

# SAFELY TOGETHER GUIDELINES

11.3.2026 / 3rd revised edition

Approved on 23 November 2024 by The Guides and Scouts of Finland's Volunteer Support Committee.

The Guides and Scouts of Finland's Safety Group is responsible for the update. Please send any suggestions for corrections and additions by email to [spturvallisuusryhma@partio.fi](mailto:spturvallisuusryhma@partio.fi).

Authors: Minna Auranen, Karoliina Eriksson, Elina Ihanus, Jenna Kaarrela, Tarja Kallio and Anne Salmela. Employees of The Guides and Scouts of Finland have also participated in the update work.

Translation: Verbionix

## Contents

### SAFELY TOGETHER GUIDELINES

<b>Glossary</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Foreword</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The basics of the Safely Together Guidelines</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>The basics of a safer growing environment in Scouting</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Scouting promotes the well-being and safety of children and young people</b>	<b>8</b>
Safe practices in local scout groups	8
Safety adult role	9
The role of adults and group leaders	9
Scouting staff supporting local scout groups	11
Practices that enhance safety	12
Safely Together at scouting events – checklist	12
Preventing and addressing bullying	13
Taking social media into account in scouting	14
Scouting events abroad	16
Guidelines for acting in situations requiring child protection	19
Recognizing abuse	19
Guidelines for action when there is concern about a child	20
Making a child welfare notification	22
Communication in child protection situations	23
Checking the criminal background of volunteers	24



# Glossary

The following glossary has been compiled to clarify the terms used in the Safely Together guidelines. The glossary is in alphabetical order.

## Adult

- A person over the age of 18 according to Finnish law.

## Personal integrity

Everyone has the right to life, personal freedom, integrity and security. Personal freedom refers not only to a person's physical freedom, but also to their freedom of will and self-determination. (EU Charter of Fundamental Rights <https://fra.europa.eu/fi/eu-charter/article/3-oikeus-henkilokohtaiseen-koskemattomuuteen>)

## Abuse

Child abuse includes neglect of a child's basic needs (inadequate care), physical violence and sexual violence. Abuse threatens a child's physical, mental and social well-being and functioning.

## Educational objectives

The educational goals of Scouting are depicted on the Scout scarf, with the relationship with oneself at its centre. The relationship with others is depicted by the friendship knot, and the relationship with society is depicted on the back of the scarf, which in Finnish Scout scarves is typically reserved for the local community, i.e. the local scout group. The relationship with nature section is outside the scout scarf and represents the individual's interaction with nature.

## Child

In the Safely Together Guidelines, a child refers to a person under the age of 18 in accordance with the Child Welfare Act.

## Child protection

The purpose of child welfare is to safeguard a child's right to a safe environment in which to grow up, to balanced and diverse development, and to special protection. The task of child welfare is to influence the general conditions in which children grow up, to support guardians in their parenting and to ensure the basic safety of children. (THL 2024 <https://thl.fi/aiheet/lapset-nuoret-ja-perheet/sote-palvelut/lastensuojelu>)

## Child welfare notification

If you are concerned about a child's welfare and have discussed the matter with the child and their guardian, file a child welfare notification if necessary. As a volunteer in leisure activities, you can also report your concerns about a child or family anonymously to the social authorities. Scouts do not need to be able to assess whether the threshold for filing a child welfare notification has been exceeded; the matter can always be discussed with the social services. Please seek help early on from the local group leader, safety adult or scout worker when investigating your concerns. It is recommended that you do not delegate the filing of a child welfare notification to someone else, so as to avoid any misunderstandings.

## Scout worker

A scout worker is an organisational coordinator responsible for supporting the local scout groups. You can find the contact details of the organisational coordinator responsible for your group, i.e. the scout worker, in the joint information search. [Search for contact details | The Scouts of Finland](#)

## Social services



In the Safely Together Guidelines, a social services authority refers to a social services professional who works with child welfare notifications. You can ask a social services authority for advice if you are concerned about a child's well-being or circumstances. If necessary, a child welfare notification can be made through the social services.

### Safer space

The principles of a safer space create a foundation for activities in which everyone feels comfortable. In a safer space, jointly agreed operating principles are followed, within the framework of which participants can be themselves. The principles are presented before or at the beginning of the event and are visible or available throughout the event.

### Equality

Equality means that all people are equal regardless of their gender, age, ethnic or national origin, nationality, language, religion and belief, opinion, disability, health, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics. (Yhdenvertaisuus.fi <https://yhdenvertaisuus.fi/mita-on-yhdenvertaisuus>)

### Equality plan in scouting

All Scouting activities and decision-making are based on the principles of openness and equality. The aim of the Scout Movement is regional equality and that no one should be discriminated against on the basis of age, gender, sexual orientation, language, cultural background, ethnic background, religion, political views, socio-economic status, health or other similar factors. Further information: Equality and non-discrimination in the Scouts <https://www.partio.fi/suomen-partiolaiset/partiofaktat/tasa-arvo-ja-yhdenvertaisuus-partiossa/>



## Foreword

It is great that you want to be involved in making Scouting safer. We hope that you can go through these Safely Together Guidelines together with your leadership team and discuss how to promote the well-being and safety of children and young people in Scouting.

In Scouting, safety is a way of thinking and acting, which is also the basis of these Safely Together Guidelines. We have updated the Safely Together Guidelines to emphasise the foundation of Scouting: volunteer work in Scout groups. We work safely together in weekly activities at the Scout hall, as well as on trips, camps and events both in Finland and abroad.

The original Safely Together Guidelines were published in 2014, and this is the third edition. The Safely Together Guidelines will now be available in the form of a website to make it easier to familiarise yourself with and update the guidelines.

The Safely Together Guidelines are linked to an online course on Moodle, which is compulsory for all group leaders in the Scouts and Scouts over the age of 18. You can log in to Moodle with your PartioID username. You should allow about two hours to complete the online course. If necessary, you can pause the course and return to it later.



## The basics of the Safely Together Guidelines

The Guides and Scouts of Finland want to do their part to ensure that children can grow and develop in a safe environment. The Safely Together Guidelines aim to reinforce that young people and adults involved in scouting know how they can create a safer environment for growth through their own actions in recreational activities.

Although providing a safe environment for growth is the primary goal in scouting, harassment, bullying, abuse or violence may still occur. Scouting wants to prepare for these challenging situations primarily through prevention and, if necessary, by addressing the issues as early as possible. The guidelines also aim to ensure that young people and adults involved in scouting know how to act if the above-mentioned situations arise.

