Greater Hudson Valley Council BSA

Virtual Meetings:

Safety Guidelines and Helpful Tips

With Technology constantly improving and enhancing our ability to connect with each other, it is only a matter of time before we start using online video conferencing as another tool to communicate with our Scouting community. This guide provides ways to run virtual meetings safely and effectively.

There are many Internet applications that can help you set up and run a virtual meeting. There's Zoom Meetings, Google Hangout, Cisco Webex Meetings, Skype, FreeConference, JItsi. That is a short list to name a few. Now with this ever growing need to use virtual meetings to communicate with our people, comes new risks and safety concerns that need to be addressed in order to stay aligned with Suffolk County Council and Boy Scouts of America safety requirements. Specifically youth protection requirements.

With SCCBSA professionals and the Council Risk Management Committee, we have created the following safety measures and guidelines that should take place before and during each virtual meeting. The following sections provide steps you can follow to run safe and effective virtual meetings:

- Code of Conduct for the Youth and Adults and Youth Protection during Virtual Meetings,
- How to protect yourself from Hackers/Video Crashers,
- Be Prepared: "Pit Falls and Hiccups to Avoid with Helpful Tips and Tricks,"
- Be Smart and Be Safe

Our main goal is for us to host virtual meetings and continue the Scouting program digitally

SCOUT ME IN

Next Section: "BSA Code of Conduct and Youth Protection"

BSA Code of Conduct
And
Youth Protection Training (YPT)
During Virtual Meetings

The BSA code of conduct does not change whether you are hosting your meeting in person or using an online application. The same rules and regulations should apply in order to properly protect the youth and the adults. Here are some reminders to keep in mind when hosting a virtual meeting:

Remember two deep leadership always applies—whether in person or online. There should always be two adults in attendance who are YPT certified and certifications have not expired.

Appropriate attire should always be worn online the same as in person. Registered youth and leaders can wear the field uniform, activity shirt, or a uniform shirt designated by your unit. Inappropriate clothes, impolite language, or inappropriate gestures are not allowed. Proper attire is mandatory, not an option.

Scouting is a safe place whether in person or online. Bullying, threats, vulgar language, in-appropriate gestures, etc., will not be tolerated and stopped immediately. Those who violate these policies should be noted by BSA incident reports and submitted to your local council's District Executive.

Next Section:
How To Protect Yourself From Hackers
And
Video Crashers

Hosting A Virtual Meeting:

How To Protect Yourself From Hackers / Video Crashers

There have been reports on people hacking into virtual meetings and disrupting the conference with inappropriate behavior. As host of these meetings, it is our job to protect those in attendance as well as yourself. A lot of these situations can be avoided with the right knowledge and proper ways to defend against crashers who could disrupt and ruin a virtual meeting.

Do's

- **Set up meeting with a password** (*This makes for extra steps but separtes lock from key)*
- ***Only send invitations directly to people you know. You can send invitations via email or text message.***

During meeting, frequently check guest list for attendees you don't know and remove them. Must have two deep leadership at all times

- **Most of these applications will allow you to give host privledges to multiple leaders on the virtual meeting so more eyes can monitor attendees**
- **If you feel the meeting has been compromised, shut down the meeting immediately.**

Don't

- **Do not share the invitation on any social media platform which include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, etc.**
- **Don't allow any one to join that you don't know.**
- **Don't ever leave the meeting unattended unless there are two adults present.**
- **Don't allow Cyber-bullying to occur. The host has a mute all feature that you can activate if you are uncomfortable with dialogue.**
- **Don't allow break out sessions unless 2 adults present per room.**
- **Don't forget BSA code of conduct during these meetings**

Prepared. For Life.

Next Section: Be Prepared: Helpful Tips and Tricks

Be Prepared:
Watch Out For Virtual Meeting Pit Falls and Hiccups,
&
Helpful Tips and Tricks

As you are navigating through applications and setting up your virtual meetings, we compiled information together to help keep your meeting running smoothly and safely, avoid any problems that might occur, avoid any pit falls, and keep the meeting as seamless as possible.

Before Each Meeting:

Have the host (leader) address the cyber safety and virtual meeting etiquette via email day before meeting.

On the main page of your application, you should have the ability to share the hosting responsibilities to other leaders. This feature will allow to spread our responsibilities such as: Monitoring attendance, checking the Message Box, controlling the meeting with muting abilities, and making sure meeting etiquettes are being followed.

For more Security, you could keep video/audio for the host only and make sure the kids have there camera off so no one sees the kids. Those features can be turned off or on before you start the meeting. It should fall under advance settings when you start the process of creating a meeting. If any questions come up, any guest could utilize the message box to ask their questions.

During the Meeting:

- The Virtual backgrounds can swallow you if you move away from the camera. Be aware of that. On the Zoom application, you can access these features on the bottom tool bar of your screen. There is an video icon with an arrow pointing up. Select the arrow and you will see "Virtual Backgrounds". Select and choose your background.
- Not having a virtual background though, can be problematic. It opens you up to unexpected people walking behind you (aka. spouse getting out of the shower, etc.), so this feature can be helpful in maintaining proper Virtual meeting etiquette.
- **Sound Issues:** Having multiple devices on the same call in same room can cause echo. If two scouts from the same family want to have their own screen, one will have to mute their microphone and speakers to avoid echo.
- **Family Sharing one device issue:** Families with only one phone/tablet available for scouts to use may cause issues in Breakout rooms. If a Bear and a Lion are sharing a phone and Break Outs starts...which one to they go to? We ask the scouts to split the time equally. Once the time was up, they switched about halfway through. There is also a record button the host can utilize so they can share the video with their scouts in case any of them missed the meeting.
- **Breakout Rooms:** For Zoom, there is a Break Out Room button. When pressed, it lets you choose how many rooms you'd like for the call. You can name the rooms by different ranks, or if leaders aren't available, you can combine ranks depending on how many leaders are present. For every room, there should at least one leader and one parent monitoring in accordance to Youth Protection guidelines. You can have Lions/Tigers, Wolves, and Bears/Webelos in the same room because you might run a problem of not having enough adults. You can quickly assign participants to the breakout rooms on the fly manually, and then they can have mini den meetings. You can still communicate with the whole pack over message box/chat feature, which is very useful. As the host or any co-host, can broadcast to all participants that the Break Room session will be ending in five minutes, end the Break Outs, and everyone comes back to the pack meeting.

After the Meeting:

* If you are hosting the meeting, please make sure to end the meeting. You don't want to have any scouts or adults to still have access to the meeting space. This could cause Youth Protection violations.

Next Section: Be Smart and Be Safe

INTERNET SAFE ALERT!

With everyone using Zoom and other internet conferencing tool be aware.

Steps that the FBI recommends taking to avoid Zoom-bombing include keeping video conferences private rather than public, along with refraining from openly posting links to the conferences on social media platforms like Twitter or Facebook.

Tips shared by the company include setting the app's screen sharing feature to "only host" before beginning a session. Locking meetings so that no new participants can join, muting participants and disabling file transfer are also suggested as ways to block a malicious person from potentially hijacking or disrupting meetings.

Be Smart • Be Safe!