

Guide to Safe Scouting



XI - Medical Information

It is recommended that all members of the Boy Scouts of America have periodic medical evaluations by a licensed health-care practitioner.* In recent years, in an effort to provide better care to those who may become ill or injured and to provide youth members and adult leaders a better understanding of their physical capabilities, **the Boy Scouts of America established minimum standards for providing medical information prior to participating in various activities. They are classified as follows:**

Class 1:

Includes any event that *does not exceed 72 consecutive hours*, where the level of activity is similar to that normally expended at home or at school, and where medical care is readily available. Examples: day camp, day hike, swimming party, or an overnight camp. Medical information required is a *current health history signed by parents or guardian*. The health history form currently found on the back of the BSA individual applications or the Class I Personal Health and Medical Summary found on page 3 of form No. 34414 (Personal Health and Medical Record) meets this requirement. Den leaders, Scoutmasters, team coaches, and crew Advisors should review these and become knowledgeable about the medical needs of the youth members in their unit. Forms must be updated annually. They are filled out by participants and kept on file for easy reference.

Class 2:

Includes any event that *exceeds 72 consecutive hours*, where the level of activity is similar to that normally expended at home or at school, and where medical care is readily available. Examples: resident camping, tour camping, and hiking in relatively populated areas. Medical data required is a *annual health history signed by parents or guardian supported by a medical evaluation completed within the past 36 months by a licensed health-care practitioner*. The Personal Health and Medical Record - Class 2, No. 34414, is designed primarily for resident Cub Scout and Boy Scout summer camp but could be used for any Class 2 activity. Youth members and adult participants under 40 years of age use this form. (See Camp Health and Safety for additional information on Class 2 application.)

Class 3:

Includes any event involving strenuous activity such as backpacking, high altitude, extreme weather conditions, cold water, exposure, fatigue, athletic competition, adventure challenge, or remote conditions where readily available medical care cannot be assured. Examples: high-adventure activities, jamborees, Wood Badge, and extended backpacking trips in remote areas. Medical information required includes *current health history supported by a medical evaluation within the past 12 months performed by a licensed health-care practitioner*. Form 34412 is to be used by youth for Class 3 activities. Adults age 40 or older will use this form for Class 2 and Class 3 activities. See form No. 34414, Personal Health and Medical Record, for more information.

Philmont Scout Ranch and Florida Sea Base require the use of their special medical form by all youth and adults because of the strenuous nature of the activities taking place there.

It is recommended that unit leaders have a complete medical history and permission slip for every participant attending each Scouting activity. The medical history form and permission slip, in most cases, will allow emergency medical treatment to a youth member in case of injury or illness when a parent or guardian cannot be contacted.

* Examinations conducted by licensed health-care practitioners, other than physicians, will be recognized for BSA purposes in those states where such practitioners may perform physical examinations within their legally prescribed scope of practice.

Immunizations

Verification of the following protections is strongly recommended before participation in activities conducted by the Boy Scouts of America:

1. Tetanus and diphtheria toxoid within the past 10 years
2. Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) since first birthday
3. Trivalent oral polio vaccine (TOPV); four doses since birth

Life-Threatening Communicable Diseases

Local Scouting units and their chartered organizations traditionally determine their own membership, absent any legal constraints. Accordingly, units and sponsoring institutions should determine the feasibility or desirability of allowing youth or adult members who have or are suspected of having a life-threatening communicable disease to participate in Scouting activities. A youth member who is unable to attend meetings may continue to pursue Scouting through the Lone Scout program.

Sun Safety

The American Academy of Dermatology advises the following protection tips against damaging rays:

- Limit exposure to sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. when the sun's rays are the strongest.
- Generously apply sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 and reapply every two hour when outdoors, even on cloudy days.
- Wear protective, tightly woven clothing, such as a long-sleeved shirt and pants.
- Wear a 4-inch-wide broad-brimmed hat and sunglasses with UV protective lenses.
- Stay in the shade whenever possible.
- Avoid reflective surfaces, which can reflect up to 85 percent of the sun's damaging rays.

Religious Beliefs and Medical Care

The following is the policy of the Boy Scouts of America regarding medical requirements:

- **Medical examinations for camp attendance are required of all campers for the protection of the entire camp group. The immunization requirement is waived for persons with religious beliefs against immunization.**
- **All Scouts and Scout leaders need to learn first aid, not for their own use, but for service to others who may require it. A Scout or leader may ask to be excused from first-aid instruction, but no advancement requirement will be waived except as indicated.**
- **Requirements 1 and 5 for the Personal Fitness merit badge call for examinations by a physician and a dentist with appropriate follow-up recommendations. This may be set aside on presentation of a certificate by the Scout's parents and a proper church official that a definite violation of religious conviction is involved.**

Prescriptions

The taking of prescription medication is the responsibility of the individual taking the medication and/or that individual's parent or guardian. A Scout leader, after obtaining all the necessary information, can agree to accept the responsibility of making sure a Scout takes the necessary medication at the appropriate time, but BSA policy does not mandate nor necessarily encourage the Scout leader to do so. Also, if your state laws are more limiting, they must be followed.