

**Blue Water Council, Boy Scouts of America**  
**924 7<sup>th</sup> Street**  
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To all unit leaders,

The first purpose of this letter is to clarify the Blue Water Council procedure for obtaining Adult Volunteer background checks before allowing an adult volunteer to participate in the programs of the Council. First, the performance of a background check is exclusive obligation, duty and right, of the national organization of the Boy Scouts of America. Council or local unit background checks are not authorized.

The second purpose is to establish the responsibility of unit officials when after a clear background check by the Boy Scouts of America they come into possession of information subsequent to that clearance. The unit has a duty to report that information immediately to the Blue Water Council Scout Executive. The Scout Executive will then inform the adult Scouter involved and the designated representative of the charter organization if further action is necessary. It is the responsibility of the charter organization to inform the unit and its committee of the action taken, if any.

Yours in Scouting,

Michael J Whaling  
Council President

## Adult Background Checks – BSA Blue Water Council Quick Guide

This is an attempt to clarify key points of our system in simple terms. It is not meant to take the place of the detailed process of BSA.

1. All persons over 18 must have an adult background check using the BSA form #28-501E provided by our National office.
2. This form is to be filled out each time an adult changes position. ie: a den leader becomes committee chair, etc.
3. The signatures on the form only indicate what is known at the time of signing.
4. The form goes to the council and is sent into National. An answer will be available within 1 week from the submission date of a fully completed application.
5. The background check is the responsibility of the National office of BSA, exclusively. If done thru Michigan Police Depts., you get Michigan results. National BSA gets all 50 states data.
6. If there are problems, they are directed to the Scout Executive who then tells the institutional head. These are the only persons privileged with this info.
7. “Clean” results are sent to the council office. The person is entered into our computer by our registrar and a BSA membership card with a unique ID# is made by Blue Water Council and mailed to the unit leader. ie Cubmasters or Scoutmaster, Crew, Ship or Venture Leaders etc. It is the unit leader who passes along the card and advises the unit committee that the adult is AOK.
8. Problems: If there are any, very strict rules apply. All cases of known or suspected issues must be reported to Scout Executive exclusively. If the Scout Executive is not available (ie vacation) there is a Senior District Executive who reports to our Area Director, who will act. The rules from National are executed by the Scout Executive without exception. The person involved is suspended pending the results of the investigation.
9. Misdemeanors may be tolerated (ie a DUI conviction or youthful event, long past). The Scout Executive and the Institutional Head only decide the issue. No one else or no group (unit committee) is part of the decision.
10. Felonies involving abuse/violence are not allowed. We are not lawyers, this area is left to professionals.
11. Anyone who is denied membership has their fee returned and they are entered into the BSA national database, to prevent those who try to re-enter by moving state to state.

This process was put into place to protect our children, families, ourselves and the reputation of the BSA.

If you have questions, don't delay; get with your Scout Executive about the issue. Anyone else subordinate to that role may be well intended, but are not trained to the fullest extent. This is by design, the “Buck” stops on the Scout Executive's desk!

Everyone is entitled to fair play – it's the Scout Way. At times, stories float around that someone is “guilty” of X Y or Z. Our process will clear up these claims. Often a claim is proven not really so dire. We all make mistakes. Let's avoid an unfair rush to judge our neighbor. The facts will prevail, and will be shared with those charged with the responsibility to act in our interest.

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