



# 2026-27 GUIDE FOR POST SCOUTING CHAIRS

## Department of Florida July 2027

(This supersedes all previous Department of Florida Scouting Guides and Manuals)

### FOREWORD

The purpose of this guide is to outline the scope, responsibilities, and expectations associated with the position of **Post Scouting Chair**. It is intended as a practical resource for individuals serving in this vital role, particularly those newly appointed to support and strengthen the partnership between **The American Legion (TAL)** and **Scouting America (SA)**—the organization formerly known as the Boy Scouts of America.

This guide is not designed to serve as an exhaustive reference on Scouting; comprehensive materials on that subject are readily available elsewhere. Rather, it seeks to provide clear guidance specific to American Legion–chartered Scouting units by defining key terms, clarifying roles and responsibilities, summarizing applicable regulations, and promoting consistency across posts. Its overarching objective is to support both new and experienced volunteers in advancing the shared mission of TAL and SA at this important point of collaboration.

### BACKGROUND

The Scouting America is a congressionally chartered national corporation founded in 1910. Its mission is to provide a program for America's youth that will prepare them to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law. The American Legion is also a congressionally chartered national corporation founded in 1919. Shortly after its founding, The American Legion adopted Scouting America as its official and principal initiative for Children and Youth under the Americanism pillar.

TAL encourages its local Posts to collaborate with nearby SA Councils in chartering individual Scouting units. Over the years, The American Legion has become one of the largest community-based organizations to sponsor Scouting units nationwide. The enduring partnership between TAL and SA stands as a testament to their shared dedication to fostering citizenship, leadership, and service among America's youth.

**Bottom Line Up Front: American Legion Posts, Squadrons, and Auxiliary Units that charter a Scouting America unit need to have a Post Scouting Chair who is also willing to serve as the Chartered Organization Representative in the Scouting unit.**

## POST SCOUTING CHAIR

If you serve your Post and Scouting as the **Post Scouting Chair**, you deserve gratitude from both fine organizations. You have volunteered to take on a uniquely important position in your Post.

While most other Chairs are involved in activities supporting the older generations of veterans, you will be guiding and shaping the development of the youngest generation of Americans. Your involvement will impact on how they embrace leadership, citizenship, patriotism and community service.

In this role, you'll act as the Scouting advisor to your Post's Americanism Chair—and ultimately to the Post Commander—on all things related to Scouting. Your specific responsibilities will depend on how involved your Post is with local Scouting activities.

Even if your Post doesn't have the resources to charter or sponsor a Scout unit, that shouldn't hold you back from getting involved. There are always Scout units in your community that would greatly benefit from your Post's support and engagement.

Your Post can participate in Scouting in many ways, including:

- inviting neighboring Scout units to march in veteran and patriotic parades
- providing instruction in flag handling and respect
- encouraging Legionnaires to be merit badge counselors
- allowing Scout units to use Post facilities for meetings or fundraising events
- donating equipment directly to Scout units (but not funds)
- donating funds to the local Scout council through Friends of Scouting
- presenting Eagle Scout certificates (downloadable from TAL national website)

If your Post charters a Scouting unit—or wants to charter one — the Post Scouting Chair role becomes even more important. **So, what does “CHARTERING” mean?**

People often confuse “chartering” and “sponsoring,” but they aren't the same thing. **Chartering** is a formal agreement between a Scouting America (SA) council and a community association like a church, school, veterans service organization, or local group. This agreement establishes guidelines for the organization to operate a Scouting program with adult leaders they approve, all while working toward shared goals and serving local youth and families.

You can think of a charter as being like a business franchise—both sides have responsibilities, and each relies on the other to make the partnership work.

In The American Legion (TAL), each Department is chartered to provide Legion programs, and then those Departments charter individual Posts to carry out the same. Similarly, and at the National level, SA charts councils across the country to run Scouting programs, and those councils charter with American Legion posts to oversee the operation of the Scouting units.

Charters are renewed annually through an Annual Unit Charter Agreement, which must be signed by the Post Commander. This agreement outlines the expectations for how the Post will run its Scouting program. It's crucial to review and understand the terms, as they create a legal foundation for how the Post and Scouting America will collaborate.

**Sponsoring** is the less formal support of a Scouting unit. It often involves donating money, providing opportunities to earn money, allowing post property to be used for activities, courts of honor, service projects or meetings without that formal agreement that a charter codifies. Posts can provide this type of support to as many Scouting units as it can reasonably handle. Your Post can appoint a Post Scouting Chair to help manage the sponsorship of Scouting units, but it is not required.

