

Dear Parents

This week you'll receive an email invite to re-registration your child(ren) for the Scouting 2018-2019 season. There are a few dates, timelines and costs you need to be aware of. These change as well as the options as time progresses.

Between **May 1 and May 14 returning members only** may re-register for the coming season. This gives existing members within our section and group the ability to register before the registration is open to new members. As you're aware, word has got out about the exceptional program we run and we're expecting an influx of members including new members to Scouting. Due to our meeting space restrictions, we've had to cap our section participant size. Once we hit the maximum, we'll stop accepting registrations. Of course, you'll still have the ability to register with another group. I therefore encourage you to re-register before the system is completely opened up. The early registration fee is \$260. All of this goes to the national office to pay staff, provide Scouter training programs, manage the recognition, training, screening systems, insurance and to keep our various Scouts Canada camps and offices operational.

Rather than click through the re-registration screens, I strongly urge you to read through and update any emergency contact or medical information. We rely on this information to be correct in the system throughout the year.

On **May 15** the registration system opens to the public. The system will remain open until the section becomes full. If you have a friend who wishes to join, tell them to visit [www.Scouts.ca](http://www.Scouts.ca) and click on the JOIN button. They'll be prompted for their postal code to show other groups that meet near them. Our section will be shown.

On **July 1** the early registration fee ends and, if there's still space, the cost to register becomes \$290.

One thing I'd like you to be aware of regarding our Troop section. I regretted to inform you that the **Troop section** will be **discontinued** for the year of 2018-19 due to the shortage of leadership. However, return members can register to another nearby groups. Unless there is new volunteer to sign up as scouter, we'll re-assess the situation next year and determine whether the Troop section will be re-opened.

For those requiring subsidy, I strongly urge you to do three things asap. The subsidy is based on financial need and the criteria, minimal threshold to qualify, is the same for Scouts Canada and the Canadian Tire Jumpstart program.

1. Apply to the Canadian Tire Jumpstart program. This program offers funding for kids to participate in Scouting programs. They distribute funds twice per year, normally aligned with the summer/fall and winter/spring seasons. Applications are accepted on-line between Jan 15 and Nov 1. Click here to start the process. Please note that financial need is a personal discussion and the Scouters at our Group do not need to know, nor are we required to know, about your financial situation. Likewise, only the parents/guardians can start this process. We are not able to call or apply on anyone's behalf. As of this writing the maximum amount available is 2 x \$300 or \$600 annually.

<https://jumpstart.canadiantire.ca/content/microsites/jumpstart/en/apply.html>

2. Apply to the [Scouts Canada No One Left Behind \(NOLB\)](#) membership subsidy fund. This fund helps to offset (it normally won't cover all costs) the annual membership fees. To apply, parents visit <https://help.scouts.ca/hc/en-ca/requests/new>. The Online Submission page has a drop down menu with "Subsidies: No One Left Behind" as an option. From here the request will be triaged to the necessary staff in managing the NOLB request. Again, the eligibility criteria is the same as Jumpstart. You'll need evidence of income. This application should occur before the (re-)registration process begins. If you received NOLB funding, the registration amount will be shown reduced.
  
3. Scouts Canada has another subsidy program to help offset (again, it won't make the costs zero) the cost of participating in our programs. Often the group will help the family with this cost and is often asked to share the cost by one third, ie. One third national subsidy, one third group fund raising and one third paid by the family. If you would like to discuss participation subsidy, please talk to our Group Commissioner Wesley Lim or myself to start the ball rolling. This application is done on a group level and is meant to provide relief to participation in camps, outings, etc throughout the year. It takes time for the request to go from Group to Council to National for final approval so 60 days minimum advance before camp or when the subsidy is needed. Of course, those receiving NOLB funding are expected to help the Group in it's fund raising efforts throughout the year.

If you have any questions about registration, registering for the next higher section, or concerns about the program, please don't hesitate to talk to one of the Scouters, myself or our Group Commissioner. We rely on feedback to improve the program, address issues and make course corrections. Scouting is a family activity and we're always looking for parents and guardians to get involved. You can start out small helping our group committee with small events like a weekend fund raiser or become an overnight parent at a camp or start the training to become a full Scouter. Scouts Canada and our group provide lots of support to help you decide if it's right for you. If you enjoy the outdoors, helping kids learn or experience new activities, I strongly urge you to talk to a Scouter or our Group Commissioner about how parents can help us be even more successful. Our group has high standards, however, it becomes easier when we have several Scouters helping. Besides, the Scouters often have as much if not more fun than the kids!

Yours in scouting,

Edwin Li

***100<sup>th</sup> Markham Scout Group***

*Group Registrar*