The operating principles of The Guides and Scouts of Finland's guidelines for promoting the well-being of children, Safely Together, are based on current Finnish legislation (Child Welfare Act 2007/417, Act on Child Custody and Right of Access 1983/361, Act on the Criminal Background Checks of Volunteers Working with Children 2014/148), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and The Guides and Scouts of Finland's Charter. The aim of the guidelines is to ensure that Scouts commit to practices that promote the safety and well-being of children. In this context, promoting safety and well-being means ensuring that children's fundamental and human rights are realised, as defined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

### **From the perspective of safety and well-being, this means, among other things, that**

- children are listened to and treated with respect
- the personal integrity of children is respected
- children's safe growth, development and well-being are supported
- children are protected from bullying, violence, sexual abuse, substance abuse and other factors that threaten their safe growth

The Safely Together guidelines are primarily a tool for leaders of all ages working in the Scouts. The guidelines are also used by Scout workers. Scout leaders' guardians and partners can also familiarise themselves with the guidelines. The guidelines focus on prevention and how each leader can promote the well-being of children in scouting through their own actions. The scout programme provides scouts with the skills to act in a way that makes everyone feel good.

### **The Safely Together Guidelines contain information and operating models on**

- how everyone can promote the well-being of children and young people in Scouting through their own actions and example
- how to prevent bullying, discrimination and violence in scouting
- how to intervene in bullying, discrimination, violence and other inappropriate behaviour and how to resolve situations

Updates to the Safely Together guidelines, active communication about them and training on their content ensure that all Scout volunteers and employees in Finland know how to make Scouting even safer. Everyone should also know what to do if they are concerned about a child's safety, growth or development.

### **Children are entitled to special care, support and protection**



It is important for The Guides and Scouts of Finland to ensure that scouting is a safe and healthy environment for children and young people to grow up in. In scouting, children are treated with respect, and scouting activities support their balanced growth, development and well-being. This goal is not always achieved, and children and young people may experience harassment, bullying, abuse or violence even in scouting.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 20 November 1989. The Convention applies to all children under the age of 18. In Finland, the Convention entered into force in 1991. The Convention is binding. Finland is committed to safeguarding, protecting and promoting the rights of the child. The Convention on the Rights of the Child is monitored by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Finland and other signatory states report to the committee every five years. The reports and the feedback received by the states are public.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child also applies to the scout movement. Scouting activities must take into account the best interests of the child and the child's right to safe leisure activities.

### **The four general principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child are**

- The right to life and development: a good childhood includes health, safety, learning, joy, play, rest and leisure time
- The right to equality: a life free from discrimination is a child's right
- The right to participation: children should be heard in matters that concern them, and children as a group should be able to express their views, act and influence decisions
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child requires that the best interests of the child be always taken into account and given priority in decision-making. The aim should be to reach a decision that best realises and promotes the rights, well-being, growth and development of the child

It is the duty and responsibility of adults to ensure that children's rights are realised. Even children and young people in difficult situations can grow up to be well-adjusted adults if they receive adequate and timely support. Even one secure adult relationship can be enough. In addition to or instead of their own guardian, an important person can be, for example, a municipal social worker, teacher, coach, hobby instructor, scout leader or youth worker.

### **The objectives of the Safely Together Guidelines in brief**

In the Safely Together Guidelines, a child is defined as a person under the age of 18 in accordance with the Child Welfare Act. The key points of the guidelines are as follows:

- The promotion of children's well-being is implemented in all scouting activities.
- Scouts have sufficient knowledge to protect children and promote safety in their activities.
- In the Scouts, everyone follows the Safely Together Guidelines in all situations and treats all children with respect.
- The Guides and Scouts of Finland has guidelines in place to prevent child abuse and to deal with suspected cases of child abuse.



# The basics of a safer growing environment in Scouting

Scouting ideals and educational goals form the basis for scouting activities and create a foundation for a safe growing environment in Scouting. The ideal of a scout is

- to respect other people
- to love nature and protect the environment
- to be reliable
- to build friendships across borders
- to be aware of one's responsibilities and take action
- to develop oneself as a person
- to seek the truth in life

Scouting educational objectives <https://partio-ohjelma.fi/partiokasvatus/kasvatustavoitteet>

The following guidelines form the basis for safer scouting activities:

- Safety instructions
- Safety instructions for scouting activities on water
- Crisis communication guidelines
- Mental well-being in scouting
- Comfortably together
- Alcohol policy
- Action in crisis situations and crisis plan guide

These are supplemented by the districts' and scout events' own guidelines. In addition, safe scouting activities are supported by an anonymous reporting channel for those who have experienced inappropriate treatment, the Easy to Join symbol, and the scouting equality and non-discrimination plan. In order to organise accessible scouting activities, principles for a safer environment have been drawn up, which form the basis for activities where everyone feels comfortable. In order to proactively promote the well-being of children, both in and outside of scouting, the Scouts use these Safely Together Guidelines.

Further information [Organising accessible scouting activities](#)



# Scouting promotes the well-being and safety of children and young people

The Scout programme supports the promotion of children's mental, social and physical well-being. The key educational goal of the Scout programme is to teach and engage children in recognising and understanding ways and phenomena that promote their own and others' well-being. When well-being is a concern or under threat, it is important that Scouts know how to act appropriately. Situations are prepared for in advance through training and by creating an operating environment that promotes well-being and safety.

The Guides and Scouts of Finland (Suomen partiolaiset - Finlands Scouter ry) promotes the well-being of children and young people

- by supporting local scout groups in organising high-quality scouting programmes
- by developing and maintaining safety education as part of the scout programme
- by familiarising and training the organisation's volunteers and employees in accordance with this guideline as part of the scout training system
- by regularly reviewing and updating the organisation's Safely Together Guidelines as necessary
- by guiding local scout groups to work with the necessary authorities in child protection matters
- by offering support to people of all ages who witness or are subjected to abuse and, if necessary, referring them to support outside the scout movement

## Safe practices in local scout groups

Well-planned activities in the local scout group promote safety. The Scout programme, common rules, orientation and safety plan provide a good foundation for high-quality scouting activities. The principles of a safer environment form the basis for all activities (weekly activities, excursions, camps, competitions and events). Within the framework of these principles, participants can be themselves and everyone can feel good. The principles are agreed upon together, reviewed before the event or at the beginning of the event, and are visible and available throughout the event.

