

ADULT VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP TRAINING STANDARDS Cradle of Liberty Council

by Chuck Bolger, Council Commissioner

Introduction A few years ago, the then current leadership of Cradle of Liberty Council decided that we would become a fully-leader-trained Council. This was a step-by-step process that today (February 2017) is largely complete. With a few exceptions, every registered Adult volunteer in Cradle of Liberty Council is “position-specific” trained. (The general exceptions are Chartered Organization Representatives and Merit Badge Counselors; specific exceptions to come).

Position-specific means that the Scouter has completed the BSA training that corresponds to her or his BSA position, in *each* Unit that he or she is registered in.

The easiest example to use is *me*. My primary position in Cradle of Liberty is Council Commissioner; I have completed Council Commissioner Basic Training (D17). I am also position-specific trained in my *other* registered positions: Pack Committee Chairman, Troop Committee member, Unit Commissioner, and Merit Badge Counselor.

Joining Cradle of Liberty Council To become a registered adult volunteer in Cradle of Liberty Council, one must first fill out a BSA Adult application, and pay the annual fee of \$24 + \$2 to Council for insurance. But, before our Registrar processes your application, you must first submit three (3) Pennsylvania Background Clearance documents as mandated by PA law.

Youth Protection Training You must also complete BSA Youth Protection Training (YPT, Y01) which is available to be taken online. The Boys Scouts of America are preeminent across the USA among all youth organizations when it comes to protecting our kids. It is so important that the BSA National Service Center requires Youth Protection Training to be renewed every two years. Naturally, so does Cradle of Liberty Council.

Why Require Training? The answer to this is a rhetorical question...“Doesn’t every youth deserve a Trained Leader?” More practically, no one can possibly know everything you need to know about Scouting and being a Scout leader without some preparation. That’s what BSA Training is all about.

Availability of Training In the digital world of the 21st Century, BSA National Service Center provides excellent training online (including, as mentioned, Youth Protection). As of February 2017, the following trainings that fulfill position-specific requirements are available on My.Scouting.Org: Cub Scout Leader Training (Cubmaster & Asst., Den Leader & Asst. and Pack Committee); Venture Leader Training (Crew Advisor, Committee and Board of Review); Sea Scouting (Committee, Skipper and Mate); Exploring (Post Advisor/Sponsor, Committee and Service Team).

Boy Scout Troop Committee members can complete Troop Committee Challenge (WS10) online; it is available on My.Scouting.Org under the **My Dashboard – My Training – Training Center** tabs. The remaining Boy Scout Leader Training courses are Scoutmaster/Assistant Specific Training (S24) and Introduction to Outdoor leader Skills (IOLS, S11). These are currently only available as live “classroom” courses which are offered several times per year in Cradle of Liberty Council.

New Leaders and Training Since most current Cradle of Liberty Council volunteers are now position-specific trained, who isn't? Generally this answer falls into one of three categories: 1) Brand new leaders (most often Cub parents). New Cub leaders typically join in the fall, at the beginning of the new school year. 2) New Boy Scout leaders, who join a Troop with their Webelos son. This typically occurs in the spring, as Webelos “bridge” over into Boy Scouts. 3) Registered Leaders assuming a new position, e.g., Committee member becomes Scoutmaster. In each of these three cases, some flexibility is built into our system when it comes to completing position-specific training, based largely upon the availability of said training.

Training and Rechartering The one time of year that Council can truly impact the completion of position-specific training is year end, when all units are due to recharter. Over the last few years, Cradle of Liberty has mandated that every registered Unit leader complete both their position-specific training **and** be current in their Youth Protection training up to March 31 of the new charter year, before a Unit Charter will be processed. As mentioned above, some exceptions can be made for those three categories, but **NO** exceptions are made for Youth Protection Training. It is expected that volunteers will take the YPT that is appropriate to their program; since BSA recognizes the latest YPT taken as the current one regardless of program, Cradle of Liberty does, too.

Responsibility for Training It is up to Unit Committee Chairpersons to assure that all registered leaders in their unit are trained. Individual Units often have a leader who is designated as Unit Training coordinator, to whom this task can be delegated. District Committees need to have a standing Training Committee, to assist Units in completing their training. Unit Commissioners, working with their District Commissioner, should make sure that each of their assigned Units is fully cognizant of any training deficiencies and/or expiring Youth Protection Training well in advance of year's end. The Council Training Committee should develop Trainers in sufficient amounts to be able to provide year-round and frequently occurring Training courses, especially those that are not available elsewhere, and to provide supplemental training courses beyond the basic position-specific courses.

Ultimately, as a dedicated Scout Leader, the responsibility for completing your Training, like all leadership responsibilities, resides squarely upon the shoulders of that person you see each day in your mirror. **Every Scout, every Cub, every Venturer, every Explorer and every Sea Scout deserves a well-trained Leader. That's you!**