There are several types of Scouting units, each one tailored to a different SA program and youth age group. They are:

### SCOUTING AMERICA (SA) PROGRAMS

| <u>PROGRAM NAME</u>                 | <u>MEMBERSHIP</u>                                             | <u>UNIT NAME</u>     |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. CUB SCOUTS                       | grades K to 5, ages 5 to 10 ½                                 | Organized as Packs.  |
| 2. SCOUTS BSA (formerly Boy Scouts) | grades 6 to 12, ages 10 ½ to 17                               | Organized as Troops. |
| 3. VENTURING                        | grades 8 to 12, ages 14 to 20                                 | Organized as Crews.  |
| 4. SEA SCOUTS                       | grades 8 to 12, ages 14 to 20                                 | Organized as Ships.  |
| 5. EXPLORING                        | grades 6 to 8, ages 11 to 13<br>grades 8 to 12, ages 13 to 20 | Organized as Clubs   |

(NOTE – Varsity Scouts, SA ended December, 2017 and STEM is a sub-program involved with any of the above.)

### BOYS AND GIRLS IN EVERY PROGRAM

The Cub Scout program opened its membership to girls in September of 2018, with the newly renamed Scouts BSA program (formerly Boy Scouts) following suit in February of 2019. **Girls in SA are not referred to as “Girl Scouts”, as that name belongs to the Girl Scouts of the USA,** which is not affiliated with SA. Just call them all “Scouts”. Cub Scout packs can be (all) Boy, (all) Girl, or Family packs, which include both genders. Scouts BSA troops are organized as Boy and Girl troops, with a B or G suffix that follows their unit number to identify it as a Boy or Girl troop. Venturing, Sea Scouts and Exploring have been co-ed since their creation.

### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE POST AND ITS SCOUTING UNITS

The relationship between the Post and its Scouting units is clearly outlined in the Annual Charter Agreement and the various Scouting America (SA) Rules and Regulations referenced in it. Here are some key points:

- The **Post Commander** holds the Scouting title of **Institution Head (IH)** and is responsible for signing the Annual Charter Agreement. However, this responsibility is often delegated to the Post Scouting Chair.
- **The Post fully owns all assets associated with its chartered Scouting units, including properties, equipment, vehicles, trailers, and any funds held by the unit.**
- The Post maintains reasonable oversight and approval over the activities of the Scout units, particularly when it comes to financial matters. **Scouting units also use the Post’s tax-exempt status.** The Post usually covers the Annual Unit Charter fee....basically a registration fee that covers the SA unit’s affiliation with the SA National. The fee is \$100 for 2025-26.

- The **IH** agrees to appoint one Legionnaire to represent the Post at the Scouting unit level - the **Chartered Organization Representative (COR)**. If the Post charts more than one SA unit, that one COR is responsible for all the Post's chartered Scouting units.
- Scouting units are considered on an equal footing within the Post, alongside groups like the SAL, Auxiliary, and ALR, and share the American Legion Post's tax-exempt status. This can be formally reflected in the Post's Bylaws (examples available).

## THE SA CHARTERED ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVE ROLE

**The Chartered Organization Representative (COR) is a SA position.** The title is a mouthful and almost always just referred to as the C-O-R by pronouncing the individual letters. Note – try not to pronounce this as “core”, as it will immediately identify you as an outsider in Scouting circles. Chartered Rep is another acceptable way of shortening the title, especially when speaking with other Legionnaires.

**The COR is almost always the Post Scouting Chair.** Thus, your Post Scouting Chair should be prepared to assume a SA Unit level position as the COR. The COR is a registered Scouting leader, should wear the SA Field uniform when supporting the Scouts, must comply with and enforce all SA rules and regulations, and must take the required SA training.

- On behalf of the Post, the COR is both a Human Resources and Quality Control manager of the Scouting unit.
- The COR is the only registered Scouter (adult volunteer) in the Post's Scouting units who may approve adult volunteers for unit leadership positions.
- If it were to become necessary, the COR is the only one authorized to remove an adult leader from a position within the SA unit.
- The COR approves fundraising activities and liaisons with the Post Finance Officer for periodic reviews of the Scout units' financial activities.
- Additionally, since the CORs are registered Scout leaders, they are also voting members at the local SA district (as a District Committee Member at large) and at the council's annual meeting. The COR is responsible for representing the American Legion's interests in a proactive manner at both two local levels.

