

Ways to hold a Join Scouting Night 2020



COVID-19 has brought new challenges to all of us. Scout leaders continue to find fun and innovative ways to deliver the Scouting program. Virtual Scouting has been connecting Scouts to not only their own unit but also to Scouts across the country. Leading into Fall, there are still some uncertainties facing us. The Erie Shores Council Membership Team has been working hard to rethink and reimagine how we will approach recruitment and inviting new families to the Scouting movement. Here are some suggested techniques that you can use for a successful recruitment for your unit. To optimize results, you may need to employ multiple methods to reach families. Keeping in mind that there will be kids unable to return to school, if school is in session, based on their health circumstances or family members. Remember that parents will want to know all health and safety protocols you will be following. (Social Distancing, handwashing, encouraging masks or face coverings, etc.)

1. Traditional Recruitment Night

This is the traditional way of recruitment. JSN's are usually held at a local school, library, or your unit's chartering organization. A familiar location like a school or library is always preferred for a JSN. Some parents may be hesitant to go to a church or other location they are not familiar with to join. Your chartering organization is a great location for unit meetings, however, be sure to check with them for any changes due to COVID-19.

2. Grade Specific

Use this method to host an in-person JSN (Method 1) by limiting the number of families attending by separating by grade for a specific time/day. If combining grades, plan for turnout expectancy and group accordingly. For example: Kindergarten and 3rd grade, 1st and 4th grades, and 2nd and 5th grades. With this method be sure to have the corresponding Den Leaders at the appropriate times as well as your unit's New Member coordinator, Cubmaster, and/or other key unit leadership.

3. Outside Venue

If you are not allowed inside your normal JSN location, you can apply Methods 1 and 2 by simply moving to an outside location. Schools or other public locations may not be allowing use of inside facilities so by using this method, it still allows for a familiar location as some families may be hesitant to go to a church or other unfamiliar location. This will also enable greater Social Distancing and ease some of the anxiety parents may be having by returning to school.

4. Drive-Thru JSN Event

Curbside pick-up/Drive-Thru could be employed to host a JSN for Scouting. Pre-communication and marketing will be crucial if using this method. Setup stops for questions, applications (encourage online applications), welcome packets including unit calendar and leader bios, volunteer opportunities, "Meet Your Leader," submitting registration fees, etc. You could also use this in conjunction with a service project such as a Scouting for Food Drive by including donation drop off stop.

5. Virtual Recruitment

Pre-planning with a solid program will be integral for success in addition to using a familiar platform such as Zoom, Google Meets, GoToMeeting, etc. Use the screen sharing feature to present JSN information (a template is available for download at erieshorescouncil.org/recruitment). Use a dedicated volunteer to monitor the chat feature to answer questions and link families to the online registration system when using this method.

6. Scouting Delivered! (not stand-alone method)

This is an additional step that can be used by units that provides a "one-stop shop" for families by collecting fees for registration, Boy's Life, handbooks, uniforms, unit t-shirt, unit fees, etc. After your JSN, a unit volunteer will coordinate the purchasing/ordering by Scout and will have at either their first meeting or deliver/ship to the Scout's family.

