



Youth Membership Policy 2016

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define the admission procedures for youth membership of The Scout Association of Australia, Victorian Branch ('Scouts Victoria').

SCOPE

This policy applies to all persons under the age of 18 years wishing to join Scouts Victoria.

POLICY STATEMENT

Consistent with the national and international principles of Scouting, Scouts Victoria is open to all young people without distinction of origin, race or creed. Membership shall be voluntary, without distinction of gender or abilities.

Consistent with the provisions for youth membership defined in the Policy and Rules of The Scout Association of Australia ('The Association'), membership requires that the young person be within the age ranges defined by The Association for each section, has accepted the commitment of the Scout Promise,¹ and has been registered as a member of the Scout Movement by Scouts Victoria in accordance with this policy and associated admission procedures.

Consistent with the provisions of the Policy and Rules of The Association and Scouts Victoria's Constitution,² membership is subject to the approval of the Chief Commissioner of Victoria or their delegate, and the Chief Commissioner of Victoria or their delegate can suspend or revoke the membership.

Ongoing membership is subject to the payment of all relevant annual membership fees.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive Manager

- Ensure this policy is made available on the Scouts Victoria website and the Application for Youth Membership is made available to prospective members upon request.
- Maintain a register of all youth members.
- Issue Certificates of Youth Membership.

Branch Executive Council / Region Executive / District Executive / Group Committee

- Each formation shall set their respective annual membership fees, if any, and advise all Group Leaders within their jurisdiction of any such fees in a timely manner.

Chief Commissioner

- Approve the 'Application for Youth Membership' requirements.

¹ Being, according to the relevant age-range, the Joey Scout Promise, the Cub Scout Promise or the Scout Promise as defined in Policy and Rules 2014 and acceptance of the scout laws as applies to the respective age-range section.

² Being The Constitution of the Scout Association of Australia, Victorian Branch made under the authority of the Victorian *Scout Association Act 1932*.

- Delegate the approval of youth membership to the respective Group Leader.³
- Suspend or revoke the membership of a youth only after seeking the advice of the relevant Group Leader and Commissioner/s.⁴

Group Leaders

- Ensure all youth participating in the Scouting program are registered members, other than 'youth visitors'.
- Ensure only registered youth members wear the Scout Uniform and are awarded Scout badges.
- Ensure parents or guardians of prospective youth members complete an Application for Youth Membership⁵ and are advised of the total membership fee.
- Upon receipt of a completed Application for Youth Membership and receipt of the relevant membership fees, consider the application for approval. Where approved, register the youth member via the Scouts Victoria extranet.
- Present a Certificate of Youth Membership to all registered youth members.

PROCEDURES

Youth Visitors

Young people who are not registered members are welcome to visit and participate, by invitation or request, in a limited number of regular Section program meeting nights and/or other Scouting run events or activities open to youth members of that age group, subject to any pre-requisite requirements.⁶ They are not entitled to wear the Scout Uniform. Note: While participating in the Scout program a youth visitor is covered by the Scouts Victoria Personal Accident Insurance Policy.

Pre-investiture

Where a young person wishes to join Scouts Victoria and their parent or guardian consents to their joining, the Group Leader and/or section leader shall explain the requirements of membership and provide the parent or guardian with an Application for Youth Membership. A pre-invested youth member may wear the Scout uniform appropriate for the section they are joining but without badges or Group scarf. A pre-invested youth member may participate in all program meetings, including local, District, Region and Branch events and activities that are open to Youth Members of that age group.

Note: Pre-invested Youth Members are covered by Scouts Victoria's Personal Accident Insurance Policy when engaging in activities conducted as part of the Scouting program.

Investiture

The Group Leader and/or Section Leader and/or other invested member⁷ in the presence of an authorized leader may invest a young person as a Youth Member of Scouts Australia and the worldwide Scout Movement subject to:

- the young person's parent or guardian completing an Application for Youth Membership;

³ The Chief Commissioner may withdraw this delegation at any time.

⁴ Other than where the parent or guardian of the youth member is the Group Leader or Commissioner.

