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2025 LEADER GUIDE

LEADER GUIDE OBJECTIVE

This 2025 Membership Recruitment Leader Guide is designed to assist and support your unit, whether Pack or Troop, with your Membership Recruitment Campaign. This document will discuss the available materials, tools, and training along with other assorted ideas that Pathway to Adventure Council (PTAC) offers to help you prepare and recruit new youth and adults for your unit.

These materials are suggestions that can be used as standalone or in support of other tools and materials, whether from National or what has been successfully used by your unit in the past. These materials are in support of PTAC's Mission and Vision Statements to offer our youth the opportunity to instill lifetime values and foster character development and values-based leadership skills. Remember, it all starts with Cub Scouts and continues through Scouts BSA, and can continue with our Crews, Ships, Posts, and Clubs. Please reach out to your District Membership Team, District Executive (DE), or your Unit Commissioner if you have any questions or need assistance.

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RECRUITMENT READINESS - ONLINE & UNIT

Social media is where the families are as it is an online world where people make decisions about everything based on what they see online, including Scouting. What is the first step I need to accomplish to ensure my unit's Recruitment Readiness? Recruitment Readiness is essential for any unit to have a successful recruitment no matter the time of your campaign. First, you need to ensure that your online presence, your unit's BeAScout Pin, is active and current, which includes all pertinent contact information since your BeAScout Pin allows families to locate units within their neighborhood or community. Does your unit pin reflect the proper contact information updates that occurred as part of your unit renewal? A good "Rule of Thumb" is to verify your pin and toggle set-up accuracy every 3 months, especially if you have not received any online Leads or Applications during that timeframe. You can find the instructions regarding your pin set-up within the BeAScout Pin – Invitation / Application Manager Training slide deck located at the following link:

www.pathwaytoadventure.org/membership-resources/ under **Membership Training Section**

Your next step is to determine those recruitment tools and materials you want to utilize followed by developing your timeline to support your recruitment campaign. The easiest approach to create a timeline is to "backdate", where you work backward from your recruitment event date to determine when you need to start your activities, especially if any materials have a turnaround time. Any flyers, Geo-Fencing, and Customize Video requests need a 3-week turnaround time for proper support from our district volunteers and professionals. An example of a "Backdating" timeline can be found on page 11 or within the Membership Requirement Training slide deck. Additional timeline examples can be found in the Peer-to-Peer Recruitment and SPL and PLC Recruitment Letter sections of this Leader Guide. Your District Membership Chair and DE are always available if you have any questions or issues at any time during your recruitment campaign.

APPLICATION & INVITATION MANAGER

Scouting America offers an online application process for youth and adults that can be completed from start to finish without a single piece of paper changing hands. This allows prospective members and leaders to either ask for additional information about your unit before joining or register and pay in a way that is convenient for them, and it creates a more efficient and user-friendly registration experience for units, districts, and councils. This online presence is linked through your BeAScout Pin and is known as Invitation Manager and Application Manager. The following bullet points provide a brief explanation and expectations about each of these tools. Additional information about these tools is contained within the **BeAScout Pin – Invitation / Application Manager Training** slide deck under **Membership Training Section**.

www.pathwaytoadventure.org/membership-resources/

Invitation Manager

- These "Leads" are from parents requesting additional information about your unit, please respond to these families within 72 hours.
- Leads with 60 days of inactivity are automatically closed out by the system, which means we have lost that opportunity to have that child join your unit and experience Scouting.

Application Manager

- Online application submitted by the parents to have their child join your unit.
- Adults can also submit an online application to join your unit.
- Please turn around these applications within 72 hours.

SPECIAL NEEDS SCOUTING (SNS)

Are you an "Accepting Unit"? Selecting the right Scout unit is a big deal for all involved. By the time a family comes to your unit, they may have experienced a lot of rejection from other groups and experienced situations where their child was not accepted by others. The parents feel the same rejection as the child, so they may be nervous when seeking acceptance from a new group like yours. We need to convey the message that in the Pathway to Adventure Council, **"Scouting is for everyone"**.

