



FAQs for Linked Troops

Q: What is the definition of a “linked troop”?

A: Linked troops are separate troops, regardless of gender, that both share the same chartering organization and the same troop committee. The decision to have a linked troop is made by the chartering organization.

Q: Why do linked troops share the same troop committee?

A: Sharing a troop committee allows linked troops to serve more youth without being limited by the chartering organization’s ability to find additional volunteers.

Q: Does the troop committee for a linked troop have the same committee members?

A: Yes. Linked troops share a troop committee.

Q: We are a male Scouts BSA troop, and our chartering organization is excited to start a female Scouts BSA troop. Who decides whether we become linked troops or separate troops?

A: The decision to have a linked troop is held by the chartering organization. As a best practice, it should be a consensus decision based on resources and preferences.

Q: Can linked troops meet at the same time?

A: Yes, linked troops, which are two separate troops that share a committee, can meet at the same time and place based on the decision of the chartering organization.

Q: Can linked troops hold unit meetings as one big troop?

A: No. While opening and closing of troop meetings can be done together or separately, (depending on space and the decision of the chartering organization and troop leadership), the rest of the unit meetings must be run as separate troops. This allows each unit’s adult and youth leadership to effectively serve in their important roles.

Q: Can linked troop share the same unit number?

A: Yes, however, the decision is up to the chartering organization and the local council. Troops cannot add a letter suffix to their number (e.g., Troop 100B and Troop 100G).

Q: Can linked troops share the same Assistant Scoutmasters?

A: Yes, the chartering organization approves the Assistant Scoutmasters of their troops. Assistant Scoutmasters must be registered in both troops and can select a troop to have their “primary” registration with and then “multiple” in the other troop. However, each troop must provide its own separate and appropriate two-deep leadership for its participants must meet all the other requirements of Scouting’s [Barriers to Abuse](#).

Q: Can linked troops offer activities together?

A: Yes. Each troop must provide its own separate and appropriate two-deep leadership for its participants and troops must meet all the other requirements of Scouting’s [Barriers to Abuse](#), including privacy and separate accommodations.

Q: Are linked troops required to attend the same summer camp and agree on a shared calendar of events for the year?

A: No, this is not required.

Q: Can the patrol leader’s councils of linked troops be merged?

A: No. Program integrity requires single-gender troops and single-gender patrol leader’s councils. For details on troop leadership requirements, review Scouting’s [Barriers to Abuse](#).

Q: What obligation does each linked troop have to the other? How does BSA expect a troop to support its linked troop?

A: BSA hopes that each troop will be helpful towards the other troop as well as friendly, courteous, cheerful, and kind. The chartering organization owns all equipment and funds for every unit. Linked troops should work together and coordinate the equitable use of shared equipment. Linked troops can have separate equipment if resources allow. The key is to refer to the Scout Law.

Q: Are linked troops required to adopt the same unit practices, rules for uniforms, annual calendars, etc.?

A: No. Even though their committees are linked, each troop is still a separate unit. The youth leadership, with guidance from the adult leaders, sets the culture of each unit. So long as both troops are administering the program safely and in accordance with policy—they are “Scouting.”

Q: Must the leaders of male troops be men and the leaders of female troops be women?

A: No. Adult leadership of a troop can consist of men and women. All Youth Protection guidelines must be followed regardless of the makeup of the adult leadership. Reminder: A registered female adult leader 21 years old or over must be present for any activity involving female youth.

Q: If a community does not have the ability to establish a new troop with the required number of youth of one gender, can the genders be combined to form a troop?

A: No. For details on troop leadership requirements, review Scouting’s [Barriers to Abuse](#).

Q: Can a chartering organization decide not to have a male or female troop?

A: Yes. To best serve the needs of the chartering organization and the community it serves, chartering organizations can decide on which types of units to charter.

Q: Can a chartering organization decide to have male and female patrols in one troop?

A: No. For details on troop leadership requirements, review Scouting's [Barriers to Abuse](#).

Q: What happens if a Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster is not available for a meeting?

A: The chartering organization and troop committee—in accordance with Scouting's [Barriers to Abuse](#) adult supervision requirements—will decide how they will conduct their meeting if the Scoutmaster cannot be present. Each troop must have their own two-deep leadership present for all activities.

Q: With the invitation to females to establish Scouts BSA troops, does the Scoutmaster position change?

A: No. The Scoutmaster is still responsible for training and guiding youth leaders in the operation of the troop, as well as managing, training, and supporting assistant Scoutmasters in their role.

Q: Could two organizations near one another partner together, one with a male troop and the other with a female troop?

A: Yes, provided they have local council approval. Per the Guide to Safe Scouting, local council approval is needed for unit-coordinated overnight camping activities involving other units not chartered by the same organization. Units that wish to host events involving other units that do not share the same charter partner must have approval from their council. This includes events for packs, troops, crews, and ships from the same council; neighboring councils, the same territory; or another territory.