



Republic of the Philippines  
**Department of Education**  
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION  
SCHOOLS DIVISION OFFICE OF MUNTINLUPA CITY

**Office of the Schools Division  
Superintendent**

JAN 14 2025

**MEMORANDUM**

**NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING POLICY  
(BOY SCOUTS OF THE PHILIPPINES SAFEGUARDING POLICY)**


To: Assistant Schools Division Superintendent  
Chief Education Supervisor, Curriculum Implementation Division  
OIC-Chief Education Supervisor, School Governance and Operations Division  
Public Elementary and Secondary School Principals / OICs  
All Others Concerned

1. Attached is National Office Memorandum No. 08 s. 2025, dated January 10, 2025, on the above-captioned title, the contents of which are self-explanatory, for the information and guidance of all concerned.
2. Immediate and wide dissemination of this Memorandum is desired.

For:

**VIOLETA M. GONZALES**  
Asst. Schools Division Superintendent  
Officer-In-Charge  
Office of the Schools Division Superintendent

By:

  
**MA. REGAELE A. OLARTE**  
OIC-Chief Education Supervisor, SGOD  
Officer-in-Charge  
Office of the Assistant Schools Division Superintendent

Encl.: As stated  
References: As stated  
To be indicated in the Perpetual Index  
Under the following subjects:

SCOUTING      COMMUNICATIONS

ELK/DM/NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING POLICY (BOY SCOUTS OF THE PHILIPPINES SAFEGUARDING POLICY)  
018 /January 14, 2025

UN-2025-018



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# BOY SCOUTS OF THE PHILIPPINES

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"Laging Handa"

10 JAN 2025



## NATIONAL OFFICE MEMORANDUM

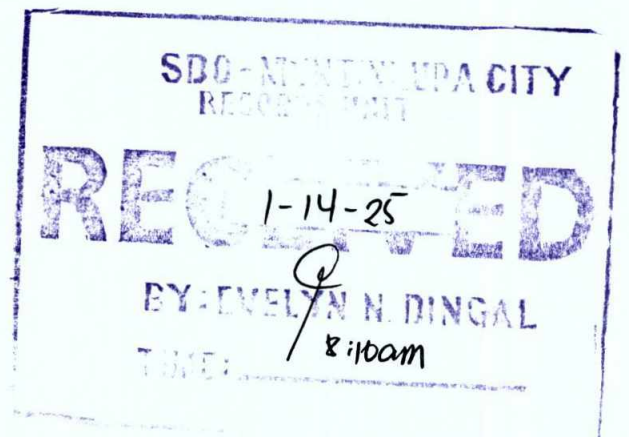
No. **08** series of 2025

TO : **REGIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS  
COUNCIL SCOUT EXECUTIVES AND OFFICERS-IN-CHARGE  
ALL CONCERNED**

SUBJECT : **NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

1. Consistent with the commitment of the Boy Scouts of the Philippines to ensure the safety and security of all stakeholders of Scouting and in compliance with the requirements of international commitments and domestic laws, the National Executive Board, during its meeting held last 13 December 2024, has approved the **National Safeguarding Policy**.
2. The attached policy was adopted to pursue the following objectives:
  - a. Protect children, young people, and adults from all forms of harm, abuse, and exploitation, whether physical, emotional, or sexual, during all Scouting activities.
  - b. Ensure that all BSP personnel, volunteers, and adult leaders conduct themselves with professionalism and uphold the values of the **Scout Oath and Law** in all interactions.
  - c. Promote a culture of transparency, accountability, and mutual respect, creating a space where Scouts can thrive and become active agents of positive change in their communities.
3. The National Office is preparing for the detailed roll-out of the Policy up to the Local Council level. Capacity-building on the policy at the individual level will also be prepared through the Learning and Management System. Schedule and details of the roll-out and capacity-building will be announced later.
4. In the interim, all Regional Youth Development Officers and Council Scout Executives are directed to disseminate the Policy to the respective Regional Scout Committees and Local Council Executive Boards for initial dissemination.
5. For information, guidance and strict compliance.

**KIM ROBERT C. DE LEON**  
Director IV (Secretary General)



# NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING POLICY

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Policy Statement

The **Boy Scouts of the Philippines (BSP)** is dedicated to helping the youth develop values and acquire competencies to become responsible citizens and capable leaders, guided by the **Scout Oath and Law**<sup>1</sup>. Central to this mission is the commitment to provide a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment for all members of the Scouting Movement.

The **BSP Safeguarding Policy** is built on the principles outlined in the Scout Oath and Law, emphasizing the importance of protecting children and young people from harm. BSP recognizes that safeguarding is not just about protecting children from abuse but also fostering a culture where all members, including adults, are treated with respect, fairness, and dignity.

Through this policy, BSP aims to:

- a. Protect children, young people, and adults from all forms of harm, abuse, and exploitation, whether physical, emotional, or sexual, during all Scouting activities.
- b. Ensure that all BSP personnel, volunteers, and adult leaders conduct themselves with professionalism and uphold the values of the **Scout Oath and Law** in all interactions.
- c. Promote a culture of transparency, accountability, and mutual respect, creating a space where Scouts can thrive and become active agents of positive change in their communities.

BSP remains steadfast in its responsibility to shape future leaders while ensuring the safety and well-being of all its members in line with national child protection laws and international standards. This policy applies to all Scouting activities, both in-person and online, reinforcing BSP's commitment to creating a safer world for all.

### 1.2. Legal Framework

The **BSP Safeguarding Policy** is grounded in both international and national laws that protect the rights and well-being of children, young people, and adults. These legal frameworks guide BSP's efforts to ensure the safety of all its members and provide clear guidelines for preventing and responding to abuse, exploitation, and harassment. The following are key legal references for the policy:

- a. **WOSM Safe from Harm Policy**<sup>2</sup>: BSP aligns with the World Organization of the Scout Movement's (WOSM) Safe from Harm policy, which sets global standards for creating safe environments in Scouting, with a focus on preventing abuse, harassment, and exploitation, and promoting the well-being of all members. **BSP commits to regular updates of its Safeguarding Policy**, ensuring it is aligned with evolving global standards outlined in WOSM's Safe from Harm framework.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://Scouts.gov.ph/oath-and-law/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://learn.Scout.org/resource/world-safe-harm-policy>

## **Boy Scouts of the Philippines Safeguarding Policy**

- b. **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)<sup>3</sup>:** This international treaty recognizes the inherent rights of all children and obligates states and organizations to protect these rights. Key provisions include the child's right to protection from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence, as well as the right to participate in decisions affecting them. The BSP integrates these principles into its policies and practices, ensuring the safety, dignity, and empowerment of all Scouts, in alignment with the global standards for child protection and well-being.
- c. **Republic Act No. 7610<sup>4</sup> (Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation, and Discrimination Act):** This law provides for special protection of children against abuse, exploitation, and discrimination, and mandates stronger deterrents for child-related crimes.
- d. **Presidential Decree No. 603<sup>5</sup> (Child and Youth Welfare Code):** This decree declares the rights of children and the responsibilities of various sectors, including the government, community, and family, in ensuring their welfare and protection. It emphasizes the duty of institutions like the BSP to promote the best interests of children, safeguard them from exploitation and abuse, and foster their holistic development.
- e. **The Family Code of the Philippines<sup>6</sup> (Executive Order No. 209, as amended):** The Family Code underscores the vital role of the family as the basic social institution responsible for the upbringing and protection of children. It highlights the parents' primary obligation to care for and guide their children while also mandating the state and organizations like the BSP to support families in fulfilling this duty, particularly in safeguarding children from harm and abuse.
- f. **Republic Act No. 11930<sup>7</sup> (Anti-Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children and Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials Law):** This law addresses the prevention, prosecution, and rehabilitation related to online sexual abuse and exploitation of children (OSAEC) and the dissemination of child sexual abuse or exploitation materials (CSAEM). It mandates strict reporting mechanisms and technological safeguards to protect children from online exploitation, an important provision for Scouting activities that may involve online interactions.
- g. **Republic Act No. 7877 (Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995)<sup>8</sup>:** This law defines and penalizes acts of sexual harassment in workplaces, educational institutions, and other settings where there is a power imbalance. It complements the **Safe Spaces Act (RA 11313)** by addressing harassment in hierarchical relationships, such as employer-employee or teacher-student interactions. Together, these laws strengthen BSP's commitment to creating a harassment-free environment across all Scouting activities.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1992/06/17/republic-act-no-7610/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://elibrary.judiciary.gov.ph/thebookshelf/showdocs/26/22773>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1987/07/06/executive-order-no-209-s-1987/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://issuances-library.senate.gov.ph/sites/default/files/2023-02/ra%252011930.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.ombudsman.gov.ph/GAD/Laws%20and%20Mandates/republic\\_act\\_7877.pdf](https://www.ombudsman.gov.ph/GAD/Laws%20and%20Mandates/republic_act_7877.pdf)

## **Boy Scouts of the Philippines Safeguarding Policy**

- h. **Republic Act No. 11313<sup>9</sup> (Safe Spaces Act):** This law protects individuals from gender-based harassment in public spaces, workplaces, and online platforms. BSP adheres to the Safe Spaces Act by ensuring that all members, including adults and children, are free from harassment and discrimination.
- i. **Republic Act No. 10173 (Data Privacy Act of 2012):** This law ensures the protection of personal information in both physical and digital formats, emphasizing the responsible and lawful handling of data. It mandates strict confidentiality, security measures, and accountability in collecting, processing, and storing personal information. For the BSP, this law guides the safeguarding of scouts' and members' personal information, particularly when handling sensitive data, including health records, consent forms, and media permissions, ensuring compliance with data privacy standards and protecting individuals from data misuse or breaches.

The **BSP Safeguarding Policy** incorporates these legal frameworks to ensure that all BSP activities, whether physical or digital, comply with the highest standards of child protection. The policy will be reviewed and updated periodically to reflect changes in the law and incorporate emerging best practices in safeguarding.

### **1.3 Background and Rationale**

The Boy Scouts of the Philippines has long been committed to fostering the personal growth and development of young people through Scouting. However, the increasing complexity of today's world—including the challenges posed by both in-person and online interactions—demands a proactive approach to safeguarding.

The **BSP Safeguarding Policy** was developed to ensure that:

- a. All individuals, whether Scouts, leaders, or volunteers, can participate in Scouting activities free from the risk of harm.
- b. BSP also recognizes that youth members can actively contribute to their own protection and the protection of their peers, promoting a culture of safety and respect throughout the organization. Youth empowerment is a key strategy for ensuring Scouts are knowledgeable, confident, and proactive in safeguarding.
- c. BSP provides a clear framework for identifying, preventing, and addressing abuse, harassment, and misconduct.
- d. BSP personnel are well-equipped to respond to safeguarding concerns quickly and effectively.

Additionally, this policy supports BSP's broader mission of building responsible, empowered, and morally upright individuals by establishing clear standards for behavior, transparency, and accountability.

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<sup>9</sup> [https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2019/ra\\_11313\\_2019.html](https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2019/ra_11313_2019.html)

## **Boy Scouts of the Philippines Safeguarding Policy**

### **1.4 Aims and Scope**

The **BSP Safeguarding Policy** aims to:

- a. **Protect children and young people** from all forms of abuse, exploitation, neglect, and harm in both physical and digital environments.
- b. **Promote safe and respectful interactions** among adults within the Scouting movement, ensuring that all adult leaders, staff, and volunteers uphold professional boundaries and conduct themselves with integrity.
- c. **Establish clear guidelines** for preventing, reporting, and managing safeguarding incidents, ensuring the safety and well-being of all BSP members.