It is a good idea for the local scout group to draw up its own equality plan to guide its activities. This tells both those involved in scouting and those considering taking up the hobby that attention is paid to equality in the activities. When drawing up the plan, it is a good idea to use the Equality Traffic Lights tool, which first assesses the current situation of the local scout group and then selects approximately three areas for development to increase equality.

Equality Traffic Lights tool <https://www.partio.fi/lippukunnille/lippukunnan-johtaminen/moninaisuus/yhdenvertaisuussuunnitelma/>



Organising accessible activities <https://www.partio.fi/lippukunnille/lippukunnan-johtaminen/moninaisuus/miten-toiminnassa-otetaan-kaikki-huomioon/>

## Safety adult role

Local scout groups must appoint at least one safety adult over the age of 18 who has completed the Safely Together training. It is recommended that safety adults work in pairs.

Safety adults must be familiar with the Safely Together Guidelines, practices that increase safety in scouting, and how to act in challenging situations, such as intervening in bullying. Safety adults support local scout group members in matters related to these guidelines. If necessary, the safety adult contacts scout workers or their own safety networks in the above-mentioned matters.

It is important for children and young people to know that they can ask safety adults in particular about or report mistreatment, both of themselves and other scouts. Safety adults can easily perform this task alongside their other duties. Unless the local scout group's board specifically appoints a safety adult for their local scout group, the duties of the safety adult fall to the local scout group leader. The Guides and Scouts of Finland recommend that local scout group roles should not be concentrated on the same people but should be distributed evenly among all leaders. For this reason, it is not recommended that the local scout group leader and safety adult roles be held by the same person.

It is good for safety adults to be actively present at local scout group events so that they become familiar to children and young people. The duties of a safety adult also include checking the criminal background of volunteers, which will be discussed later in this guide. You will find a link to the job description for safety adults at the end of this section.

All training provided by the Scout Association promotes high-quality and safe scouting activities. You can familiarise yourself with these guidelines by completing the Safely Together online training course on the Scout Moodle platform. We recommend that everyone over the age of 15 complete the online training course. The online training course takes approximately two hours to complete.

The local scout group's board is responsible for ensuring that the Safely Together online training is completed properly. The training is part of The Guides and Scouts of Finland's training system. The role of a safety adult includes the right to monitor the status and validity of their local scout group's Safely Together training in Kuksa. The Safely Together training is valid for five years, after which it must be renewed. Kuksa will remind you when renewal is necessary. Please contact a scout worker if you have any difficulties using Kuksa.

Further information: Safety adult job and job description page <https://www.partio.fi/lippukunnille/lippukunnan-johtaminen/toiminnan-turvallisuus/turvallisesti-yhdessa/turva-aikuinen/>

## The role of adults and group leaders

Scout training is available for leaders of all age groups. The training provides the skills needed to carry out high-quality scouting activities and ensure safety. Local scout groups should strive to have at least two leaders for each activity group, who plan, implement and evaluate the group's activities together. Two leaders are better able to respond to the needs of the group members. A prerequisite for safer activities is that the leaders know the members of their activity group well.



Scouting is a versatile hobby for adults as well. Scouting involves meaningful volunteer work. Adults play an important role in the day-to-day running of the local scout group and in organising activities for children. Working together, building trust and enabling safe coexistence are key tasks for adults.

### Principles of respectful interaction for adults

- every child and young person is treated as an individual
- the diversity of children and young people is valued and respected
- the individual characteristics of children and young people are taken into account in activities as far as possible
- every child and young person feels noticed in the scouts
- children and young people are listened to
- what children and young people say is taken seriously
- children and young people are spoken to in a respectful and appreciative tone (no shouting or belittling)
- children and young people are spoken about in a respectful tone
- children and young people are treated fairly
- children and young people are treated honestly
- children and young people can trust the adults and leaders in the scout group
- children and young people are helped when necessary
- children and young people are cared for in a spirit of shared responsibility
- the right of children and young people to integrity is respected
- when working with children and young people, be genuinely present, both mentally and physically

A Samoaja is a young person aged 15–17 who is required to complete a group leader course, or ROK. After completing the ROK, they can act as a group leader in a scout local scout group. A Samoaja is assigned an adult mentor, or guide. The Samoaja receives support and guidance from their guide. It is also important that Samoajas have different role models in addition to their own pilot. Samoajas are recruited for their positions and have a recruitment discussion with them. The samoaja must have a clear picture of what is about to undertake as a group leader, what is expected of them and what goals have been set for scouting in the local scout group.

### The group leader

- knows the principles and goals of scouting.
- knows how to utilise the scout method in scouting. The scout method is not just one way of doing scouting, but rather a way of making scouting what it is.
- knows the duties of a group leader in the group they lead, understands the goals of the group's activities and the responsibilities and rights of a leader. The group leader is recruited for their position, and a recruitment discussion is held with them. They must have a clear picture of what they are getting into as a group leader, what is expected of them and what goals have been set for scouting in the local scout group. The group leader must know who they can turn to for help.
- works as part of the local scout group's leadership and is able to implement the local scout group's practices in the group's activities.
- leads the group in a systematic manner in weekly activities, excursions and camps.



- knows how to use the programme for the age group they lead and use it to organise high-quality, safe and meaningful activities for their group.
- is familiar with safety instructions and knows how to lead the group's activities safely.
- is familiar with the group's activities at different stages. The group leader understands the importance of team building, knows how to welcome new members to the group and knows how to ensure safe activities within the group.

Further information:

Volunteer work in the Scouts [https://www.partio.fi/nyt/aikuisille/ensi-kertaa-partioon/vapaaehtoistyo/](https://www.partio.fi/nyt/aikuisille/ensi-kertaa-partioon/vapaaehtoisty/)

## Scouting staff supporting local scout groups

Scouting workers help local scout groups by offering support, advice and guidance. In addition, the Scouting office monitors the overall situation of the local scout groups and assists in child protection matters and in ordering criminal record certificates. The organisation coordinator responsible for supporting the local scout group is the local scout group's primary contact person in challenging situations. The Scout District also provides support in anticipating safety issues, early intervention and resolving unclear situations. If the local scout group does not know how to act in challenging situations, it is advisable to contact the Scout District directly. The contact details of The Guides and Scouts of Finland's staff can be found in the contact search [at https://www.partio.fi/suomen-partiolaiset/tietoa-meista/yhteystiedot/yhteystietohaku/](https://www.partio.fi/suomen-partiolaiset/tietoa-meista/yhteystiedot/yhteystietohaku/)

The Scout District should also be contacted if there is a crisis in the local scout group. In an acute crisis situation, follow the crisis situation guidelines [Lippukunnan kriisiviestintä: mitä tehdä kriisin tapahtuessa? | Suomen Partiolaiset](#). The Scout worker will provide further instructions on how to deal with the situation. In an emergency, call the emergency number 112 directly.

