



Northern Lights Council



Volunteer Recruitment And Development

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Volunteer Screening Procedure

Scouts Canada recognizes the importance of adult volunteer members in such roles as program leaders, group committee and council volunteers within its organization. Therefore, Scouts Canada requires that all applicants be screened by Scouts Canada in accordance with the following five step screening procedure.

Step 1 - Application

All adults applying to become volunteers members must complete a Scouts Canada "Application for Membership and Appointment of Adults" form. Signing the application constitutes a personal commitment to the Mission and Principles and adherence to the Policies and Procedures of Scouts Canada. Job descriptions that emphasize Scouts Canada's commitment to the safety and protection of members and the safekeeping of resources will be provided to applicants.

The application also serves to ensure that adults will take, to the best of their ability, reasonable precautions to ensure the safety and well being of those youth entrusted to them, as well as their own personal safety. When we accept this application, we commit ourselves and the organization to support this individual in their volunteer role.

Step 2 – Interview

Each volunteer applicant will be interviewed in accordance with Scouts Canada interview guidelines that are set out in detail in Scouts Canada's Volunteer Recruitment and Development Procedures. The following minimum standards will be followed:

- the confidentiality of all applicants will be respected;
- there will be at least two interviewers present at the screening interview;
- a review of the acceptability of the job description by the applicant;
- a determination whether this person is acceptable to work with youth;

- Councils are responsible for ensuring the secure storage of records of interviews, reference checks and Police Record Checks (PRCs)
- **Invitation**
 - Once you have identified a candidate for a role and established the person's potential suitability, ask them if they would consider helping out.
 - Have some printed materials readily available that outline the role; a job description would help.
 - Outline the steps involved in our screening process, and our commitment to providing safe programs.
 - Exchange phone numbers and set a time for follow-up.
 - Don't recruit volunteers at registration time. This type of last-minute appeal makes it more difficult to be selective.
 - Make sure you get the message across that **SCOUTING IS FUN!**
- **How to Prepare**
 - Read over the candidate's application. Discuss with the other interviewer what you know about the candidate and how the person came to be invited or applied for the Scouting role.
 - Decide in advance who will ask which questions, and note any special questions or information that needs clarification.
 - Assemble the materials you will need for the interview (Job Description, Duty of Care).
- **Where to Meet**
 - Conduct the interview in the candidate's home if possible, especially for program roles. Here, you'll be able to meet the other members of the person's family who may become involved directly or indirectly. As well, the home can provide clues to an individual's interests and character.
 - Consider meeting in an office or other work setting for administrative or council roles. The meeting place should be comfortable for both the candidate and the interviewers. Wherever you hold the meeting, be sure you're on time; it's an important sign of respect.

- **Probe Relevant Information**
 - Don't be afraid to add to your planned questions when you want to seek greater detail about the candidate's life or previous involvement with youth. Do this whenever you hear a reference to some activity or attitude that might support acceptance, or lead to a concern.

- **Realistic Time Commitment**
 - Don't tell someone that the task will only take two (2) hours a week. Be Honest! Recruiters should give a realistic estimate of the time commitment. We must provide possible candidates with all of the information they need to make an informed decision

- **Warning Signs**
 - During an interview, you might become uneasy or feel a nagging sense of anxiety. This might occur when you recognize any one (or a combination) of the following:
 - gaps in personal history,
 - not answering questions directly,
 - an over-interest in children, or a lack of adult relationships,
 - belief that hitting children is okay,
 - a greater interest in what they will get out of the program than in developing youth,
 - prejudice towards certain groups of people,
 - harsh or inappropriate language in conversation,
 - questioning the need to have a reference to God in the Promise,
 - lack of time for volunteering and development,
 - inability to work as a team member.
 - Occasionally, a person may say things that shock you or cause you great discomfort. Here's an example. "I love working with children; they're some of my best friends. Children are the only people who really understand me." If you hear a "bomb" like this, ask for clarification. Keep probing until your fears are either calmed or piqued even more. In other words – **TRUST YOUR GUT FEEL**
 - If it becomes clear that you will not be able to recommend the person for membership, end the interview.