This policy applies to:

- a. **BSP personnel and staff:** Including all full-time, part-time, and contractual employees of BSP.
- b. **Volunteers and adult leaders:** Any individual who serves in a leadership or supporting capacity during BSP activities, including Scouting events, camps, and trainings.
- c. **Scouts and young participants:** All members of the BSP Scouting movement, including children and young people participating in any Scouting activity. This includes all preparatory and post-activity situations.
- d. **Other adults including legal guardians, third-party partners and contractors:** Any external individuals or organizations working or interacting with the BSP, including event legal guardians, visitors, contractors, donors, media personnel and any other personnel who come into contact with Scouts during any Scouting event or activity.
- e. The policy also extends to any **online activities** conducted under BSP's supervision, ensuring that both digital and physical environments are safe for all participants.

## **Boy Scouts of the Philippines Safeguarding Policy**

### **2. Preventive Strategies**

#### **2.1 Code of Conduct for BSP Staff, Adult Leaders and Volunteers**

The Boy Scouts of the Philippines (BSP) is committed to ensuring the safety, protection, and well-being of every Scout. All BSP staff, adult leaders, and volunteers are expected to adhere to this Code of Conduct to foster a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment in line with the core values of Scouting. The behavioral protocols outlined here shall be applicable at all times.

##### **a. Do's:**

- i. **Be a Role Model**  
Demonstrate professionalism and serve as a positive example for Scouts. Show punctuality, discipline, and leadership, while modeling proper behavior in all Scouting meetings and activities. Live by the Scout Oath and Law.
- ii. **Maintain Supervision at all times**  
Ensure that at least two responsible adults supervise all activities to prevent one-on-one situations with utmost consideration for the sex or gender of the Scouts. This includes hiking, camping, and other Scouting events.
- iii. **Communicate Respectfully**  
Use safe, positive, and respectful language when addressing Scouts. Avoid sarcasm, harsh tones, inappropriate nicknames/titles or derogatory language based on appearance, ethnicity, sex or gender identity. Always refer to individuals by their proper names. Communication must remain respectful and calm at all times.
- iv. **Ensure Transparency and Open Observation**  
All Scouting activities must be authorized and documented. Keep activities open for observation by leaders, parents, or authorized persons, and avoid holding closed-door or unsupervised meetings. All events, trips, or meetings must be officially sanctioned by Scouting authorities and approved by parents/guardians.
- v. **Conduct Activities in Approved and Safe Spaces**  
Scouting activities should be held in public or approved spaces, whether in-person or online. Under no circumstance shall these activities be conducted in private homes or spaces. All overnight stays must occur at approved venues with proper supervision.  
  
Scouts are not allowed to stay overnight in an adult leader's private home or vice versa. Adults must not also enter Scout's private spaces unsupervised. All interactions must take place in officially designated or supervised areas.
- vi. **Follow Uniform Guidelines**  
Ensure that Scouts and leaders wear appropriate Scouting uniforms during official events, ceremonies, and when representing the BSP in public.
- vii. **Treat Scouts Equitably**  
Distribute tasks, awards, and opportunities fairly based on merit and effort. Leadership roles and merit badges must be awarded according to the existing guidelines to prevent personal bias.

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Leaders must not favor any particular Scout by giving them special treatment, rewards, or personal gifts. All rewards and tasks must follow standard processes. Offer career advice and personal guidance professionally and without favoritism or undue influence. Ensure that guidance is offered equally to all Scouts.

- viii. **Create a Safe Space to Promote Inclusivity**  
Foster an inclusive environment where Scouts of all backgrounds feel safe and valued. Ensure spaces and activities are gender-sensitive and culturally-relevant. Actively promote a respectful, safe, and uplifting environment where Scouts feel empowered to express themselves without fear of judgment or retaliation (stereotype, prejudice and discrimination).
- ix. **Encourage Peer Support and Empowerment**  
Promote a culture where Scouts support one another by empowering them to take on leadership roles, encouraging them to express concerns assertively, and upholding Scout ideals and values.
- x. **Accomplish Safeguarding Training Requirements**  
Complete and pass the Safeguarding training, either online or offline, and other related training or learning conducted by the Boy Scouts of the Philippines.

### **b. Don'ts:**

- i. **Prohibit Unnecessary Physical Contact**  
Inappropriate and unnecessary physical contact must be avoided. Always explain the need for contact (e.g., during first aid or badge pinning, etc) and seek the scout's consent and permission before proceeding. Maintain personal boundaries, and only initiate physical contact when necessary and with consent. This is consistent with the educational objectives of Scouting and its Youth Program.
- ii. **No Abuse of Power**  
Adult leaders must not use their authority to unfairly influence Scouts, exploit their position, or make Scouts perform personal errands. Adult Scouts must not use their authority as Patrol leader/Crew Leader/ or any other troop/outfit designation/ position to unfairly influence fellow Scouts.
- iii. **No Communication during Unreasonable Hours**  
All communication (in-person, call/text, online) should be related to Scouting activities only. Do not communicate with Scouts during inappropriate hours (e.g. before 7 AM & after 8 PM), unless in an emergency.
- iv. **No Smoking, Vaping, Harmful Substance & Alcohol Use**  
Smoking, vaping, or consuming alcohol or any harmful substance is strictly prohibited in all Scouting activities and with or without the presence of Scouts, especially when wearing the Scout uniform. The use and/or possession of drugs/harmful substance, alcohol, or tobacco is strictly prohibited at Scouting events and activities. Campsites and venues must remain substance-free at all times.

## **Boy Scouts of the Philippines Safeguarding Policy**

- v. **No Double-Meaning or Inappropriate Jokes**  
Making inappropriate sexual jokes and innuendos is strictly prohibited, especially in the presence of Scouts.
- vi. **No Hazing, Bullying, Harassment or Excessive Discipline/Correction**  
Hazing, bullying, excessive discipline, and harassment of any kind are strictly prohibited. Scouting activities must foster teamwork and respect, not embarrassment nor humiliation. Physical punishment or excessive discipline/correction (e.g., "kissing the ground" or crawls) is not allowed.
- vii. **Do Not Apply Pressure or Threaten Scouts**  
Leaders must not impose undue pressure on Scouts or use threatening behavior, including intimidation or coercion.
- viii. **No Gossiping or Gaslighting**  
Leaders must not gossip about Scouts or manipulate their emotions by downplaying concerns or invalidating their feelings.
- ix. **Do Not Be a By-stander**  
Never promise to keep a secret that could affect a Scout's safety or well-being. All reports of bullying or abuse must be reported promptly.
- x. **Do Not Resolve Safeguarding Issues Privately**  
Safeguarding concerns must be reported and properly documented by the designated officer immediately. Leaders must not attempt to handle issues privately, and will always follow the Case Management Protocols stipulated in this Safeguarding Policy.

### **2.2 Safe Interaction Amongst Adults**

Consistent with the **Safe Spaces Act (Republic Act No. 11313)**, BSP upholds the right of every individual to a safe, respectful, and non-discriminatory environment, both in physical spaces and online.

This section outlines the guidelines for appropriate adult-to-adult interactions within BSP, fostering a culture of mutual respect, professionalism, and safety for all members. The goal is to prevent gender-based harassment, bullying, and abuse while promoting positive and productive relationships.

#### **a. Guidelines for Safe Interaction Amongst Adults**

- i. **Respect and Dignity**
  - All adults within BSP — staff, volunteers, or adult leaders — must treat each other with respect and uphold the principles of equality, fairness, and dignity in every interaction.
  - Any behavior that demeans, humiliates, or marginalizes another adult is strictly prohibited, including discriminatory comments or actions.
- ii. **Zero Tolerance for Harassment**
  - BSP maintains a strict policy against all forms of harassment, including:
    - **Sexual Harassment:** Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal/physical conduct of a sexual nature.

## **Boy Scouts of the Philippines Safeguarding Policy**

- **Gender-Based Harassment:** Acts, comments, or gestures that humiliate, intimidate, or demean individuals based on sex, gender, sexuality, or sexual orientation.
- **Bullying and Verbal Abuse:** Offensive remarks, intimidation, or any verbal or emotional abuse aimed at diminishing another person's self-esteem or professional standing.
- **Cyber Harassment:** Threatening or offensive communications via digital platforms such as social media, email, or other electronic messaging channels.

### **iii. Professional Boundaries**

- BSP adult leaders, staff, and volunteers must maintain clear professional boundaries in their relationships with each other. Favoritism, power imbalances, and inappropriate relationships that could compromise professionalism and impartiality must be avoided.
- In cases where relationships extend beyond professional contexts (e.g., friendships), interactions within BSP must still adhere to respectful and professional standards, ensuring fairness and equality.

### **iv. Non-Discriminatory Practices**

- Discrimination based on sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, socioeconomic background, or any other protected status is prohibited within BSP. All adults are entitled to equal treatment and opportunities in the Scouting movement, ensuring an inclusive and welcoming environment.

### **v. Conflict Resolution**

- BSP encourages open communication and respectful dialogue to resolve interpersonal conflicts among adults. Should disputes arise, BSP offers channels for mediation and resolution, ensuring that conflicts are handled with dignity and professionalism.
- If conflicts escalate or involve harassment or abuse, formal reporting mechanisms will be activated, and an investigation will follow in accordance with the **Case Management and Reporting Protocols** of the BSP Safeguarding Policy.

## **b. Online and Digital Interaction Amongst Adults**

### **i. Safe Digital Spaces**

- BSP recognizes that digital platforms are extensions of the physical environment. As such, all standards for safe and respectful interactions apply to online communications.
- Adult leaders, staff, and volunteers must avoid engaging in cyber harassment, making offensive comments, or participating in inappropriate behavior on social media, email, or any other digital platforms when interacting with other adults in the Scouting movement.

### **ii. Cyber Harassment and Abuse**

- Acts of online harassment or the spread of false or harmful information about another person within BSP are treated as violations of this policy. Such behavior will be addressed through the **Case Management and Reporting Protocols** outlined in the BSP Safeguarding Policy.

## **Boy Scouts of the Philippines Safeguarding Policy**

### **2.3 Code of Conduct for Children and Young Persons (Scouts)**

This **Code of Conduct** outlines the expectations for Scouts in their interactions with fellow Scouts and adults during all BSP activities, both in-person and online. By following these guidelines, Scouts contribute to creating a positive, supportive environment where everyone can thrive.

#### **a. Guidelines for Safe Interaction Among Scouts**

##### **i. Respect for Others**

- Scouts must treat fellow Scouts, leaders, and adults with respect. This includes listening to others, valuing their opinions, and being mindful of their feelings.
- Physical violence, bullying, or any form of aggression—whether verbal or physical—is strictly prohibited. Scouts are encouraged to resolve disagreements peacefully and to seek help from a leader or adult if needed.

##### **ii. Inclusion and Fairness**

- Scouts must be inclusive of everyone, regardless of their background, sex, gender, religion, or abilities. Excluding others from activities or making fun of someone because they are different is not acceptable.
- All Scouts should play fairly, avoid cheating in games or competitions, and ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in activities.

##### **iii. Kindness and Support**

- Scouts are expected to show kindness and offer support to others, especially when someone is feeling sad, hurt, or excluded. Helping others is a core value of Scouting.
- If a Scout witnesses bullying or unfair treatment, they should report the issue to an adult leader or take action to support the individual being mistreated.

