



Unit Representative Support Pack

Job Description, Support Resources and Best
Methods



SCOUTING AMERICA™

ORDER OF THE ARROW



Scouts and their parents expect all Scouting America activities to be conducted safely. To ensure the safety of participants, Scouting America expects leaders to use the four points of **SAFE** when delivering the Scouting program.

SUPERVISION

Youth are supervised by qualified and trustworthy adults who set the example for safety.

- Accepting responsibility for the well-being and safety of youth under their care.
- Ensuring that adults are adequately trained, experienced, and skilled to lead the activity, including the ability to prevent and respond to likely problems and potential emergencies.
- Knowing and delivering the program of Scouting America with integrity.
- Using qualified instructors, guides, or safety personnel as needed to provide additional guidance.
- Maintaining engagement with participants during activities to ensure compliance with established rules and procedures.

ASSESSMENT

Activities are assessed for risks during planning. Leaders have reviewed applicable program guidance or standards and have verified the activity is not prohibited. Risk avoidance or mitigation is incorporated into the activity.

- Predetermining what guidance and standards are typically applied to the activity, including those specific to the Scouting America program.
- Planning for safe travel to and from the activity site.
- Validating the activity is age appropriate for the Scouting America program level.
- Determining whether the unit has sufficient training, resources, and experience to meet the identified standards, and if not, modifying the activity accordingly.
- Developing contingency plans for changes in weather and environment and arranging for communication with participants, parents, and emergency services.

FITNESS AND SKILL

Participants' Annual Health and Medical Records are reviewed, and leaders have confirmed that prerequisite fitness and skill levels exist for participants to take part safely.

- Confirming the activity is right for the age, maturity, and physical abilities of participants.
- Considering as risk factors temporary or chronic health conditions of participants.
- Validating minimum skill requirements identified during planning and ensuring participants stay within the limits of their abilities.
- Providing training to participants with limited skills and assessing their skills before they attempt more advanced skills.

EQUIPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

Safe and appropriately sized equipment, courses, camps, campsites, trails, or playing fields are used properly. Leaders periodically check gear use and the environment for changing conditions that could affect safety.

- Confirming participants' clothing is appropriate for expected temperatures, sun exposure, weather events, and terrain.
- Providing equipment that is appropriately sized for participants, is in good repair, and is used properly.
- Ensuring personal and group safety equipment is available, properly fitted, and used consistently and in accordance with training.
- Reviewing the activity area for suitability during planning and immediately before use, and monitoring the area during the activity through supervision.
- Adjusting the activity for changing conditions or ending it if safety cannot be maintained.

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An Open Letter from the National Chief

My fellow Arrowmen,

I am pleased to present, on behalf of the National Order of the Arrow Committee, an update to the former OA Troop Representative Support Pack originally developed in 1999. This update incorporates the many changes that have occurred in the OA since this program's inception. What it does not change, however, is the fundamental intent and purpose of what is now referred to as the OA Unit Representative program.

The OA Unit Representative acts as a liaison between the Order of the Arrow and the unit. As a leader in their respective unit, an effective OA Unit Representative:

- Enhances the mission of the Order of the Arrow and that of Scouting America,
- Provides a smoother camp promotions process leading to greater numbers of Scouts camping,
- Eases the unit election process,
- Creates a vehicle to strengthen the ties between the OA and the individual Scouting America unit
- Helps retain older Scouts,
- Assists in organizing service projects that help Scouts, Venturers and Sea Scouts actively help others in their communities,
- Provides a conduit through which lodges and chapters can better support the needs of their council's units, and
- Strengthens our lodges and chapters.

Our hope is that this information will make the OA Unit Representative a more effective promoter of the Scouting program. It is another step in strengthening the Order of the Arrow's support of our councils and their units.

Yours in WWW,

Matt Parsons
2019 National Chief



How to Use This Support Pack

This Support Pak has been designed to help you, the OA unit representative. In this booklet, you will find information that will help you understand your dual position in your unit and in the Order of the Arrow. Included in this Pack is a collection of Frequently Asked Questions that you can check to see if a question you have has already been answered. In addition, the official job description of the unit representative has been included so that both you and your unit leader will have a better understanding of your responsibilities. In that same section, you can find a list of qualifications for the position in the unit, and a checklist of information that should flow between your unit and your lodge/chapter.