- **Selection Interview Guide/Questions**

- During the interview, tailor role-specific questions to the specific task you have in mind.
- Keep your questions really relevant to the position and to Scouting membership. Human rights legislation does not allow discrimination based on gender, religion, sexual preference, language and race.
- Plan out your questions so most of them are “open-ended.” These encourage further elaboration. Instead of asking, “Do you enjoy working with kids?” ask, “What do you enjoy about working with kids?”

Step 3 - Reference Checks

All volunteer applicants must provide Scouts Canada with three character references. The interviewers will contact each of the references and record the information received. The interviewers will then conduct such further inquiries as may be reasonably necessary.

- **Tips**

- Be professional and polite. This is an opportunity to represent Scouting to the community.
- Introduce yourself and ask for their assistance with the candidate’s application.
- Explain what position the candidate has applied for in Scouting.
- Establish what type of relationship the reference and candidate have, and how long they have known each other.
- Ask the reference for opinions relating to core responsibilities.
- Last and very important question:
 - “Would you be comfortable having this person work closely with your child, or a child close to you?”

Step 4 - Police Record Checks

- Why PRC’s? - Many people equate “volunteer screening” to Police Record Checks. But this is just one step in Scouting’s comprehensive strategy – and not the most important step. Police

Record Checks have, however, already screened out some potentially problematic volunteers.

- What is a PRC? - A PRC is, as the name implies, an authorized search of police records. Scouting demands it to help determine the suitability of an individual for a volunteer or paid role involving a potential risk to people or property. How this check is handled and what information is checked varies significantly between police services, as does the cost.
- What Information Will You Receive? - All Police Record Checks involve a search of the RCMP's database (CPIC) for criminal convictions. Some police services will go much further and scan all available records, including those held only by local police, for information regarding everything from criminal convictions to registered complaints. The information passed on to those requesting the Police Record Check is equally varied, from an acknowledgement that a relevant record exists to a complete printout of everything the police know about a person.
- Once members have completed the PRC process the first time, this step need not be repeated with every role change unless the group or council considers it prudent. However, every three years, or more frequently if necessary, councils will request updates of PRCs.

Step 5 - Approval by Council Executive Director

All new adult members must be approved for membership by a Council Executive Director who must take the appropriate measures to ensure the new adult has been properly screened. The CED's signature must appear on all new adult application forms signifying the process has been properly completed.

Note: The Screening Procedure must be totally completed prior to an adult becoming a registered member and being in contact with youth members.

Volunteer Development

The Volunteer Recruitment and Development process is founded on the premise that Scouts Canada will recruit people with the appropriate attitudes, skills and abilities. Self-development will enhance their skills and knowledge, increasing their effectiveness. This ongoing support provides additional opportunities to ensure that the right person is in the right job.

After identifying the development needs of new Scouters, we must satisfy these in a manner and method convenient to the new Scouter. Councils offer development in a variety of formats. The Learning Objectives enhance our ability to support development even on an objective-by-objective basis. Many objectives require a demonstration of abilities.

Orientation

Adult volunteers new to Scouting deserve to receive clear expectations for their role and the support they need to be successful. Orientation provides basic information about the role to be filled. Recognize the unique set of strengths and experiences each new volunteer brings to their Scouting role and identify the sources of support, service and development available to complete the volunteer's knowledge and skill set.

Program Information

To ensure new volunteers are comfortable and productive in their new role, some basic program information is needed. Part of the orientation will be to ensure the volunteer receives the Program Standards and Section Leader Handbook before taking on any role.

Woodbadge Basic

Leaders recruited to all sections require certain common basic knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to be able to contribute to the delivery of a quality program. The leader must demonstrate that he or she has met the following Core Learning Objectives (available at www.nlc.scouts.ca) in the following six subject areas required for all program leaders in all sections):

- Scouts Canada's Mission and Principles
- Basic Program Planning

- Basic Program Delivery
- Basic Leadership Skills
- Basic Administration
- Basic Outdoor Skills

Once a Leader demonstrates competency in the Core Learning Objectives, he/she then undertakes more specific development in the Section Specific Learning Objectives (available at www.nlc.scouts.ca), including the objectives of the specific section program, program requirements, working with youth in that section and delivering the section program.

