



Twin Rivers Council Activity Planning

Checklist and Guide

Version August 27, 2026

Activity Checklist

Initial Planning (6–7 months before)

- ☐ Recruit Activity Chairperson — Page 5
- ☐ Review past Activity close-out reports (if repeat) — Page 8
- ☐ Set date and reserve location (Council property or external with COI) — Pages 5–6
- ☐ Get a Short-Term Camp Administrator assigned (if overnight or multi-unit) — Page 4
- ☐ Check Council calendar for conflicts — Page 4
- ☐ Confirm necessary Council assets and staff support — Pages 3–4

4–6 Months Before

- ☐ Assemble Activity Committee — Page 7
- ☐ 1st planning meeting with Council VP Program and Staff Advisor — Page 7
- ☐ Develop activity goals and theme — Page 3
- ☐ Create staff job descriptions (e.g., program director, logistics, etc.) — Page 7
- ☐ Assign Camp Health Officer (certified, first aid kit and Scouting America forms) — Page 7
- ☐ Begin patch design & ordering process (include FDL, Council name) — Page 14

3–4 Months Before

- ☐ Submit Activity budget using Council template — Page 10
- ☐ Set Activity registration fees (early, regular, late, non-council) — Pages 10–12
- ☐ Develop and submit Activity promotion materials for approval — Pages 15–16
- ☐ Request COI for non-Council locations (if applicable) — Page 6

2 Months Before

- ☐ Print and distribute Activity flyers at roundtables — Page 15
- ☐ Share the Activity's social media and newsletter content — Page 15
- ☐ Confirm Activity logistics: parking, toilets, water, warming areas, etc — Page 6

1 Month Before

- ☐ Finalize Activity schedule & layout — Page 15
- ☐ Publish Activity leader's guide (e.g. rules, map, emergencies, etc) — Page 15
- ☐ Hold Activity committee meeting — Page 8
- ☐ Submit supply orders (e.g. food, patches, ribbons, trophies, etc) — Pages 13–14
- ☐ Promote Activity to units, answer questions — Pages 15–16

2 Weeks Before

- ☐ Regular registration deadline — Page 11
- ☐ Prepare Activity check-in materials — Page 15
- ☐ Finalize staff, medical readiness, etc — Pages 13–14, 7–8
- ☐ Submit final risk plans (range & target activities, aquatics, COPE) — Pages 17–18

1 Week Before

- ☐ Final site walk-through — Page 8
- ☐ Confirm all deliveries — Page 8
- ☐ Begin late registration fee period — Page 11

Event Day(s)

- ☐ Check-in opens one hour before start
- ☐ Camp Health Officer is on-site and briefed — Pages 7–8
- ☐ Staff briefing: assignments & schedule
- ☐ Post emergency contact info list — Page 7
- ☐ Use incident report forms as needed — Pages 7–8

Post-Event (within two weeks)

- ☐ If there is an incident at the Activity, submit form to Council PROMPTLY — Page 7
- ☐ Submit receipts, income, and other documentation to Council — Pages 9–13
- ☐ Return Council equipment (if applicable) — Page 9
- ☐ Activity evaluation meeting — Page 9
- ☐ Submit close-out report — Page 9
- ☐ Send thank-you notes to volunteers & sponsors — Page 9

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Introduction

This Activity Planning Guide outlines the recommended steps and procedures to follow in planning, conducting, and closing out a district or Council event. This guide will assist the respective district chair (if applicable), Camping & Outdoor Committee Chairperson, the Council's Vice President of Program, and the Council Staff Advisor for the event.

Safety - It is the vision of the Twin Rivers Council to provide every member a safe, meaningful, and fun activity/program. Conducting an activity in Scouting America represents a partnership between a committee of volunteers, TRC staff and the policies and procedures of Scouting America. All events, whether district or Council led, are at the discretion and approval of the Twin Rivers Council Executive Board. Events not complying with Scouting America's Guide to Safe Scouting among other guidelines may result in an activity being denied or canceled. Cancellations of budgeted events are to be avoided unless absolutely necessary; a recommendation to cancel an event is made by the VP of Program and the Council Staff Advisor.

Finances - The financial health of the Council relies on the success of the event as determined by its participants (i.e. did they enjoy the program) but also the event's adherence to its budget. Therefore, each event must be self-sustaining. The procedures included in this guide help to assure participants of activities that their funds are being used properly and for the purpose intended.

By making the Council aware of all events, the Council will be able to assist vendors and participants who may request payments and refunds. Controls regarding cash receipts, income, and expenses are mandated by the Accounting Guide for Non-Profits of the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB), the Internal Revenue Service for a 501(c)3 organization, the Twin Rivers Council Executive Board, and by the national council of Scouting America. Throughout the Guide, references will be made to the Council Finance Committee. This Committee defines the fiscal management procedures of the Twin Rivers Council, Scouting America. Questions regarding event receipts, expenses, cash controls, etc., not addressed in the Guide may be directed to the Council Staff Advisor and the Council Finance Committee.

