

Local Council COPE/Climbing Committee

Organizational Structure

The COPE/climbing committee has overall responsibility for the local council's COPE/climbing activities in Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Venturing, and Exploring. Within the local council organization, the COPE/climbing committee typically reports to the vice president of outdoor program, but may be assigned to a different council officer depending on the local council organization chart. The COPE/climbing committee may be a separate committee or a subcommittee within another program committee (e.g. Camping committee).

Members of the COPE/climbing committee are typically Scouters who have been trained as COPE and/or Climbing Level I or Level II Instructors, or Directors. People who have received training from professional challenge course and/or climbing organizations may also be good additions to the committee. Others with expertise in budgeting, management, maintenance, or construction and are interested in becoming involved in the Scouting program may have useful skills that make them valuable members.

The committee should include specialists for the type of COPE/climbing activities prevalent in the local council (e.g. low challenge course, high challenge course, canopy tours, zip lines, giant swings, climbing towers, and natural rock climbing). Some committee members should either be members of or liaisons to other council committees that touch the COPE/climbing committee's areas of responsibility, including training, advancement, health and safety, camping, properties, risk management, etc.

Summer camp COPE/climbing directors should be ex-officio members of the committee during the term of their employment and afterward encouraged to become full-time, year-round volunteer members.

The COPE/climbing committee's main responsibilities include the following year-round activities tailored to the local council's COPE/climbing activities and opportunities:

- **Training**—Work with the council training committee to provide COPE/climbing training for adults and youth. Encourage and support youth participation as Instructors in Training.
- **Program**—Provide and promote a broad array of basic and high-adventure challenge course and climbing activities to support all parts of the Scouting program.
- **Advancement**—Provide advancement leadership development opportunities for youth.
- **Safety**—Actively assess safe operation of council- and district-led COPE/climbing activities, including summer camp, and promote climbing, canyoneering, and caving safety at the unit level.
- **Attraction, Development, and Retention of COPE/climbing Leadership**—A primary role of the committee is attracting, developing, and retaining qualified COPE/climbing leadership for the training, program, advancement, and safety activities above. This includes summer camp and year-round council- and district-led COPE/climbing activities and should include succession planning for key roles.

Key Activities

Local council COPE/climbing committee activities should include but are not limited to:

Training

- Climb On Safely, Canyoneering Safely, and Cave Safely
Cave Softly orientation
- Level I instructor training

- Level II instructor training
- Development of COPE/climbing activities for district & council events
- COPE/climbing training for camp staff:
 - COPE/climbing skills
 - Effective teaching of COPE/climbing skills
 - COPE/climbing safety, including emergency procedures
 - Basic climbing techniques
 - Basic facilitation

Program

- Promote COPE and climbing for all Scouts and especially for Cub Scouts by providing opportunities to participate in council & district programs
- Adventure opportunities incorporating COPE and/or climbing into activities and trips
- Promotion of COPE/climbing high adventure—Council high adventure programs, Philmont Scout Ranch, Summit Bechtel Reserve
- Enhanced COPE/climbing activities during day camp and resident camp sessions for both Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts
- Special COPE/climbing camp sessions for Boy Scouts and Venturers with emphasis on activities not available during regular summer camp sessions
- Winter programs with ice climbing or cold-weather challenge course activities for older Boy Scouts and Venturers
- Coordination with other councils to promote programs, staff training, and other resources
- Coordination with other organizations (e.g., American Mountain Guides Association, Professional Climbing Guides Institute, Professional Climbing Instructor Association, American Canyoneering Association, National Speleological Society, Association for Challenge Course Technology Professional Vendor Members, Local University Challenge

Course Programs, local climbing clubs, etc.) for joint programs or use of facilities

Advancement

- Climbing Merit Badge
- Ranger Award Elective: COPE
- Special awards and certificates for participation in COPE and/or climbing programs
- Leadership development activities for unit leadership corps

Safety

- Promotion of Climb On Safely, Canyoneering Safely, and Cave Safely Cave Softly at the district and unit levels
- Review of council and district safety training and procedures for COPE/climbing activities, including day and resident camps
- Inspection of summer camp and other council and district COPE/climbing facilities and equipment

Attraction, Development, and Retention of COPE/climbing Leadership

- Develop and maintain enough qualified instructors, distributed throughout the council, to meet all local COPE/climbing training needs in a timely fashion.
- Assist with sourcing qualified candidates for council COPE/climbing program and safety leadership needs.
- Assist with interviewing candidates to ensure necessary COPE/climbing experience, training certificates, and COPE/climbing leadership exist.
- Establish a succession planning process identifying the next COPE/climbing leaders for key roles.
- Establish a program to train, develop, and retain younger COPE/climbing staff members to become COPE/climbing instructors in the future. This includes staff for summer camp and year-round council and district-led COPE/climbing activities. The staff training process for summer camp staff ideally would begin in early spring each year to ensure that a

well-trained COPE/climbing staff exists prior to arrival at summer camp.