to join the Troop on outings and campouts. However, if you don’t accompany the Troop very often, be sure to talk with the adult leaders ahead of time to assure appropriate information concerning your health and automobile insurance is on file, and so that we can make appropriate privacy arrangements for female campers.

## ***Outings***

When schedules don’t allow a weekend campout, the Troop plans a one-day event to assure there is at least one outing opportunity each month. These one-day activities include such things as a day in the park working on advancement requirements, a hike, a visit to a museum, or a trip to do something fun like bowling or sledding. Sometimes these outings are community service projects. The cost for outings depends on what the scouts plan. Costs are often kept to a minimum by having scouts bring along a lunch.

## ***Permission Slips***

A permission slip is required for each participant whenever the Troop goes on an outing away from its normal meeting places. Permission slips are usually handed-out at meetings and sent home with scouts. Scouts are not be permitted to attend an outing if the permission slip and activity fees are not turned in when due. Please make sure your scout has the proper amount of money before the meeting starts. It is good idea to pay for Scout activities by check, as it provides an ideal way of keeping track of payments.

# **Uniforms and Equipment**

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## ***The Boy Scout Uniform***

The Boy Scouts of America is a uniformed organization. The scout uniform commands a public respect not usually bestowed upon a boy. It carries its own message. The complete field uniform is worn at troop meetings, for travel, and for other events throughout the year.

The Boy Scout field uniform (sometimes called a “Class A”) consists of the following items: Scout uniform shirt with red epaulets, scout neckerchief and slide, scout belt, scout pants and appropriate footwear. Scout uniforms are available at the Scout Shop in the Greater Cleveland Council Scout Service Center in downtown Cleveland. As well, older scouts often have “experienced” uniforms (especially trousers) that they have grown out of that may be passed along or sold to younger scouts. You may purchase troop numerals from the troop – the troop purchases them a one-piece unit. Official placement of uniform insignia (i.e., numerals, patches, etc.) is presented in Attachment I to this guide.

The Boy Scout field uniform is worn for all troop meetings between Labor Day and Memorial Day, and for all travel to and from campouts and outings. The uniform must also be worn for summer camp assemblies, and evening meals in the dining hall during summer camp. Scouts are not required to wear the neckerchief and slide for weekly troop meetings or on campouts because they tend to get misplaced.

During the summer (between Memorial Day and Labor Day) scouts may wear an “activity uniform” (sometimes called a “Class B”) to troop meetings. The Troop 263 activity uniform consists of a troop T-shirt or other scouting-related shirt (such as a T-shirt from summer camp), shorts or trousers, and appropriate closed-toe footwear (no sandals or flip-flops). The activity uniform is often worn at specified times during District or Council events such as the Camporee or Klondike Derby.

## ***Meeting Equipment***

The Boy Scout Motto is “Be Prepared.” Scouts should come to meetings prepared for the planned activities. Each scout is to bring his Boy Scout Handbook, a pen or pencil, and a notebook to each meeting. In addition, he may be asked to bring items or equipment needed for the meeting’s planned activities. These may include things like a compass, rope, pocket knife, or project materials. It is a good idea to have a small book bag or backpack to keep these items in - just for scout meetings. This help scouts keep track of their scouting stuff, and to be ready to leave for a meeting on time. The backpack can do double duty as a pack for day hikes and summer camp – especially if it has room for a water bottle and a few other “scout essentials.”



## ***Camping Equipment***

Your scout will need some equipment for camping. A list of suggested items is presented in Attachment II to this guide. Try not to purchase expensive or exotic equipment. Many of these items can be found around your house. Unit leaders and experienced scouts can suggest ways to keep expenses reasonable while properly equipping your scout. Lightly used camping equipment can often be found, and new equipment is usually available at substantial discounts at the end of a season, or through catalog stores. Camping equipment is always a great holiday or birthday gift for a scout.

Your son should wear clothes and footwear that are appropriate for the season. Always check the newsletter or permission slip for instructions on uniform and advice on clothing, and for any special items that might be needed for the month's activity. Small items (cup, flashlight, tableware, etc.) should be clearly marked with the scout's name, as should clothing that could be confused with another scout's (e.g., troop T-shirts).

Scouts should not wear printed clothing (T-shirts, hats, jackets, etc.) that displays any reference to drugs, alcohol, tobacco or related products. Clothing with inappropriate, distasteful or suggestive images or text should also be avoided. If you're not sure about something, see how it compares against the Scout Law, or call an Adult Leader.

