

# Volunteer Screening Policy Update



In order to ensure that all Scouts Canada youth members continue to benefit from a safe and healthy environment in which to explore Scouting programs, the Board of Governors recently approved a number of changes to member screening policies. These changes were undertaken to address a number of opportunities identified by the external Child and Youth Protection Advisory Committee. In addition, they ensure that all members in a position of trust are aware of Scouts Canada's Code of Conduct and are knowledgeable of their obligation to plan for and deliver programs in a safe manner.

Scouts Canada's screening policies and adult registration practices are designed to clearly demonstrate our commitment to keeping our youth members safe from harm at all times.

The recently approved policy, which comes into effect on September 1, 2012, is reflected in the table below.

## New Members:

	SCOUTS CANADA MEMBERS			NON-SCOUTS CANADA MEMBERS		
	Responsible Position under 18 (e.g. SIT, AL, CYC, AYC)	Rover Scout	Scouter & other adults (e.g. BP Guild)	Parent Helper & other Adults - Regular Meeting; Day Activity (occasional)	Parent or Guardian - Overnight	Adult - Overnight
<b>NEW</b>						
Application	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Interview	Yes	Yes	Yes	Code of Conduct, expectations	Code of Conduct, expectations	Code of Conduct, expectations
Reference Check	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Signed Code of Conduct (annual)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PRC (Clean)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
VSS (Clean)	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Mandatory Training	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Child & Youth Safety	Child & Youth Safety
Supervision	Yes - 2 registered adults	No - always 2	No - always 2	Yes - 2 registered adults	Yes - 2 registered adults	Yes - 2 registered adults
Count for Ratio?	Yes - if WB1	Yes - if WB1 (Effective Sept. 2013)	Yes - if WB1 (Effective Sept. 2013)	No	No	No
Other Restrictions	No	No	No	Role explained to youth	Role explained to youth	Role explained to youth

Member Registration Steps

SIT Scouter in Training    AL Activity Leader    CYC Council Youth Commissioner  
 AYC Area Youth Commissioner    WB1 Wood Badge 1



No pending member can participate in Scouting programs or wear the Scouts Canada uniform without first completing all of the registration and screening steps noted in the table on page 1. For clarity, the term occasional refers to between three and five times annually. Non-members attending more than five meetings in a given Scouting year should be registered in keeping with the steps outlined above. Members must apply for a Police Record Check (PRC) upon turning 18.

The mandatory training program is comprised of the following:

- [Module 1 of Wood Badge 1](#)
- [Accessibility Training](#)
- [Child & Youth Safety Training](#)

The full training program is available online via e-learning (accessed through [myscouts.ca](http://myscouts.ca)) or can be completed in person.

**Returning Members:**

	SCOUTS CANADA MEMBERS		
	Responsible Position under 18 (e.g. SIT, AL, CYC, AYC)	Rover Scout	Scouter & other adults (e.g. BP Guild)
<b>RENEWING</b>			
Application	Yes	Yes	Yes
Interview	If new Group, Area, Council	If new Group, Area, Council	If new Group, Area, Council
Reference Check	If new Group, Area, Council	If new Group, Area, Council	If new Group, Area, Council
Code of Conduct	Yes	Yes	Yes
WB1 Training	Yes (Grace period until Dec. 31, 2012)	No	Yes (Grace period until Dec. 31, 2012)
PRC Renewal	N/A	3 years from last PRC	3 years from last PRC
VSS Renewal	N/A	No	No

**Other policy changes approved for future implementation**

Several other policy changes were adopted by the Board of Governors for implementation in subsequent Scouting years. These are as follows:

1. Effective September 1, 2013 new volunteers who have not completed Wood Badge 1 for their primary role will not count for ratio, and effective December 31, 2012 renewing volunteers who have not completed Wood Badge 1 will not be an active member.

