

Guidance from the BSA regarding the American Legion

Background

Over time there have been several misconceptions that have arisen regarding if and when certain American Legion uniform items can be worn with or on the BSA uniform by Scouts/Scouters in American Legion chartered BSA units. Indeed, we have provided inaccurate and incomplete information in the past.

The confusions and inaccuracies were so wide spread across the country that a nationwide teleconference was held between the American Legion National HQ, the BSA National HQ and all Department Scouting Chairs in November 2018 and October 2019 to address these and other issues.

Since the BSA owns all of the rights to its uniform and how to wear it, the BSA representative at that teleconference took all of the issues to the BSA National Executive Board for answers. The BSA NEB policies were recently revealed to our Legion National HQ which has passed them on to each of the Department Scouting Chairs. Following are the policies issue by issue.

American Legion Cap

Pursuant to the Rules and Regulations of the Boy Scouts of America Article X, Section 4, Clause 4(a), which states: "No alteration of, or additions to, the official uniforms, as described in the official publications, or the rules and regulations covering the wearing of the uniform and the proper combinations thereof on official occasions, may be authorized by any Scouting official or local council or any local executive board or committee, except the Executive Board of the Boy Scouts of America after consideration by Council Operations."

Therefore the Legion cap is **NOT** an authorized accessory with the BSA uniform.

BSA Uniform Guidance

BSA National Headquarters has had these questions from multiple individuals who want to show their affiliation as a chartered organization representative, be it FFA, NRA, or TAL. The general rule is that badges awarded by organizations other than the Boy Scouts of America **may not be worn on an official BSA uniform**. There are some allowances to this rule, the most obvious being the wearing of religious emblems and temporary badges on the right shirt pocket.

Scouters who fill multiple roles should also not mix and match, but should wear the uniform for the position they are representing. Therefore the position patch, shoulder loops, and temporary patch should match. Meaning if you operate as a Scoutmaster, then wear the Scoutmaster patch and the unit headgear and neckerchief associated with your unit. However, if you are attending BSA events as a representative of your department/district/county/post then use the guidelines listed below.

The following are deemed acceptable means of representing The American Legion in a Scout uniform, **while serving as a Legion Scouting Chair**:

Department Scouting Chairmen – Wear the BSA Area Committee badge on the left sleeve, gold (national/regional) shoulder loops, & The American Legion/Boy Scout patch (item 720.415) suspended from the right pocket as a temporary patch.

District Scouting Chairmen – Wear the BSA Council Committee badge on the left sleeve, silver (council/district) shoulder loops, & The American Legion/Boy Scout patch (item 720.415) suspended from the right pocket as a temporary patch.

County Scouting Chairmen – Wear the District Committee badge on the left sleeve, silver (council/district) shoulder loops, & The American Legion/Boy Scout patch (item 720.415) suspended from the right pocket as a temporary patch.

Post Scouting Chairman – Wear the Chartered Organization Representative badge on the left sleeve, Blue/Forest Green/Orange/Green (unit level) shoulder loops, & The American Legion/Boy Scout patch (item 720.415) on or suspended from the right pocket as a temporary patch.

Once your tenure in one of these positions is complete, then you revert back to a unit scout leader role. Non-unit scouters may wear neckerchiefs and headgear separate from unit scouters, who are encouraged to wear the headgear and neckerchief associated with their unit.

Note that the above uniform modifications are permitted **only for those serving in an American Legion Scouting Chairman role**. By exclusion, **unit leaders and individual scouts are NOT authorized to wear the patches** and may only wear the shoulder loops for the BSA program in which they are registered. In a separate correspondence from AL National, it was indicated that the American Legion 3" round patch, Item 720.03, could also be worn as a temporary patch instead of the 720.415.

PLEASE NOTE – do not use the captions under these patches in the Legion Flag and Emblem catalogue/website as an authoritative reference. We were advised that they are written incorrectly and will be corrected soon.

In another non-uniform policy decision:

The American Legion listed as a resource for merit badges

Some Legionnaires have identified that The American Legion was not listed as a resource for the citizenship merit badges. While The American Legion is listed as a resource in other areas such as Rifle Shooting and Shotgun shooting, the citizenship badges only identified other organizations. This oversight is now with the BSA national merit badge committee, which is working on including The American Legion as a resource in future publications of the three citizenship merit badges (community, nation, and world). We will keep you apprised with any updates.

Bylaws for Scout Units

We have previously, and erroneously, recommended bylaws for Scout units. That was incorrect.

For clarification: Bylaws are self-governing regulations for incorporated entities to manage their affairs. Since BSA units are neither incorporated nor self-governing, bylaws are NEVER appropriate and will not, and cannot, be recognized as having any authority. Legion Scout Units must follow the bylaws of their chartering Post.

Scout units are encouraged to draft pamphlets or handbooks providing standards, expectations and daily working information for their units. These handbooks should be approved by the Chartering Organization Representative.

**ALL OF THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS OFFICIAL POLICY FOR
AMERICAN LEGION SCOUTING UNITS.**