



TROOP 219 UNIT WEB POLICY



OBJECTIVE

Troop 219 maintains a web page for the purposes of informing scouts, parents and leaders about troop activities and events. The Boy Scouts of America and Circle Ten Council have developed specific guidelines for individual units so that web pages will protect the safety and privacy of scouts, leaders and family members. However, in some cases these guidelines make recommendations rather than specific rules about unit web page content.

The objective of this document is to present a web policy specific to Troop 219 that will clarify the BSA and Circle 10 Unit Web Policies. The Unit Web Policy will enable the Troop Committee to specifically identify those items that can and cannot be published on the troop web page. This will prevent individual interpretation on the part of current and future webmasters and contributors from producing inconsistent web content.

UNIT WEB POLICY

ADHEARANCE TO BSA AND CIRCLE 10 WEB SITE GUIDLINES

The official Circle 10 Council web policy for districts and units can be found at <http://www.circle10.org/webpolicy/policy1.html> which includes information on the BSA National guidelines for Council, district and unit web sites.

By reference the Troop 219 web site will conform to the policies set forth in the Circle 10 and BSA guidelines.

EMAIL ADDRESSES

No email addresses will appear on the Troop 219 web site except as alias email addresses that are linked by the web page hosting service to real email addresses. For example the email address scoutmaster@troop219.greatplainsbsa.org can appear on the web site because email sent to his address is automatically forwarded to an email address defined by the unit web master to receive email meant for the scoutmaster. In the event that the email address is abused the address can be deleted and a different one created without impacting the individuals email address or privacy.

Email alias addresses are also useful for allowing the use of a consistent email address while allowing changes to individual email addresses or changes in the people filling particular roles

Only adults may receive email that is sent to email addresses presented on the site.

An adult may have their individual email address appear on the site in conjunction with a specific activity or event if they give their express permission to do so. A request sent the webmaster to publish a document on the web page that contains an individual email will be considered permission for the email address to appear on the site.



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At a minimum the scoutmaster, committee chair and webmaster will have email contact links on the page.

NAMES AND PHONE NUMBERS

Names and phone numbers of individual scouts may not appear on the site under any circumstances without specific approval of the Troop Committee.

A youth scout's name may appear on the web site in order to attribute credit for material published on the site. Examples would include by-lines for articles and credits for art work or photography.

The names and possibly phone numbers of adults may appear on the web pages associated with specific events or activities and/or in attached documents related to events and activities with their permission. It is anticipated that this will be done so that a person can be identified as a contact for information about an event or as the emergency contact for an activity.

Names and phones numbers should be removed from the site as soon as possible after the event or activity is concluded.

IMAGES

Digital pictures and other images and artwork may appear on the site as part of the record of events and activities. No identification of people shown in photographs may accompany images on the site.

Recognizable images of scouts may only appear if the scouts parents or guardian has given explicit permission for the pictures to appear. Permission may be given for a specific image or a more general permission for publication of photos may be given as a check box on the permission slips for events and activities.

It will be the responsibility of the webmaster to verify and document that permission has been obtained before allowing images of scouts to appear on the web page. The webmaster will remove any image of a scout if requested to do so by the scout, his parents, the scoutmaster or the troop committee regardless of whether permission was given.

For example pictures of places where the troop has visited may be published and pictures of scout activities may be published but if scouts appear in the photos it will not be possible to recognize them unless permission was granted by all of the parents of the scouts shown.

The purpose of this provision is to clarify the troop adherence to the following language from the Circle 10 web policy:

BSA NATIONAL POLICY SAYS

"Names, images, and especially contact information pertaining to youth members should never be gathered or published over the Internet."

CIRCLE TEN - CLARIFICATION

There's a federal law (Childrens' Online Privacy Protection Act) that explicitly prohibits using the Internet for publishing or collecting personal information for children under 13 without written consent from a parent (a signed letter). It's probably very unwise to publish contact information for youth even with parental consent, or even if they're 13-17 years of age.



