

# 2023-24 Guidance from the BSA regarding the American Legion

## Background

Misconceptions have arisen regarding if certain American Legion uniform items can be worn with or on the BSA uniform by Scouts/Scouters in American Legion chartered BSA units.

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 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

BLUF: The Legion cap is **NOT** an authorized accessory with the BSA uniform.

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."

## BSA Uniform Guidance

BLUF: Only the American Legion Department Scouting Chair, District Scouting Chairs, and Post Scouting Chairs (when serving as the BSA unit Chartered Organization Representatives) may wear Legion patches on their BSA uniforms.

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.

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, and either the Scouting Shoulder Patch (Item #720.430) or the Legion Emblem Boy Scout Patch (Item #720.003) 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, and either the Scouting Shoulder Patch (Item #720.430) or the Legion Emblem Boy Scout Patch (Item #720.003) suspended from the right pocket as a temporary patch.

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**Post Scouting Chairman** – Wear the Chartered Organization Representative badge on the left sleeve, Blue/Forest Green/Orange/Green (unit level) shoulder loops, and either the Scouting Shoulder Patch (Item #720.430) or the Legion Emblem Boy Scout Patch (Item #720.003) suspended from the right pocket as a temporary patch.

Once your tenure in one of these positions is complete, you revert to a unit Scouter role and that uniform standard.

Scouters who fill multiple roles should 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 Legion department/district/post then use the guidelines listed above.

Note that the above uniform modifications are permitted only for those serving in an American Legion Department, District or Post-level Scouting Chair role. By exclusion, unit leaders and individual Scouts are NOT authorized to wear the Scouting Shoulder Patch (Item #720.430) or the Legion Emblem Boy Scout Patch (item 720.003) on their BSA uniform.

In another non-uniform policy decision:

### **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.**