



SCOUTING/USA

National Office—Boy Scouts of America

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TO: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Homosexual activist groups across the country have been recently pursuing non-discrimination ordinances and laws. There are many reported instances of inquiries concerning the chartering of units to openly homosexual organizations, membership of homosexuals, and the appointment of homosexual volunteer and professional leaders.

We have been asked to express our official position to the field regarding these matters.

The following is a statement of our policies and procedures relating to homosexuality and Scouting. Please bear in mind that only the issue of homosexuality is dealt with, i.e., matters of sexual preference and not sexual deviance or criminal sexual misconduct.

POLICY

1. Q. May an individual who openly declares himself to be a homosexual be a volunteer Scout leader?
 - A. No. The Boy Scouts of America is a private, membership organization and leadership therein is a privilege and not a right. We do not believe that homosexuality and leadership in Scouting are appropriate. We will continue to select only those who in our judgment meet our standards and qualifications for leadership.

2. Q. May an individual who openly declares himself to be a homosexual be a registered unit member?

A. No. As the Boy Scouts of America is a private, membership organization, participation in the program is a privilege and not a right. We do not feel that membership of such individuals is in the best interests of Scouting.

3. Q. May a group of individuals who openly profess to be homosexuals obtain a unit charter?

A. No. As in the case with leadership and membership, a Boy Scouts of America unit charter is a privilege and not a right. We reserve the right to grant or withhold charters as we see fit.

4. Q. May an individual who openly declares himself to be a homosexual be employed by the Boy Scouts of America as a professional or non-professional?

A. Boy Scouts of America does not knowingly employ homosexuals as professionals or non-professionals. We are unaware of any present laws which would prohibit this policy.

5. Q. Should a professional or non-professional individual who openly declares himself to be a homosexual be terminated?

A. Yes, in the absence of any law to the contrary. At the present time we are unaware of any statute or ordinance in the United States which prohibits discrimination against individual's employment upon the basis of homosexuality. In the event that such a law was applicable, it would be necessary for the Boy Scouts of America to obey it, in this case as in Paragraph 4 above. It is our position, however, that homosexuality and professional or non-professional employment in Scouting are not appropriate.

PROCEDURE

1. Q. By what procedure may an individual's registration in the Boy Scouts of America be revoked?
A. This procedure is set forth in detail in the publication entitled Maintaining Standards of Leadership.

2. Q. What procedure should be followed in the event that an individual involved in Scouting is alleged to be a homosexual?
A. The matter should be investigated in a discreet and responsible fashion, with the utmost regard for the concerned individual's civil rights.

3. Q. What procedure should be followed in the event that a professional or non-professional employee is arrested and charged with an offense involving public morals?
A. The council representative should respectfully decline to comment or to take any action without the advise of the council's attorney. Any comment, speculation, or volunteering of gratuitous information may be prejudicial to the civil rights of the accused...and under certain conditions, could lead to a suit for damages.

Downing B. Jenks
President

Harvey L. Price
Chief Scout Executive