#### **b. Guidelines for Safe Interaction Between Scouts and Adults**

##### **i. Respecting Adult Leaders**

- Scouts must follow the instructions of adult leaders and volunteers during Scouting activities as long as this does not bring harm to themselves or others. Showing respect for adults who are guiding and supporting the Scouting experience is essential.
- Scouts must always be polite and courteous to adult leaders, avoiding any behavior that may be perceived as disrespectful or inappropriate.

##### **ii. Setting Boundaries with Adults**

- Scouts must understand that adults—whether leaders, volunteers, or visitors—should always interact with them in a respectful and appropriate manner. If a Scout feels uncomfortable with any adult's behavior, they should report it to a trusted adult leader immediately.
- Scouts should avoid accepting gifts, special favors, or private attention from adults without the knowledge of their parents/guardians/guardians or other adult leaders.

## **Boy Scouts of the Philippines Safeguarding Policy**

### **iii. Seeking Help from Adults**

- If a Scout feels unsafe, threatened, or uncomfortable during any Scouting activity, they should seek assistance from an adult leader or volunteer right away. Adult leaders should be there to provide support and guidance in times of need.

### **c. Online Safety and Digital Interaction**

#### **i. Safe Digital Behavior**

- Scouts must adhere to the same respectful behavior online as they do in person. **Cyberbullying**, harassment, or spreading harmful or false information about others is strictly prohibited.
- Scouts should use digital platforms responsibly, ensuring that their online interactions are positive and in line with the values of Scouting.

#### **ii. Reporting Unsafe Online Behavior**

- Scouts must report any form of bullying, inappropriate behavior, or unsafe activities they witness or experience online to an adult leader or volunteer immediately.

## **2.4 Respecting Property and the Environment**

### **a. Respect for Property**

Scouts must respect the belongings of others, including their fellow Scouts, adult leaders, and the venues where Scouting activities are held. Taking or damaging property that does not belong to them is not allowed.

### **b. Caring for the Environment**

Scouts are responsible for caring for the environment, especially during outdoor activities. They must leave nature as they found it, pick up litter, and follow all rules for protecting the environment. Respecting nature is a key value in Scouting, and all Scouts are expected to be stewards of the outdoors.

## **2.5 Code of Conduct for Others**

The provisions here shall be applicable for any external individuals or organizations working or interacting with the BSP, including event legal guardians, visitors, contractors, donors, media personnel and any other personnel who come into contact with Scouts during any Scouting event or activity.

### **a. Do's:**

#### **i. Ensure Supervision and Transparency**

All interactions with Scouts must be conducted in supervised, open environments. Never interact with Scouts in private or unsupervised settings.

#### **ii. Respect Personal and Cultural Boundaries**

Maintain appropriate physical boundaries. Physical contact should be minimal and based on consent, and interactions must respect the cultural practices of the region, provided they align with BSP policies.

## **Boy Scouts of the Philippines Safeguarding Policy**

- iii. **Adhere to BSP Policies and Guidelines**  
Follow all BSP safeguarding, behavior, and safety protocols when engaging with Scouts during events or activities. This includes respecting cultural traditions that are consistent with child protection standards.
  - iv. **Wear Identification at All Times**  
Ensure you are clearly identifiable by wearing the appropriate ID or badge provided by BSP during Scouting events.
  - v. **Communicate Respectfully**  
Use positive, respectful language when addressing Scouts. Avoid any form of inappropriate or aggressive speech.
  - vi. **Report Safeguarding Concerns Immediately**  
Report any inappropriate behavior or safety concerns immediately to the designated safeguarding officer, no matter how minor the concern seems.
  - vii. **Respect Media and Privacy Guidelines**  
Media personnel and others must obtain prior consent from BSP and legal guardians before photographing or recording Scouts. Do not post images on personal social media without permission.
  - viii. **Comply with Event and Safety Rules**  
Follow all event rules and safety protocols, including venue restrictions, equipment usage, and emergency procedures.
  - ix. **Respect Scouts' Privacy and Personal Information**  
Never share personal details or photographs of Scouts without BSP and guardian consent.
  - x. **Encourage Inclusivity and Respect Dietary/Religious Practices**  
Promote an inclusive environment, ensuring Scouts of all backgrounds feel safe and respected. Be mindful of religious and dietary considerations when interacting with Scouts.
- b. **Don'ts:**
- i. **Do Not Engage in One-on-One Private Interactions**  
Avoid being alone with a Scout in any private setting, including online. Interactions must take place in supervised, visible areas.
  - ii. **Do Not Make Physical Contact Without Consent**  
Avoid unnecessary physical contact with Scouts unless absolutely necessary for safety reasons, and always ensure consent is given.
  - iii. **Do Not Use Inappropriate Language or Behavior**  
Foul or inappropriate language, including jokes or remarks that are offensive or culturally insensitive, is strictly prohibited.

## **Boy Scouts of the Philippines Safeguarding Policy**

- iv. **Do Not Smoke, Drink, or Use Vices Around Scouts**  
Smoking, drinking alcohol, or gambling in the presence of Scouts or at Scouting events is strictly prohibited, including during informal gatherings related to Scouting.
- v. **Do Not Take Photos or Videos Without Consent**  
Do not take any photographs or videos of Scouts unless you have obtained explicit consent from BSP and the legal guardians.
- vi. **Do Not Distribute Unapproved Materials**  
Do not distribute any materials, including promotional items or gifts, without prior approval from BSP leaders.
- vii. **Do Not Show Favoritism or Offer Personal Gifts**  
Refrain from giving special treatment, personal gifts, or rewards to certain Scouts.
- viii. **Do Not Invade Scouts' Privacy**  
Never request or gather personal information (e.g., home addresses, social media accounts) from Scouts.
- ix. **Do Not Ignore Safeguarding Procedures**  
Always follow BSP's safeguarding procedures. Do not attempt to address incidents independently without notifying BSP personnel.
- x. **Do Not Interfere with Program Delivery**  
Do not disrupt the delivery of Scouting programs, unless addressing an immediate safety issue, which must be reported to BSP staff immediately.

## **Boy Scouts of the Philippines Safeguarding Policy**

### **3 Program Implementation Safeguarding Guidelines**

#### **3.1 General Principles and Responsibilities**

- a. **Purpose:** The **BSP Program Implementation Safeguarding Guidelines** ensure the physical, emotional, and psychological safety of Scouts during all Scouting activities, including overnight stays and travel. These guidelines outline preventive measures and clear procedures for adult leaders to mitigate risks and ensure effective supervision.
- b. **Scope:** The guidelines apply to all BSP Scouting programs, including day programs, overnight stays, local and long-distance travel, and special events. Adult leaders, staff, volunteers, and Scouts must follow these guidelines to maintain a safe and organized environment.
- c. **Responsibilities of Adult Leaders:** Adult leaders are directly responsible for the safety and well-being of Scouts during all Scouting activities. This includes ensuring proper supervision, enforcing curfews, maintaining discipline, and immediately addressing any risks or incidents that arise.
- d. **Parental/Guardian Engagement:** Parents/guardians and guardians must be fully informed about all planned activities. Clear communication of event details, including potential risks, must be provided to ensure that informed consent is obtained, with safety protocols clearly outlined.
- e. **Fairness and Equal Treatment:** Adult leaders must ensure that all Scouts are treated equitably. Tasks, rewards, and penalties must be distributed fairly, without favoritism or bias. Leaders should avoid assigning roles or distributing rewards based on personal preference or non-Scouting affiliations.
- f. **Avoiding Inappropriate and Unsafe Interventions:** Intervention measures must be proportionate to the infraction and consistent across all Scouts. Leaders must avoid imposing threats, or using violence as a means of control.
- g. **Scouts in Public Events:** Before participating in public events, Scouts must be fully prepared and equipped. Leaders must coordinate with local authorities to manage potential risks, including public conflicts, health concerns, and environmental factors like weather conditions.
- h. **Workshops and Symposiums:** These events must include a comprehensive risk management plan, including budget oversight and emergency response preparations. A designated emergency response plan and first-aid personnel must be available for immediate response in case of accidents.
- i. **Community Service:** Community service activities must be planned with risk assessments focused on physical contact, geographical locations, environment and security risks. Ocular inspections must be done in advance, and leaders must mitigate identified risks.
- j. **Maintaining standards:** In line with the APR Code of Conduct for NSOs Organizing Youth Events, any additional protocols to be created for the purposes of program implementation must take into consideration the Code of Conduct for Youth Events developed by the APR Scout Committee.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> <https://treehouse.Scout.org/sites/default/files/2024-10/Code%20of%20Conduct%20for%20Youth%20Events%20Approved%20October%202024.pdf>

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### **3.2 Incident Command System (ICS) for Program Implementation**

As part of the **Program Implementation Safeguarding Guidelines**, the Local Councils, Regional Coordination Offices and the National Office of **Boy Scouts of the Philippines (BSP)** shall establish **Incident Command Systems (ICS)** to ensure an organized and effective response to safeguarding concerns, emergencies, and other critical incidents during Scouting activities.

#### **Key Components of the ICS for BSP Program Implementation:**

- a. **Designated Incident Commanders**  
Each Scouting event or activity, particularly those involving large groups or high-risk activities, will have a designated **Incident Commanders who shall also serve as the safeguarding officer for that particular activity**. This individual, typically an experienced adult leader, will be responsible for coordinating the response to any incident that arises.
- b. **Clear Communication Channels**  
The ICS will define clear communication protocols to ensure swift and effective transmission of information in the event of an incident. All leaders, volunteers, and relevant stakeholders must be informed of the designated communication structure and their respective roles during an emergency or safeguarding concern.
- c. **Emergency Response Team**  
For larger events such as those involving approximately 300 Scouts or more, an **Emergency Response Team (ERT)** will be appointed, consisting of trained personnel responsible for managing incidents such as injuries, safety breaches, or safeguarding violations. This team will work closely with the Incident Commander to implement response strategies.
- d. **Risk and Response Plans**  
Each event or activity will have pre-determined **Risk and Response Plans**, which will outline potential hazards and the steps to be taken in the event of an emergency or safeguarding incident. These plans must be reviewed with all adult leaders and shared with relevant stakeholders before the event.
- e. **Incident Documentation**  
All incidents, whether minor or major, will be documented as part of the **Incident Command System**. This documentation will be reviewed by BSP leadership to assess the adequacy of the response and identify areas for future improvement.

### **3.3 Pre-Activity Risk Assessment and Planning**

- a. **Comprehensive Risk Assessment:** A thorough risk assessment utilizing this BSP risk activity assessment tool template (Annex A) must be conducted before any Scouting activity, particularly overnight stays and travel. Leaders must identify physical, environmental, and logistical risks, covering venue safety, weather conditions, transportation, health risks, and emergency preparedness.
- b. **Medical and Cultural Sensitivity Preparedness:** Leaders must collect the health profiles of each Scout, including allergies, chronic illnesses, and any special medical needs. Leaders must carry a well-stocked medical kit, and for larger

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events, a designated medical officer should be present. Scouts should be reminded to bring personal medications, which must be securely stored. Information regarding religious/cultural restrictions when it comes to food shall also be collected and will be considered when preparing for the meals of the Scouts.

- c. **Parental/Guardian Consent and Scout Assent:** Written consent and assent (Annex 'B') from parents/guardians or guardians is mandatory for all Scouting activities, especially for overnight stays and travel. Consent forms must include full event details, emergency contacts, and a waiver of liability, with risks clearly outlined. Integrated in the consent form is an assent form to be signed by the Scouts participating in the activity.
- d. **Site and Venue Inspection:** Prior to the event, an ocular inspection of the venue must be conducted to ensure that its safety aspects are considered. Leaders must assess environmental risks (e.g., proximity to water or cliffs) and evaluate the safety of sleeping, dining, and activity areas.
- e. **Weather Forecasting and Monitoring:** Leaders must monitor weather forecasts before and during the event. If adverse weather conditions are expected, leaders must implement contingency plans such as indoor activities or postponing/canceling outdoor events.

