

IOLS
October 24-25, 2026
Information for Participants

Course description

Scouting's outdoor program is a critical part of how the Scouts BSA program develops young leaders. While camping or participating in other outdoor events, your Scouts will challenge themselves to learn skills they've never tried before or maybe didn't think they could do. In doing so, your Scouts will work together as a team to overcome adversity when things don't go as planned; this is truly the magic of Scouting that no other program does as well.

To safely offer Scouting's outdoor program, however, you need a certain set of skills and knowledge – and that's why you're required to take Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills (also known as "IOLS") Training. You'll learn how to build a fire, use an axe, cook outdoors, use a map and compass, responsibly care for the outdoors, and much more. Even if you weren't a Scout as a kid, you'll come out of this course looking and acting like a seasoned camper. This course, combined with Safeguarding Youth Training, Scoutmaster-Specific Training, and Hazardous Weather Training will make you a "fully trained" Scouts BSA leader.

Course Prerequisites

As part of your IOLS training you need to have completed the training listed below either on line or in person. If you have not yet completed these courses, please do so. Once completed, please forward your completed training certificates to me at jmirvish@jermprod.com or bring hard copies to the training on October 24.

- Youth Protection Training (YPT)
- Scoutmaster Specific Training (SST),
- Hazardous Weather,
- Safety Afloat, and
- Safe Swim Defense.

All of these courses can be found on the my.scouting.org web site and must be completed to receive full credit for the IOLS course. Although not required, we would also recommend that you take the on-line Drive Safely course as well.

The trained certificates for these courses have to be emailed at least 72 hours prior to the IOLS course date otherwise you must bring hard copies with you to check in. No latitude. You have to have these to receive credit for completing the course.

Hard Copy Paperwork to bring with you to the course at check in:

- Completed BSA Annual Health and Medical Record form, Parts A, B1, and B2. Required for **ALL** participants for events less than 72 hours in duration. You can [click here](https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/ahmr/) or go to <https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/ahmr/> to download a copy. We will not allow you to take the course without a completed BSA AMHR form.

NOTE: YOU MUST BRING A HARD COPY OF THE AMHR WITH YOU. OUR MEDICAL OFFICER WILL COLLECT FORMS AT CHECK-IN AND RETURN THEM AFTER THE CLASS. WE WILL NOT ACCEPT A DIGITAL COPY (SHOWING UP ON YOUR PHONE) AS THE PAPER MUST BE FILED AND READILY AVAILABLE TO MEDICAL STAFF. WE HAVE NO ABILITY TO PRINT A DIGITAL COPY ON-SITE.

- Please remember that the AMHR require a copy (front and back) of your insurance card and information on vaccinations, especially tetanus. **YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE WITHOUT INFORMATION ON YOUR LAST TETANUS VACCINATION.**
- Hard copies of the training certificates discussed above if they have not been submitted 72 hours prior to the course.

Meals

- **BRING A SHELF-STABLE LUNCH THAT DOES NOT REQUIRE HEATING / COOKING FOR SATURDAY AND SUNDAY. THE COURSE DOES NOT PROVIDE A LUNCH EITHER DAY, AND YOU WILL NOT HAVE TIME TO LEAVE THE SITE TO GO GET LUNCH.**
- Each Patrol will prepare its own dinner Saturday evening and breakfast Sunday morning with ingredients provided by the course.
- The course staff will provide snacks on both Saturday and Sunday, a Dutch oven dessert Saturday night, and stuff for instant coffee and tea. (You may want to bring sweeteners for coffee as we won't be stocking all the options (sugar, Equal, Splenda, etc.).
- **IT IS IMPORTANT TO LET US KNOW IN ADVANCE OF THE COURSE IF YOU HAVE ANY DIETARY RESTRICTIONS.** Because we won't see your AMHR until the morning of check-in we have attached to this letter a participant Data Form. Please complete the form and return it to our medical officer by October 13. Based on the information we receive in advance, we make adjustments to our food purchases, recipes, and provide instructions to the Patrol Leaders as to how to accommodate dietary restrictions within their Patrols.

Weekend Times, Dates, and Other Info:

- Saturday, October 24
 - This course is being run at the same venue as the Cub Scout BALOO course. To ensure a smooth check-in process, registration and check-in for IOLS attendees will begin at 8:30 AM. Please do not arrive before 8:30 AM as the BALOO course check-in will still be going on. You will be assigned to a Patrol upon arrival.
 - The course starts with an opening flag ceremony promptly at 9:30 AM. No kidding, that's when we start. We won't wait for you. Important teaching point.
 - Each Patrol will be provided with a Patrol Box containing cook stoves, cook kit, dining fly, 5-gallon water jug, trash bags and 3-pot method clean up kit.
- Sunday, October 25
 - We expect dismissal on Sunday to occur between 3:00 PM and 4:00 PM. We always strive to push through as expeditiously as possible and if we can get you out earlier, we will, but plan for the given dismissal time.

