

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FAQ

Q: If a scouting group does not meet on parish grounds do they need to sign?

A: Yes. As long as they actively recruit in your parish (bulletin, school notices, fliers, etc.) then the scouting leaders in that unit that address parish youth should sign the Memorandum of Understanding.

Q: Do unit leaders affiliated with the Knights of Columbus have to sign the Memorandum of Understanding?

A: Yes. As long as they actively recruit in your parish (bulletin, school notices, fliers, etc.) then the scouting leaders in that unit that address parish youth should sign the Memorandum of Understanding. In that case, however, the Chaplain of the Council for the Knights may sign in place of the pastor. **N.B.** The Knights' Board of Directors implemented a policy that directed all Knights Councils to discontinue direct sponsorship of Boy Scout troops and instead to provide financial and volunteer support to troops or other youth activities that are sponsored by parishes.

Q: Are parishes required to implement the Memorandum of Understanding?

A: Yes, the Bishop has asked all parishes to comply with implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Q: What should a pastor do if a unit leader will not sign?

A: The parish should make sure that unit leaders understand the intent and the importance of having this understanding. The parish should try to allay any concerns. Unfortunately if a unit leader will not abide by the agreement, that unit leader should not be involved in leading a Catholic unit or unit closely affiliated with a parish.

Q: Who is being asked to sign?

A: The intent is for the key unit leaders of all Scout and scout-like groups (e.g., American Heritage Girls, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Trail Life, etc.) to sign—from the smallest unit (e.g., den) on up. So for example, with BSA, in addition to the Charter Organization Representative, the Committee Chair, Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, Cubmaster, and Den Leader would also sign. Assistant leaders in the smallest unit would not have to sign as the key unit leader would be responsible for making sure that the responsibilities were understood and abided by all.

Q: What is the overall process?

A: Each scouting organization in the parish should receive from the parish or other source a separate copy of the understanding. The organization's "top" scouting leader in the parish completes the contact information section and provides the agreement to all leaders within that organization at the parish level and asks them to sign the signature page. The top scouting leader then provides the completed form to the pastor who then reviews and signs the form and the parish returns the form to the Diocese for review. If unit leaders begin their service after the form has been submitted, the "top" scouting leader may either ensure the new unit leader is aware of and observes the Memorandum of Understanding or completes and submits the form to the pastor.

Q: Are non-Catholics able to be scouting leaders under this Memorandum of Understanding?

A: Catholic scouting units should have a goal to help all young people to discover Jesus Christ through the Catholic Church and the sacraments. Scouting leaders are very influential role models in the life of a young scout and should therefore be a witness to the Catholic faith. If a non-Catholic is a scouting leader in a Catholic unit, they must not do anything through their public witness, their actions, or their statements which would contradict Catholic teaching on faith and morals. It is possible for a non-Catholic to publicly "observe and act consistently with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church on matters of faith and morals" without actually being a practicing Catholic.