Scout groups do not need to be able to resolve child protection issues themselves. The most important thing to remember is that help is available and you do not have to cope alone. You can ask the Scout Office for help in resolving the situation and filing a child protection report, and if necessary, a Scout worker can refer you to the appropriate authority.



## Practices that enhance safety

In Scouting, we do things together. Adults, young people and children meet each other in numerous situations. The nature of these interactions is important for safety and the well-being of children. In scouting, the principles of respectful interaction between children and young people can be found in the scouting ideals and educational goals, among other places. Adults and young people involved in scouting play a significant role in creating a safer operating culture through their example. If you notice that these principles are not being followed, you should intervene immediately.

## Safely Together at scouting events – checklist

The purpose of this list is to remind you of what needs to be taken into account when organizing a scout event in accordance with the Safely Together Guidelines.

### Safely Together at Scout Events Checklist

All group leaders and other participants over the age of 18 must complete the Safely Together training before the event begins.

- Common rules for the event and principles for a safer environment
- Accessibility and clarity of the event
- Getting to know each other among the organisers, team building
- Encouraging pair leadership
- Support and training; for example, mentoring and necessary training
- Drawing up a safety plan
  - Full-time position for a safety adult, if possible
  - Mental safety risks, such as atmosphere, bullying, fatigue and social media, must also be taken into account.
- Provide participants with information well in advance
- Getting to know each other among participants; group formation and adults getting to know the children
- Preparation of a crisis communication plan
- Clear instructions with contact details for situations where a child becomes a cause for concern at a scout event.
- Ensuring the well-being and coping of volunteers; breaks, rest, substitutes, thanking volunteers

### Further information

Local scout group crisis communication: What to do in a crisis?  
<https://www.partio.fi/lippukunnille/lippukunnan-johtaminen/viestinta-ja-markkinointi/kriisiviestinta/>

Mental health guide, Mieli ry <https://mieli.fi/vahvista-mielenterveyttasi/mielenterveys-ja-arjen-aidot/mielenterveyden-kasi-kuvaa-mielen-hyvinvointiin-vaikuttavia-arjen-valintoja/>

Trips and camps <https://www.partio.fi/lippukunnille/partio-ohjelma/leirit/>



Action in crisis situations, Crisis plan guide <https://www.partio.fi/lippukunnille/lippukunnan-johtaminen/toiminnan-turvallisuus/toiminta-kriisitilanteessa/>

## Preventing and addressing bullying

Scouting is an educational organisation, but the primary responsibility for education lies with the children's and young people's own guardians. Scouting supports the educational role of the home. Creating a safe educational environment in scouting that promotes the well-being of children requires cooperation with the guardians of children and young people. This cooperation includes providing information about trips and events, organising scout evenings, inviting guardians to join trips and sharing concerns about children and young people with each other. It is important to communicate to children and young people that there is effective cooperation between scouting and their homes.

Scouting is a hobby where active efforts are made to ensure that no one is bullied. Scouting uses, for example, a uniform scouting programme, a training system, these Safely Together Guidelines and the role of a safety adult. In order to prevent bullying and intervene in possible cases of bullying, it is of primary importance that children, young people and adults recognise bullying and intervene immediately. In everyday language, bullying often refers to squabbles, teasing and taunting, which are relatively common and temporary, and the targets of which change.

More serious bullying occurs when deliberate hostile behaviour is repeatedly directed at one and the same person. In addition, such bullying is characterised by an imbalance of power between the parties: the bully is in some way stronger than the victim. Bullying can be verbal (name-calling, verbal abuse), indirect (exclusion from a group, spreading nasty rumours), physical (hitting, shoving, kicking), directed at property (taking or deliberately damaging belongings), or causing harm or distress via social media and smartphones (spreading rumours, impersonating someone else, excluding someone from a discussion group).

It is important to remember that bullying and racism are two different things. Everyday racism may not be recognised if you have not experienced it yourself. The subject may seem distant, or it may bring back personal experiences. Racism means that a certain group of people is considered inferior to others. Racism is the evaluation of a person or group of people as inferior to other groups of people on the basis of, for example, skin colour, ethnic origin, nationality, culture, religion or mother tongue. It can be a deliberate and conscious act, but it can also be unintentional behaviour based on prejudice. Racism can manifest itself, for example, as exclusion, othering or constant reminders of differences. People who experience racism encounter these situations regularly from different people and different sources.

It is important to intervene in racism, but it is not always easy. See the Ministry of Justice's guidelines on addressing racism here: <https://yhdenvertaisuus.fi/nain-puutut-rasismiin>. Each of us can show our support by asking a person who has been subjected to racism, "Can I help you?"

In the scouts, all cases of bullying, whether isolated incidents of teasing or repeated bullying, are addressed immediately. In the scouts, anyone who observes or encounters bullying is expected to intervene. Addressing bullying is the responsibility of adults involved in scouting activities in particular. It is important for both the victim and the bully that bullying is addressed and stopped. While investigating the bullying, it is also agreed how the situation will be monitored for a sufficient period of time. Intervening in bullying is also important for other children. Intervening in bullying sends a message that we are responsible for each other and that every person deserves to be treated with respect.



The Guides and Scouts of Finland has a guide called Mukavasti yhdessä (Comfortably Together), which provides advice on preventing and addressing bullying. You can find the guide on The Guides and Scouts of Finland's website [at partio.fi/mukavasti-yhdessa](https://www.partio.fi/mukavasti-yhdessa). Below are six steps for investigating a bullying situation.

### Six steps for resolving a bullying situation

1. Bullying must be addressed immediately. Go to the situation and calmly but firmly stop the bullying.
2. Discuss the bullying with each child/young person individually. If possible, sit down so that you are at the same level.
3. Be a safe adult and encourage the child to talk. Ask what happened in the situation. Who did what and where? Has this happened before and did anyone see the situation? Write down what you hear.
4. Make it clear that no form of bullying is acceptable and that the situation will be monitored. Agree on when to hold a follow-up discussion.
5. Inform the guardians about what happened, the investigation and the follow-up.
6. If the follow-up reveals that the bullying is continuing, more adults and cooperation between adults are needed, as well as measures. The child/young person's guardians, safety adults and organisation coordinator will be called together to plan the necessary measures. These measures include enhanced supervision and follow-up. The other children/young people in the group will be encouraged to take more responsibility and be better equipped to intervene in bullying.

