

BSA Membership Standards Policy

The Boy Scouts of America, in February, embarked on the most comprehensive listening exercise in its history to consider the impact of potential changes to its membership standards policy on the organization and gather perspectives from inside and outside of the Scouting family. This review created an outpouring of feedback from the Scouting family and the American public, from both those who agree with the current policy and those who support a change.

At the Boy Scouts of America's National Annual Meeting on May 23, the voting members of the National Council approved a resolution to remove the restriction denying membership to youth on the basis of sexual orientation alone. The resolution also reinforces that Scouting is a youth program, and any sexual conduct, whether heterosexual or homosexual, by youth of Scouting age is contrary to the virtues of Scouting. A change to the current membership policy for adult leaders was not under consideration; thus, the policy for adults remains in place. As the National Executive Committee just completed a lengthy review process, there are no plans for further review on the matter. The Boy Scouts of America will not sacrifice its mission, or the youth served by the movement, by allowing the organization to be consumed by a single, divisive, and unresolved societal issue.

The policy change is effective January 1, 2014, allowing the Boy Scouts of America the transition time to communicate and implement this policy to its approximately 116,000 Scouting units.

For more information on the Boy Scouts of America's membership standards, please visit www.bsamembershipstandards.org

Four things everyone in our organization should know about the BSA Membership Policy:

1. At the Boy Scouts of America's National Annual Meeting on May 23, the voting members of the National Council approved a resolution to remove the restriction denying membership to youth on the basis of sexual orientation alone. A change to the current membership policy for adult leaders was not under consideration; thus, the policy for adults remains in place.
2. This policy change is effective on January 1, 2014, allowing the BSA the transition time needed to communicate and implement this policy to its approximately 116,000 Scouting units.
3. America's youth need Scouting, and by focusing on the goals that unite us, we can continue to accomplish incredible things for young people and the youth we serve.
4. Scouting has been a safe haven for youth and will continue to be a safe haven. Nothing has changed.

Membership Policy

The following is the membership standard for youth members of the Boy Scouts of America, effective Jan. 1, 2014:

Youth membership in the Boy Scouts of America is open to all youth who meet the specific membership requirements to join the Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, and Venturing programs. Membership in any program of the Boy Scouts of America requires the youth member to (a) subscribe to and abide by the values expressed in the Scout Oath and Scout Law, (b) subscribe to and abide by the precepts of the Declaration of Religious Principle (duty to God), and (c) demonstrate behavior that exemplifies the highest level of good conduct and respect for others and is consistent at all times with the values expressed in the Scout Oath and Scout Law. No youth may be denied membership in the Boy Scouts of America on the basis of sexual orientation or preference alone.