

Boston Minuteman Council Policy on Tour Permits

The BSA National Council's Risk Management Service has identified areas where Scouts and Scouters can be at risk. These include: transportation to and from unit outings; activities involving swimming or boating; overnight camping; and special events, among others. The BSA's requirement that units file tour permit applications is designed to help promote proper planning and qualified adult supervision for unit trips and outings, as well as to enhance protection to unit leaders themselves.

In order to better clarify units' responsibility for filing tour permit applications in advance of their trips, the Boston Minuteman Council Executive Board passed a resolution at its meeting on November 9, 2006, effective immediately.

For the protection of our volunteer leaders and the youth in our care, resolved that BMC policy will be that all units will complete and file a BSA tour permit application for:

- All trips or outings outside of local town,*
- Any overnight trip or outing,*
- Any trip or outing in which the unit plans to have any adult transport a youth not his/her own child, or*
- Any trip or outing that involves swimming, boating, hiking, climbing, or other activity involving special equipment regardless of mode of transportation*

Tour permit applications will be filed at BMC in person, by fax, or by email.

The advance submission of a tour permit application is required for any unit trip or outing that meets the above criteria, whether the trip or outing will be held by the unit as a whole or by a defined subunit, such as a den or patrol. Trips and outings within 500 miles of the unit's home base call for a local tour permit, while trips and outings 500 miles or more away require a national tour permit.

According to the Guide to Safe Scouting, "most short, in-town den trips of a few hours do not require a tour permit." However, even for short, in-town trips, tour permit applications should be filed *if the unit plans to have adults provide transportation to youth other than their own children.* In short, a good rule of thumb for tour permit applications: "When in doubt, fill one out."

Tour permit applications are available online at the Council's Health and Safety website (go to www.bsaboston.org and click on the tab on the left labeled "Health & Safety"). Unit leaders can and should use the tour permit process to help them plan safe outings according to BSA policies as designated by bold print in the Guide to Safe Scouting. To expedite the processing of tour permits, the Boston Minuteman Council allows units to submit with each tour permit application a master list of insurance information for all vehicles within the unit. Each unit may then circle the names of the drivers for each event or activity.

If any leader has a question regarding when or how to use tour permits, please feel free to contact the Council's Risk Management Committee at bmcriskmanagement@comcast.net.

Frequently Asked Questions

About the Boston Minuteman Council Policy on Tour Permits

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Does my unit need to submit a tour permit application if we are planning a trip to a council-owned property or an event sponsored by the council or a district?

Yes. A tour permit application should be submitted in advance of any trip that meets the stated criteria, regardless of whether it is a trip to a council property or council or district event.

Does my unit need to submit a tour permit application to go to summer camp?

Yes.

Does my unit need to submit a tour permit application if individual Scouts in the unit plan on their own to attend a provisional summer camp program, such as Eagle Week?

No. If a Scout plans to attend on his own, he is not going on a unit trip or outing and the unit does not need to submit a tour permit application on his behalf.

My unit plans an in-town, day outing that does not involve swimming, boating, hiking, climbing or other activities involving special equipment, such as a visit to our local fire station or town hall. The unit's plan is to have the Scouts and adult leaders meet at the trip location (e.g., fire station or town hall), but several parents later decide among themselves to car pool and an adult ends up transporting youth other than his or her own child. Did my unit need to submit a tour permit application?

No. Because this is an in-town, day outing that does not involve special activities, a tour permit would only be needed if the unit plans to have an adult transport a youth who is not his or her own child. In this case, the unit's plan is to have everyone meet at the local trip location and individual parents have separately decided to carpool. A tour permit would have been needed in such a situation only if, for example, the Den Leader asked the Den to meet at his or her home and then planned to transport all the members of the Den to the fire station.

My unit plans to have Scouts and parents individually arrange their own transportation to a nearby camping location for an overnight trip. Since my unit's plan does not call for any adult to transport a youth other than his or her own child, do we need to submit a tour permit application?

Yes. This is an overnight trip or outing. Units submit tour permit applications when at least one of the stated criteria applies to the trip or outing.

Does my unit need to submit a tour permit application if an adult gives a youth other than his or her own child a ride home to or from one of the regular unit meetings?

No. Regular unit meetings are not trips or outings.

Does my Troop need to submit a tour permit application if the Senior Patrol Leader calls a special PLC meeting at his house and asks everyone to meet him there?

No, as long as this is a meeting and not a trip or outing. For example, if the SPL's family has a backyard swimming pool and members of the PLC will be swimming, then the unit would need to submit a tour permit application.