Mukavasti yhdessä (Comfortably together), Intervening in bullying  
<https://www.partio.fi/lippukunnille/lippukunnan-johtaminen/toiminnan-turvallisuus/mukavasti-yhdessa/kiusaamiseen-puuttuminen/>

### Links

Mukavasti yhdessä (Comfortably together) <https://www.partio.fi/lippukunnille/lippukunnan-johtaminen/toiminnan-turvallisuus/mukavasti-yhdessa/>

Ratkaisun rappauset (Steps to a solution) <https://www.partio.fi/lippukunnille/lippukunnan-johtaminen/toiminnan-turvallisuus/mukavasti-yhdessa/kiusaamiseen-puuttuminen/>

## Taking social media into account in scouting

Every child is a unique media user. One is interested in gaming, another in social media, and a third only uses digital environments at school to search for information. Whereas a 12-year-old is still somewhere between childhood and adolescence in their media use, a child finishing primary school may be interested in content and discussions intended for older people. There can be significant differences in children's media skills and ways of using media. (MLL 2024.)

Children have a lot of knowledge and insight into media use and digital culture that adults may not necessarily have. Media skills are learned and practised with peers when children use media together, share thoughts and experiences, and guide and instruct each other. However, adult guidance is important in media education, as children also need feedback on their actions. With the help of an



adult, children can safely reflect on, weigh up and seek direction for their own thoughts and opinions. (MLL 2024.)

Under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have the right to privacy. It is important to take children's privacy into account in scouting, for example when publishing photos of children on social media or elsewhere on the internet. Information spreads quickly and widely on the internet and can be used for the wrong purposes. Scout groups and teams should have clear guidelines on how to act on the internet and social media. Pictures should not be published on websites or social media without the permission of the person in the picture. From the perspective of children's rights, permission from a guardian alone is not sufficient; children have the right to decide what kind of photos of them are published and where. A no-photo sign on a scout scarf is a clear indication that the person in question may not be photographed at a scout event.

Scouts also need concrete guidance on safe and responsible media use. Children can be reminded about privacy settings, passwords, photography and sharing personal information on social media and in digital games. Children should also be taught to behave considerately and respectfully in digital environments (MLL 2024). Below is a summary of social media rules for scouting activities.

### **Rules for social media**

We are positive

- Positive, appreciative and encouraging words can greatly lift someone's spirits. Let's share our good mood and the joy and successes of scouting on social media as well.

We respect others and engage in constructive discussion

- We do not make negative comments about others on social media or discussion forums. We do not spread unfounded rumours or share inappropriate images, videos or texts about others on social media.

We do not bully or discriminate against anyone

- We only publish and comment on content that we would like to see about ourselves. We do not bully or discriminate against anyone because of any characteristic, such as skills, appearance or ethnicity.

We respect other people's privacy

- If we publish photos or videos of others, we ask for their permission. We do not photograph others without permission. We make sure that, for example, people who have not given their permission to be filmed do not appear in the background of videos. We do not publish material that is unfavourable to others. We do not share other people's personal matters on social media.

We take special care with photos and videos taken of minors

- Children have the right to prohibit the publication of photos or videos taken of them. In the case of minors, permission to publish must be obtained from their guardian. We ensure that photos and videos published of children and young people are appropriate.

We stick to the truth



- There is a lot of false information circulating on social media and the internet, and it spreads very easily and quickly. We do not spread information that we are not sure is true.

We respect copyright

- If we share material created by others, we obtain permission to publish it and indicate the copyright and sources appropriately in the publication.

Adults set an example for children and young people

- Many children are active on social media and may, for example, make ill-considered comments. It is the responsibility of adults to intervene and guide them towards appropriate social media behaviour. Adults set an example through their own social media behaviour

Scouts as role models

- We remember the values of scouting and act in accordance with them on social media as well. We can also talk about challenging issues and take a stand in an appropriate and respectful manner. As scouts, we set a positive example for others through our own actions.

Further information

MLL. 2024. Mannerheim League for Child Welfare. Vanhempainnetti. Accessed on 10 November 2024. <https://www.mll.fi/vanhemmille/lapsen-kasvu-ja-kehitys/12-15-v/12-15-vuotias-ja-median-kaytto/>

Police. 2024. Police guidelines for children and young people online. Accessed on 10 November 2024. <https://poliisi.fi/nettiohjeet-lapsille-ja-nuorille>

Victim Support Finland. 2024. Cyberbullying – Information and instructions for victims. Accessed 10 November 2024. <https://www.riku.fi/erilaisia-rikoksia/somekiusaaminen/>

For you on social media. 2024. Loisto Settlement. Accessed 10 November 2024. <https://suavartensomessa.fi/>

The Scouts of Finland. 2024. Principles for a safer environment and rules for hate speech-free discussion. Accessed 13 November 2024. <https://www.partio.fi/suomen-partiolaiset/partiofaktat/tasa-arvo-ja-yhdenvertaisuus-partiossa/turvallisemman-tilan-periaatteet-ja-vihapuheesta-vapaan-keskustelun-saannot/>

The Scouts of Finland. 2024. Ready-made materials and instructions for local scout group communication and marketing. Accessed 13 November 2024. <https://www.partio.fi/lippukunnille/lippukunnan-johtaminen/viestinta-ja-markkinointi/materiaalit-ja-ohjeet/> Social media guidelines for scout local scout groups <https://www.partio.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Sosiaalisen-median-ohje-lippukunnille.pdf>

Data protection in leisure activities. 2024. Data protection in leisure activities – a website for all those who organise leisure activities, guardians, and children and young people themselves. Accessed on 10 November 2024. <https://tietosuojaharrastuksissa.fi/>

## Scouting events abroad



An international operating environment brings opportunities and experiences but also challenges and special features. That is why organizing a safe trip abroad requires careful preparation and training of participants.

Scout trips abroad are inspiring and unforgettable experiences that broaden one's worldview. On these trips, participants experience the international nature of the scout movement in practice and build friendships across borders. At the same time, the trips are physically, mentally and socially demanding for participants and trip leaders.

When assessing the risks of a trip and drawing up a safety plan, the legislation and culture of the destination country or countries must be taken into account. Safety means different things in different countries, and safe scouting is also understood in different ways. The culture of the destination country influences what is emphasized and what attention is paid to. There may be differences, for example, in the definition of good manners or gender roles. In some countries, the age of the leader is valued in such a way that demanding leadership tasks are assigned to the oldest members.

