

Scouting America Troop 653

Behavioral Policy & Expectations

Welcome to Troop 653! In Scouting, we don't have a long list of "do's and don'ts." Instead, we use the **Scout Oath and Law** as our guide. Even if you haven't memorized it yet, the goal is simple: **Be a good person, a reliable friend, and a helpful member of the team.**

SCOUT LAW: A SCOUT IS TRUSTWORTHY, LOYAL, HELPFUL, FRIENDLY, COURTEOUS, KIND, OBEDIENT, CHEERFUL, THRIFTY, BRAVE, CLEAN, AND REVERENT.

1. How We Treat Each Other

We are a team. To keep our Troop a place where everyone feels welcome, we follow these rules:

- **Respect Everyone:** We do not tolerate bullying, malicious name-calling, or any derogatory comments regarding a person's race, nationality, or beliefs.
- **Safety First:** We avoid "horseplay" or fighting that could hurt someone or damage property.
- **Stay with Your Team:** During meetings and trips, you should sit and participate with your **Patrol**. This helps us stay organized and ensures no one is left out.

2. Troop Activities & Meetings

- **The Uniform:** Wearing your uniform shows you are part of the team. Please wear the proper uniform to all meetings and activities.
- **Respect the Space:** Whether we are at the church or a campsite, we leave the area better than we found it.
- **Be Careful with Fire:** Fire is a tool we'll learn to use, but it is never to be played with. Do not start a fire without permission from an Adult and never have a fire in a tent.
- **Be Present:** Whatever activity is going on, whether it is a presentation or "skills time," pay attention and use this time for the purpose it was meant.

3. Electronic Device Guidelines

We live in a digital world, but Scouting is about connecting with nature and each other. We use a "**Purposeful Use**" policy for electronics:

- **Scouting Tools:** You may use a device if it serves a specific Scouting purpose (e.g., looking up a knot, using a map/GPS, or taking a photo of a Troop activity).
- **"Be Here Now":** During meetings, ceremonies, and around the campfire, devices should be put away. Using electronics for gaming, social media, or music is not permitted during Troop activities.
- **Digital Safety:** All Scouts need to understand and abide by Scouting America's Digital Safety Guidelines the gist of which is **Keep it public, Keep it group-based, and Keep it Scout-related.** *Scouting America's Digital Safety Guidelines will be provided to your family and you will review them together.*

4. Communication

Our Troop communicates using a tool called "Slack." We would like every Scout and Parent to use it. Here are a few guidelines specific to Slack.

- **Be Respectful:** Having a conversation on Slack is no different than one in person. Write like you were standing in front of the person having a face-to-face talk.
- **No Private Adult/Youth Conversations:** No "private" conversations between Scouts and Adults. Always have 2 adults on a "Direct Message" conversation that any other adult is on.
- **Check Slack Often:** Be on top of what's going on in our troop and check Slack daily! You can do so from a computer, tablet, or phone.

5. Items to Leave at Home

To keep everyone safe, the following items are **strictly prohibited**:

- Alcohol, tobacco, marijuana (and derivatives), illegal drugs, and prescription meds that are not prescribed to you.
- Fireworks, sling shots, and "throwing" weapons (like stars or nunchucks).
- Sheath knives (only folding pocketknives are allowed, and only once you have earned your Totin' Chip).
- Firearms or bows (unless we are at a specific, adult-supervised range activity).

6. What Happens if There is a Problem?

We believe in **Scout-Led Leadership**. If you perceive something isn't right or someone is being treated unfairly, we handle it in this order:

1. **Patrol Leader (PL):** Your first point of contact is your Patrol Leader.
2. **Senior Patrol Leader (SPL):** If the PL cannot resolve it, the top youth leader steps in.
3. **Scoutmaster:** If the youth leaders cannot fix the situation, the adult leaders will intervene.

Consequences: Most issues are resolved with a simple conversation. However, repeated bad behavior will result in your parents being notified, and you may be asked to leave the activity or be dismissed from the event. This means that a parent may have to come to the activity to get their Scout. This is solely at the discretion of the Scoutmaster leading that event.

Serious conduct violations, for example those that involve the safety of the Scout and / or their fellow Scouts and Leaders, or violate Safeguarding Youth Policies, will be documented in writing and may have to be reported to Scouting America Leadership or in worst cases, local law enforcement. These violations may be grounds for dismissal from the Troop. This will be after a Special Committee Meeting convened specifically to talk with the Scout, their parents, and anyone else who was involved. It will be up to the Troop Committee to decide if a Scout is to be dismissed from the troop.

Our Goal: To have fun, learn new skills, and grow into leaders. By following these guidelines, you help make Troop 653 a great place for everyone!

Scout / Parent Acknowledgement

The success of any Scouting America program is dependent on teamwork. Teamwork from Scouts, Adult Leaders, and the Scout's Parents/Guardians. With that understanding, all Scouts and Parents/Guardians who participate in Troop 653's Scouting America program are to adhere to and sign this acknowledgement.

As a member of Troop 653 or a Parent/Guardian of a member of Troop 653, I acknowledge I understand that these guidelines. They have been reviewed with me and I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about them. I understand my responsibilities as a Scout or Parent/Guardian of troop 653.

Scout's Printed Name		Signature		Date
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Scout's Parent/Guardian Name		Signature		Date
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