### **3.4 Overnight Stays and Night Supervision**

- a. **Sleeping Areas**

Scouts must be assigned separate sleeping areas based on sex, ensuring that **male and female Scouts** have distinct, well-marked, and appropriately spaced sleeping quarters. These areas should be positioned in a way that offers **privacy** and minimizes unnecessary interaction between different groups during rest periods.
- b. **Prohibition of Shared Sleeping Quarters with Adults**

Adult leaders and volunteers must **never share sleeping quarters with Scouts**, regardless of the circumstances. Adult sleeping areas must be clearly separated and located at a safe distance to ensure supervision without compromising the **privacy and safety** of Scouts.
- c. **Clear Boundaries and Secure Layout**

Physical boundaries or barriers must be established, whether in tents, dormitories, or campsites, to prevent any **inappropriate contact** or unauthorized entry into Scout sleeping areas. Clear signage should indicate restricted access and boundaries, especially with male and female, mixed-gender environments or shared campgrounds.
- d. **Nighttime Safety Checks and Monitoring**

Adult leaders are required to conduct **regular, discreet checks** during the night to ensure that all Scouts remain within their assigned sleeping areas and that safety protocols are being followed. These checks must be carried out in a manner that maintains Scouts' privacy and dignity, without unnecessary intrusion or disturbance.

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- e. **Lighting and Accessibility for Night Safety**  
Sleeping areas must be equipped with **adequate lighting**, particularly around entry points, to ensure that Scouts feel safe and can easily navigate the area at night. Emergency exits, paths to bathrooms, and common areas should be well-lit and accessible, especially for younger Scouts or those with special needs.
- f. **Special Consideration for Female Scouts**  
Sleeping arrangements for female Scouts must be designed with their **specific privacy needs** in mind, ensuring that areas are safe, secure, and equipped with appropriate amenities. Adult female leaders should be assigned to supervise female sleeping areas.
- g. **Emergency Protocols and Rapid Response**  
Leaders must ensure that all Scouts are aware of emergency procedures in case of incidents during the night (e.g., medical emergencies, fires). Leaders must be prepared to **respond quickly** while maintaining the necessary supervision and safeguarding standards.
- h. **Comfort and Personal Space**  
Leaders must make efforts to ensure that sleeping areas are comfortable and respect Scouts' personal space, ensuring that bedding arrangements are adequately spaced to prevent overcrowding and maintain comfort during sleep.
- i. **Night Supervision**  
A night roving or security system must be in place, with adult leaders assigned to supervise the camp throughout the night. Patrols should occur at regular intervals, ensuring no unauthorized movement or interaction between Scouts outside their designated sleeping areas.
- j. **Adequate, Private, and Comfortable Hygiene Facilities**  
Separate, secure, and well-maintained **toilet, bathing, and changing facilities** must be provided for Scouts, clearly divided by sex, with particular attention to the needs of female Scouts. These facilities must offer **privacy and comfort** for all Scouts and be designed to ensure safety at all times.
- k. **Safety and Regular Monitoring**  
Adult leaders are responsible for regularly monitoring these facilities to ensure they remain safe, secure, and free from inappropriate behavior, while also respecting the **privacy and dignity** of all Scouts. Any supervision must be done in a non-intrusive way to maintain privacy.
- l. **Appropriate Plumbing and Waste Disposal**  
All facilities must have **adequate plumbing** to ensure a clean and hygienic environment, including **appropriate waste disposal systems** for toilet and bathing areas. Leaders must ensure that waste is disposed of regularly and in compliance with health and safety standards to avoid any hygiene risks.
- m. **Adequate and Safe Lighting**  
All toilet, bathing, and changing facilities must be **well-lit** with **sufficient and safe lighting**, especially in areas that Scouts might use at night. This helps ensure both safety and comfort while reducing the risk of accidents or inappropriate situations.

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### **n. Gender-Sensitive Design and Comfort**

Special attention must be given to designing and maintaining facilities to meet the needs of **female Scouts**, ensuring that **privacy, comfort, and access to necessary amenities** (e.g., menstrual hygiene products) are prioritized. Leaders must ensure these are available in female-designated spaces.

### **o. Emergency Preparedness**

Leaders must have an emergency response plan, which includes knowledge of the nearest medical facilities, access to emergency contact numbers, and clear evacuation routes for emergencies such as fires or natural disasters.

## **3.5 Travel Guidelines**

### **a. Pre-Travel Arrangements:**

- i. Venue and Vehicle Inspections:** Leaders must inspect travel venues (if practicable) and ensure that all vehicles used for transportation are safe and roadworthy. Vehicles must be equipped with seatbelts (if there are appropriate provisions) and emergency equipment, and overcrowding should be avoided.
- ii. Weather and Route Planning:** Travel routes must be carefully planned, with backup routes identified in case of road closures or other unforeseen hazards. Weather conditions must be monitored to avoid travel in dangerous conditions.
- iii. Travel Insurance:** All participants, including Scouts and adult leaders, must be covered by travel insurance that includes medical emergencies and accidents. This will be applicable for participation in national events. Insurance for local travel shall be covered by the existing measures being implemented by the BSP.
- iv. Parental Communication:** Parents/guardians must receive a detailed itinerary before any trip, including emergency contacts, transportation details, and expected return times. Any changes to the itinerary must be communicated immediately by the accompanying leaders.

### **b. Supervision During Travel:**

- i. Supervised Seating:** Scouts must be assigned seats to ensure proper supervision during travel. Scouts and adults should sit separately to avoid compromising situations, with leaders seated in locations that allow them to monitor Scouts effectively.
- ii. Health and Safety Checks:** Before departure, leaders must check that Scouts are physically fit for travel. Medications and necessary medical supplies must be securely packed, and a designated health officer should handle any medical emergencies en route.
- iii. Communication Plan:** Leaders must establish a communication plan with Scouts and adult leaders, including emergency contact numbers and check-in points. If traveling in multiple vehicles, communication devices should be used to maintain contact.

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### **c. On-the-Road Safety:**

- i. **Driver Safety and Practices:** All drivers must have a valid license and be fit to drive. Leaders must verify the driver's credentials and ensure that they are familiar with safe driving practices, including adhering to traffic regulations, maintaining speed limits, wearing seatbelts, and avoiding distractions (e.g., mobile phone use). Drivers must also take regular breaks to avoid fatigue.
- ii. **Rest Stops and Breaks:** Rest stops must be scheduled every 2-3 hours, and Scouts must be accounted for before resuming travel. Leaders should ensure that Scouts do not wander off during breaks and remain in designated safe areas.
- iii. **Emergency Protocols:** In the event of an accident or vehicle breakdown, leaders must have a plan to contact roadside assistance and emergency services. Scouts should remain in safe locations while waiting for assistance, and parents/guardians/guardians should be notified promptly.

### **3.6 Program Scheduling and Activity Safety**

- a. **Timely Program Scheduling:** Activities should follow a well-structured schedule, including rest breaks and meal times. Programs should not be physically or mentally overexerting, and night activities should be limited to allow adequate rest for Scouts and Scout leaders.
- b. **Health and Nutrition:** Nutritious meals must be provided during all programs. Clean drinking water must be available at all times, and Scouts should be encouraged to stay hydrated, especially during strenuous activities. Leaders should monitor Scouts for signs of dehydration or illness and respond quickly.
- c. **Activity Supervision and Equipment:** All activities, especially those with physical risks (e.g., hiking, swimming, climbing), must be supervised by qualified leaders. Scouts must be briefed on safety rules, and appropriate safety gear (e.g., helmets, life vests) must be provided.
- d. **Buddy System:** A buddy system must be implemented to ensure Scouts' safety during all activities. Each Scout must be paired with another, and they are responsible for each other's safety throughout the event. Leaders should conduct routine check-ins with each buddy pair.
- e. **Meetings:** Leaders must ensure all Scouts have equal participation during meetings and team-building activities, avoiding exclusion, favoritism, or verbal abuse. Parliamentary procedures should be used to maintain respectful discussions and avoid bias in decision-making.
- f. **Inspection:** Venues must undergo ocular inspections to prevent accidents. All participants must sign verified consent/assent forms, and parental orientation must be provided beforehand to explain the risks and expectations.

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### **3.7 Post-Event and Post-Travel Procedures**

- a. **Debriefing and Feedback:** After each event or trip, a debriefing session should be conducted with both Scouts and adult leaders. This should include a review of any incidents, lessons learned, and feedback for future improvements. Scouts should be encouraged to express concerns about their safety and emotional well-being.
- b. **Health and Emotional Follow-Up:** Leaders must follow up on any health issues or emotional concerns raised during the event. Scouts requiring medical or emotional support must be referred to the appropriate professionals, such as medical staff or counselors.
- c. **Lost and Found Management:** A system for managing lost and found items should be established to ensure Scouts recover any misplaced belongings. Leaders must communicate with parents/guardians regarding any items that remain unclaimed.
- d. **Safe Dismissal:** Scouts must not be dismissed unsupervised after an event. Parents/guardians or guardians must be responsible for picking up Scouts at designated times and locations. Leaders must remain on-site until all Scouts are safely picked up.

### **3.8 Social Media and Communications Guidelines**

#### **a. General Principles**

- i. **Purpose:** These guidelines are designed to safeguard Scouts in all online interactions and ensure that digital communication aligns with the core values of the Boy Scouts of the Philippines. All online engagements must prioritize the safety, privacy, and well-being of Scouts.
- ii. **Scope:** These guidelines apply to all members of BSP, including Scouts, adult leaders, and staff. It covers all online platforms, including but not limited to messaging apps (e.g., Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp), social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter), video calls (e.g., Zoom, Google Meet), and email communication.

#### **iii. Communication Guidelines**

- **Professional Communication:** All online communications between Scouts and adult leaders must be official and related to Scouting programs. Conversations should focus on topics such as event updates, merit badge requirements, or Scout advancement. Personal, non-Scouting-related discussions are discouraged.
- **Appropriate Hours:** Communication between Scouts and adult leaders must occur during reasonable hours, typically between 8 AM and 8 PM, unless there is an emergency. Leaders must avoid messaging Scouts late at night, and parents/guardians/guardians must be informed of any necessary communication outside these hours.

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- **Group Chats and Oversight:** All group chats or online communication groups (e.g., Messenger, WhatsApp, Viber) must include at least two adult leaders for oversight. Leaders should actively monitor these group chats to ensure that all content is appropriate and related to Scouting. **Private one-on-one chats between a leader and a Scout are only allowed with parental consent** and must be logged and reported to a superior.
- **Language and Tone:** All communication should be respectful, positive, and aligned with BSP values. Leaders must avoid using inappropriate, derogatory, or foul language. Additionally, leaders should refrain from making sarcastic or harsh remarks. Communication should focus on providing constructive feedback, encouragement, and guidance to Scouts.
- Leaders must take active measures to prevent **cyberbullying** and protect Scouts' data. Violations such as privacy breaches should be handled immediately through the BSP's reporting channels.

### **iv. Social Media Usage**

- **Official Accounts Only:** Adult leaders should only use official BSP social media accounts to interact with Scouts. Personal social media accounts should not be used for direct communication with Scouts. If a Scout sends a friend request to an adult leader's personal account, the leader must politely decline and direct the Scout to the official BSP channels.
- **Content Sharing:** Leaders must ensure that any content shared on their personal social media platforms is appropriate, respectful, and adheres to BSP's values. Sharing content with inappropriate language, adult themes, sexually explicit material, or politically controversial topics is strictly prohibited.