The safety plan must also take into account health risks (allergic reactions, infectious diseases, food poisoning, bites from poisonous animals) risks due to weather conditions (heat, cold, heavy rain, storms) risks caused by traffic culture that differs from that of the home country, and changes in the security situation in the destination country.

Differences in legislation are reflected, for example, in the powers of the authorities (e.g. police powers) and age limits (e.g. in Finland, a person who has reached the age of 18 is considered an adult). In the United Kingdom and the United States, adult interaction with children and young people is strictly regulated, and it is not considered safe for a child to be alone with an adult.

Scout trips abroad typically involve several weeks away from home. The participants spend a lot of time together, which requires stamina and flexibility. The challenges of coping manifest themselves, for example, in conflicts and disagreements between participants and in the fatigue of leaders. Other stress factors may include communicating in a foreign language, rules and practices that differ from those in the home country, a different food culture, a different traffic culture, and the climate and weather conditions of the destination country. Many people experience homesickness, most commonly at the beginning and end of the trip.

To ensure physical fitness, a joint fitness programme can be agreed upon. Together, you can also learn about stress management and identify recovery methods that suit you. It is worth highlighting the factors that contribute to good team spirit and the importance of each participant in creating a sense of unity. It is advisable to find out whether there are any healthcare professionals, crisis workers, people who speak the language of the destination country or other Scouts with special skills among the participants.

If there are concerns about a participant's mental well-being, it is advisable to discuss the matter with the person concerned and consider together what risks the trip may pose to their well-being and health.

Prepare for the risks and challenges of the trip before departure. Allow sufficient time for the trip leaders and other organizers to get to know each other and form a group. It is a good idea to read the final reports from previous trips carefully. Meetings and discussions with leaders of previous trips provide valuable experiential information. Visits to the destination country, the future camp site and testing the planned travel or hiking route in advance are recommended when travelling far from home with a large group. The leaders can also prepare themselves at home with a simulation that anticipates various situations that may arise during the trip. Insurance matters, including insurance terms and conditions and the need for any special insurance, should be clarified well in advance of



departure and communicated to participants and guardians. The safety instructions and rules drawn up by the event organizer must be known well enough to be able to act in accordance with them.

Participants and their guardians need information about the stages of the trip and the requirements. It is good to provide practical and realistic information about the trip and its various stages. It is worth putting effort into the equipment list and explaining why these clothes, equipment and supplies are needed for the well-being of the participants and the safety of the trip.

Preliminary meetings are held to share information, get to know each other and prepare for the trip. Participants can prepare for the hike by going on a practice hike in their home country, and they can prepare for camp life by attending a test camp, and so on. Arrange with your family to stay in touch during the trip, taking into account the time difference, and remind them that the trip leaders will definitely contact them if there is anything to report. There is no need to worry at home if you do not hear from the participant every day.

The trip leader must notify The Guides and Scouts of Finland's office of any international scout trips. [Notification of international trips](#) must be sent electronically via Kuksa well in advance of the trip. In addition, emergency and crisis situations should be prepared for by recording the emergency numbers of The Guides and Scouts of Finland and your own scout district in the safety plan.

One factor in good preparedness is the rules of the trip. The rules should be made together, listening to and involving all participants. The rules, their rationale and the consequences of breaking them should be discussed well in advance of the trip with the participants and their guardians.

When international scouting events are organised in Finland, it is important to establish contact with scouts coming from abroad well in advance of the event. When communicating about the event and familiarising visitors with it, cultural differences and the special characteristics of Finnish scouting, which may not be familiar or understandable to international guests, must be taken into account. For example, the Finnish custom of being naked in washing facilities and saunas, both with one's own family and with strangers, may confuse many foreigners. The rules and safety instructions for the event must be communicated clearly, and it is a good idea to repeat them in different contexts. The most important thing is to give international scouts a warm welcome and ensure that they feel safe and know who to turn to with their questions.

International opportunities for Scouts <https://www.partio.fi/partiolaiselle/tekemista-ja-kokemuksia/kansainvalisyys/>



## Guidelines for acting in situations requiring child protection

In scouting, situations may arise that require assessment and action by the authorities, such as child protection social work. Any concerns about a child or their family must always be discussed, investigated and supported, whether they arise in leisure activities or at school, for example.

The purpose of the social authorities is to safeguard the child's right to a safe environment in which to grow up, balanced and diverse development, and special protection. Depending on the family's situation, support can be obtained, for example, from social work for families with children in the welfare sector or through child protection services. The decision on whether to refer a case for support is made by the social services, so it is sufficient for the scout leader to be able to contact the social services if necessary. The social services can be contacted to discuss the situation and report observations, even if it is not known whether it is necessary to file a child protection report, for example. Matters requiring child protection must always be taken seriously.

A child protection report is an expression of concern, on the basis of which social services will investigate whether there is a need for social welfare or child protection support. The need for support is assessed by social services, and if necessary, the family is offered help and support. There is no need to be afraid of making a child welfare notification; it is an opportunity for the child and family to get help.

## Recognizing abuse

Despite the practices that promote children's well-being and safety in scouting, threatening situations sometimes arise. Sometimes concerns may arise, for example, about a child's growing-up conditions outside of scouting activities.

According to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, children must be protected from all forms of violence, neglect and abuse. In order to protect children and young people from abuse, it is essential to recognize its various forms. (Kivitie-Kallio, Söderholm.)

Any abuse occurring in the Scout movement must be addressed immediately. In urgent situations, contact the authorities without delay; in an emergency, call 112. Suspected abuse of children, such as sexual violence, is investigated by the police in cooperation with social services. If you are concerned about a situation, it is a good idea to contact social services and consult them on the matter. The scouts also have a reporting channel for inappropriate behaviour, where you can anonymously report inappropriate behaviour in the scouts using an online form. <https://www.partio.fi/suomen-partiolaiset/tietoa-meista/ilmoita-epaasiallisesta-toiminnasta/>

Examples of mistreatment in the scouts include

- an adult leader begins a relationship with a significantly younger minor
- a scout threatens another scout with violence
- a scout is subjected to violence by another scout at a scouting event
- a scout is subjected to online violence by another scout at a scouting event
- a scout pressures a minor into sexual acts online or through physical contact

Forms of abuse



- Physical violence – actions that cause or may cause physical pain, harm or injury to a child, such as hitting or pinching.
- Emotional abuse – actions that harm or may harm a child's physical, emotional, moral or social development but do not cause physical injury. Emotional abuse includes intimidation, threats, discrimination and ridicule. Emotional abuse can also be online.
- Neglect – a guardian or other adult responsible for a child fails to provide the child with the care they need, which harms or may harm the child's physical, mental, moral or social development. Areas of care include health, education, mental development, nutrition, protection and healthy living conditions.
- Sexual harassment and sexual violence – an adult or older young person pressures or forces a minor child into sexual activity, for example by exposing them to pornographic material or touching them in a sexual manner. Sexual violence against children includes, for example, making sexually suggestive comments about a child's image or body, asking for nude photos, and sexual activity directed at a child. Sexual harassment can be verbal, non-verbal or physical.
- Commercial abuse – exploiting a child for financial gain in a way that benefits others and harms or may harm the child's physical, mental, moral or social development. For example, a young person agrees to have sex in exchange for alcohol or other material goods.
- Spiritual abuse – a spiritual authority figure abuses their authority and the trust placed in them in order to control or manipulate a child.