⁵ This may require the Group Leader assisting the family access the internet.

⁶ There is no specific limit as to how many occasions a young person can attend as a visitor, however, it is expected that it should only extend over a period of three meetings or activities.

⁷ For example, a Patrol Leader or Unit Council chairman.

- the young person's parent or guardian paying the relevant fees;
- approval of the application for membership by the Group Leader;
- receipt of the relevant fees by Scouts Victoria; and
- the youth member having satisfactorily completed the required pre-investiture training.

An invested youth member is entitled to wear the Scout Uniform with the appropriate badges for the Section they are joining as well as an appropriate formation scarf and badges, and may participate, subject to any pre-requisite requirements, if any, in all program meetings, local, District, Branch and National events and activities that are open to Youth members of that age group.

Payment of Branch Membership Fee

The fee payment process is separate from the registration process. When an Application for Youth Membership is accepted on-line by the Group Leader, an invoice for the relevant Branch membership fee will be generated and forwarded to the Scout Group.

Registration

The date that a parent or guardian completes the Application for Youth Membership and pays the membership fee is, on acceptance of their membership application by Scouts Victoria, the date recorded as the date at which the young person is registered as a Youth Member of Scouts Victoria.

Registration of youth members shall be linked to membership of a specific Scout Group.

Where a youth member moves to a different Scout Group, the Group Leader of either the originating Scout Group or the receiving Scout Group shall provide to the youth member's parents or guardians an invitation, via the Scouts Victoria on-line membership system, to transfer the youth member. Upon completion of the request by the parents or guardians the transfer request shall be subject to approval by the Group Leader of the receiving Group.

Certificate of Youth Membership

All registered Youth Members will be issued with a Certificate of Youth Membership on the receipt of their registration fee payment to Scouts Victoria.

Suspension or Revocation of Youth Membership

Where a Group Leader, or other delegate of the Chief Commissioner, proposes to refuse a youth membership application, or suspend or revoke a youth's membership, this shall be done in writing and an opportunity given to the parent or guardian to be heard by the Group Leader and relevant Section Leader. Where required, a final determination on a refusal, suspension or revocation of membership rests with the Chief Commissioner.

DEFINITIONS

Application for Youth Membership: Being a means of applying for membership from time to time authorized by the Executive Manager and approved by the Chief Commissioner. It shall include basic details of the prospective youth member, a medical authority, provision for parent/guardian signature, Group Leader approval and privacy notice, and require disclosure of any court order that affects the prospective youth member.

Group Leader: Being the person identified on the Scouts Victoria extranet as the relevant Group Leader or as the nominated 'Leader-in-Charge' of the Group.

Leader: An adult holding a Certificate of Adult Leadership in the Scout Movement.

Total Membership Fee: Being the sum total of the Branch, Region, District and Group annual subscription fees applying at the time of application. Note that in circumstances of financial hardship or other special circumstance, some or all of these membership fees may be waived or reduced at the discretion of the leader-in-charge of the relevant formation.

Youth Visitor (non-member category): Being a young person who is invited to attend a meeting or activity to experience the Scout program as it applies to that person's age group.

Youth Member – pre-invested: Being a young person who has consented to join Scouts Victoria and their parent or guardian has agreed to the terms and conditions of youth membership, has completed the Application of Youth Membership and paid the membership fee to the Group.

Youth Member – invested: Being a young person who has satisfactorily completed pre-investiture training, who has formally made the Scout Promise appropriate to the section they are joining and has been invested as a Youth Member of Scouts Australia and the worldwide Scout Movement.

RELATED DOCUMENTS, REFERENCES

Scout Association Act 1932 (Vict)

Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vict)

Policy and Rules of The Scout Association of Australia (2014)

Privacy Policy 2016.

The on-line membership registration process can be accessed through the Scouts Victoria extranet at <www.vicscouts.com.au>.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

PROCEDURE OWNER

The Chief Commissioner. Email: <chief.commissioner@vicscouts.asn.au>.

DATE OF APPROVAL / DATE OF REVIEW

26 July 2016 / [3 years from approval]