

SCOUTS-L

PERMISSION SLIPS

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From: "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@CapAccess.org>
To: Jo Ernst <njernst@NETSIDE.COM>
cc: Multiple recipients of list SCOUTS-L <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>
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Jo,

There is always a certain amount of debate over whether a permission slip is needed (or whether the medical release form on the Scout application is enough) and what form the permission slip should take. Whenever this subject comes up and it does every three or four months, folks share what they have been doing and what works in their own area. And all of its seems to sound a little different.

So, is there a right way or single best permission slip? Probably not. This is because the laws in each State or territory are a little different about what constitutes a medical waiver, a release or permission. A great looking permission slip from Virginia might or might not be very good in say Washington State. To have a really good permission slip that helps in the case where a Scout is injured and one that reduces the chances of a leader being liable for the injury, you need to consult your local resources to find out what works in your state and in some cases your city. One of the best places to start is your District professional. He or she can use the resources of the Council's Risk Management Committee to help with finding a good permission/waiver form.

The folks on this committee should be familiar with local laws and better able to help with what will or will not work. Likewise, your Council has on its Executive Board a Counsel who is there to give legal advice to the Council. This attorney can also be a resource to be consulted via your professional staff.

All of that said, there seem to be some key features that can help in designing a permission form that are universal:

- * Identify the Scout**
- * Identify the unit**
- * Identify the place where the event will take place and its nature**
- * Identify the transportation arrangements**
- * Identify dates and times**
- * If the activity is risky, like rappelling, include a statement about the risks and a place for the parent to sign acknowledging that both the parent and Scout acknowledge the risks and accept liability**
- * Provide for an specifically identified adult to be given permission to act in the parent's place for medical care (this is highly dependent on your local laws as to how you write it)**
- * Be aware that in some areas a parent's signature is enough, in other areas the signature may need to be notarized for a leader to act in a parent's place for medical care**

These are always a pain to use, because Scout's while eager to have fun are not always so good on paperwork. Many Scout leaders have a few forms ready to hand at the jump-off point and an Assistant designated to get parent signatures just before leaving as practical solution.

**Speaking only for myself in the Scouting Spirit, Michael F. Bowman
Dep. Dist. Commissioner-Training, G.W. Dist., NCAC, BSA (Virginia)
U. S. Scouting Service Project FTP Site Administrator (PC Area)
ftp1 or ftp2.scouters.com/usscouts E-mail: mfbowman@capaccess.org**