



New Council Program Fee FAQ

Q: Why is Samoset Council implementing Council Program fee?

Samoset Council has worked tirelessly to keep the cost of Scouting as low as possible for our families. Year after year, our council has subsidized rising costs such as the National BSA new youth member joining fee that was implemented three years ago. There is also tremendous staff time and resources related to the annual *Family Friends of Scouting (FOS)* traditional unit presentations. The average size gift per *Family FOS* donor has decreased over the last several years as well as a decrease in Scouts BSA youth attendance since the pandemic at Tesomas Scout Camp.

Q: When was this decided and who was involved?

In July, the Samoset Executive Board approved a Council program fee to replace the annual *Family FOS* traditional unit presentation campaign. A small task force of volunteers from each of the five newly established Scout districts reviewed National BSA membership fees, Family FOS history, and other factors to determine the impact to unit and council operations and made a recommendation to the Samoset Executive Board.

Q: What is the Council Program fee going to be? (Effective October 1, 2023)

\$28 for Cubs, Scouts BSA and Venturers/Sea Scouts annually

\$28 for Registered Adult Leaders annually

The Council Program fee will be applied at the time of joining or during the annual re-registration process during the anniversary month of joining.

Q: What is the “included” in the Council Program fee?

1. Free Tent Camping - Camp Phillips, Four Mile, Flambeau Canoe Base, and CLSR during non-resident camping months.
2. Free Scouts BSA Merit Badge Clinics hosted by the council or district. Merit Badge Workshops (day events) at our camps will have reduced costs to attend. Some clinics may have a fee based on supplies required.
3. Free Cub Scout District Pinewood Derby (one per year)
4. Cub Scout District “Cub-A-Rama” Belt loops & Adventures workshop (one per year)
5. Free in-person council or district hosted training for registered adult leaders (excludes Wood Badge)
6. Adult leader recognition (knots & certificates)
7. Family FOS unit presentations will NOT be conducted in 2024 & beyond. However, some limited fundraising with families will be conducted by in-person individual visits or letter campaigns.

**Registering within a two-week window prior to the event day will incur a \$10 fee.*

Q: Could a Council fee discourage enrollment/make Scouting unaffordable for families?

We recognize that any change in pricing structure may influence a family's decision to enroll in Scouting, but at \$11.08/month, (for Council Program fee, BSA membership fee, BSA new one-time joiner fee). This is comparable to or below most other youth activities. The Council Program fee will also reduce the number of times during the year that families are asked to pay for Scouting events.

Financial assistance is available to Scouts and families based on financial need. The Council also provides units with a no-risk fundraiser to help families/units underwrite the cost of Scouting (Popcorn). Last year the average Scout earned \$223 through the annual popcorn sale to support his/her Scouting adventures. Go to Samoset.org/aid and complete the request for financial assistance application (member registration, Scout handbook, uniform, and/or council program fee). The new member application should be submitted in person or by mail to the Samoset Scout Office as the National BSA online system does not allow a local council financial assistance request.

Q: How do I apply for financial assistance?

There is an online application for financial assistance form at Samoset.org/aid. Requesting financial assistance for member registration, Scout handbook, uniform, and/or council program fee requires that the new member submit their membership application in person or by mail to the Samoset Scout Office as the National BSA online system does not allow a local council financial assistance request.

Q: How are the various forms of financial assistance (Scout Handbook, Uniform, Member Registration, Council Resident Summer Camp or Council Winter Camp) to members funded?

We are fortunate to have two separate endowments that are designated to provide specific member assistance support. The funds are managed by an asset management firm with oversight by the Samoset Council Investment Committee and Council Executive Board. We take distributions from the funds annually based on the budget and demand for assistance. In the few years where assistance demand is greater than the amount of funds we can receive in a distribution, we have been able to use excess operating budget funds or conduct additional fundraising to support those that need financial assistance.

Q: What happens if we move or leave the program? Will we get refunded?

The fee is an annual fee and is not refundable.

Q: Are other Councils charging a Council fee or charging less?

Yes, however every council is unique and sets its own budget. We believe that the inclusion of free tent camping, free select council/district events, volunteer training, adult leader recognition (knots and certificates) and staff support for membership, program and leadership development make the Council fee an excellent value. We choose to make as many services as possible available at no additional cost.

Q: Is there a family discount rate?