Other Resources - Several booklets are available from Scouting America to help plan specialized or specific events. For example, recognition meetings, day camp, camporees, and Webelos Woods have their own guidebooks. These manuals serve as a secondary resource to this Guide. Further information is available in the Scouting America Activities and Civic Service Committee Guide, No. 33082, which outlines the responsibilities of the Council and District Activities and Civic Service Chairs.

Selecting an Activity

Activities for youth and leaders are selected by either a district committee, the Council Camping & Outdoor Committee, the Council Advancement & Recognition Committee, or the Council Training Committee. Suggested events are included in Scouting America's Activities and Civic Service Committee Guide.

It is important to keep in mind that activities or events have specific and well-defined objectives. For example, a training course should provide enough information to assist adult leaders in fulfilling their position responsibilities, whereas a camporee provides youth and adult participants a method for experiencing scout fellowship, competition, skill development, and fun.

Before an activity is selected, the organizers must ask themselves the following:

- Does this activity take the place of regular unit programs or does it supplement unit programs where units may not be able to conduct this activity on their own? *It is not the responsibility of a district or the Council to provide activities just to have them. Activities are planned to assist unit leaders in providing an ideal year in Scouting for their registered youth and families.*
- To which Council population base is the activity servicing? *The activity's location may limit which units can attend based on the location's geography and/or how many people the site can accommodate. Activities should NEVER be limited to just a single district regardless of which district volunteers planned and volunteered at the activity.*
- Can I collaborate in planning this activity with another district's volunteers? *If a site can accommodate more than one district's units, it is better to offer one larger activity rather than multiple activities (e.g. one combined Klondike Derby versus multiple) since it requires less volunteer and professional resources.*
- Does my activity serve both Cub Scouts and Scouts BSA members? *All efforts should be made to serve both Council youth populations given everyone deserves a quality program. That said, NCAP procedures must be followed regarding separate camping areas as well as program activities for Cub Scouts and Scouts BSA.*
- Does my activity require Council resources/assets? *If yes, coordination will be required to ensure assets can be used among other Council activities.*
- What risks are in my activity that require a plan to mitigate them? *If your planned activity involves range and target activities (formerly known as "shooting sports"), aquatics, and/or COPE then a plan will have to be submitted to give Council comfort that these risks are being addressed.*

- Does my activity have an overnight component or involve more than one unit? *If yes, then it will require the approval per Scouting America policy of a Short-Term Camp Administrator*
- Which adult leaders will execute the activity? *There are not enough Council professionals to execute your activity; the activity will largely be run by volunteers.*
- Does Scouting America consider my planned activity “safe” for the youth member population attending my activity? *For example, while Scouting America may allow Wolf scouts to go BMX biking, they do not for Lions and Tigers. Please consult the Guide to Safe Scouting (<https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/toc/>) for any activity you plan to run. Also, review these FAQs on prohibited activities: <https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/prohibited-activities-faqs/>*

During the annual scout year planning process, district and Council activities are submitted to the Council VP of Program and the Council Staff Advisor for review. During this review process, the Council is ensuring that each activity has a viable plan, there are no site conflicts, they are chronologically dispersed, and that there are sufficient activities for the Council’s membership base. Approved activities are included in the annual Council calendar and distributed to unit leaders. The Executive Board has final approval of the Scout Year calendar. If activities are raised for consideration after the annual scout year planning meeting (held prior to April 1), **they must be presented for approval by the VP of Program and Council Staff Advisor AT LEAST 120 days before the activity to ensure resources are available**, a Council site (if requested) is available, and there is sufficient time to market the activity to Council membership.

Recruiting the Activity's Chairperson

The first step in holding a scouting activity is to identify/recruit the chairperson (i.e. "organizer") who is accountable for the activity. Volunteers who hold the following positions may be good candidates:

- District Activity Chairs who are approved by their respective District Chair.
- The Council's Camping & Outdoor Chairperson who is approved by the Council President with input provided by the Council's VP of Program.
- The Council Camping & Outdoor Chairperson may form "working groups" and appoint their respective leaders from within the Camping & Outdoor Program Committee to develop and work on specific activities.

Regardless whether the Activity's Chairperson is one of the individuals listed above or a different volunteer, the Chairperson must "own" the event to ensure it is well executed.

Selecting a Date

Once an activity is approved, dates and locations for activities shouldn't change unless extraordinary circumstances arise (e.g. the ice is too thin to safely conduct an ice fishing event, new construction at the event site prohibits the activity from being safely conducted, etc). Just because the activity chairperson or location is unavailable or the event's planning has not been sufficient, this does not constitute a valid reason for changing an activity's date or location. Be mindful that during a Pack's and Troop's annual planning process, units are scheduling which activities to participate in far in advance. If an activity chairperson or location becomes unavailable, the District Chair (for district events) or Council Camping & Outdoor Program Chair (for Council events) should choose a new chairperson and/or a new location.

