

## **Scouts in the Archdiocese**

There are both Boy Scouts and Girls Scout troops associated with many parishes within the Archdiocese. It's the pastor's decision to allow a troop at the parish. Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops are set up differently, based on the rules of their chapter (such as Atlanta Area Council of Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of Greater Atlanta). The Boy Scouts troops are often closely tied to a parish, whereas the Girl Scout troops are not. The following information should be useful in understanding the financial relationship between the Archdiocese of Atlanta and Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts in a parish. This information was obtained through various sources, including a phone interview in July 2013 with the Director of Finance, Atlanta Area Council Boy Scouts of America (BSA) and various contacts at Catholic Mutual.

### **Boy Scouts of America**

#### **Governance, Financial & Banking**

**Q:** Is a charter agreement necessary?

**A:** Yes, the *2015 Annual Boy Scout Charter Agreement for Catholic Mutual Coverage* should replace the previous 2010 version. If a school or parish has any sponsoring and or involvement with a Boy Scout Troop, it is critical that the Charter is utilized. This will then automatically trigger liability protection to the parish. The 2010 version required the Chartering Organization to appoint leaders/volunteers and conduct all back ground screening. The parishes will no longer bear this contractual burden or liability exposure for failing to do so.

**Q:** If a pastor is simply letting a local troop have meetings/gatherings at their location and the parish is not the charter organization, what guidelines apply?

**A:** If the Boy Scout troop is only using the parish's facility, the parish needs to treat the troop like an outside organization and utilize the Catholic Mutual facility usage form and obtain an appropriate certificates of insurance. This scenario would be rather limited, but can occur.

**Q:** What is the financial obligation for a parish that is the charter organization of a Boy Scout troop?

**A:** The Charter organization (parish) assumes control of the unit's checking accounts and property.

**Q:** Can the Boy Scout Troop be responsible for their own checking account (like SVDP and KOC), or is the parish supposed to be responsible (like with a parish ministry)?

**A:** Most Boy Scout councils do not lend out their tax id number for the use of each troop to set up a bank account. The Troop has a few options for setting up a bank account. If the troop uses the parish's tax id, it has to be recorded on the parish's books.

### Checking Account Options

The pastor and the Boy Scout Unit leaders should discuss which option is best, but the pastor has the authority to make the final decision.

1. Use the parish's checking account. The funds should be deposited into the church's operating account and recorded in an exchange account just like any other ministry.
2. Open a checking account using the parish's tax id#. The troop could be granted permission to open a bank account that would operate as an imprest account, with oversight by the business manager, pastor, etc. The account should be recorded on the books and monitored by the business manager (review bank statements and reconciliations).
3. The Boy Scout Unit can open their own checking account by creating their own tax id #. The Scout leader should contact a bank for directions. If this is done, the parish is not required to have the account on their books or monitor the account. However, we do recommend that the parish consider monitoring it since the unit is chartered under the parish.

### Boy Scout Troop Assets & Insurance

Many Boy Scout units accumulate assets over time (trailers, kayaks, equipment, etc.) and store the items on the parish property. Some troops purchase these items but sometimes the parish buys the items for the troop. Insurance must be considered despite who makes the purchase.

**Q:** Who owns the troop's equipment, such as trailers and its contents?

**A:** The property is owned by the parish since it is the charter organization. The assets do not belong to BSA. If a troop were to cease to exist or transfer to another parish, the assets would stay with the original parish unless the pastor at the new parish requests a transfer of equipment.

**Q:** Who is responsible for insurance of the Boy Scout troop's assets?

**A:** The troop's property is covered by the Archdiocese's insurance policy. The parish business manager should provide a list of assets to the Archdiocese so it can be insured through Catholic Mutual. Boy Scout trailers can be covered by the auto policy. Catholic Mutual can also cover the contents of the trailer. Liability is not covered at all; the Boy Scouts have a master policy for this.

**Q:** Driver's insurance coverage: When the troop goes on trips, does the parish have to follow the same guidelines and procedures for the Boy Scout troop's drivers as we do for our own parish trips, or does the BSA insurance program take care of that?

March 2016

**A:** There is a BSA national insurance program that covers accidents and injuries during scouting activities, but it is secondary to the individual's insurance.

### **Girl Scout Troops**

The Girl Scouts are required to have their own bank account and are financially independent of the parish so their bank account and assets are not recorded on the parish's books. The Girls Scout troop should follow the rules of their particular chapter, so they are treated more like a 3rd party who is using the parish property (usage agreement, adhere to the Archdiocese's insurance and safe environment policies).