Your primary reference for Order of the Arrow programs and information is the OA website www.oa-scouting.org. We highly encourage you to visit the site frequently as it is the best place to ensure the information you receive is current. At the end of this general information, you will also find several appendices that will assist you in locating information that will be helpful in fulfilling your responsibilities as an OA Unit Representative.

You will notice that certain information must come directly from your lodge, including your Lodge Planbook, a list of local area resources for community service projects, and registration forms for lodge events. If you do not already have a copy of these items, please contact your lodge/chapter leadership or your council service center.

Good luck! Your time spent as an OA unit representative will be a meaningful and rewarding one. Don't forget – your position has responsibilities both to your unit and to your lodge and chapter. Make sure that you fulfill your obligations to both as you carry out your duties as the OA unit representative.



Job Description

The Order of the Arrow unit representative is a youth liaison serving between the local OA lodge or chapter and their unit. In their unit, they help meet the needs of the unit and will serve as a communication and programmatic link to and from Arrowmen, adult leaders and Scouts who are not presently members of the OA. They will do this in a fashion that strengthens the mission of the lodge, the vision, mission and purpose of the OA, and the mission and purpose of Scouting America. By setting a good example, they will enhance the image of the OA as a service arm to their unit.

The OA unit representative is considered a position of responsibility within the unit. In the case of Scouts BSA troops, a separate position patch has been developed. Individual Scouts fulfilling this role assume the following leadership positions:

- Scouts BSA troop: Troop OA Representative
- Venturing Crew: Crew Guide
- Sea Scout Ship: Sea Scout Specialist



OA Unit Representative Duties:

- Serves as a communication link between the lodge or chapter and the unit.
- Encourages year round and resident camping in the unit.

- Encourages older Scout participation in high adventure programs.
- Encourages Scouts to actively participate in community service projects.
- Assists with leadership skills training in the unit.
- Encourages elected OA candidates to complete their induction.
- Encourages Arrowmen to assume leadership positions in the unit.
- Encourages Arrowmen in the unit to be active participants in the lodge and/or chapter activities
- Sets a good example.
- Enthusiastically wears the Scout uniform correctly.
- Lives by the Scout Oath, Scout Law and OA Obligation.
- Shows Scout spirit.

Qualifications:

OA Unit Representative

- Under 18 years old (Scouts BSA) or under 21 years old (Venturing and Sea Scouting)
- Appointed by senior youth leader in the unit with unit leader approval
- OA member in good standing

Reports To: designated youth leader within the unit (e.g., assistant senior patrol leader in a troop, crew president in a Venturing crew or ship's boatswain in a Sea Scout ship)



Role of the OA Representative Adviser

The adviser to the OA unit representative assists the youth OA unit representative so that they might succeed in their role as the communication and programmatic link between the unit and the lodge or chapter. The adviser helps to include the Order of the Arrow ideals and activities in the program of the unit. By setting a good example, the adviser enhances the image of the OA as a service arm to the unit.

Duties of the Adviser to the OA Unit Representative:

- Supports the youth they advise, helping them to fully understand the needs of the unit and the elements of the lodge and chapter structure that are responsible for support to the unit.
- Promotes the incorporation of OA ideals into the advancement program of the unit (e.g., in unit leader conferences, boards of review, and courts of honor). Promotes recognition of members who have completed their Ordeal, achieved Brotherhood, or been inducted into Vigil Honor membership within the unit.
- Attends lodge and chapter meetings with the youth they advise.
- Insures that the OA unit representative has the necessary transportation to perform their duties.
- Helps the lodge, chapter, or extended elangomat in insuring that messages and documents regarding OA activities reach Arrowmen in the unit and works with the OA unit representative to assess their impact.