**For these reasons, the Legionnaire filling the Post Scouting Chair/COR position ideally does so on a long-term basis.** With Post Commanders frequently changing, it is important for the Scouting units to have a consistent point of contact and advocate at the Post. The Post Scouting Chair should report on the status of their Scouting units to the Post Commander, Post Executive Board, and the Post general membership frequently, and optimally monthly. They should also maintain consistent communications with their Department of Florida Scouting Committee Chair. Although the COR is a registered Scout leader, their position does not require them to take an active role in the day-to-day delivery of the Scout program in their units. Many other Scout leaders will be required to do this.

## SCOUT UNIT LEADERSHIP

The overall operation of a Scouting unit is entrusted to what is referred to as the **Key 3**: The **COR**, the **Committee Chair (CC)**, and the **Unit Leader**. Both the CC and the Unit Leader are approved by the COR. Every Scouting unit has its own CC. The **Unit Committee Chair**:

- Reports the unit's status to the COR on a regular basis
- Leads the Unit Committee and all aspects of the unit

- Approves all youth for membership
- Recommends adults for leadership positions to COR
- Holds a registered BSA position and is properly trained
- Ensures the unit knows and follows all BSA rules
- Has as many approved adults on the Unit Committee as is necessary to run the unit

The **Committee Chair** recommends Unit Leaders to deliver the Scouting program to the youth. These Unit Leaders have different titles depending on the type of unit. The Unit Leaders will have as many assistants as are needed to properly deliver their program. The Top Unit Leaders are:

|             |                       |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| Cubmaster   | for Cub Scout Packs   |
| Scoutmaster | for Scouts BSA Troops |
| Advisor     | for Venturing Crews   |
| Skipper     | for Sea Scout Ships   |
| Sponsor     | for Explorer Clubs    |
| Advisor     | for Explorer Posts    |

Unit Leaders do the following:

- Deliver the official Scouting Program to their Unit's youth
- Organize work for their assistant leaders and sub-leaders
- Ensure that the program follows BSA guidelines as they pertain to Youth Protection and safety.
- Serve as advisors only to the Unit Committee

It is very important on a practical level that each SA adult leader fully understands their role and has cognizance of their position and responsibilities. Each position in Scouting is already clearly defined.

## **CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING ADULT LEADERS**

For the Screening of Leaders, know that

- As part of the adult membership registration process, **the SA will screen each adult applicant for legal background issues, driving records, and run their names against lists of barred individuals**

For the Selection of Leaders, consider

- An interview of each adult by the CC and the COR before selecting and registering
- That each adult's skills and attitudes match their position
- Instituting a trial period before the assignment is permanent
- That not everyone is always selected for the position they want
- That enthusiasm does not always equate to competence...ensure that prospective leaders meet your expectations regarding communication, attendance, and organizational skills

For the Training of Leaders, remember

- Youth Protection Training is completed before first registration & again bi-annually
- Position-specific training is completed within 90 days of registration and before every change of position.

- Advanced leadership and Scouting skills training of your leaders should be encouraged (e.g. Basic Adult Leadership Outdoor Orientation – BALOO, Introduction to Outdoor Leadership Skills - IOLS, University of Scouting, Wood Badge)
  - Recognize training and tenure accomplishments

For the Protection of everyone, know that

- SA National provides General Liability insurance and indemnification for all adult leaders
- Local SA Councils provide secondary medical insurance coverage for all registered Scouts during Scouting activities
- These coverages are in effect ONLY if all the SA rules are followed

**Your Scouting unit reflects your Post, and its leaders reflect you.** Be sure to take the time and care necessary in selecting them. The best question to always ask yourself is this: "Would I want this individual to supervise my child or grandchild?"

### Where Can I Get Help?

When you contact your local Scout Council for assistance, you will be placed in contact with a professional, full-time Scout representative, typically called a **District Executive (DE) or District Director (DD)**. If you already have a Scouting unit, its Committee Chair and Unit Leader will know your DE or DD. These professionals are specifically tasked with helping the Posts CORs establish and maintain their Scout units. Please be sure to make this important first contact, as they will simplify the process for your Post to deliver your Scouting programs.

The Scouting District in which your Post resides will have many volunteer Scout leaders whose mission is to help your Scout units succeed. Principal of these is the Unit Commissioner and one should be assigned to your units. If you don't have one or haven't met one, contact your DE or District Commissioner to address that.