SIT Scouter in Training    AL Activity Leader    CYC Council Youth Commissioner  
 AYC Area Youth Commissioner    WB1 Wood Badge 1



## Frequently Asked Questions For Scouters

### Q: What are the major changes between current policy and the revised policy as approved by the Board?

- All members over the age of 18 require consistent screening; this is a change for Rover Scouts and BP Guild members.
- Rover Scouts participating as members do not require VSS.
- All members under the age of 18 acting in a position of trust (e.g. camp helper, SIT, AL, CYC, AYC) must go through the same screening as adult screening with the exception of the police records check requirement.
- Addition of mandatory training to the registration process.
- Addition of a requirement to certify review and acceptance of the Code of Conduct each year as part of the registration process.
- Wood Badge 1 training must be completed prior to renewal of membership. This is consistent with current policy on training but differs from current registration practice.

### Q: What are the expectations of parents or guardians attending overnight activities with their own child?

Parents or Guardians attending an overnight Scouting activity with their own child are not required to provide a PRC so long as they do not have responsibility for other youth and that they are supervised by two registered adult members at all times. They must, however, complete the other screening steps as defined in the policy. Parents or Guardians assuming a position of responsibility for other youth or who act as a resource (e.g. camp cook) must be screened in accordance with the adult overnight requirements.

### Q: What are the expectations of parents or guardians attending day activities with their own child?

Parents or guardians who accompany their own child on outings or who observe Scouting activities (i.e. do not participate as a resource) do not need to be screened. A few examples of this include: attending a BP banquet, attending a hike or attending a museum tour with their own child. During all of these activities the 2 leader rule must be followed at all times, and it is important to provide

these parents with an overview of expectations surrounding safety. Parents or guardians who participate as a resource need to be screened in accordance with the Parent Helper requirements. A few examples of the Parent Helper include: leading a hike, geocaching or astronomy session, supervising during Apple Day, or managing fundraising activities such as bottle drives and Christmas tree sales.

### Q: If we ask a Venturer Scout to come help at Cub camp for the weekend but they aren't registered as an SIT or AL, do they have to be screened?

Similar to adults, there are different screening requirements depending on the type of participation. For meetings and outings the screening is the same as for any non-registered adult: only the Code of Conduct and an expectations discussion is required. For overnight camps, in addition to the Code of Conduct and expectations discussion, the Venturer Scout must complete the Child & Youth Safety Training. These Venturer Scouts do not count towards ratio, so the 2 leader rule must be followed at all times.

### Q: Can a Rover Scout participant have a criminal record? Are there any exceptions for Rover Scouts?

The exemption process for PRCs is documented in Section 3000 of Bylaw, Policies & Procedures.

### Q: Do BP Guild members have full membership rights if they are screened like Scouters?

The screening requirements apply to all adults (individuals aged 18 years and older) who apply to be members of Scouts Canada. All applicants who successfully complete all of the screening requirements are eligible to be members of Scouts Canada; this includes members of the BP Guild.

### Q: How do we ensure hired resource persons (e.g. canoe guide) are screened properly?

- For companies, confirm PRC and reference checks done for employees; review expectations re: Code of Conduct with specific guide and youth; steps should mirror non-member adult screening.
- For private individuals, complete non-member adult screening as specified in the policy.



## Frequently Asked Questions For Scouters (con't.)

### Q: What if parents want to attend activities just to watch their child from the sidelines but not participate at all? Do they need to be screened?

If parents are not participating, screening is not specifically required; however, best practice would be to provide all parents with an orientation to Scouting and an outline of the Code of Conduct at some point early in the Scouting year. We should engage parents in helping us to ensure the safest environment possible for their youth.

### Q: How long do volunteers have to complete Wood Badge 1 training for their primary role?

Volunteers must complete the full Wood Badge 1 course within their first year as a volunteer.

*Effective September 1, 2012, all volunteers must complete Module 1 of Wood Badge 1 before they can be an active member and participate in any Scouting activity as a volunteer.*

*Effective December 31, 2012, all renewing volunteers must have completed Wood Badge 1 before they can be an active member and participate in any Scouting activity as a volunteer.*

### Q: When referring to members under 18 years of age, what is a "responsible position"? Does it include youth leadership roles such as Kims and Patrol Leaders?