- Assists the OA unit representative in providing feedback to the lodge or chapter regarding the reaction of the unit and its OA members to OA programs which affect the unit, including Ordeals, unit elections, call-outs, camp promotion visits, meetings and service projects.
- Sets a good example.
- Enthusiastically wears the Scout uniform correctly.
- Lives by the Scout Oath, Scout Law and OA Obligation.
- Shows Scout spirit.

Qualifications:

- A unit assistant leader or committee member at least 21 years old.
- Appointed by the unit leader with the approval of the unit committee chair.
- OA member in good standing.

Reports To: Unit leader



Flow of Information

The following is a list of information that should flow between the OA unit representative and the lodge or chapter:

Lodge/Chapter to Unit:

- Lodge/Chapter Calendars
- Unit Elections visit information and schedules
- Camp Promotions visit information and schedules
- Community service project opportunities
- Invitations to elected candidates to attend their Ordeal
- Invitations to Arrowmen to attend OA events
- Resource lists
- OA Representative Registration Forms
- Encouragement for OA members to be active in their Lodge and Chapter

Unit to Lodge/Chapter:

- Does the unit have an active camping program?
- Does the unit attend a long-term camp?
- Do the unit's older Scouts participate in high adventure programs?
- Does the unit need assistance with its outdoor program?
- Does the unit need assistance with community service projects?
- Does the unit need assistance with training?
- Do the unit's OA members participate in lodge and chapter functions?
- Name of the new OA unit representative when changes occur
- Reaction of the unit's OA members to lodge and chapter programs and activities



Registration Form

A copy of this form should be filled out and returned to the lodge or chapter leadership in order to establish the link between the Order of the Arrow and the unit.

Date: _____

Term of Office: _____

Name: _____ Unit type/#: _____

Address: _____ District: _____

_____ OA Chapter: _____

_____ Check one: ☐ Ordeal ☐ Brotherhood ☐ Vigil

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Scouting Experience: _____

OA Experience: _____

Name of Adviser: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

_____ Email: _____

Unit Leader Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return completed copy to your lodge/chapter leadership.



The OA Unit Representative in Action

The following are examples from across the country as to how the OA unit representative can impact the unit and district.

"In our lodge, we are in the process of creating OA representative roundtables that will meet at the same time as the district roundtables. While there, the OA reps can get together to share ideas and discuss issues that need to be dealt with, whether it's the upcoming Ordeals or unit program. Since our district roundtables are at a different time from the chapter meetings, this gives us another opportunity to dedicate time specifically to the OA reps. Plus, we can contact those units that don't have an OA rep at the roundtable immediately by talking to the adult leaders from their unit."

— Joey Day, Suanhacky Lodge,
Queens Council, NY

"Our chapter has created a vice chief position that is totally dedicated to the unit representative. Their job is to make sure that all of the units have an OA unit representative, and to stay in contact with the units after they make the appointment. With a vice chief position totally dedicated to it, we've seen just about every unit in our district adopt the program. It's given us leverage when we need to get the word out for registration for lodge events and for the service project that our lodge has adopted. I just go to my vice chief, and then he gets in touch with everybody out in the district. The units can also communicate with us if they need some program help, especially if it's last minute."

— Tim Spruell, Egwa Tawa Dee
Lodge, Atlanta Area Council, GA

"During the annual re-charter time for all of the units in our council, we mailed a pack of information about the OA unit representative to every unit leader. That way, there would be an incentive to implement the program, and nobody could say that they didn't know about the position. With the adoption of the program by many of the units in our council, we are training the OA unit reps at lodge events so that they can know what will be expected of them, both from the perspective of the OA and from that of their units."

— G.W. Zuban, Nawakwa Lodge,
Robert E. Lee Council, VA



Role of the OA Unit Representative in Unit Elections

As the OA representative for your unit, your responsibility is to make sure that your lodge/chapter has a unit elections team scheduled to come to your unit. It is not, however, your role to conduct this election, unless you have been trained by the lodge/chapter and the OA leadership has asked you to perform this duty. At the same time as the unit election procedure, it might be useful to schedule a camp promotional visit from the OA.

