

## **Guidelines for Planning an Overnight Event**

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### 1. Paperwork - - the “formal” documentation

A. Troop 970 Permission Slip. The permission slip is the basic announcement providing the “who/what/where/how much” information about the event and the paper slip that the parent must sign and date to allow his/her son to participate in the event. The slip may be as simple or elaborate as you like. Most events take only one page. Elaborate events may involve more pages. You will use the permission slip to request the information that you need to complete the NCAC Local Tour Permit Application (see below). Since it is the basis upon which the parent(s) make the decision on whether or not a Scout will participate in the event, the permission slip should contain all significant information. As such, the permission slip should be considered a “serious” document. Any significant change in what it offers may be the difference between whether a Scout may or may not attend the event. It is your decision as to when to set the due date for the permission slip. A simple rule of thumb is that you should give yourself the time that you need to take the information and prepare and submit the NCAC Local Tour Permit Application (see below) on time. A broader rule of thumb is that the less time you give yourself, the less time you also give the Senior Scout in Charge to ensure that all participating Patrols have adequate time to complete preparations for the event. The strong implication here is that you should set the due date in consultation with the Senior Scout in Charge. You should have the Troop Webmaster post the permission slip.

B. Troop 970 Universal Medical Permission and Release Form.

C. NCAC Local Tour Permit Application - - for trips of less than 500 miles. The application is due at NCAC Headquarters two (2) weeks before the event. You need to have a copy of the approved application with you during the event. In order to complete and submit the application in a timely fashion you will need to have a list of all event attendees and the usual information regarding drivers, i.e., vehicle information, driver’s license number, and public liability insurance coverage. The application is available at [www.boyscouts-ncac.org](http://www.boyscouts-ncac.org) where you may search under “permit” to find the application and a helpful checklist.

### 2. Roles and Responsibilities

A. ASM in Charge. The ASM in Charge is essentially the project manager for the event. He/she carries ultimate responsibility for the event - - everything ranging from planning to execution and lessons learned. Key to success is to draw upon the pool of experience represented by all the resources at your disposal, e.g. items B through E below. Working as a team is critical, as is delegation, clear and timely communications, and, last but hardly least in importance, the involvement of the Scout in Charge. It is easy to overlook the critical role that the Scout in Charge must play in organizing the attending Scouts into viable Patrols with effective leadership. As the ASM in Charge you need to anticipate what questions and assistance the Scout in Charge might have as he grapples with the issues that he faces. This is a case in point where the absence of communications should not be interpreted to mean that all is well.

B. Troop 970 Committee Chairman. The Committee Chairman's signature is required on the NCAC Local Tour Permit Application.

C. Senior Scout in Charge. Each event must have a Senior Scout in Charge. At the outset, an event appears as a high-level statement of a requirement - - probably a destination point and some dates. Gradually that requirement is fleshed out into a concept with subsidiary planning documents as appropriate such as itinerary, agenda, roster, and budget. Involving the Scout in Charge in each of these steps is the most effective way to ensure that the event corresponds to what the Scouts - - your customers! - - want. It also serves to provide valuable experience for the Scout in Charge on how to plan and execute an event, experience which will be useful when it comes time for the summer High Adventure program. For his part, the Senior Scout in Charge should at a minimum require that his Patrol leaders provide him with a duty roster (e.g. dish washing, cooking, water pumping, etc.) for all jobs that will need to be completed during the event and a staffing roster that indicates who is responsible for taking care of what preparation before the event begins (e.g. grub master, quartermaster, etc.).

D. Scoutmaster. The Scoutmaster is your primary resource in all aspects of the event. He is to you what you are to the Scout in Charge.

E. ASM corps. Various schools of thought have materialized in how ASMs in Charge have chosen to engage the ASM corps. The ASM in Charge is forced to reach out to at least one other ASM in order to make the event a reality. That satisfies the "two-deep" leadership requirement. Each event is different. Some will undoubtedly benefit from a circle of several ASMs. Additionally, having several ASMs involved closely provides insurance against unexpected demands from your job, illness, or family emergencies. Frequent, timely, responsive, and open communications are probably the single most important ingredient in building the most effective leadership team possible for the event.

