

Updated Adult Code of Conduct and Youth Scouter Code of Conduct

Scouts Canada has updated the Adult Code of Conduct for the 2017-18 Scouting Year as part of our ongoing effort to help Scouters to work safely with youth. We have also introduced a new Code of Conduct for Scouters aged under 18 that responds to the increasingly greater roles that Scouting youth are taking in program leadership.

Both Codes of Conduct are an integral part of our youth protection measures and present clear guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable behaviours. **It is important that all Scouters and youth in leadership roles understand the Code and are aware of the updates, summarized below:**

- **Online & electronic communication:** The Code provides clarity that safety guidelines, including the Two-Scouter Rule, apply to both online and in-person engagement with youth.
- **Drugs and other substances:** The Code has been updated to include the guidelines and expectations that are detailed in [Scouts Canada's Drug and Alcohol Policy](#).
- **Youth Scouter Code of Conduct:** To ensure that we respond to the increased presence of youth aged 14–18 in leadership roles, Scouts Canada has introduced a Youth Code of Conduct for the 2017-18 Scouting Year. This Code details youth protection measures and safety guidelines that are consistent with the Adult Code of Conduct, but also recognizes that those who sign it are still a youth themselves, and it is important that they understand that they are still entitled to protection, particularly in their interactions with adults. The Youth Code of Conduct addresses both the individual's responsibilities as a Scouter and their protections as a youth.
- **Reporting:** The updated Code provides clearer guidance for reporting behaviour that is not consistent with Scouting values, and emphasizes the importance of encouraging an environment whereby those with concerns about safety feel free to speak up. Guidance on self-reporting has also been updated should a Scouter find himself or herself in a situation that may impact their ability to participate in Scouting activities.

Questions and Answers: Adult Code of Conduct

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Why are these changes necessary?

The changes update our already comprehensive Code of Conduct and were made following recommendations from Scouts Canada's Safe Scouting Team. The review identified areas in which we can improve youth safety and help Scouters work safely.

When do these changes take effect?

They take effect immediately. We have coordinated these changes with spring registration to simplify the process. The New Scouter Welcome Kit has also been updated.



How do I sign the Code of Conduct?

Each Scouter will receive an email asking them to acknowledge that they have read the Code of Conduct. Also, when a Scouter or youth over the age of 18 logs into myscouts, they will be prompted to sign the Code if they have not done so already. You can simply click "Agree" in the email, or log in to myscouts and click "Agree" when prompted. Your myscouts records will be updated automatically.

How does the new Code affect spring registration?

There is no change to spring registration. Each Scouter will receive an email asking them to read and sign the Code of Conduct. Also, when a Scouter or youth over the age of 18 logs into myscouts, they will be prompted to sign the Code if they have not done so already.

Whom does the Adult Code apply to?

There is no change to whom the Code applies to – all members over the age of 18 must sign the Code of Conduct.

Does the new Code mean that I cannot play tag with youth?

Yes, and this is unchanged from the current Code of Conduct. Under our current guidelines, Scouters must not play any game that involves intentionally touching youth. Scouters can still play games with youth and in doing so there might be occasions when Scouters bump into or accidentally touch youth. There is nothing wrong with this.

Are there any changes to the Two-Scouter Rule?

No, there are no changes to the Two-Scouter Rule. You can view the Two-Scouter Rule FAQ [here](#). (link)

What happens if either the Youth or Adult Code is breached?

It is important that all breaches of the Code be addressed: Minor infractions might be addressed by a fellow Scouter pointing out the breach to the individual and speaking then with their Group Commissioner. The Group Commissioner can then have a more formal conversation with the Scouter. Serious or persistent breaches of the Code require formal action and must be reported to your Council or Safe Scouting. If in doubt, you can seek advice from your Council or Safe Scouting. Remember it is not your role to determine why someone has breached the Code; it is your responsibility to report it.

What does being a positive role model entail?

As a Scouter, your behaviour should match the Scout Promise and Law. You can be a positive role model by demonstrating our values through the Promise and Law.

What is positive discipline? How do I use positive discipline in my Section?

Positive discipline re-enforces good behaviour, rather than exclusively focusing on bad behaviour. You can achieve this by using positive language when agreeing your Section Code of Conduct with youth for example; having a points system to reward good behaviour or prizes and awards for improved or good behaviour and using positive statements, e.g. we respect each other. Discipline should focus on solutions and not just punishment.



What is meant by “I will not rely on just my good name to protect me?”

It is important that our behaviour is appropriate and in accordance with this Code. Through your actions and words, you demonstrate that you behave safely around youth, regardless of what you have accomplished in the past or how well known you are. We all have a duty to ensure that we demonstrate safe and respectful conduct at all times.

Should we make parents aware of the codes?

Yes, it is good practice to ensure all parents are aware of how we keep youth safe. If parents are assisting with activities or attending camps, they need to sign the code.

QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE YOUTH SCOUTER CODE OF CONDUCT

Why has a youth Code of Conduct been introduced?