Included in this appendix is a backdating calendar that you can use to help in the planning process leading up to your unit election. National policy on unit elections can be found at oa-scouting.org/about/membership.

Unit elections can only be conducted by lodge authorized unit election teams. While your role is to arrange for and support the unit election team, conducting the election itself is the responsibility of the election team.



Unit Election Backdating Calendar

Task	Coordinator	Days Before Election	Date To Do	X
1. Set date of unit election, in coordination with local lodge/chapter	OA rep & chapter/ lodge chief	-60	_____	_____
2. Begin promotion of the election to the unit.	OA rep	-45	_____	_____
3. Follow up with lodge/chapter, ensure that an election team will be present	OA rep & chapter/ lodge chief	-30	_____	_____
4. Call unit's youth leaders to ensure that all unit members will be present	OA rep & Unit youth leadership	-7	_____	_____
5. Re-follow up with lodge/chapter to ensure that an election team will be on hand	OA rep & chapter/ lodge chief	-7	_____	_____
6. Hold election	Unit elections team	0	_____	_____
7. Send completed unit election form to lodge/chapter	OA rep & unit leader	+2	_____	_____
8. Ensure that all candidates are present for the call-out ceremony	OA rep & unit youth leadership	_____	_____	_____
9. Ensure that all candidates are registered for the Ordeal	OA rep & chapter/ lodge chief	_____	_____	_____
10. Ensure that unit has elangomats at the Ordeal to support candidates	OA rep & chapter/ lodge chief	_____	_____	_____
11. Coordinate transportation to Ordeal for the candidates and elangomats	OA rep adviser	_____	_____	_____
12. Recognize new OA members at appropriate unit event	OA rep & youth leadership	_____	_____	_____



OA High Adventure Opportunities

Each summer, the Order of the Arrow offers myriad different High Adventure opportunities targeted specifically for Arrowmen. Utilizing all four Scouting America national high adventure bases, the OA has combined service and adventure to offer a lower cost high adventure options to its members.

Maybe it's whetting your appetite by going for a plunge in the Atlantic Ocean with the Ocean Adventure at the Florida Sea Base. Or maybe hiking is your passion; if so, what better place to go than the Philmont Scout Ranch, where you can hike the same trails as your scoutmaster or Scouting ancestors as a part of your Trail Crew experience? Have you ever thought about what the Native Americans and early explorers did to be avid traders? Maybe the OA Voyage is your calling. Or perhaps its white water rafting down one of the oldest rivers in the world at The Summit Bechtel Reserve. Whatever your summer aspirations may be, the OA in partnership with the Scouting America national High Adventure bases have put together a multitude of options for you.

Along with your one week adventure completely designed by you, each Arrowman will be afforded the opportunity to leave their mark in history by helping to shore up portage trails, backpacking trails, or coral reefs. Aside from providing a good deed to each of these high adventure bases, every participant will have the opportunity to work closely with other Arrowmen from across the country, who have a similar interest in the future of both the program and the adventure base.

You may be thinking that this is a daunting task, but it is an experience unlike any other afforded to you in Scouting, in that it takes you

out of your world and places you with people who want to make a difference in the world. It's not every day that you can tell your friends that you climbed into Cypher's Mine, watched the Northern Lights from a canoe, went scuba diving in the Florida Keys or rode a 3,200 foot zip line.

These programs help to insure that the future of Scouting has a place to live, work and interact. This summer, try something new or do something you thoroughly enjoy! Your destiny awaits you...

Descriptions of each of the OA's high adventure programs can be found at oa-scouting.org/high-adventure.



