

**SCOUTING SAFELY**

Health and Safety Alerts

Managing Risk

Guide to Safe Scouting

Online Version

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General Resources

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## Frequently Asked Questions Concerning the Annual Health and Medical Record

**Q. Why do we need a new health form?**

A. Based on input from individual Scouters, the Order of the Arrow, local councils, health and safety and risk management committees, and high-adventure bases, there was confusion on when to use any of more than 20 different health forms in use across the nation. There was also an immediate need to update a medical form for the 2010 National Scout Jamboree. The Health and Safety Committee took on the challenge and the opportunity to establish one Annual Health and Medical Record for all ages and known risks. It is simple and yet comprehensive enough to be used for both health and wellness evaluations as well as emergency situations.

**Q. What are the major changes?**

A. A health history is still sufficient for typical activities lasting less than 72 hours (Parts A and C of the new form—similar to the old Class 1 form). For activities lasting longer than 72 hours, a medical evaluation by a health-care provider is now required annually (Part B). For high-adventure activities for which medical care may be delayed, restrictions based on standardized height/weight ratios are now mandatory.

**Q. When does the Annual Health and Medical Record go into effect? I am used to the old form and would rather use it.**

A. Transition and change can be exciting and easy, especially if it positions the BSA for the future. Everyone should begin using the Annual Health and Medical Record immediately. The existing stock of Class 1, 2, and 3 forms can continue to be used while supplies last in 2009. The only supported form effective January 1, 2010, is the Annual Health and Medical Record. Its use will be mandatory for the 2010 National Scout Jamboree.

**Q. Where can I find the Annual Health and Medical Record?**

A. It can be found at your council's Scout shop and is posted in a downloadable PDF format on Scouting Safely on Scouting.org.

**Q. Can I keep a record of my Annual Health and Medical Record somewhere at my council's office or online?**

A. Districts and councils are discouraged from keeping any medical records, whether digital or paper, unless required by local or state ordinances. However, the electronic version of the Annual Health and Medical Record is intended to be filled out and saved by individual Scouts and Scouters. The electronic Annual Health and Medical Record should not be transmitted via e-mail or stored by units, districts, or councils. Units are encouraged to keep paper copies of their participants' Annual Health and Medical Records in a confidential medical file for quick access in an emergency and to be prepared for all adventures.

**Q. The old Class 1, 2, and 3 forms were based on age. What about the Annual Health and Medical Record?**

A. There is no longer a difference in the exam interval based on age. The Annual Health and Medical Record is for everyone.

**Q. There are three parts to the Annual Health and Medical Record, which part do I need to fill out?**

A. All participants should fill out Parts A and C for any event. Part B (the physical examination) should be completed if you are participating in an event that exceeds 72 consecutive hours, such as jamborees, summer camps, and Wood Badge training courses. Part B also is required for participation in a resident camp setting or when the nature of the activity is strenuous and demanding such as service projects, work weekends, or high-adventure treks. It is important to note that if the event will take your unit beyond a radius wherein emergency care is more than 30 minutes by ground transportation, the height/weight chart found at the bottom of Part B should be strictly followed. Please note that individual units, districts, or councils may have policies in place to exceed this standard based on their unique risks.

**Q. How often will I need to renew/update my Annual Health and Medical Record?**

A. This form will need to be updated annually, just as many schools or sporting leagues require an annual update. Many changes can happen throughout a year, including changes in disease processes, medication, address, and insurance.

**Q. What is meant by "Annual" and "valid for 12 calendar months"?**

A. If you complete your record on March 9, 2009, it will be valid through March 2010, but you must complete a new Annual Health and Medical Record by April 1, 2010. Please note that the 2010 National Scout Jamboree will have a specific window when the record must be submitted.

**Q. I have several children in the program and a health care plan that does not provide cheap co-pays for physicals. What can be done to divert the increased cost of participation?**

A. Many units, districts, and councils offer physical exams. Facilitating such an event could be a positive experience, as well as decreasing costs. Several county clinics offer physicals at a very low price in order to assist children across the nation maintain a well and healthy life.