Currently, neither the National BSA membership fee nor the Samoset Program Fee has a family membership option; however, this is being considered and may be implemented in the future.

Q: When/how will fees be collected?

As the National BSA changed its fee collection process that no longer included proration, the Samoset Council Program Fee will also not be prorated. The Council Program fee will appear during online registration or if needed, in-person registration at the Scout office beginning October 1, 2023. Re-enrolling members will pay their unit during re-chartering. Units can pay online or to the council office by cash or check.

Q: Can my unit pay the Council Program Fee?

Yes, there is a function in BeAScout where a unit leader can change an option so the annual Council Program Fee and annual National BSA fees can be paid by the unit.

Q: Can I pay in installments?

Not yet. The Council Program fee will be collected when a member joins or when the member re-charters. There are technology issues related to the National BSA’s online applications that need to be resolved to allow for this type of transaction.

Q: What can a family expect to pay for a full year of Scouting?

Cub Scouting	Scouts BSA/Venturing/Sea Scouts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$80 National BSA member fee • \$25 National 1-time new joiner fee • \$120 BSA full uniform (first year only) • \$15 Fall Day Camp • \$190 Summer camp fee (3 days, 2 nights) • \$28 Council Program Fee • \$_____Monthly pack activities • \$458 annually (1st year) about \$313 in subsequent years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$80 National BSA member fee • \$25 National 1-time new joiner fee • \$120 BSA full uniform (first year only) • \$340 Summer camp fee (7 days, 6 nights) • \$28 Council Program Fee • \$_____Monthly troop activities • \$593 annually (1st year) about \$448 in subsequent years

Q: Will units still charge dues above and beyond the BSA and Samoset Council Program fees?

Units may still charge dues but should consider why and how much. Since the BSA membership fee and Council Program fee cover many of the unit costs previously covered, units should carefully consider council-sponsored fundraisers like Popcorn to further reduce the need for unit dues.

Q: How often will the Council Program fee increase?

It is unknown at this time. The Council Executive Board will evaluate the status in the spring of 2024.

Q: Where can I find more information on the Council Program Fee?

Go to [Samoset.org/fees](https://samoset.org/fees) where updated FAQs will be periodically posted

Q: What activities will be “no charge”?

1. Free Tent Camping - Camp Phillips, Four Mile, Flambeau Canoe Base, and CLSR during non-resident camping months.
2. Free Scouts BSA Merit Badge Clinics hosted by the council or district. Merit Badge Workshops (day events) at our camps will have reduced costs to attend. Some clinics may have a fee based on supplies required.
3. Free Cub Scout District Pinewood Derby (one per year)
4. Cub Scout District “Cub-A-Rama” Belt loops & Adventures workshop (one per year)
5. Free in-person council or district hosted training for registered adult leaders (excludes Wood Badge)
6. Free adult leader recognition (knots & certificates)
7. Family FOS unit presentations will NOT be conducted in 2024 & beyond. However, some limited fundraising with families will be conducted by in-person individual visits or letter campaigns.

**Registering within a two-week window prior to the event day will incur a \$10 fee. This allows the volunteer leadership planning and leading these events to confirm supplies and staffing for those events.*

Q: What if families still want to donate to the Samoset Council? What will happen to the Family Friends of Scouting campaign?

With this new model, the *Family Friends of Scouting* (FFOS) campaign will be retired and replaced with individuation donor solicitations. The Samoset Council will still pursue family donations, but donations will be solicited via direct mail, email and invitation to special community events. No more donor presentations at Blue and Golds, pack meetings, Pinewood Derbies or troop Courts of Honor.

Q: What adult leader trainings will be included in the Council Program fee?

All position required in-person training (IOLS, BALOO). Attendees will be required to register in advance. Those registering within the 2-week window will be charged a \$10 fee.

Q: What events will not be included in the “no-charge” list?

Council Camping programs such as Summer Resident Camp, Winter Camp, National Youth Leadership Training, and Wood Badge adult leader training, and Scouts BSA Camporees.

Q: How will the money be spent that is collected in Council Program fees?

Council fees will remain local and be used by the Samoset Council to support local programs, volunteer training, reference publications (youth recruiting, insurance (property, auto, cyber, member accident & sickness), marketing, postage, unit service and more.

If you have a question that is not addressed, please call the Scout office at 715-355-1450.