Choosing a Location

Choosing a location can sometimes be a difficult task. Does the location provide enough parking, sufficient campsites and/or program area, does it have sanitation facilities, does it have a warming area (for cold weather outdoor events), access to potable water, restrictive Certificate of Insurance requirements, etc? Is there a cost to rent or use the facility? If applicable, do you see any reasons why the Short-Term Camping Administrator may not approve the location? All activities should be held at locations that are free or less expensive since the participants will be paying for its usage. It is not the intention of the Twin Rivers Council to pay for locations just because they are "perfect." Look for sites where Scouting can make an impact, for instance can a service project be done there? It is important to remember not all events can be held at a Council property.

For all events not using a Council property, a written contract must be negotiated between the activity's chairperson, the Council Staff Advisor, and the Scout Executive. These agreements/contracts should only be signed by the Scout Executive or their designee. These external properties will likely require a certificate of insurance ("COI"). The activity chairperson must fill out the request for a COI here: <https://247scouting.com/forms/364-coirequest>

Short-Term Camp Administrator ("STCA")

All district and Council organized camping activities must follow the standards of Scouting America's National Camp Accreditation Program ("NCAP"). These standards are designed to ensure safety and program quality. Overnight camping activities, referred to as Short-Term Camps, require the support of a Short-Term Camp Administrator ("STCA").

The STCA is a trained council volunteer who is responsible for ensuring that the planned activity complies with the NCAP Short-Term Camp standards. The STCA will work with the activity chairperson and event committee throughout the planning process to identify applicable standards and how to meet them to ensure a quality program.

For this reason, the STCA for an event should be identified as early as possible in the planning process. Once the date and preferred location for the program have been identified, the activity chairperson must email stca@trcscouting.org to request a STCA.

The STCA will walk the event's property to ensure that it is appropriate for the event; ensure that paperwork is filed and any written Scouting America approvals are completed and obtained through the Council; confirm facilities and programs are safe and in good order before starting operation; and that appropriate health, safety and sanitation provisions are made.

When the short term-camp event opens, the STCA will complete a final, on-site NCAP standards assessment and submit the required documentation to Council.

Preliminary Planning

The activity chairperson, Council's VP of Program and Council Staff Advisor will conduct a planning meeting at least 120 days prior to the event (refer to the backdating schedule). A budget is developed, promotional information and communication channels are discussed, and requests for social media posts, email blasts and/or printing/mailing are reviewed. If done properly, this meeting will reduce the amount of effort needed for your event.

Job Descriptions

Before an activity chairperson can effectively begin their task, they must first understand what is expected of them as well as the other volunteers (e.g. a Camp Health Officer, see info below). Each activity will require a detailed job description. Be sure to create a job description for each activity staff position that describes the job's function, who they are responsible to, who they are to work with as well as their responsibilities.

Camp Health Officer and Scouting America Required Forms

The activity's Camp Health Officer must have experience in the healthcare field (e.g. EMS, doctor, nurse, etc), have access to a first aid kit that meets the Council's Standing Orders, have a list of emergency contact information, as well as copies of the following forms, which are available online:

(<https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/incident-report/>):

- First Aid Log (https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/19-127wb_singles.pdf) - **all patient encounters must be recorded in this log.**
- Incident Information Reporting Tool - Use this tool to report all injuries, illnesses, and incidents during Scouting activities or on council-owned properties that require the intervention of a medical provider beyond basic Scout-rendered first aid.
- Youth Protection/Membership Infraction Information Reporting Tool - Use this tool to report all allegations of abuse, violations of Scouting America guidelines or policies, inappropriate behavior by a Scout/Scout leader/parent/other.
- Near Miss Incident Information Reporting Tool - Use this tool to report near misses in programs such as COPE and climbing activities. A near miss is an incident that did not result in injury, illness, or damage by definition but that had the potential to have done so. Near misses with clear lessons learned can bring to light opportunities to improve safety performance or program practices.

If any of the above forms are filled out for an incident at the event, they are to be turned in to either the Scout Executive or the Council Staff Advisor **PROMPTLY** after the event.

Please refer to the Appendix for more information.

Whether you are a Scout, parent, leader, or volunteer, your commitment to incident reporting supports the core values of preparedness, responsibility, and integrity that define Scouting.

Incident reporting plays a vital role in strengthening Scouting America's safety culture. By raising awareness of potential risks, reporting helps us take swift preventive actions and drives continuous improvement in our programs. Clear, concise, and thorough reports provide the insights needed to address potential hazards and refine policies—ensuring a safer and more enriching experience for all.