**Q. I heard a physical for an adult can be very expensive. Is that true?**

A. As participants age, physicians (MDs, DOs), NPs, and PAs may require extra testing in order to approve and/or clear their participation in events. Participants who are on medications should already be checked annually.

**Q. Do I really need to explain everything about myself or my child, such as learning disabilities or depression? I don't want myself or my child to be treated differently.**

**A.** As hard as it may be to share these aspects about yourself or your child, this information is needed to structure safe activities and is imperative when giving emergency care. Please be thorough and honest. Our experience also indicates that a Scouting activity is not the place to experiment with or stop medications, especially those that address these issues.

**Q. Why do I need to put my child's or my own social security number on the record?**

**A.** It is your choice as to whether you fill in this number; however, in many states, medical care cannot be rendered without it.

**Q. What does "grade completed" mean?**

**A.** If your son has completed the 6th grade and is currently enrolled in 7th grade, you would enter 6th grade here. You may always update your information more frequently than annually.

**Q. What if I don't want to have my child immunized for tetanus or other immunizations due to religious or philosophical reasons, do I have to sign a release?**

**A.** Yes, the recommendations of the immunization task force were accepted by the Health and Safety Support Committee in October 2008 and are listed on Scouting.org under Scouting Safely. If you choose not have your child immunized, the release form can also be found there. Declining or inadequate immunizations will require verification by a certified and licensed physician (MD, DO), NPs, or PAs that a communicable disease is not present. Inadequately immunized participants will be identified so that they can be located in case of a necessity for isolation or quarantine as per local public health official directives

**Q. Can I decline medical treatment?**

**A.** Yes, but a release must be signed. The release can be found under Scouting Safely on Scouting.org. This practice is highly discouraged because this choice can put the entire unit at risk, both mentally and physically. Declining medical treatment will require verification by a certified and licensed physician (MD or DO), NP, or PA that a communicable disease is not present.

**Q. Can I use another medical exam, such as a school sports exam, and attach it to the Annual Health and Medical Record?**

**A.** No. In an effort to maintain standards of preparedness and fitness for participation, and to make sure that the medical professional conducting the examination knows the various outdoor adventures than can occur in Scouting, the BSA requires completion of Part B. Part B also includes the height/weight chart for high adventure situation where emergency medical care is not readily available.

**Q. Why can't I use the Annual Health and Medical Record for participation at the high-adventure bases?**

**A.** The high-adventure bases have very specific activities that are unique to each of them. They each provided valuable input to position the Annual Health and Medical Record for use in the future. YOU are responsible to Be Prepared for your high-adventure trek and understand and follow all high-adventure base rules, procedures, and guidelines.

**Q. Why is there a talent release on the Annual Health and Medical Record? It doesn't really have anything to do with health.**

**A.** In response to requests from several councils to eliminate paperwork, we have included the talent release as part of the Annual Health and Medical Record.

**Q. Can I still use my son's Class 2 medical form through 2009? It was supposed to be good for 36 months.**

**A.** Yes, if it is still current, unless your council, district, or unit states otherwise. However, remember the Annual Health and Medical Record is required for national Scouting events, including the National Order of the Arrow Conference and the 2010 National Scout Jamboree, and needs to be in place for activities after January 1, 2010.

**Q. Our camp is at least 30 minutes from the local hospital by ambulance or EMS. Does this mean that we automatically have to meet the height/weight requirements for all activities at the camp?**

**A.** While response time for basic or advanced life support should be a consideration for a camp's emergency action plan, it is not the record's intent. If your travels by foot, bicycle, horseback, afloat, or whatever the mode of transportation take you more than 30 minutes off of an accessible roadway where in an emergency vehicle can reach you, you will need to meet the height/weight requirements.