Every unit has a different culture because leadership is different in each unit. The overall goals are the same, but the process of "how to get there" is different. Therefore, aligning the family's and the unit's expectations is an important part of selecting a unit. This is true for all Scouts, not just those with physical and invisible learning differences.

Experience confirms that it is not only possible to support a youth with these differences in any unit, but that this benefits everyone in the unit. This opportunity exposes the Scout to helpful association in a "typical" environment. This also drives home the fact that the Scout is like the others, only needing to adjust here or there for this particular "thing". "Out of the box" thinking will need to be leveraged. You usually find that this Scout will far surpass others in certain skills. Leverage those so that the Scout feels like his or her contributions are valued within the unit.

As for the unit, both the adult and youth leaders should get the necessary background information on the youth's condition soon after the youth with a disability joins the unit. A systematic way to accomplish this is to have a Joining Conference with every Scout that joins your unit. Parents may need encouragement to share information about their child. Parents or guardians are the best people to explain those conditions so bring them in to talk with your unit's leadership if they are willing. Only discuss with others what has been authorized by the family. Privacy and discretion must be upheld in these situations.

One of your first steps is to read the information within the Special Needs and Disabilities Inclusion Toolbox, which is located in the Resources Section at www.pathwaytoadventure.org/special-needs-in-scouting/. Next would be to review your BeAScout Pin set-up and does your pin contain information about your unit leadership's awareness and your meeting location accommodations for those with physical and invisible learning differences. If you have any questions, you can contact either your District SNS Committee Chair or your DE.

NEW MEMBER COORDINATOR POSITION

Sustaining strong membership in a unit by reaching new families to invite them to join your unit and then engaging these new and existing youth and their families so they feel welcome and want to stay. The role of the New Member Coordinator (NMC) is to ensure that these keys to success take place in your unit. The 3 main responsibilities of an NMC are to **1) Share the Benefits of Scouting, 2) Coordinate Unit Recruitment, and 3) Guide the Joining and Welcoming Process.**

The NMC position in your unit can be held by a single adult or you can have a team that could handle each of the 3 responsibilities. The Unit NMC would work with their District Membership Chair, DE, and Unit Commissioner to ensure the success of their unit, especially around their recruitment campaign. For information about the New Member Coordinator position, including how to access the 2 Training Modules from National, please go to:

www.scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/councils/new-member-coordinator/

Additional information about this position is contained in the New Member Coordinator slide deck and NMC Booklet located at the following link: www.pathwaytoadventure.org/membership-resources/ under Unit Membership Tools Section

12-STEP CUB SCOUT MEMBERSHIP PLAN

The purpose of the following bullet points is a guide to assist you, along with the support of your DE, District Membership Team, and Unit Commissioner, so you can develop your Cub Scout Recruitment Plan. A copy of the 12-Step Cub Scout Membership Plan is located through the following link: www.pathwaytoadventure.org/unit-resources/recruitment-materials/

- Complete your Dates & Location Information.
- Identify the level of Access at your school (defines the Plan Option).
 - Use the information listed in the Access Levels Defined.
- Identify your New Member Coordinator (NMC).
 - If your unit does not have an NMC, then identify a parent(s) to help.
 - Are they willing to be your unit's NMC?
 - If yes, get that new NMC registered and trained.
- Set your Unit Goals.
- Select the Plan Option (Plan A, Plan B, Plan C).
- Select recruitment efforts from either those provided in this tool or on our Membership Website or from past successful unit-specific events (WHAT column).
- Complete the information in the WHO & WHEN columns to properly execute your plan.
- Review the plan for robustness.
- Has your unit utilized Geo-Fencing & Customized Recruitment Videos for your event?
- Identify what support is needed from our District / Council Membership Teams & Commissioner Corps.
 - Membership Team & Commissioner Corps: Please report this support to your District Membership Chair & DE so we can record and provide the materials prior to their target date.
- Recruitment is a series of many contacts to schools, parents & youth.
 - Promote – Promote – Promote since "People Join People".
 - Remember to share the benefits of Scouting with the parents & **Follow-up!!!**
- "Think Outside of the Box" for successful recruitment.
- Be creative and develop a solid plan that includes collaboration with your Charter Partner.
- Identify those collateral materials you will need to support your Recruitment efforts.
 - Examples: stickers, yard signs, flyers, postcards, and bookmarks.
 - If you are going to have a booth, then work through your DE to see if a pop-up, table assets, and feather banners are available.
- Is your unit's information current within your BeAScout Pin & is your unit set up to accept Online Applications?
- First, the units will need to know the date when your schools are currently scheduled to open for the Fall and know their School Access Requirements. : If unsure of your school's access requirements, please contact your principal during your recruitment planning to verify these requirements.
 - Examples: mask, capacity, & what cleaning will be required after your recruitment event.
 - With that date and additional information, you can work backward to determine all your tasks.
- You might need to have your unit develop its recruitment by utilizing the Plan B (Limited Access) option.
- Focusing on Plan B, provides the best flexibility for our units so they can adapt their plans if there are changes to our School's Access Requirements (moving to Plan A: Full Access or Plan C: No Access).