### **v. Posting and Sharing Content**

- **Consent for Photos and Videos:** Before posting any photos or videos of Scouts on social media, leaders must obtain explicit consent from both Scouts and their guardians. This can be done via written consent forms or event registration forms that include data privacy and media consent disclaimers. Leaders must ensure that Scouts and guardians have the option to withdraw their consent at any time.
- **Data Privacy Compliance:** All personal information (e.g., full names, addresses, contact details) of Scouts must be handled according to the Philippines' Data Privacy Act. Personal data must be securely stored, accessible only to authorized personnel, and must not be shared publicly without explicit consent.
- **Handling of Sensitive Content:** Adult leaders must never share or post sensitive content with Scouts, including material that is suggestive, violent, or otherwise inappropriate. Links to unverified or unsafe websites must not be shared.

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### **vi. Video Calls and Online Meetings**

- **Supervision During Calls:** All video calls and online meetings involving Scouts must be supervised by at least two adult leaders. Parents/guardians or guardians must be notified in advance about the purpose and timing of the calls, and consent must be obtained for any one-on-one interactions. All calls must be logged/recorded for transparency.
- **Secure Platforms:** All online Scouting activities must occur on **secure platforms** that include strong passwords and user protection. Online interactions must be monitored by at least two authorized leaders to ensure appropriate content, with all participants using **password-protected** websites and platforms.
- **Recording Consent:** If a video call or online meeting is to be recorded, all participants (both Scouts and their guardians) must be informed and **consent (verbal or written)** must be obtained prior to the recording. Recordings should only be used for Scouting-related purposes and securely stored.

### **3.9 Training and Capacity Building on the BSP Safeguarding policy**

In alignment with WOSM's Safe from Harm Policy, BSP will ensure that the safeguarding training on the BSP Safeguarding Policy is:

- a. **Mandatory for all adults**, including volunteers, staff, and leaders. New recruits must undergo a BSP safeguarding policy training as part of their induction, covering topics such as child protection, recognizing abuse, and reporting mechanisms.
- b. **Refreshed periodically**, with all adult leaders receiving updated training every three years to reflect changes in safeguarding laws, best practices, and emerging risks.
- c. **Age-appropriate for Scouts**, ensuring that they are educated on the BSP safeguarding policy including, how to recognize unsafe situations, and how to report concerns.
- d. **Documented and Monitored:** BSP will maintain records of all BSP safeguarding policy training completed by adult leaders and volunteers to ensure compliance. Additionally, feedback from training participants will be used to refine future training sessions.

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### **3.10 Provision for Scouts with Special Needs: Diversity and Inclusion**

The Boy Scouts of the Philippines (BSP) is committed to fostering a Scouting environment that is inclusive, accessible, and empowering for all, including Scouts with special needs and disabilities. This provision ensures that all members, regardless of their abilities, can fully participate in Scouting activities while promoting equality and respect for diversity.

#### **a. General Principles**

##### **i. Inclusivity:**

- BSP recognizes the unique needs and contributions of Scouts with disabilities and is committed to ensuring their meaningful participation in all activities.
- Scouting activities must be planned and conducted in a way that respects the dignity, individuality, and rights of all Scouts.

##### **ii. Accessibility:**

- BSP will make reasonable accommodations to ensure accessibility to facilities, programs, and activities for Scouts with physical, sensory, intellectual, or developmental disabilities.

##### **iii. Anti-Discrimination:**

- BSP strictly prohibits any form of discrimination, prejudice, or exclusion based on disability. This includes verbal, physical, or attitudinal behaviors that marginalize Scouts with special needs.

#### **b. Guidelines for Scouts with Special Needs**

##### **i. Activity Planning and Adjustments:**

- All activities must be designed to be inclusive, with modifications made to accommodate Scouts with disabilities (e.g., alternative games, accessible venues, or adaptive tools).
- Leaders must evaluate activities in advance to identify and mitigate potential barriers for Scouts with special needs.

##### **ii. Individualized Support:**

- Adult leaders and volunteers must engage with parents/guardians to understand the specific needs of Scouts with disabilities.
- Each Scout's unique abilities and support requirements must be considered, including assigning a buddy or providing additional supervision if needed.

##### **iii. Accessible Communication:**

- Leaders must use inclusive communication methods, such as visual aids, sign language interpreters, or simplified instructions, to ensure Scouts with disabilities can fully understand and participate in activities.

##### **iv. Training for Leaders:**

- All adult leaders and volunteers must undergo training on diversity and inclusion, including strategies for supporting Scouts with disabilities. This training will emphasize empathy, accessibility, and adaptive leadership.

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### **4 REPORTING AND CASE MANAGEMENT PROTOCOLS**

#### **4.1 General Provisions**

##### **a. Creating a Supportive Environment for Reporting**

BSP will ensure that Scouts who report safeguarding concerns are provided with comprehensive support throughout the process. This includes:

- **Confidential Reporting Channels:** Establish a secure and anonymous reporting portal where Scouts can safely disclose any concerns without fear of retaliation.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Conduct campaigns through videos and workshops, educating Scouts on what safeguarding is, why reporting is important, and how reporting is safe by providing information on how the BSP shall handle these reports.
- **Workshops:** Regular safeguarding workshops will be conducted for Scouts and leaders, focusing on how to recognize signs of abuse, report concerns, and provide support.

##### **b. Creating Safe Spaces and Immediate Support**

Each local council will create safe spaces where Scouts can discuss concerns with trained safeguarding officers.

- **Safeguarding Committees:** Safeguarding committees will be established at the local, regional, and national level to oversee the protection of Scouts.
- **Immediate Response:** These Safeguarding Committees will be activated to handle reports swiftly and provide immediate support, including safety planning and emergency counseling.

##### **c. Counseling and Peer Support**

The BSP will offer **professional counseling services** to any Scout who reports abuse or exploitation. Scouts will also have access to **peer support groups** and mentorship programs that create a supportive community environment.

- **Counseling Services:** Professional psychologists or counselors trained in victim response will be available at the local, regional and national levels **either directly or via referral to partners.**
- **Peer Support and Mentorship:** A peer support program will be developed to encourage Scouts to help each other and provide emotional support within the Scouting community.

##### **d. Community Collaboration**

BSP will actively collaborate with local NGOs, child protection organizations, and community stakeholders to ensure Scouts have access to external support systems when needed. This includes sharing resources, services like counseling, training, and joint initiatives to strengthen safeguarding practices.

##### **e. Retroactivity Clause**

All reported safeguarding violations will be evaluated based on the safeguarding policies in effect at the time of the alleged incident. However, if a subsequent update to the policy introduces stricter or more protective standards, the updated provisions may be applied, provided they do not conflict with the principles of fairness and due process.

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### **f. Scope of Retroactivity**

Incidents reported after the implementation of updated safeguarding policies may invoke retroactive application if the updated provisions offer enhanced protection for Scouts or stricter safeguards against abuse and exploitation.

### **g. Fairness to the Respondent**

Retroactive application will not be used to impose sanctions or obligations that were not outlined in the policy at the time of the incident, ensuring compliance with principles of fairness and due process.

### **h. Decision-Making Authority**

The Safeguarding Committee at the appropriate level (local, regional, or national) will determine the applicability of retroactive provisions on a case-by-case basis.

### **i. Documentation**

All decisions involving retroactivity will be documented, outlining the rationale for applying updated standards.

## **4.2 Case Management Protocols**

### **a. Reporting BSP Safeguarding Violations**

Violations of the safeguarding policy can be reported through the following channels:

#### **i. Direct Reporting to the Council Safeguarding Focal Person:**

Scouts, parents, staff, or any concerned party can report safeguarding violations directly to the designated Safeguarding Focal Person at the local, regional, or national levels. This ensures accessibility at multiple levels within BSP.

#### **ii. BSP Safeguarding Hotline**

A dedicated safeguarding hotline will be made available, managed by trained BSP staff. This allows Scouts and others to report concerns confidentially and promptly, ensuring that incidents are addressed quickly.

#### **iii. BSP National Office Social Media**

Reports can also be submitted via the official **BSP National Office Facebook page** or other social media platforms designated by BSP. These platforms provide a direct link for individuals who may not be able to access formal reporting channels in person.

### **b. Local Level Case Management Process**

#### **i. Report Submission**

Once a report is made, it is forwarded to the **Local Council Safeguarding Focal Person** for immediate attention. The Safeguarding Focal acts as the first point of contact, ensuring that the issue is documented correctly and that safeguarding protocols are followed.

#### **ii. Initial Processing**

The Safeguarding Focal Person at the local level documents and processes the initial details of the report, ensuring that all relevant information is captured. This documentation is crucial for transparency and later review by higher authorities.

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### iii. **Initial Report Creation**

An **initial report** is generated within **24 hours** of the concern being raised. The report details the incident and the steps taken thus far. This report is essential to ensure that concerns are acted upon swiftly.

### iv. **Escalation to the Local Safeguarding Committee**

The report is then referred to the **Local Safeguarding Committee** for further review and action. This committee will convene to discuss the next steps and any immediate actions required to protect the affected Scout(s).

### v. **Disclosure of Conflict of Interest Before Case Conferences**

Before any case conference at the Local level, all committee members must disclose any potential or actual conflicts of interest. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- **Personal Relationships:** Any familial, social, or professional relationship with the victim, alleged perpetrator, or other involved parties.
- **Prior Involvement:** Any previous role in incidents related to the current case or any personal interest that may impact impartiality.
- **Other Biases:** Any circumstance that could affect their ability to remain objective or impartial during the case review process.

### vi. **Local Safeguarding Committee Case Conference:**

The **Local Safeguarding Committee** is composed of:

- **Council 1st Vice Chairperson:** Leads the case review and ensures the safeguarding protocols are followed.
- **1 of any of the following commissioners** depending on the nature of the safeguarding concern;
  - **Program Commissioner:** Provides insights related to Scout activities and program-specific issues.
  - **Training Commissioner:** Addresses training needs or breaches in training guidelines related to the incident.
  - The Deputies shall be involved if the incident involves a perpetrator under their supervision.
- **Council Scout Representative:** Ensures that Scouts' voices are heard during the process, participation of which will be dependent on the nature of the case based on the discretion of the Council 1st Vice Chairperson, especially regarding cases concerning extreme forms of violence.
- **Council Scout Executive:** Serving as the Secretary of the Committee
- **External member with Child Protection Expertise:** Provides professional safeguarding insights as the need arises

A case conference is convened **within 48 hours** after the Safeguarding Focal submits the report. The committee meets to assess the situation and determine the immediate actions needed to address the concern and safeguard the Scout(s) involved, including referral to the regional or national level if needed.

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### **c. Regional Level Case Management Process**

#### **i. Report Submission**

If the report involves more complex issues<sup>11</sup> or escalates beyond the local level, it is forwarded to the **Regional Council Safeguarding Focal** for processing. This ensures that the regional level is involved, when necessary, especially for serious incidents that may impact a number of Scouts or involve more complex or significant violations.

#### **ii. Initial Information Processing**

The **Regional Safeguarding Focal** documents the report and follows the same initial processing procedures as the local level, ensuring a consistent and standardized response to all safeguarding concerns.

#### **iii. Initial Report Creation**

An initial report is generated within the **24-hour period** and then referred to the **Regional Safeguarding Committee** for review.