By reporting incidents promptly, you ensure that Scouting America continues to provide a safe environment where all can grow, learn, and thrive. Your active participation in this process reflects the values of responsibility and integrity that are at the heart of Scouting. Together, we maintain a safer, more enriching Scouting experience for everyone.

If there is an accident at the activity, an accident insurance claim form can be completed by using this link:

<https://trcscouting.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Accident-and-Sickness-Insurance-Claim-Form-Council-Unit.pdf>

If this form is handed out or provided to a unit leader or family member, a complete incident report must be completed and submitted to the Council Office.

Repeat Activities

For these activities, the Council Staff Advisor will provide the activity chairperson access to the prior year's activity's close-out report, the final budget as compared to the forecasted budget, and copies of any promotional material, registrations, and purchase orders (if applicable). These materials may be an excellent guide to run a repeat activity.

Backdating Schedule

A backdating schedule will assist the activity chairperson and their volunteer committee to keep their activity on track. This schedule also helps to ensure that items are ordered on time, materials are ready, and staff are in place to make the activity successful. A specific schedule should be created for each activity (Figure 1).

Figure 1 - Example Backdating Schedule

-210 days	Recruit activity chairperson
-180 days	Select activity location and date (if event was not already approved during the yearly calendar planning)
-150 days	Recruit activity committee and develop a staff listing with contacts
-120 days	Preliminary planning meeting with Council Staff Advisor and VP of Program
	Prepare Activity Budget using the Council-provided template
	Develop promotional materials
	Be assigned a Short-Term Camp Administrator, if applicable
-90 days	Hold first Activity Committee meeting
	Submit request to order patches, supplies, etc.
	Promote in newsletter, social media, and roundtable (promotion can be done at any point, early promotion is best,)
-75 days	Distribute social media releases and e-mails
	Submit work order request for Council office printing
-60 days	Second Activity Committee meeting
	Promote in newsletter, social media, and roundtable
-45 days	Visit, email and/or call units
	Short-Term Camp Administrator checklist submitted
-30 days	Promote in newsletter, social media & roundtable
	Third activity committee meeting
-20 days	2nd contact with units
-15 days	Regular registration deadline
	Reconfirm physical arrangements
	Reconfirm staff members and revise staff listing with contacts
-5 days	Final check on details
0 days	Activity
+7 days	Return any loaned equipment
	Submit any income collected during the activity (note: this should almost never occur...payment should be done via Black Pug registration system)
	Send thank you letters
	Submit final bills, receipts, invoices, etc.
+14 days	Host evaluation meeting
	Prepare close-out report

Activity Budget

Using the budget in last year's activity folder (if applicable), the Activity Chairperson prepares a draft budget using the Council's Budget Planning MS Excel Workbook and submits it for approval to the Council Staff Advisor and the Council's VP of Program. The activity chairperson should take into account new possible expenses associated with the activity and change in membership numbers

Activity Fees and Expenses

To determine the fee for participants, the activity chairperson should first look to see how the prior year's event, if applicable, or a similar prior event fared. Was there a surplus? If yes, what was the cause of the surplus? Did donations offset fees and would the activity receive those donations again? On the other hand, were expenses too low?

For the activity's budget, estimate attendance based on prior year or similar events. Do not plan for 100% attendance of the eligible participants. For example, if the district has 500 Cub Scouts as well as Scouts BSA and the past five years attendance at the district camporee had been 50-75 scouts, it is recommended that you conservatively plan for the same attendance.

For most activities, it is better to estimate expenses before setting a fee. If the budgeted expenses are too high, reconsider them until you can establish a reasonable fee for all participants (e.g. can you 3D print or laser etch custom trophies rather than order them from a local company who may charge you a premium)

Because the Council operates a zero-based budget system and because you have a contingency expense built in, **little to no surplus should be planned in the activity budget** as well as **the activity budget WILL NOT be approved if there is a projected deficit**. Note that a 10% contingency (i.e. to address uncertainty in revenue and expense estimates) as well as a 15% administrative fee (e.g. to pay for professional staff time supporting the event, use of Council resources such as the printer and Blackpug, and use of Council facilities, if applicable) are built into the Council's Activity Budget MS Excel workbook that you must account for. Note that these expenses can be revisited for high registration fee events (e.g. Scouting America high adventure trek, Council camporee, National Jamboree, NOAC, etc. since a % basis adds too much cost)

After reviewing the activity fee estimate, weigh the goal of keeping the cost of the event affordable versus what is “current market” (e.g. a standard Regal movie ticket can cost ~\$12 for a 2 hour movie...how does your day/weekend event fee compare?). Note that a cheap event can turn off participants just as much as an expensive one. Feel free to spend within your activity budget to give the participants a memorable experience.

