

Frequently Asked Questions Concerning the Annual Health and Medical Record

Q. Why do we need a new health form?

A. Based on input from individual Scouters, the Order of the Arrow, local councils, health and safety and risk management committees, and high-adventure bases, there was confusion on when to use any of more than 20 different health forms in use across the nation. There was also an immediate need to update a medical form for the 2010 National Scout Jamboree. The Health and Safety Committee took on the challenge and the opportunity to establish one Annual Health and Medical Record for all ages and known risks. It is simple and yet comprehensive enough to be used for both health and wellness evaluations as well as emergency situations.

Q. What are the major changes?

A. A health history is still sufficient for typical activities lasting less than 72 hours (Parts A and C of the new form—similar to the old Class 1 form). For activities lasting longer than 72 hours, a medical evaluation by a health-care provider is now required annually (Part B). For high-adventure activities for which medical care may be delayed, restrictions based on standardized height/weight ratios are now mandatory.

Q. When does the Annual Health and Medical Record go into effect? I am used to the old form and would rather use it.

A. Transition and change can be exciting and easy, especially if it positions the BSA for the future. Everyone should begin using the Annual Health and Medical Record immediately. The existing stock of Class 1, 2, and 3 forms can continue to be used while supplies last in 2009. The only supported form effective January 1, 2010, is the Annual Health and Medical Record. Its use will be mandatory for the 2010 National Scout Jamboree.

Q. Where can I find the Annual Health and Medical Record?

A. It can be found at your council's Scout shop and is posted in a downloadable PDF format on Scouting Safely on Scouting.org.

Q. Can I keep a record of my Annual Health and Medical Record somewhere at my council's office or online?

A. Districts and councils are discouraged from keeping any medical records, whether digital or paper, unless required by local or state ordinances. However, the electronic version of the Annual Health and Medical Record is intended to be filled out and saved by individual Scouts and Scouters. The electronic Annual Health and Medical Record should not be transmitted via e-mail or stored by units, districts, or councils. Units are encouraged to keep paper copies of their participants' Annual Health and Medical Records in a confidential medical file for quick access in an emergency and to be prepared for all adventures.

Q. The old Class 1, 2, and 3 forms were based on age. What about the Annual Health and Medical Record?

A. There is no longer a difference in the exam interval based on age. The Annual Health and Medical Record is for everyone.

Q. There are three parts to the Annual Health and Medical Record, which part do I need to fill out?

A. All participants should fill out Parts A and C for any event. Part B (the physical examination) should be completed if you are participating in an event that exceeds 72 consecutive hours, such as jamborees, summer camps, and Wood Badge training courses. Part B also is required for participation in a resident camp setting or when the nature of the activity is strenuous and demanding such as service projects, work weekends, or high-adventure treks. It is important to note that if the event will take your unit beyond a radius wherein emergency care is more than 30 minutes by ground transportation, the height/weight chart found at the bottom of Part B should be strictly followed. Please note that individual units, districts, or councils may have policies in place to exceed this standard based on their unique risks.

Q. How often will I need to renew/update my Annual Health and Medical Record?

A. This form will need to be updated annually, just as many schools or sporting leagues require an annual update. Many changes can happen throughout a year, including changes in disease processes, medication, address, and insurance.

Q. What is meant by “Annual” and “valid for 12 calendar months”?

A. If you complete your record on March 9, 2009, it will be valid through March 2010, but you must complete a new Annual Health and Medical Record by April 1, 2010. Please note that the 2010 National Scout Jamboree will have a specific window when the record must be submitted.

Q. I have several children in the program and a health care plan that does not provide cheap co-pays for physicals. What can be done to divert the increased cost of participation?

A. Many units, districts, and councils offer physical exams. Facilitating such an event could be a positive experience, as well as decreasing costs. Several county clinics offer physicals at a very low price in order to assist children across the nation maintain a well and healthy life.

Q. I heard a physical for an adult can be very expensive. Is that true?

A. As participants age, physicians (MDs, DOs), NPs, and PAs may require extra testing in order to approve and/or clear their participation in events. Participants who are on medications should already be checked annually.

Q. Do I really need to explain everything about myself or my child, such as learning disabilities or depression? I don't want myself or my child to be treated differently.

A. As hard as it may be to share these aspects about yourself or your child, this information is needed to structure safe activities and is imperative when giving emergency care. Please be thorough and honest. Our experience also indicates that a Scouting activity is not the place to experiment with or stop medications, especially those that address these issues.

Q. Why do I need to put my child's or my own social security number on the record?

A. It is your choice as to whether you fill in this number; however, in many states, medical care cannot be rendered without it.

Q. What does “grade completed” mean?

A. If your son has completed the 6th grade and is currently enrolled in 7th grade, you would enter 6th grade here. You may always update your information more frequently than annually.

Q. What if I don’t want to have my child immunized for tetanus or other immunizations due to religious or philosophical reasons, do I have to sign a release?

A. Yes, the recommendations of the immunization task force were accepted by the Health and Safety Support Committee in October 2008 and are listed on Scouting.org under Scouting Safely. If you choose not have your child immunized, the release form can also be found there. Declining or inadequate immunizations will require verification by a certified and licensed physician (MD, DO), NPs, or PAs that a communicable disease is not present. Inadequately immunized participants will be identified so that they can be located in case of a necessity for isolation or quarantine as per local public health official directives

Q. Can I decline medical treatment?

A. Yes, but a release must be signed. The release can be found under Scouting Safely on Scouting.org. This practice is highly discouraged because this choice can put the entire unit at risk, both mentally and physically. Declining medical treatment will require verification by a certified and licensed physician (MD or DO), NP, or PA that a communicable disease is not present.

Q. Can I use another medical exam, such as a school sports exam, and attach it to the Annual Health and Medical Record?

A. No. In an effort to maintain standards of preparedness and fitness for participation, and to make sure that the medical professional conducting the examination knows the various outdoor adventures that can occur in Scouting, the BSA requires completion of Part B. Part B also includes the height/weight chart for high adventure situation where emergency medical care is not readily available.

Q. Why can’t I use the Annual Health and Medical Record for participation at the high-adventure bases?

A. The high-adventure bases have very specific activities that are unique to each of them. They each provided valuable input to position the Annual Health and Medical Record for use in the future. YOU are responsible to Be Prepared for your high-adventure trek and understand and follow all high-adventure base rules, procedures, and guidelines.

Q. Why is there a talent release on the Annual Health and Medical Record? It doesn’t really have anything to do with health.

A. In response to requests from several councils to eliminate paperwork, we have included the talent release as part of the Annual Health and Medical Record.