



Patriots' Path Council Den Chief Plan

Why an emphasis on den chiefs?

We are encouraging a greater use of trained den chiefs because packs, troops and Scouting will benefit from the use of den chiefs. The den chief can help with both retention of Scouts and leaders as well as with the recruitment of Scouts. The den chief position is a critically important youth leadership position of responsibility for both packs and troops. Serious consideration should be given to the personal characteristics and maturity of individual Scouts before they are assigned as den chiefs. Below are just some of the many benefits that show why the use of den chiefs is so important to all aspects of the Scouting program.

Cub Scout:

- Learn about Scouting. The Cub Scouts love to hear about the Scout's camping trips and other adventures.
- Potential to start den meetings with a trained den chief and provide continuity of program.
- Potentially relate better to the den chief because they are closer in age than the adult leader and even older Scouts.
- Interacting with Scouts – sometimes from different troops within the same area.
- Develop relationship with Scout:
 - More likely to continue in the pack and more likely to cross over to Scouts BSA.

Den Leaders:

- Gain another set of valuable hands to lead/assist with Cub Scouts in activities, including songs, skits, games, sports, ceremonies, etc.
- Support with any number of activities and skills that promote Cub Scout advancement.
- Help with special outings, field trips and outdoor activities.
- Gain access to the den chief's training and knowledge as both currently a Scout and previously as a Cub Scout.
- Help with retention and provide for more individualized attention.
- Support on creating more of a Patrol Method approach with Webelos and Arrow of Light dens.
- Foster a link to the troop, which can be a great resource for many things including help with outdoor activities and Arrow of Light requirements.

Den chiefs:

- Learn leadership and communication skills.
- Improved self-confidence and self-worth.
- Develop relationship with Cub Scouts and are looked up to by Cub Scouts.
- Opportunities to engage in advanced youth leadership trainings
<https://ppcbsa.org/committees/training/>
- Can earn the BSA Den Chief Service Award.
- Exploring new roles within Scouting that require new and/or refined skills.
- Earn position of responsibility in troop, thus assisting in rank advancement.
- Learn to work cooperatively with adults.



Packs:

- Improves retention. Cub Scouts learn from older Scouts who stayed in Scouting, are excited about Scouting and their role in it.
- Gain another set of valuable hands to lead/assist with Cub Scouts in activities, including songs, skits, games, sports, ceremonies, etc.
- Helps to maintain communications with troop, which is beneficial to Scouts and leaders.
- Help to provide an example to Cub Scouts who will one day return as den chiefs.
- In many cases the den chief already knows the adult leaders within the pack and are already comfortable working with them.
- Can be used to assist with recruitment drives and programming.

Troops:

- Cub Scouts in packs that properly utilize den chiefs are more likely to cross over to Scouts BSA through effective Webelos to Scout Transition programming.
- Excellent for maintaining a relationship with the pack, which is beneficial for Scouts and leaders.
- Can be used to assist with recruitment drives and programming.
- Opportunity to develop leaders (e.g.; future troop guides and other leader positions) which will strengthen the youth leadership of the troop.

How are den chiefs solicited, selected and assigned? Any way you can!!

Here are some suggestions:

- Following the troop elections, den chiefs should be identified based on interest and commitment and take Den Chief Training.
- The cubmaster creates a list of den leaders, meeting dates and times for possible den chiefs. The scoutmaster and cubmaster work together to discuss the pack's needs for den chiefs for the coming year.
- At the beginning of the school year the scoutmaster, senior patrol leader and cubmaster have finalized the assigning of den chiefs with a den and the den chief attends their first meeting along with an adult leader from the troop. The den chief also attends pack meetings with their den.
- Because den chiefs often come from the same pack to which they are later assigned, they usually already have a comfort level with the adult leaders in the pack. Den chiefs may at times also be assigned to a den that contains a parent, guardian and/or younger sibling(s). Sometimes this works and sometimes it does not. The scoutmaster, senior patrol leaders and cubmaster need to meet at least once a month for the monitoring of the den chief by discussing with all parties how the experience is going, if modifications are necessary and if changes are warranted.



Training:

- Patriots' Path Council promotes the highest levels of training which are essential to a successful den chief.
- Both the den leader and the den chief should attend training to understand the role and responsibility of the den chief.
- The cubmaster, scoutmaster, senior patrol leader and any other leaders who oversee or coordinate den chiefs would also benefit from this training to understand the process.
- District training – Each of Patriots' Path Council's six districts offers den chief training throughout the year.
- Council training – Den chief training is offered at the Merit Badge Introduction Workshop (the first Saturday in November) and at the University of Scouting for Scouts, Cub Scout leaders and Scouts BSA leaders (the first Saturday in December).
- Den Chief Handbook – Available for purchase at Patriots' Path Council Scout Shops. Packs and/or troops may choose to provide a complimentary copy of our valuable resource to their den chiefs.