The fee structure should be developed for the different types of participants (i.e. Cub Scouts versus Scouts BSA versus Adult Leaders versus non-Council participants).

Anyone from outside of Twin Rivers Council should pay a higher fee since they do not pay the Council’s Program and Insurance Fee.

Staff Fees - More complex events (e.g. Council camporee, certain district camporees, etc.) will require a separate registration for staff members (i.e. adults that are not unit scout leaders) to successfully run the event.

The Twin Rivers Council appreciates volunteers’ contributions and their support for Scouting. For short term camping (i.e. <72 hours) events with costs beyond de minimis (i.e. event costs >\$5), staff should be charged a registration fee equal to the cost of the hard goods (e.g. meals, t shirts, etc.) they’ll receive, ensuring youth and adult leaders aren’t subsidizing staff recognitions. To keep those staff registration fees as low as possible, Council contingency or administration expenses do not apply for staff. Event pricing discretion is granted to activity leaders and Council staff, with the VP of Program as the final arbiter. This provision was agreed upon unanimously at the Twin Rivers Council Executive Committee meeting on August 20, 2026.

Late Registrations - Late participant/unit registration for district/Council activities has recently become the “norm”, which makes activity planning for the activity chairperson very difficult (e.g. how much food do you buy the day before the event?, etc) and frustrating. Much of the late registration has been caused by units waiting for every last scout to register before submitting their unit registration as well as there has largely been no incentive to register early. To offset this planning challenge, many activity chairpersons have sought to close event registration early which gives them needed certainty prior to the event but has precluded scouts/units from attending.

For the 2025-2026 scout year and beyond, Twin Rivers Council is imposing a “hammer” strategy to balance the needs for units/participants and the event volunteers. To address the activity staff’s need for event certainty, a standard event fee based on the activity budget will be set for up registration initiation to two weeks prior to the event. To incentivize units/participants to register early, the event fee increases as follows:

- Between 2 weeks and 1 week prior to the event - **registration fee increases by 50%**
- Registration from 1 week prior to the event to day of the event - **registration fee is double that of the standard fee**

The goal of this higher event fee is not to provide additional funds to Council, rather it is to incentivize units to register in advance for part or all of their unit. If registrants choose to register right up to the event, they have to pay for that privilege.

Accounting Codes

Income and expense account numbers are listed in the Council's Activity Budget MS Excel workbook. These account numbers are helpful to Council staff in keeping track of specific transaction items used to operate the activity. Accounting Codes are used in the budget, on purchase request forms, purchase orders, and when identifying receipts for reimbursement. For some activities, there are additional account numbers available. The Council Staff Advisor can provide additional numbers if necessary.

Purchases

Now that you have an approved budget and registration fees are starting to come in, it is time to make the purchases for the supplies that you need for your activity. Do NOT be afraid to spend to your budgeted amounts. At this point, your goal is to have a well-run activity...NOT to make money for Council (i.e. beyond your budgeted Contingency and Administrative expenses). So long as your activity breaks even and your participants have a good time, your activity is a success. Here are some ideas on how to purchase supplies for your activity:

- Food - Look to buy in bulk to save money. Options are: Restaurant Depot, BJ's, Sam's Club, etc
- Flag Ribbons - Although these ribbons may have been a big thing for when you were a scout, they are becoming less popular with some units. Consider whether your attending units would want this ribbon to add to their unit flag (some may not even have one). There are two options here. First, some companies can make custom ribbons for your event. This will take more set up time and also add to cost. Second, there are Scouting America-produced more generic ribbons that can be purchased quickly and cost a lot less.
- Handouts - Your activity may require handouts, a leader guide, etc. Don't go straight to Staples or FedEx Office to get these printed! The Council staff can print these for you on the Council's printer at a much lower cost
- Sales Tax Exemption - for whatever you purchase, note that the items can be exempt from New York sales tax because the Twin Rivers Council is a 501(c)3 organization. Some stores (e.g. Lowe's) already have the Twin Rivers Council set up in their systems, all you need to provide is the Council's EIN = 14-1340028. *Note that the Council's EIN/tax exempt status is ONLY to be used for district/Council/Lodge events; the unit's chartered organization's EIN is to be used for all unit-level purposes.* Others may require New York Form ST-119.1 which the Council can provide
- Program Supplies: Materials can be purchased from the Council, Amazon and other vendors through the professional staff to reduce the need/burden on the volunteers to buy themselves and wait for reimbursement.