Backdating Calendar for a Successful Community Service Project

Task	Coordinator	Days Before Project	Date To Do	X
1. Set the date of the project	OA rep & unit youth leadership	-90	_____	_____
2. Contact the group for whom you are doing service and work out details	OA rep	-60	_____	_____
3. Begin promotion of the event to the unit	OA rep & unit youth leadership	-45	_____	_____
4. Collect necessary tools for the work project (shovels, rakes, etc.)	OA rep & adviser	-30	_____	_____
5. Call all members of the unit to remind them of the project	OA rep & unit youth leadership	-14	_____	_____
6. Coordinate transportation to the project	OA rep & adviser	-7	_____	_____
7. Contact local media about appropriate news coverage	OA rep	-7	_____	_____
8. Hold the service project	Unit	0	_____	_____
9. Report to the unit leader the number of community service hours completed by each member of the unit for rank advancement	OA rep	+7	_____	_____
10. Report to lodge/chapter the nature of the project and number of community service hours performed	OA rep	+7	_____	_____



National Organization Contact List

In searching for a community service project, you may find it helpful to contact one of the following national organizations to see if they have on-going projects in your local community.

American Red Cross

www.redcross.org

430 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006-5307
(202) 737-8300

Arbor Day Foundation

www.arborday.org

211 N. 12th Street
Lincoln, NE 68508
(888) 448-7337

National Alliance to End Homelessness

www.endhomelessness.org

1518 K Street, NW, 2nd Floor
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 638-1526

Feed the Children

www.feedthechildren.org

333 N. Meridian Avenue
Oklahoma City, OK 73107
(800) 627-4556

National Family Partnership

www.nfp.org

2490 Coral Way, Suite 01
Miami, FL 33145
(305) 856-4173

Sierra Club

www.sierraclub.org

2101 Webster Street, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612
(415) 977-5500

Habitat for Humanity International

www.habitat.org

322 W. Lamar Street
Americus, GA 31709
(800) 422-4828

Breakthrough T1D (formerly JDRF and Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation)

www.breakthrough1d.org

200 Vesey Street, 28th Floor
New York, NY 10281
(800) 533-2873

Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

www.lls.org

3 International Drive, Suite 200
Rye Brook, NY 10573
(914) 949-5213



National Leadership Seminar (NLS)

The National Leadership Seminar (NLS) is a weekend training program focusing on leadership development. Presented by the OA region chief, qualified youth staff and adult advisers, the NLS is open to all Arrowmen and provides an in-depth look at leadership skills and techniques. An NLS discusses how these skills can be applied in your role in the OA and in other aspects of your life.

The NLS program is offered several times a year at locations in each region. Scheduled dates are listed on the national OA program calendar (oa-scouting.org/program/national-calendar). More detailed information is available from your lodge leaders, the section chief or adviser, or the region chief or region chair.

As one Arrowman described his NLS experience:

"I just returned from one of the greatest leadership courses around. The NLS course is a winner..."

"I didn't even get out of the room after the second or third session before I was putting the new knowledge to use..."

"The Staff for the training was excellent. We were privileged to have our national vice-chief, the region chief, and several section chiefs and various members of the national OA committee. A great staff."

"Well, I have now been given more useful tools to use to help the Scouts in my council improve themselves and the lodge. I feel a little less nervous about my position..."

"If and when you get the chance to attend a NLS, GO!"

If you are interested in attending an NLS, please contact your lodge chief or adviser.



Online Camping Resource

Tired of going to the same campground? Looking for something new? The Internet can be a valuable resource for planning a camping trip with your unit. The following is a collection of sites that you might share with your unit when looking for a creative adventure, near or far. Some of these sites are commercial, others are from the government. In either case, you should be aware that the material found on these sites is not maintained nor endorsed by Scouting America. These are provided merely as a service to units who may find the information useful.

GORP – Great Outdoor Recreation Pages

www.gorp.com

Huge site with reviews of camping destinations all across the world. Heavy on graphics and advertisements, you have to know what activity you are looking for before you dive in. Includes reviews of national parks, state parks, and other possible Scouting locations.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

www.usace.army.mil

The Corps of Engineers maintains waterways all across the United States. In order to find the Corps of Engineers campgrounds closest to you, follow the links through Services to the Public, and then Recreation. Each individual district maintains recreation information on separate pages, so you will have to choose the appropriate location.

U.S. National Park Service

www.nps.gov/parks.html

Information about all of America's national parks is provided by the National Park Service on this page. You can find parks on a map, search by interest, or perform a key word search. At www.nps.gov, you can also find information about educational and research opportunities.



