

5—THE DISTRICT COMMISSIONER STAFF



A district has several types of commissioners. Some unit commissioners relate directly to units, and other commissioners lead and support the unit commissioners.



The District Commissioner

This leader is recommended by the district nominating committee for approval and appointment by the council executive board with the concurrence of the Scout executive. The district commissioner leads the commissioner staff of the district, guiding and measuring the district's unit service function of the program.

Major responsibilities include:

1. Recruit a full staff of commissioners.
2. Oversee the training program for all commissioners.
3. Guide unit commissioners to visit each unit regularly, identify unit needs, and make plans to meet unit needs.
4. Encourage unit commissioners to enter their visits in the Unit Visit Tracking System.
5. Work with the district chairman and district executive as a member of the district's Key 3.
6. Plan and preside at monthly meetings of the district commissioner staff.

7. Attend district committee meetings to report on conditions of units and to secure specialized help for units.
8. Represent the district as a member of the council commissioner cabinet.
9. Review UVTS use and create reports as needed.



Assistant District Commissioners

A district may have one or more assistant district commissioners. Each is responsible for an assigned share of the units in the district and the unit commissioners who serve those units. Assistant district commissioners are often assigned a geographic area of the district. They work closely with the district commissioner and district executive.

Major responsibilities include:

1. Recruit enough unit commissioners to serve their assigned units and area.
2. Conduct personal coaching and orientation sessions for unit commissioners.
3. Maintain regular contact with their unit commissioners to provide guidance in unit service needs.

4. Meet with their team of unit commissioners at the monthly district commissioner meeting to plan specific actions to help units be more successful.
5. Serve units with no assigned unit commissioner.
6. Help unit commissioners evaluate and improve their unit service performance.
7. Assist unit commissioners in using the Unit Visit Tracking System), including adding entries for commissioners who are unable to add their own.
8. Track the charter renewal status of all their units.
9. Review UVTS use and create reports as needed.



Unit Commissioners

Many unit commissioners serve more than one type of unit. One might serve a Cub Scout pack, Boy Scout troop, Varsity team, and Venturing crew in the same chartered organization. Other unit commissioners may serve only packs, only troops, only teams, or only crews. Check with your commissioner leader or coach to see how your district is organized.

The unit commissioner is a Scouting generalist whose passionate overriding mission in Scouting is to help units succeed. Specific responsibilities include:

1. Help each unit achieve the Journey to Excellence.
2. Use the annual commissioner service plan; maintain its scheduled opportunities for commissioner contact with units.
3. Know each phase of the Scouting program and be able to describe what each is and how each works. Review all Scouting program literature to support assigned units.
4. See that all direct-contact unit leadership completes basic leader training, including Youth Protection training.
5. Visit unit meetings regularly.
 - a. Observe the unit in action and determine the degree to which the descriptions in the literature are being followed.
 - b. Privately use the commissioner worksheet.
 - c. Annually, work with unit leadership in conducting the unit action planning meeting and completing the unit self-assessment form.
 - d. If called upon, participate or help in some of the regular activities of the unit.
 - e. Record your visit in the Unit Visit Tracking System (UVTS).
6. Visit regularly with the unit leader.
 - a. Be aware of the unit leader's needs and concerns.
 - b. Serve as the unit leader's friend and coach.
 - c. Offer encouragement and support.

- d. Using the literature available, help the leader see new opportunities for improvement.
 - e. Maintain the best possible relationship with unit leadership.
 - f. Encourage unit participation in district and council program events.
 - g. Enter your visit in the Unit Visit Tracking System (UVTS).
7. Work to assure effective and active unit committees.
 - a. Visit with the unit committee periodically.
 - b. Observe the committee in action.
 - c. Using the literature, offer suggestions for improvement.
 - d. Work with the committee to solve problems and improve unit operation.
 - e. Record your visit in the Unit Visit Tracking System (UVTS).
8. Keep in touch with the chartered organizations of the units you serve.
 - a. Meet and encourage the orientation of the chartered organization representative.
 - b. Meet the head of the organization and explain your role as a help to the units.
 - c. Help develop a good relationship between the unit's leadership and the chartered organization leadership.
 - d. In close cooperation with the district executive, give the leaders of the organization a brief progress report and compliment them for using Scouting.
 - e. Record your visit in the Unit Visit Tracking System (UVTS).
9. Know the neighborhood in which your units are located.
 - a. Help graduating members of one program join the next level of Scouting.
 - b. Identify potential sources for new youth members.
 - c. Cultivate men and women of good moral character who might become Scouting leaders.
 - d. Know your chartered organizations and prospective ones.
 - e. Learn about resources and characteristics of the neighborhood that might impact a unit's program.
10. Know the district and council.
 - a. Identify resources that can help the unit.
 - b. Know and share information about scheduled events that will help the unit.
 - c. Work closely with the professional staff.
 - d. Use members of the district operating committees to help meet specialized needs of your units.

11. Set the example.
 - a. Adopt an attitude of helpfulness.
 - b. Keep your promises.
 - c. Be concerned about proper uniforming.
 - d. Be diplomatic.
 - e. Be a model of Scouting ideals.

You have no choice about being a role model. You are one. The only choice you have is which role you'll model.

12. Continue to grow as a commissioner through training, experience, and consultation with others in the district.
13. Be sure that unit adults attend Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, and Venturing roundtables.
14. Make certain that proper techniques are used to select and recruit unit leadership.
15. Help the unit conduct a membership inventory (at least annually) of youth and adults.
16. Facilitate the on-time annual charter renewal of all assigned units using Internet rechartering or the traditional paper rechartering method.
 - a. Help the unit committee chairman conduct the charter renewal meeting.
 - b. See that a completed charter renewal application is returned to the council service center.
 - c. Present the new charter at an appropriate meeting of the chartered organization.



Roundtable/Forum Commissioners

1. Recruit and train a staff qualified to put on quality roundtables for unit personnel.
2. Plan and conduct monthly roundtable programs.
3. Make all arrangements for roundtables, including meeting places, equipment, and supplies.
4. Conduct regular critiques to determine how roundtables can be improved.



Your District Executive

Strictly speaking, district executives are not commissioners, but they are full-time *commissioned* leaders of the Boy Scouts of America. District executives share the same objectives as commissioners: to help units succeed in providing a quality program for youth.

The district executive is a Scouting friend and coach for every commissioner in the district. He or she is employed by the council and works under the direction of the council Scout executive. The district executive works to deliver the Scouting program through volunteers.

You can expect your district executive to:

1. Provide professional coaching.
2. Give inspiration and encouragement.
3. Maintain regular contact with the heads of chartered organizations.
4. Keep district records up-to-date.
5. Arrange for help from the council service center.
6. Provide vital behind-the-scenes administrative skills.
7. Work with and support volunteers on the unit and district level.
8. Suggest and support action plans for recruiting district volunteers.

Both commissioners and professionals share responsibility for building good working relationships. Good volunteer-professional relationships are characterized by mutual trust, mutual respect, and mutual recognition of each other's role and competency.

Be accessible to your district executive. Exchange phone numbers, email addresses, mailing addresses, etc. Return his or her calls. Help make the most efficient use of each other's Scouting time.

Commissioners should know that they can turn to their professional for advice or troubleshooting. Develop good communications in which you and your district executive really listen to and understand each other.

Take good care of your district executive. Your district executive cares about you.