- First Aid Supplies - Before purchasing these at CVS or at a grocery store, please check with volunteers from the prior district/council event to see what, if any items need to be replaced from the last event
- Scouting America Supplies - Note that the items in the Scout store or online at scoutshop.org may not be the best price available. Council staff may be able to work with the Scout store staff to not only get a discount but have your desired item shipped in from another store
- Patches - This has been the default memento for scouts and leaders participating in activities. **You should start preparing the patch early in the planning process.** The Council will allow for patches to be ordered prior to the event so participants can have the instant recognition of having completed the activity. However, as with other items mentioned above, please order appropriately. If the prior event had 200 participants, do not order 600 patches even though you can get a lower per unit cost, rather order ~250. Per Scouting America rules, patches must have a fleur-de-lis (“FDL”) on them (either in color or “ghosted” into the background). Be mindful of copyrighted imagery as well as imagery not in line with Scouting America values (e.g. a scout not riding a bike properly...another council tried for the 2023 National Jamboree, Scouting America rejected the production of the patch). There are two different types of patches you can order for the event:
 - Activity Patch - generally, a circle patch with a button loop hanger that the scouts can wear on the right pocket of their uniform.
 - Council Shoulder Patch (“CSP”) - This patch is worn on the left shoulder of the uniform. In addition to the “FDL” requirement, the CSP must also include “Twin Rivers Council” on the patch.

The patch design and order quantity are subject to the approval of the Council Staff Advisor and VP of Program.

Note that the Kittan Lodge youth leadership must approve any Order of the Arrow swag you may plan for your event.

The Twin Rivers Council has primarily worked with these patch manufacturers, but you are not restricted to working with just them:

- AB Emblem
- Class B
- Mortiz Embroidery Works
- Artex Group
- Youth Marketing Strategies

Promotion of the Activity

Early and attractive promotional materials will make an impact in the success of your planned activity. The largest mistake an activity can make is late promotion to unit leaders. Units leaders are busy; their unit schedules fill quickly. If you want participants to register for your planned activity, then you must assist unit leaders in their unit's planning process. A flyer and social media are a great supplement to online registration on the Council's website. With the influx of social media and emails now, it's important to make that person-to-person connection with a phone call or unit visit for your event.

Draft Promotion Materials

Flyer - Before a flyer can be distributed at a roundtable or emailed to unit leaders, it must first meet a set of standards and be approved by the Council Staff Advisor. The same is true for any emails or social media posts. Listed below are guidelines to help in producing your promotion piece.

Leader's Guide - As you get closer to the activity, many unit leaders and participants will benefit by producing a leader's guide which includes information such as:

- A map of activity site and where events/stations will be held, and where to park
- Important information such as unit leaders have copies of all participants' Scouting America Annual Health and Medical Check Record with them, whether refreshments are being served, whether you need unit volunteers to help with the activity, what do with trash, where units can camp (if applicable), etc
- If it is a cold weather event, you may want to give them reminders of how participants should be prepared to be outside in the cold
- What skills the scouts should work on at their unit meetings before attending the event

Design Standards

When designing a flyer, be sure to include the following:

- The activity's name and theme
- All flyers must have the district name (if it is a district event), "Twin Rivers Council" and "Scouting America" on it. If it is a district activity, be mindful of how the name of the event could be perceived by potential registrants. If you entitle your klondike derby as the "Adirondack District Klondike Derby", Twin Rivers Council units may believe only units in Adirondack District can attend. However, if you entitle the klondike derby as the "Northern Klondike Derby hosted by Adirondack District", other units may be more willing to register for the activity.
- QR code for online registration
- Activity information:
 - **Who** - can attend (Scouts BSA, Cub Scouts, both)?, is the person they should contact with questions?
 - **What** - the event is about?, is the cost?, should they bring?
 - **Where** - the event is?,
 - **When** - is the activity? (day(s) and timeframe), is the registration deadline?
 - **Why** - should scouts sign up? will it be fun? what will they learn? are there prizes? Maybe give a link to a youtube video to show them a prior activity to get a sense of why they should register.
 - **How** - can they get their money back (i.e. the refund policy)?

Planning for Activity Risks

If your planned activity includes any of the following items, you will have to provide additional planning materials prior to your activity being approved.

Aquatics

If your activity includes activities that are on or in the water you must follow all the appropriate NCAP/safety standards. Those standards include Safe Swim Defense, Safety Afloat, Paddle Craft Safety, and Swimming and Water Rescue. Aquatics activities should be reviewed by a certified Aquatics Instructor, in consultation with the VP of Program and Council Staff Advisor.

COPE

COPE and climbing activities have very strict protocols. Scouting America protocols also cover movable climbing towers such as those provided by the Army National Guard. All such activities should be reviewed by a certified COPE/Climbing director, in consultation with the VP of Program and Council Staff Advisor. Some programs require the direct supervision by a certified COPE/Climbing director so pre-planning is vital to ensure this activity is possible.