#### **iv. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest Before Case Conferences**

Before any case conference at the Regional level, all committee members must disclose any potential or actual conflicts of interest. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- **Personal Relationships:** Any familial, social, or professional relationship with the victim, alleged perpetrator, or other involved parties.
- **Prior Involvement:** Any previous role in incidents related to the current case or any personal interest that may impact impartiality.
- **Other Biases:** Any circumstance that could affect their ability to remain objective or impartial during the case review process.

#### **v. Regional Safeguarding Committee Case Conference:**

The **Regional Safeguarding Committee** includes:

- **Regional Vice Chairperson:** Heads the review of regional cases.
- **One of the following commissioners** depending on the nature of the safeguarding concern;
  - **Program Commissioner:** Provides insights related to Scout activities and program-specific issues
  - **Training Commissioner:** Addresses training needs or breaches in training guidelines related to the incident.
  - The Deputies shall be involved if the incident involves a perpetrator under their supervision.
- **Regional Scout Representative:** Ensures Scouts' input is considered during case handling, participation of which will be dependent on the nature of the case based on the discretion of the 1st Vice Chairperson, especially regarding cases concerning extreme forms of violence.
- **Youth Development Officer V:** Serving as the Secretary of the Committee
- **External member with Child Protection Expertise:** Provides professional safeguarding insights as the need arises

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<sup>11</sup> Complex child protection concerns are cases which might prevent local councils from fully performing their case management duties because of the parties involved in the said incidence (e.g., a member of the safeguarding committee is involved, a highly influential local individual is involved and other similar situations)

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The **Regional Case Conference** is convened **within 24 hours** of the Safeguarding Focal's report, to ensure quick intervention. The committee determines necessary actions, including referring cases to the national level if needed.

### **d. National Level Case Management Process**

#### **i. Report Submission**

If escalated from the local or regional level, the report is forwarded to the **National Safeguarding Focal Person**.

#### **ii. Initial Processing**

The National Safeguarding Focal Person is responsible for documenting the initial details of the report, ensuring all relevant information is processed accurately and efficiently.

#### **iii. Initial Report Creation**

An **initial report** is generated within **24 hours** and referred to the **National Safeguarding Committee** for a formal case review.

#### **iv. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest Before Case Conferences**

Before any case conference at the National level, all committee members must disclose any potential or actual conflicts of interest. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- **Personal Relationships:** Any familial, social, or professional relationship with the victim, alleged perpetrator, or other involved parties.
- **Prior Involvement:** Any previous role in incidents related to the current case or any personal interest that may impact impartiality.
- **Other Biases:** Any circumstance that could affect their ability to remain objective or impartial during the case review process.

#### **v. National Safeguarding Committee Case Conference:**

The **National Safeguarding Committee** comprises:

- **Secretary General:** Oversees the safeguarding procedures at the national level.
- **Legal Officer:** Provides legal guidance and determines any legal implications.
- **2 Volunteers from the National Executive Board** (Preferably from the Adults in Scouting and Risk and Safety Management Committees)
- **National Scout Representative (Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao):** Represents Scouts at the national level depending on the victim and accused.
- **External member with Child Protection Expertise:** Provides professional safeguarding insights as the need arises

The **National Case Conference** must be convened within **48 hours** of the report. The team assesses the case and determines the appropriate response, including referral to external agencies if necessary.

### **e. Post-Case Conference Actions**

#### **i. Case Conference Results:**

- Results must be finalized **within 72 hours** after the conclusion of the case conference.

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- The respondent and the victim are informed of the **outcome** and any actions to be taken.

### **f. Appeals Process for Case Resolutions**

- Any party involved in a safeguarding case, whether the complainant or the respondent, has the right to appeal the decision or outcome of the case.
- Appeals must be based on specific grounds, such as:
  - Procedural errors during the case management process.
  - New evidence that was not available during the initial investigation.
  - Perceived bias or conflict of interest affecting the decision.
  - Disproportionate sanctions or outcomes.

### **g. Appeal Levels**

#### **i. Local Council to Regional Level:**

- If the case was initially handled at the Local Council level, the appeal must be submitted to the Regional Safeguarding Committee **within 10 working days of receiving the resolution**.
- The Regional Committee will review the appeal and decide whether to uphold, modify, or overturn the initial decision.

#### **ii. Regional Level to National Level:**

- If the case was initially handled or appealed at the Regional level, further appeals can be submitted to the National Safeguarding Committee **within 10 working days of receiving the regional decision**.
- The National Committee's decision is final and binding.

#### **iii. Number of Appeals:**

- Each party is allowed a maximum of two appeals, ensuring that cases are not perpetually contested.
- First Appeal: From Local to Regional or from Regional to National.
- Final Appeal: From Regional to National.

### **h. Appeals Submission and Review Process**

#### **i. Written Submission:**

- Appeals must be submitted in writing, clearly stating the grounds for the appeal and providing supporting evidence or documentation.
- Appeals must be addressed to the appropriate safeguarding committee at the next level (e.g., Regional or National).

#### **ii. Committee Review:**

- The receiving committee will convene within 10 working days of the appeal submission to review the case. A decision must be rendered within 15 working days of the review.
- The committee must ensure that no member involved in the previous decision participates in the appeal review to maintain impartiality.

#### **iii. Final Decision:**

The National Safeguarding Committee's resolution on an appeal is final and binding. No further appeals will be entertained after the national level decision.

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### **iv. Documentation and Communication:**

All appeal proceedings and decisions must be documented and shared with the involved parties. Transparency and fairness must be maintained throughout the process.

## **i. Handling Different Types of Violations**

### **i. Criminal Violations:**

- If the safeguarding violation is of a criminal nature (e.g., abuse, exploitation), the case is immediately referred to law enforcement authorities or the social welfare office.
- If the respondent is a BSP employee, they may be placed on preventive suspension pending investigation. The case is also forwarded to the CODI (Committee on Discipline and Investigation) for appropriate administrative actions based on the Rules on Administrative Cases in the Civil Service.

### **ii. Non-Criminal Violations:**

- For non-criminal safeguarding violations, an internal investigation is initiated by the safeguarding committee to establish probable cause both in motu proprio or when there are reports filed by a complainant.
- If the investigation is ongoing, the respondent may be placed on preventive suspension to protect the victim and prevent interference with the investigation.

### **iii. Probable Cause:**

If probable cause is found, the results of the investigation are formally communicated to both the respondent and the complainant, along with any actions to be taken.

### **iv. No Probable Cause:**

If no probable cause is established, the results of the investigation are communicated to both parties, and the case is dismissed. A resolution shall also be issued formally announcing the results of the investigation.

## **j. Support for Victims:**

BSP is committed to providing the necessary support for victims, which may include:

- **Counseling:** Access to professional psychological support for emotional recovery.
- **Medical Support:** Access to healthcare services if needed.
- **Legal Support:** Assistance in navigating legal processes, especially in cases involving criminal acts, specifically, provision of advice and referral.

These support services, if not available within the BSP, shall be coursed through the BSP's network of partners and volunteers.

## **k. Sanctions**

### **i. For BSP Employees:**

- The case is referred to the **CODI** for administrative investigation and the application of appropriate sanctions.
- The CODI also facilitates internal administrative case filing if required.

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### **ii. For Non-BSP Employees:**

- If the respondent is a non-BSP employee, the safeguarding committee coordinates with the **affiliated organization** of the respondent to apply the necessary sanctions (e.g. staff of partner organizations collaborating with the BSP).
- However, if the respondent is a non-BSP employee, but is an active member of the BSP (e.g. Adult leaders who are teachers as well), the BSP shall impose additional sanctions depending on the violation such as but not limited to the following - written warnings, preventive suspensions, or being perpetually barred from participating in the BSP events.

### **iii. Sanctions and Disciplinary Measures**

The BSP shall apply a **graduated sanctions system** to address safeguarding violations, ensuring that responses are proportionate to the severity of the misconduct. The following framework will guide disciplinary measures:

- **Minor Violations:** Includes breaches such as failure to follow procedural rules. Sanctions may include:
  - Written warning.
  - Mandatory retraining in safeguarding protocols.
- **Moderate Violations:** Includes negligence in supervision or inappropriate behavior not amounting to abuse. Sanctions may include:
  - Temporary suspension from activities ranging from one month to six months, depending on the severity and circumstances of the violation
  - Mandatory counseling or corrective training.
  - Formal written reprimand.
- **Severe Violations:** Includes any form of abuse, exploitation, or repeated violations of safeguarding rules. Sanctions will include;
  - Permanent disqualification from membership with the BSP.
  - Referral to local authorities or law enforcement for legal action.

### **I. Due Process and Confidentiality**

All individuals subject to disciplinary action will be afforded due process, including the right to be heard and present their case and request a formal investigation. BSP will document all disciplinary actions taken and ensure that records are maintained in a confidential and secure manner.

### **m. Flagging System for Safeguarding Risks**

As part of the BSP Safeguarding Policy's commitment to protect Scouts and all members, a **Flagging System** will be implemented. This system is designed to monitor and manage individuals who have been the subject of **multiple safeguarding complaints** or have been **formally charged** with safeguarding violations. The purpose is to ensure that safeguarding concerns are shared across BSP governance levels to mitigate risks.

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### **i. Criteria for Flagging Individuals**

Individuals will be flagged under the following conditions:

- **Multiple Complaints:** If an individual has been the subject of **two or more safeguarding complaints** within a 6 month period. Complaints may relate to inappropriate behavior, or conduct that poses a potential risk to children or vulnerable individuals.
- **Formal Charges:** If an individual has been **formally charged** with a safeguarding violation, including cases involving physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, exploitation, or gross misconduct that impacts the safety of children and young people.

### **ii. Confidential Handling of Reports**

All flagging concerns will be handled confidentially by the designated BSP Safeguarding Focal at the National level. Flagged individuals will be subject to a **confidential assessment and inquiry** conducted by the Safeguarding Focal. During this process:

- Privacy and dignity will be maintained for those who reported the potential flagging concern(s) and the flagged individual.
- Information regarding the flagged status will be shared only with those authorized to handle safeguarding issues within BSP, ensuring confidentiality unless legal action or safeguarding breaches require further disclosure.

### **iii. Assessment and Review Process**

Each flagged case will undergo a **thorough assessment** by the safeguarding focal in coordination with the safeguarding committee at the national level to determine the risk level and necessary actions. This may include reviewing past complaints, conducting interviews, and seeking external advice if required. The following outcomes are possible:

- **Continued Monitoring:** In cases where complaints have not been substantiated (e.g. multiple reports or complaints are filed, but have not prospered as formal charges), the individual may be placed under close monitoring, with conditions set for continued involvement in BSP activities.
- **Formal Flagging:** Once an individual is deemed as formally flagged, the information will be formally documented and, if deemed necessary, will be shared with other local councils or BSP governance levels to prevent future risks in other areas of operation (e.g. to prevent the transfer of flagged individuals from one council to another).

### **iv. Preventing Misuse of the Flagging System**

To ensure the integrity of the Flagging System and prevent misuse, the following safeguards will be enforced:

- **Objective Criteria:** Flagging decisions will be based on clear and objective criteria, focusing on verified complaints and formal charges. These criteria will be documented and kept for review in case the decision is challenged.
- **Due Process:** Individuals who are flagged will have the right to present their case and request an impartial review.

### **v. Documentation**

All flagging decisions, actions taken, and outcomes of assessments will be documented. These records will remain confidential and accessible only to authorized BSP personnel responsible for safeguarding. Any sharing of flagged information will be conducted in a controlled manner to protect the rights of the individual while prioritizing the safety of Scouts and other members.