### 3. Paperwork - - the "practical" documentation

A. For Everyone - - each Scout family participating in the event should receive the following information before the event:

1. Itinerary. It should provide enough information so that everyone can provide an answer to the question, "Where are we going?" For example, not just a place name, but also the name, address, and telephone number of the place of lodging, the museum, or the white-river rafting outfitter.

2. Agenda. This should provide activities, locations, and times. Activity can be unstructured - - so this is not a call for plotting out every second of every hour. Since the agenda should be constructed in close cooperation with the Scout in Charge, the agenda provides an opportunity to verify that the event is being built to the expectations of the Scouts.

3. Statement of objectives and expectations. Clearly stated, objectives and expectations allow all participants to focus on the same thing. All events are learning experiences. State up front what you intend for the Scouts to learn. Once again, the statement should be drafted in close cooperation with the Scout in Charge. If there is a misconnect, it could surface in this exercise.

4. Special instructions for participants on what to bring. For example, money for fast-food stop(s), sunscreen, ID, sleeping bag for beds without linens, etc.

5. Roster of participants. This should include Scouts, ASMs, non-ASM adults participating - - and the cell phone numbers for all the adults. This could prove useful in the event of an emergency.

6. Patrol organization for the event. This is especially important given that Patrols are sometimes merged for events.

B. For Drivers - - each driver should receive the following:

1. List of drivers including cell phone number and vehicle make, model, and license plate number.

2. List of all other adults participating in the event and including cell phone number.

3. Special instructions for drivers, including map information for each driver providing overview of route(s) to/from the destination and detail of the destination itself.

4. Location of nearest emergency trauma treatment center, including address and map identifying route from destination. This information is easily obtained at [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/emergencymedicalservices.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/emergencymedicalservices.html) .

5. Instructions regarding departure for destination and leaving destination for home. Policy for the event as regards early departure and “one-way” drivers.

C. For the ASM in Charge - - in addition to all the above, the ASM in Charge will probably want to have:

1. List of who is riding in whose vehicle.

2. A notation of which route each driver is taking.

3. A Troop 970 Permission Slip signed and dated for each Scout.

4. A Troop 970 Universal Medical Permission and Release Form signed and dated for each Scout.

5. A copy of the NCAC Local Tour Permit Application as approved.

#### 4. Leadership Guidelines

A. The ASM in Charge and the Senior Scout will establish and communicate to all participants and parents of participating Scouts what the chain of command is for the event naming individual Scouts and ASMs by name and what the roles and expectations are for Patrol Leaders, Patrol members, ASMs, non-ASM adults participating.

B. These guidelines will serve to assist the Troop to function as a team and to minimize friction due to confusion over “what’s expected of me.” The guidelines are also a condition for participation.

C. The guidelines should be disseminated at least two weeks before the event, since much of the information will have to be ready by then in order to submit the NCAC Local Tour Permit Application on time.

#### 5. Budget

A. Most events take place within Loudoun County or in adjacent counties. Expenses incurred by the Troop will be paid for out of each Scout’s Scout account. Patrol expenses, e.g. food, will be covered by each patrol.

B. In the case of events that involve Troop expenses beyond what is normal, a budget outlining individual Scout expenses by category, e.g. transportation, admission, lodging, should be drafted and included as part of the information package for sign-up

with the Troop 970 Permission Slip. In particular, if transportation is considered as an expense category, it should be discussed and agreed upon with the Troop 970 Committee before the event takes place.

6. Schedule

A. As with anything, it depends. If the tickets are sold out, you waited too long.

B. NCAC Local Tour Permit Application. This must be at NCAC two (2) weeks before the event. You need to give yourself enough time to receive the approved application signed and dated by NCAC by return mail.

C. It has historically been very difficult in Troop 970 to get permission slips from parents. A recognized art form in the Troop is how to divine the number of days or weeks of cushion to build into a deadline without stifling interest, causing bitterness, or setting yourself up for last-minute actions. Good luck!