In addition:

1. Whenever a COPE course or tower is in operation, there must be a first-aid kit, a means of emergency communication on-site, and a backup means of communication (i.e. a second cell phone or radio or other means of backup).
2. UIAA- or CEN-approved helmets must be worn by everyone in the fall zone of climbing sites, towers, and high-course COPE elements at all times, including during setup and takedown and while working with ladders.
3. Staff members and participants must understand and follow the safety rules for towers and each COPE course element.
4. Safety measures must be used for all activities. This may include but is not limited to spotting, Step Off Safely, imposing limits (e.g., restrictions on jumping, diving, and running) or other appropriate measures for the activity.
5. Fall protection or belay systems must be used for anyone whose feet are more than six feet above ground (with a few exceptions such as The Wall and The Beam)
6. No one is allowed on any element unless a director or Level II instructor is present and spotters or belayers are in place and ready to perform.
7. Participants' heads should be kept higher than their feet.
8. Because of the danger of injury, grabbing the belt or belt loops of a participant on any element should not be allowed.

Range and Target Activities (formerly known as “Shooting Sports”)

Range and Target Activities (“RATA”) covers any and all activities that use a projectile. All of these activities must follow all appropriate safety standards set by Scouting America and local as well as State authorities/agencies. These activities must also follow the standards set forth by Scouting America’s Guide to Safe Scouting. All activities should be reviewed by a certified RATA Director, in consultation with the VP of Program and Council Staff Advisor.

APPENDIX

Health Officer Responsibilities for Short Term Camp Events

The Event Chair (volunteer running an event), with the assistance of the Short Term Camp Administrator (STCA), is responsible for recruiting an Event Health Officer (EHO) during the planning phase of the event. This document is intended to be a guide to meeting Scouting America's and NYS Department of Health's requirements to maintain the health and safety of the event's participants and staff.

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Recruiting an Event Health Officer

Job Description - Event Health Officer

Be at least 18 years old, be a responsible adult registered with Scouting America and have the minimum required medical certification for the event type (see NCAP SQ-405). Supervises the health and safety of scouts, adult leaders, and staff during all hours of the event. Administers aid and coordinates emergency efforts when needed. Responds to any health, safety, and first aid needs that arise. Maintains a record of injuries and medications taken by scouts, writes incident reports for any reportable events, and submits their records to Twin Rivers Council and, if required, to national and local agencies (see Incident Reporting).

Certification Requirements by Scouting America

Excerpt from NCAP SQ-405 outlining the certification needs of a Health Officer depending on the availability of the local emergency medical system's response time:

- A. When access to an emergency medical system (EMS) is 10 minutes or less, American Red Cross Standard First Aid and CPR/AED for Professional Rescuers and Health Care Providers, or equivalents, are required.
- B. When access to EMS is greater than 10 minutes, the camp health officer must be one of the following:
 - a. Licensed physician
 - b. Licensed nurse practitioner
 - c. Nurse (RN, LPN, or LVN). Nurse's aides, Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs), and assistants do not qualify.
 - d. Licensed physician assistants
 - e. Paramedic
 - f. Emergency medical technician (basic, intermediate, or paramedic)
 - g. Emergency medical responder, i.e., current state license from the state in which the camp is located or current Nationally Certified First Responder listed on the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (www.nremt.org) or, until 2017, eligible for certification on the National Registry.

See also: Twin Rivers Council Standing Orders [\[link\]](#)

STC Health and Safety Checklist

Responsibilities of the Event Chair before the event:

- ☐ Identify the event's access to an emergency medical system (EMS) to determine the EHO's required medical certification [\[link\]](#):
 - ☐ Access to EMS is 10 minutes or less: American Red Cross Standard First Aid and CPR/AED for Professional Rescuers and Health Care Providers, or equivalents.
 - ☐ Access to EMS is greater than 10 minutes: EMT, LPN or higher and CPR/AED for Professional Rescuers and Health Care Providers.
 - ☐ Access to EMS is greater than 60 minutes: the EHO must additionally have a current certification in Emergency Care and Safety Institute Wilderness First Aid, or equivalent.
- ☐ Recruit an EHO with the proper medical certifications.
- ☐ Submit EHO's certifications and paperwork to STCA:
 - ☐ Current medical certification.
 - ☐ Current CPR/AED for Professional Rescuers and Health Care Providers.
 - ☐ Completed Camp Health Officer's Training, Day Camp and Short-Term Camps Course [\[link\]](#).
 - ☐ Signed TRC Standing Orders' Verification of Review and Understanding.
- ☐ Inform participants and staff that the Annual Health and Medical Record part A, B1, and B2 must be completed.
 - ☐ Determine if any activities (ie in-water activities) require the participants or staff to need a completed part C.
- ☐ With the assistance of the EHO, STCA, and Event Committee, complete an Activity Planning and Risk Assessment [\[link\]](#).