Situations in the scouts that require intervention from a child protection perspective may include, for example:

- a child is not picked up from a meeting or camp and their guardian cannot be reached
- the guardian picks up the child from the scouts while intoxicated
- the child shows signs of abuse, such as bruises or contusions in unusual places (e.g. handprints on the arm)
- the child reports neglect or mistreatment
- the child says that they do not want to or dare to go home
- the child tells about their own substance abuse or the leader becomes concerned about its severity
- the child's behaviour or condition is worrying; for example, the child has cuts or other signs of self-harm
- the scout group becomes concerned about a possible substance abuse or mental health problem on the part of the guardian
- in scouting, there is suspicion that the child has been the victim of violence
- there are other reasons to be concerned about the family situation, which endangers the child's well-being

#### Sources

Kivitie-Kallio Satu & Söderholm Annlis. 2012. Child abuse – a human rights issue and a public health problem. Kustannus Oy Duodecim. Available at [https://www.duodecim.fi/xmedia/www/esittelyt/6394\\_esittely.pdf](https://www.duodecim.fi/xmedia/www/esittelyt/6394_esittely.pdf)

National Institute for Health and Welfare. 2025. Encountering a child who has experienced violence and providing initial support. <https://thl.fi/aiheet/vakivalta/tyon-tueksi/vakivaltaa-kokeneen-lapsen-kohtaaminen-ja-ensivaiheen-tukeminen>

## Guidelines for action when there is concern about a child

### Anticipation



It is a good idea for the local scout group leadership to discuss and be aware of how to act in situations that raise child welfare concerns. It is important to find out in advance how and where to report child welfare concerns in your area. For example, it is a good idea to write down the necessary telephone numbers in the safety plan or to make the contact details of the safety adult visible to the local scout group members.

The local scout group leadership should be familiar with the general safety guidelines for the scout movement and the crisis communication guidelines. By training and supporting the leadership, the local scout group ensures that leaders are aware of and skilled in promoting safety and addressing concerns in scouting.

### **Don't be alone**

Local scout groups do not need to be able to handle child-related concerns on their own. Local scout group leaders do not need to be able to resolve child protection issues themselves; they are supported by the authorities, professionals and scout workers. No one should exceed their own limits or cope alone in their voluntary work; help should be sought and obtained in good time.

### **Ask, tell and listen**

If you notice abuse or other child welfare concerns, you must intervene immediately. An unpleasant situation or information may come as a surprise, or the concern may have arisen gradually. The matter should be discussed with the child concerned. It is a good idea to have your own leadership pair or another leader from the local scout group present during the discussion, as this makes it easier to control the situation, share the emotional burden and make plans for the future.

When concerns arise, you can ask the child how they have been doing and encourage them to tell you the truth. It is important to use precise language and direct questions with the child that cannot be misunderstood. For example, it is good to talk directly about self-destructive behaviour or concrete observations. It is important to remember that talking about these things can be difficult and frightening for a child. Give them time and do not leave them alone during the conversation.

Suspected abuse of a child in connection with any form of violence is a police matter. For possible criminal proceedings, it is important that the child's own account of the matter is heard. It is advisable to avoid leading questions, such as "Did your guardian or someone else hit you?". Good questions include, for example, "What happened to you? Would you like to tell me more? Have you told any other adults about what happened?" Do not make any promises to the child or young person, such as, "It's good that you told me about the hitting. It won't happen again."

You should not promise a child or young person that you will not tell their parents or guardians. You can tell the child that you are trying to help them. If possible, it is a good idea to take notes during the conversation so that the matter can be revisited later if necessary, and the manager does not have to rely on their memory. The most important points from the child's account should be written down as direct quotes, if possible. If you are unsure about how to bring up the matter, you can discuss it with, for example, social services or a scout leader.

If necessary, concerns about the child should also be discussed with their guardians. The child's primary caregivers are their guardians, who should not generally be bypassed. There is no need to be shy about investigating the matter and asking questions of the guardians. However, in serious and acute cases where there is reason to suspect that the child is at risk at home, you should contact the child welfare authorities directly. In such cases, the authorities will consider how to contact the guardians and provide the person who contacted them with instructions on how to proceed. If you



suspect that a guardian or other adult close to the child is sexually abusing or otherwise mistreating the child, do not discuss the matter with the parties involved until the police have given instructions on how to proceed.

Source: Barnahus. 2023. Instructions for professionals. Situations involving suspected violence against children or young people. Available at <https://barnahus.fi/yleinen/toimintaohje-ammattilaisille-lapseen-tai-nuoreen-kohdistuvan-vakivaltaepailyn-tilanteisiin/>

## Making a child welfare notification

If you are concerned about a child's welfare and have discussed the matter with the child and their guardian, file a child welfare report if necessary. As a volunteer in leisure activities, you can also report your concerns about a child or family anonymously to the social services. Scouts do not need to be able to assess whether the threshold for filing a child welfare report has been exceeded; the matter can always be discussed with the social services. Please seek help from the local scout group leader, safety adult or scout worker at an early stage when investigating your concerns. It is recommended that you do not delegate the filing of a child welfare notification to someone else, so as to avoid any misunderstandings.

