

## 2023 Annual Membership Fee Updates

### **New Annual Membership Fee Process Announced – BSA Will No Longer Prorate Fees for New Members beginning August 1, 2023.**

Beginning August 1, 2023, all new youth and adult members who join Scouting will be enrolled in a 12-month membership cycle and BSA will cease prorating fees. Both youth and adults will pay the full annual membership fee and will renew their membership on the anniversary date of joining Scouting. All proration of membership fees will be eliminated. Each registered member of the BSA will receive an email notice with a registration renewal link beginning 60 days before the anniversary month they joined Scouting. Unit leaders will receive a copy of the email and should stay engaged in the membership renewal process just like rechartering.

Effective **August 1, 2023**, the BSA will implement the following national membership fees which were approved by the National Executive Committee:

- **\$80** for Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing and Sea Scouting participants (\$5 increase)
- **\$60** for all adult volunteers (\$15 increase to provide general liability insurance and enhanced background checks)
- **\$25** one-time joining fee for new program participants in Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing and Sea Scouting (Not prorated and no change in fee)
- **\$30** for Scoutreach (Not prorated)
- **\$25** for Merit Badge Counselors (New Fee applies only for Merit Badge Counselors not already registered as leaders)
- **\$50** for Exploring participants Youth & Adult (\$5 increase)
- **\$100** for a unit charter/affiliation fee (no change in fee)
- **\$15** for *Scout Life* magazine

### **Key Updates for Charter Renewals**

- Units with 2023 expiration dates- No changes, you will renew charter and membership as always.
- Units with February 29, 2024, expiration- Unit will automatically lapse after 1 month. Renew your charter by the end of March. Your unit and members will still have a February 2024 expiration date.
- Units with March-December 2024 expiration dates- You will renew your charter and membership under the new system.

### **Membership Renewal Process:**

- All membership in the BSA will be renewed on a 12-month membership cycle.
- Each member, youth, or adult will renew their membership on their anniversary month. Many will have an anniversary that is the month their unit renewed last, and any new members will renew 12 months after they joined.
- Membership renewals will be completed either by credit card with a 12-month renewal payment from the individual, by a scout unit that has elected “Unit will pay all our members renewals” option, or by a manual payment at the Council Office.
- By eliminating prorated, it will streamline the rechartering and membership renewal process for units and councils.

### **Unit Charter Renewal**

To simplify the unit charter process, membership renewals will no longer be tied to the unit charter process; beginning for units expiring in March 2024; units will still renew their charters separate from their membership. The process will be much simpler as the system will validate the unit leadership and verify the unit has the minimum required youth and adults. The COR and council will approve the leadership, the unit will approve the charter, and the unit will submit the annual unit charter renewal fee of \$100.

### **New Members:**

- Beginning August 1, 2023, all new youth and adult members will join for a 12-month membership cycle. Both youth and adults will pay the full annual membership fee to join Scouting and will renew their membership on the anniversary month of joining.
- New members joining after July 31, 2023, will begin their annual membership renewal in July 2024. This will be tied to the anniversary month of joining.
- Each member of the BSA will receive an email notice with a registration renewal link beginning 60 days before the anniversary month of joining.

### **Existing Members:**

- Beginning August 1, 2023, all youth and adult membership renewals will be for a 12-month membership cycle.
- Charter Renewal will remain unchanged for units due to charter through February 2024. March 2024 units will be the first to renew in the new process.
- Charter Renewal change will take effect for units starting March 1, 2024, to allow all units renewing in 2023 a complete renewal cycle.
- Renewing members will renew their membership on their anniversary month.
- Each member will receive an email renewal notice reminder beginning 60 days before the anniversary month.

### **Merit Badge Counselors:**

- Beginning in August 2023, merit badge counselors who are not registered as an adult leader in a unit will pay an annual \$25 fee.
- Merit badge counselors are not registered in a unit position and therefore are not allowed to attend overnight Scouting activities/events.

## FAQ

**1. Q: Why is proration being eliminated?**

**A: BSA is an annual program and has incredible value for youth and families. By** eliminating proration this allows the BSA to keep the annual membership fee low for all families. The annual membership fee went from \$75 to the new fee of \$80 starting August 1, 2023.

**2. Q: We prorate many of our youth in the Fall every year, will that still be a possibility?**

**A:** No, there will not be any prorated fees. All new members and all renewals will be on a 12-month membership renewal.

**3. Q: When will the new annual membership fee be implemented?**

**A:** Starting August 1, 2023, any new member or renewing member will pay the new non-prorated registration fee. *(See new fees on page 1 and an infographic was provided to the council)*

**4. Q: We would like to have all unit's charter in December, is this possible?**

**A:** Yes, the unit can still renew in whatever month you choose, the only change is, members are not directly tied to the charter renewal. **Example:** If you start a new unit in April, you can still short term the unit charter to December (the 6 months to 18-month rule will still be enforced for units).

**5. Q: We want all our members to renew in December each year, can we still do that?**

**A:** No, the membership renewal will be in the month the person joined. In the first few years of this new process, most of the renewals will be in the month you historically rechartered your units in, but over time we expect that will shift to the August – October period as these are the month's most new members join.