As Scouting youth take on increasingly greater roles in program leadership, it is important to support them wherever we can. A 14-year-old Scouter in a position of leadership and responsibility needs an easily understood Code that helps guide their interactions with youth. At the same time, they are still a youth themselves, and it is important that they understand that they are still entitled to protection, particularly in their interactions with adults. The Youth Code of Conduct addresses both the individual's responsibilities as a Scouter and their protections as a youth.

What is the minimum age for a Scouter?

Section Scouters are Volunteers that are 14 years of age or older and are appointed by a Group Commissioner or more senior Commissioner on behalf of Scouts Canada, following approval as a registered member. Approval for appointment should be based on maturity, personal example and the ability to work effectively with the selected age group and other members of the Section Scouters.

When do youth Scouters sign the Adult Code of Conduct?

As soon as youth Scouters become 18, they must sign the Adult Code of Conduct.

QUESTIONS RELATED TO FOLLOWING THE CODE ONLINE

Why does the Code apply on and offline?

Modern media and communication methods have become an important part of Scouting and our safety guidelines need to keep pace. As with in-person interaction with youth, online contact must be in accordance with our values, and our Code of Conduct provides guidance in this area.

How do we interact safely with youth online?

The Code of Conduct provides clear guidelines for how to interact safely with youth online and via email. In essence, you can interact safely by either copying another Scouter on all emails, messages and posts (thereby maintaining the Two-Scouter Rule) or by copying the youth's parents.



YOUTH SCOUTER CODE OF CONDUCT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is a youth Code of Conduct needed?

As Scouting youth take on increasingly greater roles in program leadership, it is important to support them wherever we can. A 14-year-old Scouter in a position of leadership and responsibility needs an easily understood Code that helps guide their interactions with youth. At the same time, they are still a youth themselves, and it is important that they understand that they are still entitled protection, particularly in their interactions with adults. The Youth Code of Conduct addresses both the individual's responsibilities as a Scouter and their protections as a youth.

What happens if I do not want to agree to this?

In order to serve in a Volunteer leadership role, you must agree to the Code of Conduct. If you do not wish to agree to the Code, then you must remain in a participant role.

Why don't I sign the same Code of Conduct as adult Scouters in the organization?

Although you are taking on a role in program leadership, you are still a youth, and it is important that you understand that you are still entitled to the same protections as other Scouting youth, particularly in your interactions with adults. The Youth Code of Conduct addresses both your responsibilities as a Scouter and your protections as a youth.

What will happen to me if I break one of these rules?

If you break one of the rules you will be spoken to about what you did and why it is unsafe. If your behaviour is dangerous to yourself or others, you could be disciplined.

I'm a Scouter and a youth member – does this Code of Conduct apply to me even when I'm at an activity as a youth?

If you are taking part as youth participant, the Code does not apply to you. However, remember that even as a participant you should always be demonstrating the Scout Promise and Law. If you do not follow the Promise and Law as a participant, that could influence your ability to serve as a Scouter.

What will happen if I break one of the rules while at an activity as a youth?

The Code is designed to help you work safely with youth you supervise, and it does not apply if you are participating in an activity as a youth. However, remember that even as a participant you should always be demonstrating the Scout Promise and Law. If you don't follow the Promise and Law as a participant it could still affect your ability to serve as a Scouter.

Do I need to ask my parents' permission to sign the Youth Code of Conduct?

Yes, your parents should be involved in all of the stages as you become a Scouter and you should speak with them about the responsibilities and rewards of serving as a Scouter.



What happens if my parents don't want me to sign the Code? Can I still volunteer?

If your parents have concerns about the Youth Code of Conduct, you should ask them to discuss those concerns with your Group Commissioner. All Scouters must sign the Code, and if you don't sign it then you will not be able to serve as a Scouter.

I'm a Youth Commissioner for my Council/Area – does that mean I 'supervise' all the youth within my Area/Council? What if I'm in a relationship with another youth from my Area?

As a Youth Commissioner you do have some responsibility for all of the youth in your area. If you are a Venturer attending an event that includes multiple Sections (Venturers, Scouts, and Cubs or Beaver Scouts), then you cannot attend as a participant. This is because you occupy a position of trust through your role as a Youth Commissioner.

If you are in a relationship with another youth from the same Section that you are a member of, then you can only attend events for that Section as a participant. For example, if you are a Venturer and in a relationship with a fellow Venturer, you can only take part in the Venturer program as a participant.

How does the Two-Scouter Rule apply to me?

If you are carrying out your Scouter role, then the Two-Scouter Rule applies to you. If you are attending as a participant, it does not.

Am I allowed to be alone with a youth that I supervise?

No, the Two-Scouter Rule applies.

Am I allowed to be alone with an adult Scouter that I volunteer with?

Yes, although you should be comfortable with this and it should be restricted to Scouting activities only.

When do youth Scouters sign the Adult Code of Conduct?

As soon as you are 18 you must sign the adult Code before taking part in Scouting activities.