ACCESS LEVELS DEFINED:

- **Plan A: Full Access:** Ability to distribute flyers, post yard signs **AND** conduct a Youth Talk at school (live or video).
- **Plan B: Limited Access:** Ability to distribute flyers, post yard signs **OR** conduct a Youth Talk at school (live or video).
- **Plan C: No Access:** Cannot distribute flyers, post yard signs **AND** conduct a Youth Talk at school (live or video).

RECRUITMENT MATERIALS & TOOLS

(Please allow a 3-week lead time for requests to your DE)

COLLATERAL MATERIALS

- Yard Signs
 - Please use the Split Yard Sign if you have school access issues. This Yard Sign has one half of the sign that says to Join Scouting and the other half is blank. This blank side allows for your unit to hang a flyer in a page protector with unit specific information, which can then be placed by the entrance of your school. Please include your Unit Specific QR Code so when a parent can take a picture of this code, they will be taken to BeAScout.org where they can join your unit with an Online Application. You should also consider adding your unit's website address so they can access more information about your upcoming recruitment event.
- Adventure is Calling: All materials listed below are available on the PTAC Membership Website or through your DE.
 - Stickers, Postcards, Peer-to-Peer Cards, Bookmarks, Gliders, Yard Signs & Flyers: Boys Only, Girls Only, Boys & Girls, and Bilingual.
 - Link: www.pathwaytoadventure.org/unit-resources/recruitment-materials
- #Adventure On! – 2025 Membership Resources from National are available at the BSA Brand Center Link: <https://www.scouting.org/recruitment/>, then click on the BSA Brand Center button

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

- Pop-ups, feather banners, tables, tablecloths, polycore cutouts & sandwich boards available for use – please coordinate with your DE.

CUSTOMIZED VIDEOS

- Use these videos on your Facebook page as a replacement or supplement to youth talks at our schools.
- Please submit the SmartForm request and allow 3 weeks prior to the event date for a customized video, if submitted less than 3 weeks, you will get a standardized video. Please consider setting your Facebook page to Institutional (Private) to control who can see who is in your group.
- <https://tinyurl.com/CustomVideoPTAC>

GEOFENCING

- Units should consider placing a "fence" around your school, church, park district, and grocery store within your neighborhood or community.
- In Spring, Packs should also consider placing a "fence" around Day Care Centers in your neighborhood and follow up with either flyers or postcards, this approach sets the table for your Fall recruitment.
- Please submit the SmartForm request 3 weeks prior to event date to allow for turnaround of your request so you can capture the full 14-day boost.
- <https://tinyurl.com/GeofencePTAC>

PEER TO PEER RECRUITMENT

PLAN & PROMOTE

The following bullet points are a suggested timeline to follow and tools to use when planning a Peer-to-Peer recruitment event. Please remember, a "Dynamic Recruitment" includes both youth recruiting youth and parents recruiting parents during your recruitment event.

PLAN OR IDENTIFY A "HIGH IMPACT" SCOUTING EXPERIENCE & TOOLS NEEDED FOR SUPPORT.

