



Outdoor Service Guides

Code of Conduct

This code of conduct outlines our expectations for all members of Outdoor Service Guides regarding their behavior and responsibilities while involved with our organization. It is important that members understand and adhere to these guidelines to maintain a positive, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all.

Like the Scout Law and Promise, the contents of this code of conduct are concepts we expect all members to work to apply to their daily lives in and outside of OSG. Specifically, the code of conduct applies to member interactions in various areas of our shared lives as members, including all events hosted by Outdoor Service Guides, online and phone interactions (phone calls, video calls, chat, text, email, etc.), social media, and other activities or other events where we, as members, represent Outdoor Service Guides.

Mission & Values

The mission of Outdoor Service Guides is to foster an inclusive environment where individuals of all ages develop outdoor skills, connect across generations, and engage in community service.

Outdoor Service Guides believes that diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility are central to our identity as an organization and align with the principles of our shared Scout Law. We expect all members to embody, protect, and uphold these values and to actively create and cultivate an affirming, equitable, and inclusive environment.

For a more detailed description of our Mission and Values, see our Aims & Methods¹ and DEIA Policies².

¹ [Program Aims & Methods](#)

² [DEIA Policy](#)

Expected Behaviors

Every Outdoor Service Guides volunteer staff member and leader at any level (*national, regional, group, etc.*) is expected to be considerate of their fellow scouts, and contribute to a collaborative, positive, and healthy environment in which we can all thrive, learn, and have fun. Specifically:

- **Follow all OSG Policies.** Stay up to date on our current policies and ensure you and your group are in compliance.
- **Respect the rights and personhood of others.** As an inclusive organization, we agree to acknowledge and value each individual as a unique human being with inherent dignity and treat them with consideration. This may look like using someone's correct pronouns or respecting another's right to cultural expression.
- **Be empathetic.** Consider that others have different lived experiences and may respond differently to use of language or tone. Our culture of empathy demands that we consider others' well being and sense of safety as a foundation of our engagements. Remember that we are a volunteer organization, give grace, and assume good intentions.
- **Be welcoming.** Go above and beyond to ensure that everyone is invited and considered in your planning. Extend additional communication to individuals who might not have been welcomed into scouting or the outdoors. Avoid cliques or closed communication.
- **Be supportive, both proactively and responsively.** Offer to help if you see someone struggling or otherwise in need of assistance (taking care not to be patronizing or disrespectful). If someone approaches you looking for help, be generous with your time; if you're under a deadline, let them know when you will be able to help or direct them to someone else who may be of assistance. Be an ally to your fellow scouts when you see a need.
- **Be inclusive.** Go out of your way and across cultures to include people in jokes or memes; we want to build an environment of open circles. Avoid slang or idioms that might not translate across cultures, or be deliberate in explaining them to share our diverse cultures and languages. Speak plainly and avoid acronyms and jargon that not everyone may understand. Ensure that meals take dietary needs and restrictions into account, and provide adaptations and accessibility accommodations as necessary.

- **Be collaborative and transparent.** Work together with your fellow scouts. Invite others to provide their input and listen to diverse perspectives. It's part of our values to share early and ask for feedback often.
- **Be generous in both giving and accepting feedback.** Feedback is a gift, and a way to suggest opportunities for improvement as well as recognize contributions and celebrate successes. Good feedback is kind, respectful, clear, and constructive, and focused on goals and values rather than personal preferences. Feedback should be given in a timely manner, and received with gratitude and a growth mindset.
- **Be respectful of people's time.** Embrace habits that are inclusive and productive for team members wherever they are: make liberal use of asynchronous communication tools, document syncs and decisions thoroughly, and pay attention to time zones when scheduling events. Limit meetings where possible and be efficient when conducting them.
- **Be kind.** Be polite and friendly in all forms of communication – especially remote communication, where opportunities for misunderstanding are greater. Avoid sarcasm. Tone is hard to decipher online; do your best to be clear. Use video hangouts when it makes sense; face-to-face discussion benefits from all kinds of social cues that may go missing in other forms of communication.

Unacceptable Behaviors

Outdoor Service Guides is committed to providing a welcoming and safe environment for all. The following behaviors will not be tolerated and may be subject to disciplinary action, as outlined later in this document.

- **No discrimination.** Outdoor Service Guides does not permit discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, color, national origin, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, parental status, marital status, political affiliation, immigration status, native language or speech characteristics, socioeconomic status or background, neurodivergence, or physical appearance.
- **No harassment.** Sexual and personal harassment will not be tolerated by Outdoor Service Guides in any sphere. Harassment refers to verbal, written, or physical actions and may include: unsolicited physical contact, pushing, grabbing, or other touching; comments or suggestions which might reasonably found to be unwelcome, objectionable, offensive, or causing discomfort; sexual or unfriendly propositions; insults or taunting based off any of the differentiating characteristics named above or that are personal in nature; and verbal abuse or threats.
- **No inappropriate content or unwelcoming behavior.** A scout is clean in thought, word, and deed. Unwelcoming behavior or language, or sharing content that may make others uncomfortable, whether or not it reaches the level of harassment, is strongly discouraged and may be subject to disciplinary action.
- **No retaliation.** Members are encouraged to raise concerns without fear of reprisal. Outdoor Service Guides strictly prohibits any form of retaliation against members who report misconduct in good faith.

Rights

We recognize the rights of our members as they relate to scouting with Outdoor Service Guides, specifically:

Right to Freedom of Speech and Expression: Outdoor Service Guides the rights of our members to engage in civil discourse and express their perspectives in a responsible and accountable manner. As an organization committed to diversity, we believe that engaging with differing perspectives makes us stronger, and we encourage spirited discussion and expression. Speech that constitutes discrimination or harassment is prohibited and falls under our anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies.

Right to Freedom of Thought: All members have the right to a belief system of their choosing, whether religious or otherwise. Belief systems may not be used as justification for violating our anti-discrimination or anti-harassment policies.

Right to Personhood: As an inclusive organization, we believe each individual has the right to be seen as a unique human being with inherent dignity.

Right to Safety: All members, youth and adults, have the right to be physically and psychologically safe when scouting with us.

Responsibilities

Members and volunteers on staff at any level of the organization are critical to our success in providing a program that meets our mission. To do this, we expect members to exercise the following responsibilities:

Confidentiality: All employees, volunteers, and members are expected to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive information, including member information, internal financial data, and proprietary information.

Conflict of Interest: Any employee, volunteer, or member with a conflict of interest must disclose the conflict and recuse themselves from any decision-making process related to the conflict.

Reporting Misconduct: Any individual who witnesses or experiences misconduct, including harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, must report the incident through the Board of Directors. The organization will investigate and address the incident promptly and fairly using our Conflict Resolution Policy³.

³ [Conflict Resolution Process](#)

Disciplinary Action

Violations of the Code of Conduct will be forwarded to the Personnel Committee for review, according to our Conflict Resolution Policy. Disciplinary actions will vary depending on the violation. Minor violations may incur an official reprimand or warning. Repeated violations or serious infractions may result in removal from office, or a temporary or permanent ban from the organization.

In cases of corruption, theft, embezzlement, or other unlawful behavior, legal action may be taken.

This policy was reviewed and revised by members of the OSG-US Board of Directors.

The final version of this policy was approved by the OSG-US Board of Directors on 2025-04-07.