The Department of Florida has a Department Scouting Chair. Inform your Legion chain of command of any issues and use the Legion Scouting chain for assistance

You will find many resources and information at the Department website under the Scouting tab. <https://www.floridalegion.org/programs-services/scouting/resources/>

- These items will be updated and revised with new information as needed. There have been many changes in Scouting recently and there will undoubtedly be many in the future. Also, the Department website has an archive of monthly Legion Link publications which have Scouting articles dealing with current topical issues.

Your most important task is to know when help is needed, and how to ask for the appropriate position to assist. Never be afraid to ask for help.

### HELPFUL HINTS

**Not a Military Unit:** Scout units aren't military organizations and should never be treated like one. No camouflage or military-style uniforms are allowed at any Scout events.

**Youth Protection:** The "Two Deep Leadership" rule, which is part of the SA Youth Protection policy, means that you and your adult leaders should never have one-on-one contact with a Scout unless

there's another adult over 21 in attendance. This applies to meetings, counseling, emails, texts, phone calls, social media, etc. (p parents and guardians are, of course, exceptions)

**Financial and Material Assets Belong to the Post:** The Post, not the unit, holds onto the unit's financial and material assets. Any money raised by the unit is for the unit's needs, not for individual Scouts. The SA's Fiscal Policies and Procedures, Product Sales Guide, and Fundraising Policy are the main guidelines for unit financials, and you can find them easily online.

**Tax Exemption:** Since Scouting units are considered on an equal footing within the Post, alongside groups like the SAL, Auxiliary, and ALR, they likewise share the American Legion Post's tax-exempt status.

**Girls in Scouting:** As mentioned, girls were welcomed into Cub Scouts in September 2018 and Scouts BSA in February 2019. The Venturing and Sea Scout programs have been co-ed since their inception. There are specific safety guidelines for girls in SA programs, some of which are still being developed. Stay connected with your DE, Unit Commissioner, and Scout District for the latest updates.

**Post Bylaws Rule:** Lastly, your SA unit's bylaws aren't recognized by SA. Instead, the units follow the Post Bylaws. However, the units can create short procedural guides for their everyday operations. These Unit Handbooks are helpful, especially for parents of new Scouts joining.

## UNIFORMS

As a Post Scouting Chair/COR, you should wear the SA Field uniform when serving in your COR role, and your American Legion uniform when in your Post Scouting Chair capacity. No Scout or adult leader affiliated with an AL-chartered unit may wear any American Legion item or marking on the BSA Field uniform, with three notable exceptions.

- Only the Post's COR may elect to wear the 3" round Legion Emblem Boy Scout patch (Item Number 720.003) in the temporary patch position on the right pocket of the SA Field Uniform.
- Post Scouting units are allowed (and encouraged) to order custom numeral emblems (the numbers on the left sleeve of the SA Field Uniform, directly underneath the Council Shoulder Patch) that reflect their American Legion affiliation.
- Scouters awarded the American Legion Square Knot Award, and thus eligible to wear the SA Community Organization Knot on the SA Field Service Uniform, may place a 3/8-inch American Legion Lapel Tack in the center of the knot (Item Number 715.100)
- The Legion Emblem Scouting Shoulder Patch (Item Number 720.430) is not for wear on the SA Field Uniform, but rather on the left sleeve of the Legion uniform.



- The Legion Scouting Insignia patch (Item Number 720.337) can and should be worn on the left side of the cap to identify your dual role as a Legionnaire and a Scouter.



**Legion caps MAY NOT be worn with the SA Field Uniform.** These decisions were made jointly between SA and TAL National Headquarters in December of 2018. This guidance is posted at the Department website under Scouting.

**Rules and Regulations of the SA, July 2023** can be found at the Department of Florida Scouting Resource link (<https://www.floridalegion.org/programs-services/scouting/resources/>)

### IN CLOSING

Again, the objective of this guidance is to give new Scouting Chairs a head start in understanding and performing in their positions. Any recommendations for additions, deletions or clarifications are welcome and appreciated. Please forward them to the Scouting Chair at the address below.

Your commitment to this very important Family and Youth program of TAL's Americanism pillar is noteworthy. Very few programs provide more goodwill to the community than our Scouting programs. And no one contributes as profoundly to the moral, ethical, character and leadership development of our youth than a well-run and safe Scouting program.

Yours in Scouting and For God and Country,

*Angie Walker*

Angie Walker  
Scouting Chair  
Department of Florida  
The American Legion  
[Scouting@legionmail.org](mailto:Scouting@legionmail.org)