Responsibilities of the EHO before the event:

- ☐ Submit to Event Chair current medical and CPR/AED certifications (as above).
- ☐ Complete and submit to the Event Chair the Camp Health Officer's Training, Day Camp and Short-Term Camps Course [\[link\]](#).
- ☐ Review TRC's Standing Orders. Complete the final page Verification of Review and Understanding. Submit to Event Chair and TRC Health and Safety Committee.
- ☐ Assess the camp's planned activities for health and safety risks and recommend any changes to the Event Chair.
 - ☐ Recommend accommodations to be made for scouts and adult leaders with accessibility needs.
- ☐ Designate a Medical Care Area where participants can locate the EHO, or another communication system so all participants have access to the EHO.
- ☐ Determine the number of first aid kits needed for the event. Create a purchase order for the Event Chair and produce the first aid kits.
 - ☐ If a specialized medical equipment is needed, like an AED, coordinate with the Event Chair on obtaining it.
- ☐ Determine the screening method for scout, adult leader, and staff's Annual Health and Medical Record.
 - ☐ Unit based events (scouts participate with their unit and are supervised by their adult leaders) are screened by their unit leader who keeps their unit's Annual Health and Medical Records. This leader keeps any medications for their unit.
 - ☐ Scouts, adult leaders, and staff not attending with a unit are screened by the EHO who collects the Annual Health and Medical Record and any medications.
 - ☐ Determine where Annual Health and Medical Records can be securely stored while still being accessible in the case of an emergency.
 - ☐ Determine a locked storage location for medications to be stored.
- ☐ Prepare a First Aid Log for a council/district activity or event including day camps [\[link\]](#).
 - ☐ Two First Aid Logs shall be created, one for participants and a second for staff.
 - ☐ If the EHO will hold medications, prepare a Routine Drug Administration Record [\[link\]](#).
- ☐ Review or develop Emergency Procedures in accordance with NCAP's AO-805. Train or communicate procedures to staff.

Responsibility of EHO during the event:

- ☐ Provide first aid care for all attendees, or provide guidance to guide unit leaders' care.
- ☐ Document all first aid given by the EHO as well as any scouts, adult leaders, and staff.
- ☐ Identify injuries, ailments, or "near-misses" if they qualify as reportable events to Scouting America and NYS DOH and report them to the Council Executive and Council Physician. (see Incident Reporting)
 - ☐ Council Executive contact _____
 - ☐ Council Physician contact _____
- ☐ Maintain the Medical Care Area and the First Aid Kits being used at the event.
- ☐ If the event has collected scout's medications, provide scouts with their medication at appropriate times and log you have witnessed their administration in the Routine Drug Administration Record.
- ☐ For all events, if a scout takes a non-routine medication, like an as-needed or parent provided medication, log the administration either in the Routine Drug Administration Record or the First Aid Logs.
- ☐ At the end of the event, return all Annual Health and Medical Records and any collected medications to scouts, adult leaders, and staff.

Responsibility of EHO and Event Chair after the event:

- ☐ Close down and preserve the materials of the Medical Care Area and First Aid Kits.
- ☐ Submit First Aid Logs, Routine Drug Administration Records, and any Incident Reports to Twin Rivers Council's professional and volunteer team.
 - ☐ _____ [professional contact]
 - ☐ Health and Safety Committee at _____

Resources

National Camp Standards of Scouting America's NCAP. [\[link\]](#)

Standards relevant to EHOs: PD-110, SQ-405, HS-503, HS-504, HS-505, HS-506, HS-507, HS-508, HS-509, AO-805, AO-808

TRC Standing Orders HS-505 [\[link\]](#)

Health Officer Day and Short Term Camp Training [\[link\]](#)

Incident Reporting

Scouting America has requirements for all scouting events, from Troop outings to Council events, to report any s to Council camping, to make incident reports. What specifically qualifies as an incident can be found on the "All Things Incident Reporting" pdf or Scouting America's Incident Reporting landing page, links below, but can be summarized as Youth Protection violations and injuries that result in hospitalization or death. The most common incident report a EHO fills out would be for injuries they referred the patient to higher medical care.

Incident reports must be completed and submitted according to the timeline outlined on "All Things Incident Reporting." For common incidents happening at events, this should be within one business day after the completion of the event. Any questions should be directed to the Council Executive, who can be notified of the incident before the paperwork has been finished.

All Things Incident Reporting .pdf [\[link\]](#)

Make a report: Scouting America's Incident Report Landing Page [\[link\]](#)

Incident, Near-Miss, or Not? Flowchart: [\[link\]](#)

First Aid Kits

Scouting America has a consistent recommendation for the minimum inventory of first aid kits, which can be found in the Scout Handbook and First Aid Merit Badge pamphlet. The "Personal First Aid Kit" list is recommended for first aid kits distributed throughout the event, with the EHO carrying the "Troop First Aid Kit." First Aid kits should be expanded upon based on TRC Standing Orders, the risks of the event, and the training level of the responder.

Recommended First Aid Kit inventory [\[link\]](#)