Note: When a leader is recruited to a different section, that leader completes only the Section Specific Learning Objectives for the new section.

All leaders are expected to achieve the Core Learning Objectives and the Section Specific Objectives for the role into which they have been recruited within their first year of involvement.

Woodbadge Advanced

Key section leaders recruited to all sections require certain common advanced knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to be able to motivate and lead their section teams in the delivery of a quality program. Leaders must demonstrate that they have met the following Core Advanced Learning Objectives (www.nlc.scouts.ca) in the following three subject areas:

- Advanced Program Delivery
- Advanced Leadership Skills
- Advanced Outdoor Skills

Once a Leader demonstrates competency in the Core Advanced Learning Objectives, the leader or advisor undertakes more specific development in the Section Specific Advanced Learning Objectives (www.nlc.scouts.ca), including the objectives of the specific section program, program requirements, working with youth in that section and delivering the section program. When a leader is later recruited to a different section, that leader is required to complete only the Section Specific Advanced Learning

Objectives (and Core Advanced Learning Objectives #15 & #16 if required) for the new section.

Key section leaders are expected to achieve Core Advanced Learning Objectives and the Section Specific Advanced Learning Objectives for the role into which they have been recruited within their second year of involvement.

Typical developmental and learning activities may be undertaken in one or more formats, including on-the-job development and experience, self-study, peer interaction, being coached, or by participating in training modules or a formal developmental course.

Coaching/Mentoring

Typically, experienced Scouters serve as a coach or mentor for new Scouters, introducing them to new skills and information they need to learn during their first few months and helping them develop the skills and competencies as identified in the Basic Learning Objectives. As new Scouters become more proficient in their tasks, this Scouter may assume a mentor's role, becoming someone on whom the Scouter calls upon for advice.

Each Scouter will work with a coach/mentor to determine which skills they have and which they need to develop. This means that as long as the Scouter demonstrates to a coach/mentor that they can perform the competencies identified, they may achieve their accreditation.

Commissioners at their appropriate level will select coaches/mentors, based on the coach/mentor's expertise in certain program proficiencies. Commissioners or their designates will also assign coaches/mentors to Scouters.

Resources

Scouts Canada and Northern Lights Council has many resources to provide it's volunteers with the necessary information to create quality programs.

Scout Shop

- Program Builder CD-ROM
- Section Leader Handbooks
- JUMPSTART programs
- Grizzly Creek Solution

Council Website (<http://www.nlc.scouts.ca>)

- A Guide to the Honours and Awards of Scouts Canada
- Application for Membership and Appointment of Adults
- Basic and Advanced Learning Objectives
- Camping/Outdoor Activity Procedures
- Duty of Care
- How to Protect Your Child from Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide
- Job Descriptions
- Program Standards
- Scouts Canada's Volunteer Recruitment and Development Handbook (includes job descriptions)
- Section Leader Orientation Tool (include local information)
- By-Law, Policies and Procedures

Other Resources (Most recommended)

- Scouts Canada Website (<http://www.scouts.ca>)
- MacScouter (<http://www.macscouter.com>)

Recognition

At the end of each year, every volunteer should be thanked for their contribution, recognized for their service and asked about his or her plans for the following year. Many volunteers will accept an invitation to commit another year to their current roles. For others, there may be new positions offering new challenges, while others may 'retire' from Scouting.

The people responsible for supporting volunteers are typically the best people to provide recognition and help with the decision on further involvement. Scouts Canada has many formal and informal means of recognition.

Awards, Thank You, Appreciation

We must recognize the contributions of all volunteers. By showing our appreciation, we increase the probability of retaining them for a longer period of time. Appreciation takes many forms; the National Honours and Awards Program is just one example. Visit your local Scout shop for a variety of thank you gift ideas.

Job Enrichment/Supplementary Challenges

Why not reward volunteers for good work by offering them opportunities to accept new challenges? While this is a more subtle form of recognition, people feel appreciated when others recognize their skills and abilities. In effect, what you are saying is, "You have shown an ability to get things done. We would like to offer you more opportunities."