Members under the age of 18 who are serving in volunteer leadership roles as defined by Bylaw, Policy & Procedures (Activity Leaders and Scouters-in-Training) as well as those serving in Youth Commissioner roles are considered to be serving in responsible positions with respect to youth. Other youth leaders such as Kims & Keeos, Patrol Leaders and Venturer Scout Presidents do not require screening in order to be members of Scouts Canada and participate in our programs.

### Q: Is the Volunteer Screening paper form still available for tracking Interview responses and Reference information?

Yes. It can be found at:

<http://www.scouts.ca/sites/default/files/Volunteer-Screening-Checklist-en.pdf>



## Frequently Asked Questions For Parents

### Q: What is Scouts Canada's policy on parents/guardians participating in Scouting activities?

We encourage parents to get involved in their child's Scouting activities. In fact, the majority of our volunteers are parents. This can mean assisting at an event or becoming a Scouter. However, Scouts Canada believes that it is important for all individuals working with our youth to have proper training and screening to ensure the safest experience for our members .

### Q: What is a parent's/guardian's role at a Scouting activity?

The primary responsibility of Parents/Guardians lies with their own child. Parents/Guardians are often asked to help as a program resource person (sharing a skill or hobby) or bringing snacks for Beaver Scouts or Cub Scouts outings. Parents are required to complete screening (as per the Non-Scouts Canada Member screening chart) and are always under the supervision of at least two registered Scouters. Parents are permitted to participate in 3-5 Scouting activities per year before they must become a Scouts Canada member.

### Q: What can parents expect if they need screening to participate in a day time activity?

There are three simple steps to screening parents – it won't take more than 10 minutes.

- Scouters will discuss what is expected of parents at the activity.
- Parents will need to read, understand and sign our Code of Conduct annually.
- They will introduce the parents to the rest of the youth and explain their role at the activity.

### Q: What screening is required for parents/guardians to attend an activity over night?

Requirements are the same as if attending a day time activity with one addition. All adults staying over night must watch the Child and Youth Safety training video.

- Scouters will discuss what is expected of parents at the activity.
- Parents will need to read, understand and sign our Code of Conduct annually.
- Scouters will introduce the parents to the rest of the youth and explain their role at the activity.
- All adults need to watch the Child and Youth Safety training video.

### Q: When does a parent need proof of a clean Police Records Check?

Non-members participating in more than 5 activities in a given Scouting year should be registered as a Scouts Canada volunteer,

following the screening steps for Scouts Canada Members, which includes providing a clean PRC and VSS. Parents who strictly observe the activity are not considered to be participating.

### Q: Has Scouts Canada changed their policy with regards to Non-Scouts Canada Members?

Scouts Canada has had a screening policy in place for non-members for many years. It has recently been revised and strengthened, however. Society's view of child safety has evolved from a time of little recognition to one of heightened awareness. We place great importance on creating a fun and safe environment for our members, especially children and youth. As part of its 2012 Child and Youth Safety Plan, Scouts Canada has strengthened its non-member policy to reflect today's realities. We are all responsible for keeping youth safe.

### Q: What is Scouts Canada's policy on resource people recruited to help during day time activities?

Whether it's the fire department, someone from the orienteering club or any other resource person, people who participate in day events need to be screened exactly the same way as a parent:

- Scouters will discuss what is expected of resource people at the activity
- Resource people will need to read, understand and sign our Code of Conduct annually
- They will introduce the resource people to the youth and explain their role at the activity

### Q: Are resource people also screened if they stay over night at a Scouting activity?

Yes, if resource people are participating in an over night activity they must:

- Scouters will discuss what is expected of resource people at the activity
- Resource people will need to read, understand and sign our Code of Conduct annually
- Scouters will introduce the resource people to the youth and explain their role at the activity
- Provide a current and clean police record check with vulnerable sector screening, verified by a Commissioner
- Watch the Child and Youth Safety training video.

### Q: Do parents and other resource people need to sign an individual release and hold harmless agreement?

No, not if they have been properly screened.