Help your scout use discretion in deciding what to bring. Discourage him from bringing expensive or irreplaceable items. Some examples of what ***not*** to bring are presented in Attachment II. Scouts are solely responsible for their own equipment and belongings. ***Adult leaders will not act as "safe-keepers" or be responsible for expensive or sentimental items.***

## **Troop Finances**

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### ***Dues***

Each scout pays dues of \$7.00 per month. Dues must be current in order to participate in a month's activity or outing. Depending on the number of scouts in the troop, dues may be adjusted each operating year. Dues help to support troop operating expenses such as:

- Annual Charter (registration) and Accident Insurance renewal
- Awards
- Promotional materials
- Postage
- Equipment maintenance and replacement
- Fuel for cooking and heating
- Troop T-shirts
- Vehicle rental (if necessary)
- Other expenses as approved by the Troop Committee

## ***Fundraising***

Because most of the operating expenses of the troop are covered by dues, money making projects are provided to help Scouts and their families defray the cost of monthly dues, outings, and other scouting-related expenses. There may be two to three Troop-sponsored fundraising projects each year.

The proceeds from each project are distributed based on scouts' participation or share of proceeds in the project. Because it is a non-profit organization, the troop must assure that fundraising proceeds used only for Troop- and scouting-related expenses. Therefore the proceeds are held by the Troop as ***credits*** for each scout in an individual account. Fundraising proceeds are generally distributed in a ratio of 75% to the scout's individual account and 25% to the Troop's general fund.

A scout may use his credits to pay monthly dues, activity and camping fees, or other scouting-related expenses approved by the Troop Committee. If a scout leaves the troop, his account balance of credits is transferred to the troop general fund.

## ***Troop Accounts***

Boy Scout Troop 263 maintains its own checking account. The entire operation of the troop is financed by its members. The troop does not receive any help from the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America, the Greater Cleveland Council, or the United Way. Please make all checks payable to "***Boy Scout Troop 263.***"

## **Behavior and Attendance**

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### ***Behavior***

Scouts and Troop Leaders are expected to behave in a manner consistent with the Scout Oath, Scout Law, Scout Motto and Slogan, and the Outdoor Code at all times. The Committee and Adult Leaders of Troop 263 feel that it is better to reward desired performance than to punish inappropriate or disruptive behavior. Hazing and corporal punishment are prohibited by the Boy Scouts of America, Greater Cleveland Council BSA, and Troop 263.

Various appropriate methods are employed to maintain order and discipline. However, if a scout's behavior interferes with Troop functions or presents a safety concern, he may be suspended from future activities for a length of time determined by the Troop Committee in consultation with the scout's parents. If behavior is a serious problem, an Adult Leader will contact the scout's parents to come take their son home from a meeting or activity – regardless of location.

## ***Attendance***

Participation is important to a scout's success in the Troop. Each scout plays an important role in the Troop as a patrol member and, perhaps, as a leader. Each advance in a scout's rank requires that he is active in his Troop and patrol. As well, many of the specific requirements for rank advancement must be completed during Troop meetings, outings, or campouts. To participate in a Troop activity or outing, a scout must attend at least two of the four meetings prior to the outing, or have made arrangements for excused absence.

An excused absence is for illness, or other parental-approved excuse, telephoned prior to the meeting or activity. Having too much school work is a poor excuse, since this is usually the result of the Scout waiting until the last minute to complete assignments, but it will be accepted.

Scouts are to notify their Patrol Leader if they are going to be absent from a troop meeting. If the Patrol Leader is unavailable, the scout should notify the Senior Patrol Leader. If neither of these is available, the scout should notify the Scoutmaster. Scouts do not have to call if they are on an extended leave of absence that has been approved by the Troop Committee. Extended leaves include conflicts with sports teams, religious education classes, out of town visits, and the like.

## **Health and Safety**

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### ***Medical History and Physical Examinations***

Prior to participation in troop activities, your son's medical history (e.g., immunizations) and release for first aid and medical treatment must be provided using the form on the back of the Boy Scout Membership Application. Scouts' medical information is kept private, and is only used if necessary for first aid or emergency medical treatment.

Prior to attending resident camp (summer camp), each scout and adult leader must have a medical examination by a physician. The examination must be documented on a Class I / Class II examination form from the Boy Scouts of America, signed by the physician. These forms are distributed with summer camp information, and are also available on the Greater Cleveland Council website. Scouts and adult leaders participating in high-adventure camping must submit a Class III medical examination form – also available on the Greater Cleveland Council website.

After the initial examination, scouts and adult leaders under 40 years of age may update their medical information (e.g., height, weight, medications, etc.) annually without visiting a physician. A new physician's examination is required every three (3) years at a minimum. Adult leaders 40 years of age or older must have a medical examination by a physician annually.

## ***Medicine***

Boy Scout Troop 263 adheres to a strict policy concerning prescription and over-the-counter medicine. The policy is included as Attachment III to this guide. The policy is designed to assure medicine is given according to schedule, in proper doses, following any special instructions, and that it is taken under appropriate supervision.