Stuff to Bring With You

1. Wear your full uniform to register. After flags you can change to a Scout-related activity shirt or long / short sleeve T-shirt that you bring with you. (See clothing notes below.)
2. Boy Scout Essentials: Personal first aid kit; a filled water bottle; flashlight/head lamp; trail food or snacks; pocket knife, matches and/or fire starters; sun protection (sun screen SPF 30 or greater; a hat); whistle; compass; 25 feet of rope / paracord); appropriate clothing and rain protection (see below).
3. Appropriate clothing: Please note that this course is being conducted in the late fall. Daytime and evening temperatures are likely to be cold. Participants should plan and pack accordingly. Layering will be critical to adjusting to the fall weather variations. You should plan on bringing temperature-appropriate base layer clothing (e.g., long underwear), inner layers (e.g., long sleeve moisture wicking shirts, long pants, a sweater or fleece inner jacket), and a wind/rain resistant outer shell / jacket. Please keep in mind that you will be sitting for periods outdoors, so hats, gloves, wool socks, etc. may also be appropriate to the conditions. A wide-brimmed hat may also be a good idea if it is sunny. Also, we do not control the ground-keeping at the Coast Guard Station, and tall grass is usually a haven for ticks. Also, please keep in mind that for the orienteering activity / hike, we will be going through the woods and a few places that sometimes have standing water / soggy ground. Consider also having high wool socks and/or ankle high hiking shoes. Regardless, you should do a tick check before bed Saturday night and when you get home Sunday.
4. Camping Equipment: The basic plop and drop front country camping stuff is required,

i.e., tent, ground cloth, sleeping bag, sleeping pad or cot, sleeping clothes. An extra wool blanket may be worth tossing in your car in case you need it at night or to wrap up in during outdoor instructions when you are sitting outside.

5. As noted above, you will need a shelf-stable bag lunch for Saturday that does not require cooking. Although there will be some snack items and some items for hot beverages (*e.g.*, tea bags) you should bring some of your own items and a spice kit to suit your taste buds.
6. Personal hygiene kit.
7. A mess kit (shallow bowl, cup, and utensils) that you will use for eating, not cooking. Please do not bring disposable items. You will clean your personal mess gear after every meal using the three-pot method.
8. Any standard folding outdoor or camp chair, because you'll be spending about a third of the time sitting down.
9. Your Scouting notebook (a dedicated spiral-bound or loose-leaf binder that you keep for all your Scouting training and activities, with blank pages so you can take careful notes) and something to write with.

How The Course Will Run

- First you will sign in, go through medical screening, and pay any money that's due. Please arrive on time. You will need time to set up your tent, and we will be tenting by patrol, so you won't be able to set-up until you've checked in and received your patrol assignment.
- You'll have a short walk from your car to the campsite.
- Check in with your assigned Troop Guide and then set up your tent in your assigned patrol area.
- We'll start on time, so don't be late. This is an important teaching point.
- We'll be operating as a Troop with New Scout Patrols. The number of patrols will depend on the number of registrants we have. At a minimum there will be two patrols. You'll be assigned to one of the New Scout Patrols, and you'll rotate as Patrol Leaders, cook, cleanup, etc. By Sunday graduation you will be a much more informed and engaged Scouter. You will go back to your unit with a better understanding of the skills required to deliver an outdoor program and why and how the Outdoor Program is an essential component of meeting the Mission of Scouts BSA.
- The course will be in a seminar format. Ask questions. Ask any and all questions. Discuss your concerns. We're here only to teach you. By the way, ask questions.
- The daily schedule will be provided to you directly by your Troop Guide and / or through your Patrol Leader.

The next courses you should take are Wood Badge and Back Country Outdoor Leader Skills (BCOLS). Go to the NCAC website to sign up for the next offering, and do great things for the youth of our nation.

See you soon, stay well.

Yours in Scouting,

John Mirvish
Scoutmaster
Accotink Bay District IOLS Course Director
jmirvish@jermprod.com

**IOLS-BALOO DATA FORM
ACCOTINK BAY DISTRICT TRAINING
NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA
COUNCIL FALL 2026**

Please email this form to paulalabriola@yahoo.com preferably NLT October 13, 2026. Please also bring a hard copy of this form and your BSA A/B Medical Form to Check-in (A&B — no doctor certification required)

ALL QUESTIONS MUST BE ANSWERED
(enter n/a if not applicable)

Name						Date of Birth		
BSA Membership Number					District			
Unit Type		Unit Number		Position				
Emergency Contact Name								
Emergency Contact Phone								
I am registering for		IOLS - Course			IOLS - Staff			
I am allergic to the following:								
Acute issues that do not appear on your BSA Medical Form:								
I cannot eat the following (check all that apply):	Pork	Beef	Chicken	Fish	Eggs	Gluten	Lactose	
	Other (please list)							
Last tetanus shot	Date:							

I recognize the importance of having the information immediately available in case of emergency and agree to notify the Course Director if any of the above information changes.

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE: _____ Date: _____