### Here's what to do

- In non-urgent matters, call the child welfare authorities in your welfare district or municipality during office hours. Contact details can be found on the welfare district or municipality's website. Child welfare notifications can often be made electronically.
- In urgent situations (e.g. a child says they are afraid to go home due to a serious threat), call the social and crisis emergency services in your area. You can also contact the social emergency services by calling emergency number 112.
- Tell the social services the child's full name and date of birth or personal identity number, if known. Be prepared to give the names and telephone numbers of the child's guardians.
- Explain why you are concerned. Describe the reasons for your concern as accurately as possible: for example, the child said at a meeting on such and such a day that their parents had been drunk all weekend. Explain how long you have been concerned and what kind of situations may have already been involved in raising the issue.
- State whether you wish to make the report under your own name or anonymously. Please note that it is difficult to make a child welfare report completely anonymously without the content of the report revealing that it was made by the patrol group leader. The child's guardians and the child have the right to read the child welfare report as it is written. You can discuss how the report is written with the employee who receives it. In order to move the matter forward, it is often a good idea for the person making the report to use their own name.
- Tell us if the child's guardians or the child know that you have contacted the social services. The employee who received the child welfare notification will ask you for further details and any additional information needed to process the notification.
- The child welfare notification must be resubmitted if the concern persists or new concerns arise.



The child can file a child welfare report themselves, but in the scouts, the starting point is that they receive adult support and assistance in filing the report. It is essential in scouting to ensure that the child knows who they can tell about their concerns and that contact is made with social services.

Social services are also able to answer questions from guardians after the situation has occurred. If the matter continues to bother you or another adult in the local scout group, it is a good idea to discuss it with, for example, the local scout group leader and the safety adult. If that does not seem sufficient, contact a scout worker, who will provide instructions on how to resolve the situation.

## Communication in child protection situations

Child protection matters must be handled with sensitivity, respecting the privacy of the child and their family. Child protection matters should be dealt with within the local scout group by as small a group as possible, for example with the local scout group leader or safety adult. No one outside the local scout group should be told about the child protection report or its contents.

Child protection matters arising in the local scout group should not be disclosed or commented on publicly; responding to questions from the media, for example, is the responsibility of the authorities or a scout worker. If the situation requires internal crisis communication within the local scout group (e.g. a violent incident involving several members), the matter should be communicated at as general a level as possible, taking into account the privacy of the child and their family. Help and guidance in this matter can also be obtained from a scout worker.



## Checking the criminal background of volunteers

According to the Criminal Records Act, criminal background checks are a preventive measure that only affects the recruitment of new members to the local scout group who have already been convicted. The safety of the growth environment can be improved by checking criminal records more effectively and developing practices that reduce the possibility of harmful behavior in interactions between adults and children or young people, and between children and young people. In some cases, however, a criminal record check must be carried out.

When should a criminal background check be carried out?

A criminal background check is carried out on all new adults who start working in the local scout group and who will be leading a group on their own (excluding those who lead an activity group on their own as part of their own scout programme). If adults are recruited for tasks through advertisements, the advertisement must already state that those who take on the task alone will be required to present a criminal record extract.

**A volunteer's criminal background will be checked when all of the following conditions are met:**

- The local scout group has approved The Guides and Scouts of Finland's Safely Together Guidelines as part of its own operating guidelines by a decision of the board.
- The person will be the only adult leader of the group (excluding leadership of a group participating in the Samoaja programme).
- The role involves regular leadership of the group and the group includes underage participants.
- The role is permanent (the term of office lasts at least one operating year) and is generally performed alone.

Volunteers may also have a criminal record extract that they have obtained themselves. If the extract is less than six months old, it can be used in a criminal background check. If a person does not consent to a criminal background check, they should not be hired for group leadership tasks alone.

If you have any questions, please contact your local scout group's employee and ask for help without hesitation!

How is a criminal background check carried out?

The local scout group conducts the criminal background checks itself. The process is easy and simple. Please refer to the current instructions [on the Legal Register Centre's website](#).

The sections concerning scouts refer to organisers of voluntary activities.

Criminal background check process:

1. The scout group determines that a criminal background check must be carried out on a person who is starting or already in a position.
2. The representative entered in the local scout group's association register (the local scout group's authorised signatory) orders the necessary criminal records [from the ORK's online](#)



- [service](#). The order can also be placed by email or post. We recommend using the online service. Other ordering methods increase the price of the order and extend the processing time.
- a. Before placing the order, the representative must obtain consent forms from the volunteers and attach them to the order.
  - b. The volunteer task can be defined by the scout group, but it is also advisable to describe it in layman's terms. For example, 'Akela, group leader for 7–10-year-old scouts'.
  - c. Does the volunteer activity organiser have guidelines or a plan for measures to protect the personal integrity of minors? Enter 'Scouting Safely Together guidelines. Approved on XX.XX.2024 by The Guides and Scouts of Finland. If a scout local scout group is ordering a criminal background check for the first time, the system requires the operating instructions to be attached. In this case, attach the PDF version of the Safely Together guidelines found at the bottom of this page to the application.
3. The Legal Register Centre will process the order and send the criminal background checks to the local scout group's safety officer or other designated person. However, the checks will not be sent to the local scout group's general address, which is accessible to everyone.
  4. The safety adult or (if there is no safety adult, the local scout group leader) shall enter only the name of the person processing the extract and the date in the Kuksa scout register, not any information about the content of the extract. Once the extract has been checked, it must be handed over to the volunteer concerned without delay. Criminal records extracts may not be copied. No note may ever be made in a volunteer's personal data as to whether or not the extract contains criminal information. The local scout group must give the extract to the volunteer as soon as it has been checked.
  5. The safety officer, together with the local scout group leader if necessary, will assess and make the final decision on whether the person is suitable for the task/position. In the scouts, we recommend avoiding hiring someone if their criminal record extract contains entries [for criminal offences](#). The person processing the criminal record extract is bound by confidentiality regarding the information contained in the extract. This confidentiality obligation continues even after the person processing the extract is no longer in the position in which they obtained the information. The obligation of confidentiality must be taken seriously, as any breach of it may be punished as a criminal offence or misdemeanor under the Criminal Code (Criminal Code 39/1889, Chapter 38, Sections 1 and 2).

In 2024, the processing time at the Legal Register Centre will be seven working days, and applications will be processed in the order in which they are received. The processing time does not include postal delivery time. In 2024, an extract will cost €6 when ordered through the online service and €12 when ordered by other means. When ordering through the online service, the extract must be paid for immediately. Applications sent by post or email will be invoiced separately.

If you have any questions or problems regarding criminal background checks, please contact your local scout group's scout leader or the Legal Register Centre!

Related links:

- [Legal Register Centre, Voluntary criminal record extract](#)
- [Digital and Population Services Agency, Suomi.fi authorisation](#)
- [Suomi.fi authorising another person](#)
- [Entries visible on a criminal record extract](#)