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### **vi. Monitoring Mechanisms**

Safeguarding reports shall be furnished to the National Safeguarding Committee via the following reporting schemes;

- Local Councils to consolidate reports in terms of number of safeguarding concerns handled for the year and shall submit to their respective Regional Coordination Office by the end of October.
- All Regional Coordination Offices shall consolidate the data submitted by the Local Councils within their jurisdiction, and shall submit these to the BSP National Safeguarding Committee by the end of November.
- The BSP National Safeguarding Committee shall consolidate all reports and shall include these in the BSP National Report.

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### **5 SAFEGUARDING IN EMERGENCIES**

In times of emergency, including natural disasters, displacement, or crisis situations, safeguarding standards must remain a priority to protect the physical, emotional, and psychological well-being of Scouts. Emergencies often heighten the risks of abuse, exploitation, and emotional trauma, making it essential that all adult leaders, volunteers, and third parties strictly adhere to safeguarding guidelines. The following measures ensure comprehensive protection for Scouts in crisis situations:

#### **5.1 Safe Temporary Shelters and Camp Environments:**

- a. **Separate Sleeping Quarters:** When Scouts are housed in temporary shelters, evacuation centers, or camps, adult leaders must ensure that separate sleeping quarters are provided for male and female Scouts, respecting privacy and cultural sensitivities. Additionally, younger Scouts or those with specific vulnerabilities (e.g., children with disabilities) should be placed in areas that receive extra supervision.
- b. **Supervision and Monitoring:** Adult leaders must maintain heightened supervision throughout the emergency period, especially at night or during high-stress situations, to prevent any safeguarding violations. Designated safeguarding focal points must conduct regular checks to ensure safety protocols are followed.
- c. **Designated Safe Spaces:** Leaders should establish **safe spaces** within camps or shelters where Scouts can go if they feel unsafe, scared, or need emotional support. These areas should be well-lit, easy to access, and supervised by trusted leaders.

#### **5.2 Recognizing and Addressing Heightened Vulnerability:**

- a. **Heightened Risk Awareness:** Scouts may be particularly vulnerable to emotional distress, **exploitation**, or **abuse** during emergencies, especially given the chaos, displacement, or breakdown of social structures. Leaders must be trained to recognize signs of **trauma, anxiety, fear**, and **withdrawn behavior** that could indicate a safeguarding concern.
- b. **Gender-Based Violence and Exploitation:** In crises, the risk of **gender-based violence (GBV)** or **trafficking** increases, particularly for girls. Adult leaders must remain vigilant to any potential threats from external actors (e.g., strangers, aid workers, or even other Scouts) and take immediate action if any concerns arise.
- c. **Extra Vigilance for Unaccompanied Minors:** Scouts separated from their families during emergencies may be especially vulnerable. Leaders must take all necessary precautions to ensure these Scouts are accounted for, well cared for, and kept safe from harm.

#### **5.3 Designated Safeguarding Focal Points in Emergencies:**

- a. **Role of the Safeguarding Officer:** In emergency settings, at least one safeguarding officer or trained leader must be responsible for monitoring safeguarding standards within the shelter or camp. This officer should have direct authority to enforce safeguarding protocols and should be recognized by all leaders and Scouts.
- b. **Training in Crisis Safeguarding:** Safeguarding focal points should be trained in **crisis-specific safeguarding protocols**, including how to manage safeguarding violations in difficult, high-stress environments. This includes knowing how to engage local authorities or child protection agencies if needed.

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### **5.4 Incident Reporting During Crises:**

- a. **Immediate and Flexible Reporting Mechanisms:** Safeguarding violations during emergencies must be reported **immediately**, even if normal communication channels are disrupted. A crisis communication plan must be in place, including **alternative methods of reporting** to authorities or external child protection agencies.
- b. **Multiple Reporting Channels:** In case phone lines or internet access are down, adult leaders should know how to use alternative methods such as **radio communication, satellite phones**, or in-person reporting to the nearest available authorities. Establish **clear contact points** for Scouts and leaders to report safeguarding concerns.
- c. **Coordination with External Agencies:** If normal safeguarding procedures cannot be followed due to the nature of the emergency, leaders must establish contact with **local relief organizations, child protection agencies, or law enforcement** to ensure all reports are properly handled.

### **5.5 Providing Psychosocial and Emotional Support:**

- a. **Immediate Emotional Support:** During emergencies, Scouts may experience high levels of anxiety and emotional distress. Adult leaders must prioritize **psychosocial support**, offering emotional reassurance, one-on-one conversations, or group counseling to help Scouts process their emotions.
- b. **Access to Professional Support:** Where possible, leaders should coordinate with external agencies to provide access to **professional counselors or psychologists** trained in trauma and child protection during emergencies.
- c. **Regular Check-Ins:** Leaders should conduct regular **emotional well-being check-ins** with Scouts, ensuring they have an opportunity to express any concerns, fears, or emotional challenges in a safe and supportive environment.

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### **6 IMPLEMENTATION WITH PARTNERS**

#### **6.1 Interaction between the BSP Safeguarding Policy and the Department of Education's Child Protection Policy.**

- a. The **Boy Scouts of the Philippines (BSP) Safeguarding Policy** and the **Department of Education (DepEd) Child Protection Policy** are both designed to ensure the safety, protection, and well-being of children. While they both aim to safeguard children from harm, abuse, exploitation, and harassment, they operate in different contexts:
- b. The **BSP Safeguarding Policy** applies to all Scouting-related activities, whether conducted on or off school grounds, and governs the behavior of BSP adult leaders, volunteers, and Scouts.
- c. The **DepEd Child Protection Policy** applies to activities that take place within educational institutions or under DepEd's jurisdiction, covering school personnel, students, and school-related activities.

Both policies complement each other to provide comprehensive protection for children involved in both school and Scouting environments.

#### **6.2 When Does the BSP Safeguarding Policy Take Effect?**

The **BSP Safeguarding Policy** takes effect during all **official Scouting activities** organized by the BSP. These include:

- a. Regular Scouting meetings, regardless of whether they take place on school premises or in community settings.
- b. Scouting events such as camps, hikes, and overnight stays.
- c. Travel for Scouting-related events, both locally and internationally.
- d. Any activity where Scouts are under the supervision of BSP personnel or adult Scout leaders.

The BSP Safeguarding Policy applies to all adult Scout leaders, volunteers, and personnel involved in these activities, even if they are also employed by schools or are part of the DepEd workforce.

#### **6.3 Scouting Activities in Schools: Overlapping Responsibilities**

When Scouting activities are conducted within school premises or involve school personnel who are also registered adult Scout leaders, both the **BSP Safeguarding Policy** and the **DepEd Child Protection Policy** may apply. The following guidelines outline how these policies interact:

- a. **For Scouting Activities Led by BSP Adult Leaders:**
  - i. If the activity is organized and led by BSP personnel, the **BSP Safeguarding Policy** applies. This includes troop meetings, Scouting projects, or camps held on school grounds but supervised by BSP adult leaders.
  - ii. BSP adult leaders must follow BSP protocols regarding supervision, child protection, and incident reporting, even if the activity occurs within a school setting.
- b. **For School-Based Co-curricular Activities:**
  - i. If the activity is part of a school's co-curricular program and is supervised by school personnel not acting as BSP leaders, the **DepEd Child Protection Policy** governs the activity.

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- ii. However, if BSP adult leaders are present in uniform and acting in their official capacity during a Scouting-related event, they must adhere to the **BSP Safeguarding Policy**.
- c. **For School Personnel Acting as BSP Leaders:**
  - i. If school personnel (e.g., teachers) are also registered as adult Scout leaders and are performing duties related to Scouting, they must follow the **BSP Safeguarding Policy** for all Scouting-related interactions.
  - ii. During regular school hours or non-Scouting activities, these personnel are bound by the **DepEd Child Protection Policy**.

In situations where both policies apply, the stricter or more immediate safeguarding provisions from either policy should be followed to ensure child safety.

### **6.4 Collaboration Between BSP and DepEd**

To ensure consistent protection for children, both the **BSP Safeguarding Policy** and the **DepEd Child Protection Policy** must work together. Clear communication and collaboration between BSP and DepEd personnel are essential to ensure that:

- a. **Clear Safeguarding Responsibilities:** When Scouting activities are conducted on school grounds, all personnel must understand which policy applies to specific situations and act accordingly. School staff acting as BSP leaders must follow BSP protocols during Scouting activities, while school personnel must adhere to DepEd's protocols during regular school functions.
- b. **Training and Awareness:** School personnel who are also BSP leaders must be trained in both the BSP Safeguarding Policy and the DepEd Child Protection Policy to ensure they are fully aware of their responsibilities and the procedures for each role.

### **6.5 Reporting and Incident Management**

In cases where incidents occur during Scouting activities, the following reporting guidelines apply:

- a. **BSP-Sanctioned Activities:**
  - i. If an incident occurs during a Scouting activity, whether on school grounds or elsewhere, the **BSP Safeguarding Policy** will govern the response. The incident must be reported through BSP's internal reporting channels, and the designated BSP safeguarding officer must be informed.
  - ii. If the incident involves school staff or impacts the broader school community, it must also be reported to the school administration and the **DepEd School Child Protection Committee** for further action.
- b. **School-Based Activities:**
  - i. For incidents that occur during school-based activities or non-Scouting events, the **DepEd Child Protection Policy** will govern the response. However, if the incident involves a Scout or occurs during an event that overlaps with Scouting, the BSP safeguarding team should also be informed to ensure appropriate follow-up.
- c. **Dual-Role Leaders:**
  - i. If an incident involves a school staff member who is also an adult Scout leader, both the BSP and DepEd policies will apply. The individual must report the incident through the appropriate channels in both organizations.

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### **6.6 Conflict Resolution and Best Interest of the Child**

In the event of a conflict between the two policies, the guiding principle is the **best interest of the child**. Both policies are designed to protect children, and when there are differences in procedures or responsibilities, the course of action that provides the most comprehensive protection for the child should be prioritized.

- a. **Reporting Procedures:** The stricter or more immediate reporting requirements from either policy should be followed. For instance, if BSP's reporting protocols require quicker action than DepEd's, BSP's timeline should be adhered to.
- b. **Coordination with Authorities:** Both BSP and DepEd should coordinate to ensure that any safeguarding issues are handled promptly, especially in cases where incidents cross between school and Scouting contexts.

### **6.7 Communication and Collaboration with Parents/guardians/Guardians**

The BSP recognizes the critical role that parents/guardians and guardians play in safeguarding their children. To ensure that Scouts participate in activities within a safe and supportive environment, BSP is committed to maintaining clear, consistent, and transparent communication with parents/guardians and guardians. This communication is essential for fostering trust, promoting safety, and ensuring that all involved parties understand the safeguarding measures in place.

- a. **Key Components of Communication and Collaboration with Parents/Guardians:**
  - i. **Pre-Activity Information Sharing**

Prior to any Scouting event or activity, BSP will provide parents/guardians with comprehensive information about the event, including:

    - The nature and scope of the activity (e.g., outdoor adventure, camping, educational programs).
    - Specific safeguarding measures that will be in place (e.g., adult supervision ratios, health and safety precautions, risk management plans).
    - Emergency contact details for the adult leaders, safeguarding officers, and local authorities.
    - Detailed travel arrangements if the activity involves transportation, ensuring that parents/guardians are aware of pick-up/drop-off points and safety procedures during travel.
    - Health and Safety requirements, including the collection of any relevant medical information from parents/guardians to address the specific needs of their children.
  - b. **Consent and Assent Process**

BSP will implement a standardized **Consent and Assent Form** (Annex B) for every activity, which must be signed by the parent/guardian before a Scout can participate. This form will:

    - i. Provide a clear understanding of potential risks associated with the activity and how BSP plans to mitigate them.
    - ii. Include emergency response plans, ensuring parents/guardians/guardians are aware of how incidents will be handled.
    - iii. Detail any health information required, allowing BSP to provide necessary support for Scouts with specific needs or medical conditions.