This experience should be a meeting or event where that guest (youth & parent) will:

- Find interesting, exciting, and memorable.
- Participate in a hands-on activity where your guest can get to know the Scouts better and learn about your unit.
- Please, if possible, avoid a Pack Night or a Troop meeting.
- Remember: Parents will want to know about the benefits for their child and see their child have fun at your event.

Additional Support Tools to use with Peer-to-Peer Recruitment

- Customized Videos
 - Use it on your Facebook page as a replacement or supplement to youth talks at your school. Please consider setting your Facebook page to Institutional (Private) to control who can see who is in your group.
- GeoFencing
 - Use this tool as a supplement that can support your recruitment event.
- 12-Step Membership Plan
 - Helps to identify your unit's specific tasks and assign responsibility to an individual for successful recruitment.

PLAN & PROMOTE-PROMOTE-PROMOTE

3 Weeks Prior

- Ask existing Scouts to make a list of everyone they know who could be in their unit.
- Packs need to involve the parents in this process with their child.
- Packs should have parents recruit the parent of the youth on your list.
- Troops should utilize the SPL & PLC Recruitment Letter document, which contains a suggested checklist to assist with your recruitment planning.
 - **Link:** www.pathwaytoadventure.org/unit-resources/recruitment-materials
- Challenge the Scouts:
 - To include youth who may not be in their immediate circle of friends.
 - Do not decide for anyone else that they "can't" or "wouldn't" join.
- **This 3 weeks prior timeframe also applies to requests to your DE, which allows for proper lead time for Flyers and other Recruitment materials, including requests for Customized Videos and Geo-Fencing Support**

2 WEEKS PRIOR

- Add any new names since the list was last made and clean up duplicates.
- Assign every name on the list up to 2 current Scouts who know these individuals.
- Scouts each fill out a Peer-to-Peer Card (legibly) for each guest they will invite.
- During the following week, every prospective scout on the list is enthusiastically invited to the upcoming event or activity, and given a business card with the event name, time, date, location, and "By" (invitee) filled in on the back.
 - Add your unit's QR Code, found in Invitation Manager, in the provided space on the back of the Peer-to-Peer Cards
 - **Print at home or work with your DE.**
 - **Cards are located at:** www.pathwaytoadventure.org/unit-resources/recruitment-materials/
- Every prospective Scout gets a personal invite from 2 current Scouts.
- Make person-to-person invitations and use social media (includes your BeAScout Pin) as a supplement, but not as the initial invite.

1 WEEK PRIOR

- Scouts personally remind those who have been invited.

DAY OF EVENT

- Do not forget that one last reminder.

AT THE MEETING

- Make prospective youth & parents feel totally at home as soon as they arrive.
- Get youth & parents directly involved in activities right away.
- Have an adult volunteer (New Member Coordinator) present to meet with the parents.
 - Explain Scouting and answer their questions while the youth are participating.
 - Use the Why Scouting Tool to explain the benefits of Scouting for their child.
 - Give them youth applications (and adult applications if interested).
 - Youth & Adults can also apply online.
 - Share promotional brochures.
- Be sure to announce the upcoming cool activities and outings they can go on to increase their interest in joining your unit.
- Personally invite them back to your next meeting/event.
- Collect registrations that night.

FOLLOW-UP

- During the next two weeks, Scouts should:
 - **Personally thank your friends & parents for coming.**
 - **Ask guests how they liked the event.**
 - **Share what they like most about Scouting.**
 - **Invite them back.**
- Leaders respond to all questions/requests for information that parents expressed at the meeting.
 - Encourage parents to encourage Scouting to their child.
- Get the "Commitment to Join" completed.