An Example of a Monthly Plan

June/July:

- The senior patrol leader and scoutmaster (or designee) should identify Scouts who might best serve as den chiefs, solicit their interest and commitment and arrange for them to take den chief training.
- The council and/or districts offer in-person Den Chief Training.

July/August:

- Den chief designee registers for training. <https://ppcbsa.org/committees/training/>.
- The council or districts offer in-person training.

August/September:

- The scoutmaster and cubmaster discuss the pack's needs for den chiefs for the coming year.
- The cubmaster encourages den leaders to accept a den chief for their den. Creates a list of den leaders and meeting dates and times for possible den chiefs. Arranges for den leaders to attend den chief training.
- The scoutmaster and cubmaster finalize assigning den chiefs to a den and the den chief attends their first den meeting along with an adult leader from the troop. The den chief should also begin to attend pack meetings with their den.
- The council and/or districts offer in-person den chief training.
- The den chief begins to regularly attend den planning sessions and meetings and pack meetings. As advisable, consider sending an adult leader from the troop for the first few meetings.



October/November:

- The den chief attends den planning sessions and meetings and pack meetings. Where necessary, the troop continues sending an adult leader to adjust the den chief to duties.
- The scoutmaster and cubmaster (or designees) monitor den chief usage and at least once a month discuss with all parties (senior patrol leader, den leaders, other coordinating leaders, etc.) how the experience is going, if modifications are necessary and if changes are warranted.
- The council and/or districts offer in-person Den Chief Training including the Merit Badge Introduction Workshop the first Saturday in November.

November/December:

- The den chief attends den planning sessions and meetings and pack meetings.
- The scoutmaster and cubmaster (or designees) monitor den chief usage and at least once a month discuss with all parties (senior patrol leader, den leaders, other coordinating leaders, etc.) how the experience is going, if modifications are necessary and if changes are warranted.
- The council and/or districts offer in-person den chief training including the Merit Badge Introduction Workshop the first Saturday in November and the University of Scouting the first Saturday in December.

December - June:

- The den chief attends den planning sessions and meetings and pack meetings.
- The scoutmaster and cubmaster (or designees) monitor den chief usage and at least once a month discuss with all parties (senior patrol leader, den leaders, other coordinating leaders, etc.) how the experience is going, if modifications are necessary and if changes are warranted.

February:

- The pack should recognize den chiefs at the Blue and Gold dinner or whenever other leaders are recognized
- The den chief participates with the troop in the Crossing Over Ceremony for Webelos to Scout transition.

April/May:

- Adult leaders in both the troop and pack discuss and complete the form for the Den Chief Service Award.

June:

- The troop and/or pack recognizes those den chiefs who have earned the Den Chief Service Award
- The scoutmaster and cubmaster review how the experience benefitted all parties, make necessary modifications/improvements for the coming year and the cycle begins again...



Scouts BSA Den Chief Service Award

The den chief is the only Scout youth leadership position of responsibility that is tied to a specific award. Information about this award can be found below and at:

<https://www.scouting.org/programs/boy-scouts/advancement-and-awards/merit-badges/dencf/>

Requirements:

1. Serve the pack faithfully for one full year.
2. Attend Den Chief Training (if available within year of service)
OR be trained by the assistant cubmaster and den leader.
3. Know and understand the purposes of Cub Scouting.
4. Help Cub Scouts achieve the purposes of Cub Scouting.
5. Be the activities assistant in den meetings.
6. Set a good example by attitude and uniforming.
7. Be a friend to the Cub Scouts in the den.
8. Take part in weekly meetings.
9. Assist the den at the monthly pack program.
10. Meet as needed with the adult members of the den, pack, troop or crew.
11. Complete four of these projects:
 - a. Serve as a staff member of a special Cub Scouting event, such as a Scouting show, bicycle rodeo, etc.
 - b. Serve as a staff member of a Cub Scout day camp or resident camp.
 - c. Advance one rank.
 - d. Assist in recruiting three new Cub Scouts.
 - e. Assist three Cub Scouts to become Webelos Scouts.
 - f. Assist three Webelos Scouts to join a troop.
 - g. Help to plan and carry out a joint pack-troop activity.
 - h. Recommend to your Scoutmaster or Venturing Advisor another Scouts BSA or Venture Scout to be a den chief.



See the *Den Chief Handbook*, No. 33211B, for detailed requirements.