## Attachment I – Suggested Camping Equipment

### Boy Scout Troop 263 Suggested Camping Equipment

#### **Suggested Campout Equipment:**

- ☐ One complete change of clothing for each day of camping
- ☐ Weather appropriate jacket
- ☐ Raingear (*Poncho or Rain Suit*)
- ☐ 2 pairs of shoes (*tennis shoes and hiking boots [water proof]*)
- ☐ Sleeping bag or two heavy blankets
- ☐ Sleeping pad and pillow (*optional*)
- ☐ Backpack or duffel bag or suitcase (*no garbage bag packs please*)
- ☐ Mess kit (*small bowl, knife, fork & spoon*)
- ☐ Drinking cup (*for hot or cold liquids*)
- ☐ Small flashlight with extra batteries [or 2<sup>nd</sup> flash light] (*LED headlight, Mini Mag-Lite or similar is a good choice*)
- ☐ Toilet kit (*hand towel, washcloth, soap, toothbrush & toothpaste*)
- ☐ Scout Handbook (*in plastic bag with seal*)
- ☐ Scout Uniform (*as advised – Wear to & from unless noted*)
- ☐ Troop T-shirt
- ☐ Pocket knife (*after proper training*)
- ☐ Compass (*Silva Pathfinder recommended*)
- ☐ One-Quart Water Bottle or Canteen (*Nalgene 1-Qt. Recommended, good seal required*)
- ☐ Inexpensive Camera (*disposable recommended*)
- ☐ Rope (*Med duty, 10+ft, do not cut Cloths line & other uses*)
- ☐ **Trash bag(s)** (many uses wet cloths/ cover gear in rain)
- ☐ **Plastic bag** (put shoes in at night [inside or outside tent])

#### **DO NOT BRING\*:**

- × Expensive or irreplaceable items (Cell phones)
- × Matches or lighters
- × Electronic games or radios (*personal portables with headphones are OK during travel*)
- × Products in an aerosol can or spray bottle (lotions/ liquids please)
- × Anything illegal for a minor to possess

\* Scouts are solely responsible for their own equipment and belongings. ***Adult leaders will not act as “safe-keepers” or be responsible for expensive or sentimental items.***

#### **As a Scout becomes an experienced camper, he should upgrade to:**

- ☐ A good sleeping bag (*rated to 20°F*)
- ☐ A good sleeping pad (*RidgeRest or similar*)
- ☐ Backpack with hip belt

# Attachment II –Policy Concerning Medicine

## Boy Scout Troop 263

### Policy Concerning Medicine Taken During Troop Activities

- A. For purposes of this policy, **medicine** means any controlled substance prescribed by a medical doctor or psychiatrist; or any over-the-counter product used regularly under the supervision of a scout's parent(s) or guardian(s), such as aspirin, or cough, cold or allergy remedies.
- B. The Scoutmaster (or a trained adult leader designated by the Scoutmaster or the Troop Committee) is to be notified in writing any time a scout who is required to take medicine will be participating in a troop activity other than regularly scheduled meetings. At a minimum, this notification shall include:
  - 1. The name of the medicine.
  - 2. Dose and timing at which the medicine is to be taken (e.g., one capsule, four times a day).
  - 3. Any special instructions for taking the medicine (e.g., take with food, do not chew, etc.).
  - 4. Common side effects of the medicine, especially any side effects the scout is known to have had (e.g., nausea, drowsiness, sleeplessness, dizziness, etc.).
- C. The scout's parent(s) or guardian(s) shall provide the Scoutmaster (or designated, trained adult leader) an adequate supply of the medicine for the duration of the troop activity. A few extra doses should be included to allow for unexpected delays in travel, etc.
- D. All medicines and copies of notifications are to be held and secured by the Scoutmaster (or designated, trained adult leader) during troop activities. The Scoutmaster, Troop Committee, and any designated adult leader involved in control of medicine will take reasonable steps to hold the name of the medicine and the purpose for which it is prescribed in confidence.
- E. All medicine will be taken under the supervision of the Scoutmaster (or designated, trained adult leader) and a second adult. The scout is responsible for administering the medicine himself. The Scoutmaster and second adult are not responsible for administering the medicine, but are to observe and document the scout taking the proper dose at the proper times.
- F. Under no circumstances is a scout to take medicine during troop activities without the supervision of the Scoutmaster (or designated, trained adult leader) and a second adult.
- G. Should a scout refuse to take his medicine, or otherwise violate this policy during a troop activity, he will be dismissed from the activity, and his parents will be called to take him home.
- H. The Scoutmaster (or designated, trained adult leader) will return all unused medicine to the scout's parent(s) or guardian(s) at the conclusion of the troop activity.