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### **c. Engagement and Feedback Channels**

The concerned BSP governance structure (local, regional or national) will create open channels of communication to actively engage parents/guardians throughout the Scouting year. These channels will allow parents/guardians to:

- i. Receive regular updates on upcoming events, safeguarding initiatives, and changes to BSP policies.
- ii. Provide feedback on safeguarding measures and voice any concerns they may have regarding their child's participation in BSP activities.
- iii. Contact designated safeguarding officers or adult leaders at any time to raise concerns or request information.

### **d. Safeguarding Awareness for Parents/ Guardians**

To foster a collaborative approach to safeguarding, BSP will organize regular **Safeguarding Awareness Sessions** for parents/guardians. These sessions will:

- i. Educate parents/guardians on the safeguarding policies and procedures BSP has in place, including how they can support these efforts from home.
- ii. Inform parents/guardians of their role in safeguarding, such as identifying early signs of abuse, bullying, or distress in their children and reporting concerns to the designated BSP safeguarding focals.
- iii. Provide practical advice on how parents/guardians can engage with their children's Scouting experience while ensuring their safety and well-being.

### **e. Crisis Communication Protocols**

In the event of a safeguarding incident or emergency during a Scouting activity, BSP will activate its **Crisis Communication Protocol**, which includes:

- i. Immediate notification to parents/guardians of the incident and the steps being taken to address the situation.
- ii. Continuous updates on the status of the incident and the well-being of the affected Scout(s) until the issue is fully resolved.
- iii. Clear guidance for parents/guardians on any additional actions they may need to take (e.g., picking up their child from the activity site, contacting medical professionals).

### **f. Post-Activity Debriefing and Feedback**

After every major event or activity, BSP will seek feedback from parents/guardians on the safeguarding measures that were implemented. This will include:

- i. Surveys or direct communication to assess parent/guardian satisfaction with the safety of the event.
- ii. An open platform for parents/guardians to suggest improvements to the safeguarding policies and procedures.
- iii. Sharing of key learnings or adjustments made based on feedback to ensure continuous improvement of BSP's safeguarding practices.

## **6.8 Affiliated Scouting-Related Organizations' Adherence to BSP Safeguarding Policy**

All **affiliated Scouting-related organizations** that work with, or alongside and its members must adhere to the safeguarding standards and protocols outlined in the BSP Safeguarding Policy. This requirement applies to any organization directly involved in supporting or delivering Scouting activities, including but not limited to, Scouting clubs, educational institutions, local Scouting councils, youth organizations, and external service providers of the BSP. The following guidelines ensure alignment and accountability across all partnerships:

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### **a. Mandatory Compliance:**

All affiliated organizations must formally agree to adopt and implement the BSP Safeguarding Policy as part of their partnership agreement. This includes ensuring that all staff, volunteers, and leaders associated with the organization are familiar with the policy's provisions and are trained in safeguarding practices.

### **b. Training and Capacity Building:**

Affiliated organizations are required to ensure that their personnel receive safeguarding training consistent with BSP standards. This training must cover essential topics such as recognizing signs of abuse, reporting safeguarding concerns, and maintaining appropriate boundaries with Scouts. BSP may offer training support, resources, or oversight to ensure compliance.

### **c. Safeguarding Focal Points:**

Each affiliated organization must designate a Safeguarding Focal Point who will be responsible for overseeing safeguarding practices within their organization and liaising with the BSP Safeguarding Focal. This person will ensure that safeguarding procedures are effectively implemented and that any concerns are reported and addressed in a timely manner.

### **d. Reporting and Monitoring Mechanisms:**

Affiliated organizations must have internal mechanisms to report safeguarding incidents and concerns. These mechanisms must align with the BSP's reporting channels to ensure seamless communication and coordinated responses to safeguarding violations. The BSP reserves the right to review the organization's safeguarding reports as part of periodic monitoring and evaluations.

### **e. Regular Audits and Compliance Checks:**

BSP reserves the right to conduct regular safeguarding audits of affiliated organizations to ensure that they are fully complying with the Safeguarding Policy. Affiliated organizations must cooperate with these audits and take immediate corrective actions if any safeguarding gaps or violations are identified.

### **f. Consequences for Non-Compliance:**

Affiliated organizations that fail to adhere to the BSP Safeguarding Policy may face sanctions, including the suspension or termination of their affiliation with the BSP. Persistent non-compliance or failure to address safeguarding violations will result in escalated consequences, which could include legal actions if necessary.

### **g. Review and Updates:**

Affiliated organizations are required to periodically review and update their safeguarding practices in line with any amendments to the BSP Safeguarding Policy. BSP will provide updates on policy revisions, and affiliated organizations must incorporate these changes into their operational procedures.

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### **7 MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

#### **7.1 Monitoring Mechanisms**

The BSP National Office shall assign specific personnel or teams to monitor compliance with the Safeguarding Policy for child protection and adult interactions, ensuring regular assessments at local, regional, and national levels. These teams will conduct **scheduled safeguarding audits** at all levels of the organization, focusing on areas such as adherence to the Code of Conduct, incident reporting procedures, and the effectiveness of preventive strategies.

To maintain the highest standards, BSP will:

- a. Develop an **Annual Safeguarding Audit Plan** at the national level, ensuring all local councils undergo comprehensive evaluations at least once every two years.
- b. Ensure that audit reports are shared with national leadership, safeguarding officers, and relevant stakeholders to foster transparency and accountability.

#### **7.2 Evaluation and Reporting**

The BSP shall implement mechanisms for gathering feedback from Scouts, parents/guardians, and adult leaders on the effectiveness of the policy, and provide a framework for reporting improvements. **Surveys, focus groups, and post-activity debriefings** will be conducted after major Scouting events and periodically throughout the year to capture feedback from all stakeholders, including Scouts, adult leaders, and parents/guardians.

The BSP will:

- a. Create **feedback loops** by integrating findings from safeguarding audits, incident reports, and stakeholder surveys into policy revisions and safeguarding strategies.
- b. Provide a yearly **Safeguarding Evaluation Report**, summarizing key trends, challenges, and improvements based on the feedback and audit results and ensure lessons learned from incidents or evaluations are used to update policies and enhance training programs.

#### **7.3 Youth Feedback Mechanism**

The BSP will actively seek input from Scouts regarding safeguarding practices through regular surveys, debriefs, and group discussions. This feedback will help evaluate and improve safety measures and ensure that young members' perspectives are considered.

#### **7.4 Regular Policy Reviews**

The BSP shall establish a schedule for regular reviews of the Safeguarding Policy to incorporate changes in laws, WOSM standards, and emerging risks. The said review shall be done once every 3 years at the minimum.

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### Annex A: Risk Assessment Tool

<b>Name of activity/event,</b>		<b>Date and Location of the activity/event</b>	
<b>Name of person doing this risk assessment</b>		<b>Date of risk assessment</b>	

<b>RISKS</b>  (Physical, Environmental, Logistical, Others)  <i>What could go wrong?</i>	<b>PROBABILITY</b>  Low = 1 Medium – 2 High – 3  <i>What is the chance of the risk occurring?</i>	<b>SERIOUSNESS</b>  Low = 1 Medium – 2 High – 3  <i>What is the magnitude of the effects if the risk occurs?</i>	<b>RISK LEVEL</b>  Multiply the two scores: 1-2 Low Risk 3-4 Medium Risk 5-9 High Risk	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT OPTION</b>  <i>What can be done to reduce/mitigate the risk and its effects?</i>	<b>RESOURCES NEEDED</b>  <i>What resources will be needed to reduce/mitigate the risk and its effects?</i>
<b>Before the event</b>					
Example: Participants were not able to get their consent forms from their parents	1	3	3	Assign representative to coordinate with parents/guardians	Consolidated list of participants requirements
<b>During the event</b>					
Example: Earthquake occurs during the activity	1	3	3	Orient Earthquake drill protocols of the venue	Evacuation plan
<b>After the event</b>					
Example: In the event that there is a typhoon or any natural disasters	1	3	3	Contingency plan	Weather forecast and contingency budget (accommodation and food)

## **Boy Scouts of the Philippines Safeguarding Policy**

### **Annex B:**

### **Boy Scouts of the Philippines Consent and Assent Form for Participation in Scouting Events**

#### **Introduction**

The Boy Scouts of the Philippines is committed to creating a safe and enriching environment where Scouts can grow, learn, and enjoy various activities. To ensure all Scouts and parents/guardians understand and agree to the terms of participation, please carefully read the following information, then complete the consent and assent sections below.

#### **Details of Participation**

Scouting events are designed to promote personal growth, leadership, teamwork, and community involvement. These events may include, but are not limited to, outdoor camping, hiking, skill-building activities, and community service projects. While our trained leaders prioritize safety, some activities involve risks inherent to outdoor and group environments.

**Duration:** Events may range from a single day to multi-day trips, depending on the event specifics.

**Supervision:** Activities will be supervised by trained adult leaders and volunteers, who adhere to our safety and safeguarding policies.

**Health & Safety:** Medical professionals or trained first aiders will be on-site or on-call during events. All participants are required to provide up-to-date health information.

*To know more about the specific details of the activity, please refer to the activity briefer attached to this consent and assent form.*

#### **Parent/Guardian Consent**

I, the undersigned, as the parent/guardian of the Scout named below, give my informed consent for my child to participate in Scouting activities organized by the Boy Scouts of the Philippines. I have read and understood the information provided and acknowledge the potential risks involved. I confirm that:

1. **Health and Medical Information:** I have provided accurate, up-to-date health information, including any known allergies, medications, and medical conditions that may impact my child's participation. I authorize the event organizers to seek emergency medical treatment if necessary.
2. **Photography and Media:** I grant permission for photographs, videos, and recordings of my child to be taken during activities, which may be used for Scouting promotional materials, reports, or other public-facing materials.  
Yes  No
3. **Transportation:** I understand that my child may be transported by authorized personnel to and from Scouting events as needed. This may include private buses, vans, or other forms of safe transportation arranged by the Boy Scouts of the Philippines.
4. **Code of Conduct:** I have discussed with my child the importance of following the Boy Scouts of the Philippines' Code of Conduct, which includes respecting others, adhering to safety guidelines, and cooperating with Scout leaders and peers.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Boy Scouts of the Philippines Safeguarding Policy**

### **Scout Assent**

I, as a participant in the Boy Scouts of the Philippines, understand the purpose of Scouting events and agree to fully participate while following all instructions from leaders. I will treat other Scouts and leaders with respect, follow safety guidelines, and ask for help if I feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

- I agree to participate in Scouting events:  Yes  No

Scout's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Scout's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Emergency Contact Information**

1. Primary Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to Scout: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Secondary Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to Scout: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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Thank you for supporting your child's participation in the Boy Scouts of the Philippines. Together, we can provide a safe, meaningful, and enjoyable Scouting experience. If you have any questions about this form or our Scouting events, please contact your local Scouting office or activity point person via the details below:

*Note: This consent form will be retained by the Boy Scouts of the Philippines for record-keeping and safety purposes.*

**Annex C: Case Management Flowchart**