PEER-TO-PEER BUSINESS CARDS: FRONT & BACK OPTIONS

Print at home or work with your DE

Pack Boys
(Front)



Pack Girls
(Front)



Pack Generic
(Front)



Pack
Boys & Girls
(Front)



Back - Same
for All Cards



Scouts Boys
(Front)



Scouts Girls
(Front)



Scouts Generic
(Front)



Scouts
Boys & Girls
(Front)



Peer-to-Peer Recruitment Incentives

These Peer-to-Peer incentives (one per youth) are for those existing Scouts who recruit a new Scout

- A new Scout cannot be a Cub Scout who crosses over to a Troop

Cub Scouts

- Kindergarten – 2nd Grade: Sunglasses
- 3rd – 5th Grade: Engraved Pocket Knife

Scouts BSA

- Engraved Pocket Knife <or>
- Gift Certificate to the Scout Shop

Youth or Unit Leader can submit the 2025/2026 Peer-to-Peer Recruitment Coupon to your local Service Center or submit the Smart Form Online Here: <https://tinyurl.com/PeerRecruitmentPTAC>

- You will receive your incentive upon confirmation of the approved application for that new Scout
- All Peer-to-Peer incentives are at the Council Service Centers

RECRUITMENT INCENTIVES FOR NEW & EXISTING YOUTH

CUB SCOUTS (NEW SCOUTS):

- Packs should consider giving all families who attend your recruitment event, whether they do or do not complete an application, a copy of their Pack Calendar and an invite to your next event
- Packs should let their new families know that they will be receiving a Welcome Kit from Council once their child's application is live in the system.
- New Family Welcome Kit will include: New Scout coupons for the Chicago Wolves & Dave & Busters, About the Council card, Special Needs in Scouting Brochure, Scout Shop Discount, Cub Scout Sticker Sheet, Scout Family Bumper Sticker, invitation to the Council Camporee (based on registration date), and more!

SCOUTS BSA & PACKS (EXISTING SCOUTS):

- Please see the Peer-to-Peer Recruitment section for those incentives for those Scouts who recruit a new Scout (one per youth)

UNIT INCENTIVE (PACKS ONLY) – DRIVE FOR 5:

- Recruit +5 new Scouts over their 3-Yr Rolling Average
 - District Membership Chair and DE will have this information
- Have a Registered & Trained New Member Coordinator
- Hold a Recruitment Event + provide your recruitment date to your District Membership Chair & DE
- All new Scouts complete their Bobcat requirements within 60 days
- All new Scouts recruited through out the year will be included in your Pack's 2024 Drive For 5 Incentive, which runs through December 15th
- Meet these incentives and our Pack receives Pinewood Derby Cars for all Scouts in the Pack!

AVAILABLE MEMBERSHIP TRAINING

The following Membership Training PowerPoint slide decks are available on our Membership Website, for your reference, using the following link: www.pathwaytoadventure.org/membership-resources/ under **Membership Training Section**. Additional information will be available at your August, September and October Roundtables, along with our monthly PTAC Newsletter.

NEW MEMBER COORDINATOR

- This course will help you learn about the Leadership position(s) of the New Member Coordinator for Packs, Troops, Ships and Crews. The purpose of this position is to help onboard and Welcome your new & existing Scouts and their families to your unit. Sustaining strong membership in a unit depends on reaching your audiences to invite them to join the unit and partly on engaging new & existing members and their families so they feel welcomed and want to stay.

RECRUITMENT TOOLS

- Recruitment goes beyond holding either a Fall or Spring recruitment event in your Pack or Troop. In this slide deck, you will learn how our tools can help support your year-round recruitment, which includes the use of a New Member Coordinator.

ACCLIMATING THE NEW SCOUT AND THEIR FAMILY TO YOUR UNIT

- This slide deck will help you re-think how we can help acclimate your new & existing youth and their families to your unit. This approach can lead to increased retention (youth & adult) along with parental involvement, which could lead to growth in membership. We will explain the "Why" followed by the "How" and the "What" behind the need to make everyone feel welcome.

USING TECHNOLOGY TO HELP YOUR UNIT GROW

- This slide deck will cover how the Membership Tools can support your unit's recruitment. The primary focus will be on Peer-to-Peer Recruitment, Customized Videos, Invitation & Application Manager, BeAScout Pin, Geo-Fencing / Facebook along with Slack, Next Door & Patch.com. This course is not designed to train you in how to use these technologies discussed during this session.

BEASCOUT PIN + INVITATION / APPLICATION MANAGER

- You will learn the importance how the BeAScout Pin, Invitation and Application Manager tools and how they support each other. These tools allow families to locate units within their neighborhood or community, reach out for additional information (Lead) or they can join by filling out an Online Application.