Helpful OA Unit Representative References

Unit elections handbook:

oa-scouting.org/resources/inductions/unit-elections-handbook

Scouting America high adventure programs:

www.scouting.org/national-high-adventure-bases

OA high adventure programs:

oa-scouting.org/high-adventure

OA high adventure promotion:

oa-scouting.org/high-adventure/resources/promotional-resources

OA National calendar:

oa-scouting.org/program/national-calendar

OA National Leadership Seminar:

oa-scouting.org/training/national-leadership-seminar-nls



Other Program Resources

Need help in finding program ideas and answers about Scouting America and OA operations and procedures? Be sure to take advantage of the following resources:

Scouting America Programs:

Scouts BSA: www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/resources/publications

Venturing: www.scouting.org/programs/venturing/crew-resources

Sea Scouts: seascout.org (Resources Tab)

OA Programs: oa-scouting.org/resources/publications



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the OA unit representative?

Answer: The OA unit representative program was begun in 1999, and is a program of the Order of the Arrow that has been officially adopted by Scouting America. The OA unit representative qualifies is an official leadership position within the respective troop, crew or ship, and holders of the position can earn time towards their leadership rank requirements, just as with other leadership positions in the unit.

2. What are the responsibilities of the OA unit representative?

Answer: There are numerous possibilities for the job description of the OA unit representative. The beauty is that it is flexible enough to allow your unit to fine-tune the exact responsibilities. However, the most basic tasks of the OA unit representative are to coordinate service opportunities within the unit, to coordinate unit involvement with the Order of the Arrow, including unit elections, inductions (elected OA candidates completing their Ordeal), activations (Ordeal members attending their first subsequent OA event), and camp promotions, as well as coordinating requests for lodge and chapter resources to help meet unit needs. The OA unit representative should provide feedback to the lodge/chapter as to the success of their initiatives.

3. Who can serve as an OA unit representative?

Answer: Anyone in a Scouts BSA troop who is under the age of 18 can serve as the troop's OA unit representative, provided they are a dues-paid member of the Order of the Arrow. In Venturing and Sea Scouting units, any OA

dues-paid member under the age of 21 can serve in the role. They should be appointed by the senior youth leader in the unit, and will be a member of the respective youth leadership team in the unit and invited to attend lodge and chapter meetings.

4. Will there be an Adviser for the OA unit representative?

Answer: As with all positions in the Order, the OA unit representative should have an adult as their adviser. This adult must be over the age of 21, be a dues-paid member of the Order of the Arrow, and be appointed by the unit leader.

5. What if a unit does not appoint an OA unit representative?

Answer: The OA unit representative is a unit leadership position and is therefore up to the unit to adopt and use the program. If the unit does not wish to appoint an OA unit representative, the lodge and chapter should encourage the unit to utilize the program by pointing out the benefits that accrue.

6. What position does the OA unit representative hold in the unit?

Answer: The OA unit representative's position is determined by the unit they serve. In the case of a troop, it is an OA troop representative; in the case of a Venturing crew, a crew guide; in the case of a Sea Scout ship, a sea scout specialist. In each case, the OA unit representative position is a leadership position within the unit.

7. What recognition is available for OA unit representatives?

Answer: Lodges and chapters are encouraged to develop recognition similar to what they use for other lodge and chapter officers and committee chairs.

8. Should OA unit representatives meet as a group?

Answer: The lodge or chapter should run an OA unit representative training seminar at least twice a year. Additionally, OA unit representatives are expected to attend lodge and chapter functions.

For annual updates to this publication, frequently check the national OA website at www.oa-scouting.org

"Let it be remembered that the Order of the Arrow was created to help the unit – to help it present its membership a better ideal of the inner qualities of the good Scout camper. Qualities of character, like cheerfulness and service, are hard for a boy or a man to understand in the abstract. They come easier when seen in human life.

"Let us realize the significance of the Order in the unit – for the unit is our best hope in Scouting."

— Dr. E. Urner Goodman
Founder, Order of the Arrow



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