



Hudson Valley Council Members:

The National Executive Board of the Boy Scouts of America has made the difficult but necessary decision to increase the annual membership fee effective January 1, 2020. The membership fees in the Hudson Valley Council are:

Youth – Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, and Venturing	Adults – Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, and Venturing
National Fee: \$60	National Fee: \$36
HVC Operations & Service: \$36	HVC Operations & Service: \$36
Insurance Fee: \$12	Insurance Fee: \$12
Boy’s Life (optional): \$12	Boy’s Life (optional): \$12
Total with Boy’s Life: \$120	Total with Boy’s Life: \$96
Total without Boy’s Life: \$108	Total without Boy’s Life: \$84

The National Council has shared that the fee increase is directly tied to the significant cost increase of the liability insurance that is carried to cover all official Scouting activities. Please note that this is not a local decision, nor do we have direct input into the process. With that said, personally we know that the National Council is reviewing all options to ensure a safe and healthy program-based environment for our youth.

Our council along with National remains committed to ensuring that all youth can experience the character-building benefits of Scouting regardless of their financial situation.

We recognize that this increase is not beneficial to the registration process. The Hudson Valley Council Board wants to assist our units and our families with the fee increase primarily due to the timing of the National Council’s announcement.

The Hudson Valley Council will be offering a Holiday Popcorn Sale via Trails End Popcorn. The sale will run from November 28th – January 10th, 2020. **During this time, ALL PROFIT will go to the local unit.** Units will be able to sell popcorn by Show-N-Sell, and Take Order Sales. More details to follow next week. Please sign up with Council Popcorn Adviser, Frank Giusto: frank.giusto@scouting.org if your unit would like to participate.

Thank you for all you do for the Youth of our Communities!

Yours in Scouting,

Bill Poole
Council President

Gregg Dick
Council Commissioner

David Horton
Scout Executive/CEO

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FAQ

Q: Why are the fees increasing now?

A: While costs increase every year, the Boy Scouts of America has worked to keep the annual membership fee as low as possible to make Scouting available to as many young people as possible by subsidizing core costs, including liability insurance we must carry to cover all official Scouting activities. As the organization's financial situation has shifted over the past several months, it is no longer possible to subsidize at the level we have in the past, especially as the cost of insurance has increased dramatically.

Q: Does this apply to youth members and volunteers?

A: Yes, the new fees apply for youth and adult members. Effective January 1, 2020, the new fees are:

- \$60 for youth members in Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing and Sea Scouts,
- \$36 for youth members in Exploring, and
- \$36 for adult members (includes cost of background check and *Scouting Magazine*)
- \$60 for unit charter fees

Q: Is Scouting still a good value?

A: Absolutely! While most extracurricular activities are seasonal, Scouting is a year-round program that remains one of the most valuable investments we can make to support young men and women today so they can become the leaders we will turn to tomorrow. For most of our youth members, the new registration fee amounts to \$5 a month, which is an enormous value when you consider that many seasonal extracurricular activities often start at \$100 for programs that last a few weeks.

Q: Does the fee increase apply to council-paid memberships?

A: No. The cost for council-paid membership, sometimes known as ScoutReach, will continue to be \$24 for each youth member.

Q: What will the money be used for?

A: Every dollar of membership fees will go to cover the cost of essential services, including liability insurance for members participating in approved Scouting activities, background checks for adult leaders, program development and training resources, continuously updated youth protection and youth safety training, improved IT/digital experiences and services to our councils nationwide.

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Q: Is this increase being implemented to cover the cost of the additional background checks?

A: No, the cost of background checks is not the prompting the fee increase.

Q: Why is this being announced now?

A: We recognize the timing of this fee increase creates challenges as units have already begun collecting fees for their 2020 registration renewal process, and we would not make this difficult decision if it were not absolutely necessary. Unfortunately, the cost of liability insurance we must carry to cover all Scouting activities has increased dramatically over the past several months, and the organization is no longer able to offset the cost of insurance. We are committed to supporting you through this process and are making necessary adjustments to the online rechartering system to ensure units can carry out the recharter process.

Q: Does this increase cover financial challenges the organization is facing?

A: The increase was prompted because the cost of liability insurance we must carry to cover all Scouting activities has increased dramatically over the past several months, and the organization is no longer able to offset the cost of insurance. The national membership fee also enables us program development and training resources, continuously updated youth protection and youth safety training, improved IT/digital experiences and services to our councils nationwide.

Q: When will this increase take effect?

A: The new membership fees will take effect starting January 1, 2020 for the 2020-21 program year.

Q: Is financial assistance available?

A: We are committed to ensuring that all youth can experience the character-building benefits of Scouting regardless of their financial situation. In addition to the many existing council and unit membership assistance funds, we have established the donor-funded *Growing Future Leaders Fund* to provide financial support to those who need it.

Q: My council recently announced a new fee to cover insurance. Does this change mean that fee is no longer necessary?

A: No, the liability insurance that we need to carry for all Scouting activities at the national level is different from local fees that are collected to address local needs, which can include such as local property and accident insurance, as well as unique local programming costs.





Q: In addition to the national membership fee, my council is implementing a program fee. Is that allowed?

A: Starting August 1, 2020, councils can choose to charge a local program fee, up to but no more than the national membership fee – up to \$60 for youth members in Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing and Sea Scouts; up to \$36 for youth members in Exploring and up to \$36 for adult members. The local program fee can include local insurance costs (i.e., accident, property, etc.), as well as cost to administer unique local programming efforts.

Q: What happens if my council's program fee is more than the national membership fee?

A: Councils that are currently charging a program fee more than the national membership fee have one year to adjust their fees in order to be in compliance with the new rules.

Q: What measures has the national organization taken to offset the financial challenges?

A: In addition to ongoing efforts to streamline and simplify the organization, the national organization has taken a number of steps in addressing its financial challenges, including the recent elimination of more than 35 positions at the National Service Center and ongoing consolidation of departments for the most effective utilization of resources in support of Scouting.

Q: Will the national membership fee continue to increase?

A: Although no decision about future increases have been made, the cost of operating our organization and services increases every year. Should it be necessary to increase fees in the future, the National Executive Board of the Boy Scouts of America has agreed to evaluate the needs and make such decisions, whenever possible, at the National Annual Meeting in May or early in the summer so that they can be announced with as much lead time as possible to allow for councils and units to be able to plan accordingly.

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