YOUTH RECRUITING YOUTH

- This slide deck is geared toward the youth in our Troops, Crews and Ships. This slide deck covers the why and importance our registered youth should be recruiting their friends to join their unit. We show the available Council and National tools and materials for future recruitment opportunities.

JOIN NIGHT RECRUITING "TOP 5" RULE OF THUMB

1. Promote-Promote-Promote
 - a. "People Join People".
 - b. Parents want to know about the benefits for their child and their family.
2. Time with your child
 - a. The Scouting program offers this opportunity for our parents.
 - b. Engage youth & parents while talking about upcoming activities.
3. Tone down the Scouting
 - a. Wear your Class B uniform to a recruiting event & let parents know that you are also a volunteer.
4. Get the "Commitment to Join" completed.
5. Follow-up

WELCOMING / ONBOARDING BEST PRACTICES

We need to remember that our Families & Scouts (new & existing) need to be "Seen, Heard, & Validated (Included)". The following bullet points share some of the Welcoming & Onboarding best practices. A New Member Coordinator plays a key role in your Welcoming and Onboarding process for your unit. Additional information about this position is contained in the **Acclimating New Cub Scouts & Parents to your Pack** slide deck located at the following link: www.pathwaytoadventure.org/membership-resources/ under **Membership Training Section**.

- Be that friendly face & let families know you are there for them and they can count on you.
- You do not know all the answers but promptly follow-up or direct them to those who could answer that question or concern.
- Make a "Top 5" list of things a new youth and their family would need to know (**DO NOT OVERTHINK IT!!!**)
- How are your unit leadership's awareness and your meeting location accommodations for those with physical and invisible learning differences?
- Follow-up and monitor new & existing Scouts & their families (Participation & Advancement)

ADDITIONAL RECRUITMENT SUPPORT LINKS

- Council Website: www.pathwaytoadventure.org/unit-resources/recruitment-materials/
- Aaron On Scouting Blog:
<https://blog.scoutingmagazine.org/2021/11/15/why-normal-friend-activities-are-such-an-effective-recruiting-tool/>
- National's Unit Playbook:
<https://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/unit-recruiting/sign-up-night-unit-playbook/>
- National "Landing" page (includes Recruitment Resources plus Current and Past Webinars):
<https://www.scouting.org/recruitment>
- Cub Scout Chat Live on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/scoutingmagazine/>

BACKDATING TIMELINE EXAMPLE

Timeline (Weeks)	Week: -8	Week: -7	Week: -6	Week: -5	Week: -4	Week: -3	Week: -2	Week: -1	Target Date	Week: +1	Week: +2
Recruitment Event	Create Plan		Progress Checkpoint			Progress Checkpoint			Event	Welcome & Follow-up	Follow-up & Assessment
BeAScout Pin Assessment & Facebook page		Is Pin Current?			Add Video						
Youth Talk								Youth Talk			
Customized Video		Submit Smartform						Give to Principal			
Flyers				Submit Request				Handout Flyers			
Yard Signs, Polycore Cutouts & Sandwichboard					Submit Request			Place in targeted locations			
Geo-Fencing		Submit Smartform			Drop your Fence (14-21d)						
Invitation Engine				Submit Smartform		Plan	Send out Ask	Reminder	Final Reminder		
Peer-to-Peer					Plan	Handout Invite	Reminder	Final Reminder			

PEER-TO-PEER RECRUITMENT COUPON



2025/2026 Peer-to-Peer Recruitment Coupon

Existing Scout Name: _____

Unit (Type / Number): _____

District: _____

Coupon Submission Date: _____

New Scout Name: _____

Unit (Type / Number): _____

New Application Submitted (Please designate – Paper vs. Online): _____

Registrar Confirmation Application Approved Date: _____

Unit received incentive upon coupon submission Yes / No / N/A (Circle answer)

Select the specific incentive: Sunglasses / Knife / Scout Shop Certificate (Circle Answer)

Signature of adult receiving youth incentive: _____