**6. Q: We have a highly organized charter renewal process in our council, how will this change?**

**A:** All scout units will still charter annually; they will need to meet the leadership and members standards of the BSA. Payment of the unit charter fee and COR approval will still be required. All adult leaders must be approved by the COR and the council. Membership renewal is a separate process and done annually by the individual/unit.

**7. Q: How will membership renewal work?**

**A:** All members will be sent an email 60 days out from their anniversary month. Upon joining, the person will be asked to enter their Credit Card information and then in future years the renewal will be an "opt-out" process similar as a subscription or recurring gift. You will be reminded of your membership expiring and you can opt-out, renew your membership or the unit will have the ability to pay for their members.

**8. Q: How will the unit leadership know who is due to renew and who has renewed in their unit?**

**A:** Both youth and adult leaders will be included in email notifications to the unit Key-3 monthly as to who is due to renew and who has renewed. In addition, the roster in [Scoutbook](#) and [My.Scouting](#) will indicate the registration status of the member.

**9. Q: What happens if someone's email bounces and is undeliverable?**

A: Email notifications are sent to the individual, COR, Committee Chair, and the Key Leader (Cubmaster/Scoutmaster/Advisor/Skipper); the unit should be able to identify that an individual is due to renew and can work with the individual to complete their renewal. Units are encouraged to update email contact information in [Scoutbook](#). Should someone miss this process the council can pull a **Non-Renewed Membership Report** in [My.Scouting](#).

**10. Q: Will the Council Registrar be notified when someone's membership has ended due to lack of payment?**

A: The council is able to run the **Non-Renewed Membership Report** and see expired youth and adults.

**11. Q: How will the "Unit Pays" option work and not double collect fees?**

A: The unit will have the option to change the setting in [My.Scouting](#) which will tell the system that member renewals are due, and the unit will pay for it, like many units do today with recharter. The unit would have a Credit Card or ACH pre-set and each month membership fees are due; they would automatically be paid. A "pay at the council office" option will also be available. This will only be for renewals, not new members. The unit will have an "opt-out" option to not renew a member too.

**12. Q: After the two months of email notifications, a Scout/Adult does not have their registration paid for by the individual or the unit, will the unit leader and individual get contacted stating that they can no longer participate?**

A: There will be a one-month lapse period and then the Scout/Adults will be dropped. A notification will go to the individual/parent and the unit indicating that the person is dropped.

**13. Q: Will a Scout be covered by insurance if they still show up to meetings after their registration period expired for lack of payment?**

A: It is important that all youth be registered in a timely manner. This ensures coverage for both general liability insurance and secondary accident and sickness insurance. All youth participating in BSA programs are covered by insurance. A Scout must register to continue participation in the program.

**14. Q: We collect Council Program Fees through online registration and rechartering, will we still be able to do that?**

A: Yes, Council Program Fees can be collected for new members and renewals, but these will also be a 12-month fee only, there will not be any proration for council program fees. Per the [BSA Rules and Regulations](#), a local council may charge an annual registration or program fee to youth members, adult program participants and Scouters whose primary registration is with the council in an amount **not to exceed** the amount of the applicable individual registration fee for their position established by the Executive Committee. ([BSA Rules and Regulations: page 14](#))

Merit Badge Counselors do not pay the council program fee, just their annual \$25 BSA registration fee.

**15. Q: If someone needs financial assistance and the Council can help, is there a mechanism for the Council to pay a portion or all the registration?**

A: **As it is today** this process will not change. This would be a local council decision on how they would like to fund Scouts who need financial assistance.

**16. Q: A member is a month late with their annual membership renewal...will they need to complete another application to "rejoin"?**

A: There is a one-month lapse period. Those who fail to register will need to complete a new application for membership.

**17. Q: Our council does not allow adults to pay online, will we be “forced” to change that process to accommodate the new registration system?**

A: No, online registration is encouraged to help simplify the annual membership process. However, the council sets its own policy on adult applications for membership.

**18. Q: Are Merit Badge Counselors now required to pay for membership?**

A: Yes, Merit Badge Counselors are required to register, take Youth Protection, and pay an annual \$25 fee. Merit badge counselors are not registered in a unit position and therefore are not allowed to attend overnight Scouting activities/events.

**19. Q: Does a Merit Badge Counselor qualify as a unit position?**

A: No, the Merit Badge Counselor is not a unit position. If a merit badge counselor wants to participate in unit activities and camp overnight activities, they must be registered in a qualified unit position.

**20. Q: Can someone register as a Merit Badge Counselor for \$25, and then multiple as an Assistant Scoutmaster for free instead of the \$60?**

A: No, an adult must register in a qualified unit position and then they can multiple as a Merit Badge Counselor, the Merit Badge Counselor position is not a unit position and therefore are not allowed to attend overnight Scouting activities/events.

**21. Q: Will there be a guide or tool kit to explain the new renewal for leader?**

A: We will create a video that will walk leaders and charter organizations through the new charter process.