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When it comes to images, it should be OK to publish them with "the necessary permissions" - that being written consent from the parent (either a letter, a form, or a clause in an event application form). Child safety isn't really an issue here (unless the kid's name appears right under the image - but "name" should be covered by the "contact information" guideline) - the main concern there is avoiding a (possibly ugly) conflict between a parent and the unit if the parent is especially nervous/sensitive about the Internet. With written permission, the unit should be covered - though they should probably be willing to replace the image in any case (it's really not worth alienating a parent).

TROOP NEWSLETTER

The Troop Newsletter will not be published on the troop web site. If the newsletter were to be published on the site it would have to conform to the Troop 219 Web Page policy. By not publishing it on the web the newsletter will have more latitude in its content.

Individual items that are in the newsletter may also be published on the web site as long as they conform to the web site policy.

COMERCIAL CONTENT

The Troop 219 web page will not contain any commercial content including, banners, content or links to other pages that are commercial in nature. Links to scout related sites that contain banners and other advertising are permissible if the site link is directly related to scouting and the primary content of the site is in promotion of the goals of scouting and the site is identified as not being part of the troop site.

Links to commercial web sites may be included in web pages for specific activities and events if they directly relate to that event. For example a web site of a kayaking school may be included on a page describing an event the troop is having at that school.

Commercial sites may be referenced in a page when giving lists of companies that provide products or services to an upcoming event but cannot be presented in any way as an endorsement of that company, product or service.

CONVERSATIONAL CONTENT

The troop 219 web site will not contain any conversational content of any kind. This will include chat sessions, bulletin boards, news groups, guest books, on-line forums or any technology that allows posting of content to the site directly by an outside party.

Conversational content is prohibited even in the presence of a password protected portions of the site due to the high level of resources necessary to monitor and control them properly.



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SOURCE OF CONTENT

All content on the Troop 219 web site should be carefully reviewed before publication to insure that placing it on the web site does not violate the copyrights of the person that created or owns it. In particular all material not directly created by a member of the troop should be scrutinized.

EXCEPTIONS FOR PASSWORD PROTECTED PAGES

Should the web site at some point in the future have password protected pages the following materials may be included that would otherwise not be published on the page:

- Identifiable photos of scouts
- Identification of scouts shown in photos
- Troop 219 Newsletter
- Email addresses of adults with permission

The following material is not granted an exception for publication even in password protected areas:

- Troop rosters
- Names with phone numbers of individual scouts
- Conversational content
- Copyrighted material without permission of the copyright holder
- Commercial content

Before material can be published in a password protected area the webmaster must present a written description of the proposal for password protecting the site and gain specific approval of the plan. At a minimum the plan should include the following:

- Usernames and passwords should be created for each scout family (general access passwords are inherently not secure).
- Passwords must be changed at an interval acceptable to the troop committee but not less than once per year.

PUBLICATON OF THE WEB POLICY

This document will be published and maintained on the troop web page.

INTERPRETATION OF THE UNIT WEB POLICY

The committee member assigned as unit webmaster will be responsible for keeping the web site in conformance with this policy. In the event of a dispute regarding content the webmaster should, in most cases, remove the offending material, especially if it pertains to an individuals name, image or other personal data.



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Disputes than are not dealt with in this matter should be brought to the attention of the troop committee who will have final say regarding content. In all cases the troop committee should be guided by the goal of maintaining the safety and privacy of individuals and the goals of scouting.

ACCEPTANCE AND MODIFICATION OF THE WEB POLICY

Initial approval and subsequent changes to this web policy may be made only by approval of the troop committee and publication of the web policy on the web page.

The webmaster will review the Council and BSA web site policy no less than once per year to determine if changes have occurred and make appropriate recommendations to the committee for updates to the policy as necessary.

REVISION HISTORY

Version 1 Initial Unit Web Policy Document, March 16, 2003 – Initial draft submitted to troop committee for review March 17, 2003

Version 2 Initial Unit Web Policy Document, March 24, 2003 – Added password protected web page section and made minor changes to Modification section. Approved by the Troop Committee on March 27, 2003.