**Q. When does the height/weight chart apply? We have differing opinions in our unit/district.**

**A.** When the Annual Health and Medical Record goes into effect, the height/weight chart will apply in the following known adventure activities:

- ‡ **When your travels take you more than 30 minutes off of an accessible roadway, fire lane, camp road, etc., where you float, walk, hike, bike, or otherwise go into the backcountry.** Depending on the terrain and local conditions, this might be a couple hundred yards or a couple of miles into the backcountry.
- ‡ **Most BSA high-adventure camps that include a backcountry component (ask them about their requirements before you go).** Philmont Scout Ranch has this standard in place as an example.
- ‡ **When your lodge, unit, district, or council requires it as part of a program.**

The height/weight chart generally would not apply (unless your lodge, unit, district, or council says it does) in the following:

- ‡ The majority of BSA resident camps, as most Cub Scout/Boy Scout resident camps (not high-adventure camps) have drive-up campsites and don't require packing in or out.
- ‡ Cub Scout programs. (Backcountry and high-adventure are not age-appropriate for Cub Scouting/)
- ‡ Wood Badge courses in a typical resident camp setting. Again, Philmont Scout Ranch has this requirement in place.

| The 2010 National Scout Jamboree.  (However, please review the [Be Prepared link](#)  to review all medical risk factors, including excessive body weight.)

**Q. Is the height/weight chart mandatory for the 2010 National Scout Jamboree?**

A. No. However, if you review the risk factors on [www.bsajamboree.org](http://www.bsajamboree.org)  under the [Be Prepared](#)  tab, you can see that we recommend a body mass index (BMI) of less than 30 (obese) for adult staff positions requiring moderate to high physical exertion. We recommend that youth fall within the 5th and 85th percentiles. As with past jamborees, this 100th Anniversary jamboree promises that everyone will be walking at least 5 miles per day. In order to make this the best, most exciting, fun-filled, safest jamboree ever, being prepared and in the best Scouting shape possible is a must. Youth with BMIs over the 95th percentile and adults with BMIs over 40 (morbidly obese) should reconsider participation. This subject was discussed in the January 2009 issue of *Scouting* magazine. Watch the jamboree newsletters and Web site for more information.

**Q. I believe my body fat percentage will prove that I am fit and able to participate in the events described in the Annual Health and Medical Record requiring the use of the height/weight chart. Can I obtain a body fat test from my physician and use those results?**

A. Yes, body fat percentage may be used if your weight is 295 pounds or less. (Acceptable body fat percentage for women is 10 to 31 percent. Acceptable body fat percentage for men is 2 to 25 percent. Verification by a physician is required.)

**Q. Where did the BSA height/weight chart and alternative body fat percentage come from?**

A. The Annual Health and Medical Record is based on several evidence-based sources, including the the revised Dietary Guideline for Americans from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health and Human Services, and has been successfully deployed by our high-adventure bases. The maximum weight for each height in this chart correlates to a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 32 to 33, which is into the obese category. Please refer to these links that explain BMI and body fat percentage.

**Children and Teens:** <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/dnpabmi/>

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), BMI is a reliable indicator of body fatness for most children and teens. As with BMI, a healthy body fat percentage in kids depends on their age as well as several other factors. Your pediatrician should be able to determine what your healthy body fat percentage is, dependent upon your height and your age. ([http://pediatrics.about.com/od/bmi/a/0806\\_bmi\\_crtcms.htm](http://pediatrics.about.com/od/bmi/a/0806_bmi_crtcms.htm) )

Childhood Obesity: [http://pediatrics.about.com/od/obesity/a/408\\_obesity\\_hub.htm](http://pediatrics.about.com/od/obesity/a/408_obesity_hub.htm)

**Adults:**

Adult BMI calculations: [http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi/adult\\_bmi/english\\_bmi\\_calculator/bmi\\_calculator.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi/adult_bmi/english_bmi_calculator/bmi_calculator.html)

American Council on Exercise and International Sports Sciences Association recommendations for Body Fat Percentage: <http://stanford.wellsphere.com/weight-loss-article/ideal-body-fat-percentage/9646>

Understanding Adult Obesity: <http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/PDFs/understandingobesityrev.pdf>

**Q. My child is underweight according to the chart on the Annual Health and Medical Record. Can he still participate in high-adventure activities?**

A. Yes, if he is cleared by his health-care provider as stated on the record. Based on our experience, excessive body weight is a much higher risk. See <http://www.bcm.edu/cnrc/bodycomp/bmiz2.html>  for further information concerning underweight youth. If his high-adventure activity includes backpacking, make sure his pack weighs no more than 25 to 30 percent of his body weight as recommended by Philmont Scout Ranch and the Health Lodge Task Force.