

## Nights Away Permit Scheme (FS120800)

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#### Introduction

This page provides a general overview to the Nights Away Permit Scheme. It should be read in conjunction with Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR) of The Scout Association. More detailed information for applicants, Nights Away Advisers (NAAs) and Commissioners can be found in separate factsheets.

#### The Nights Away Permit Scheme

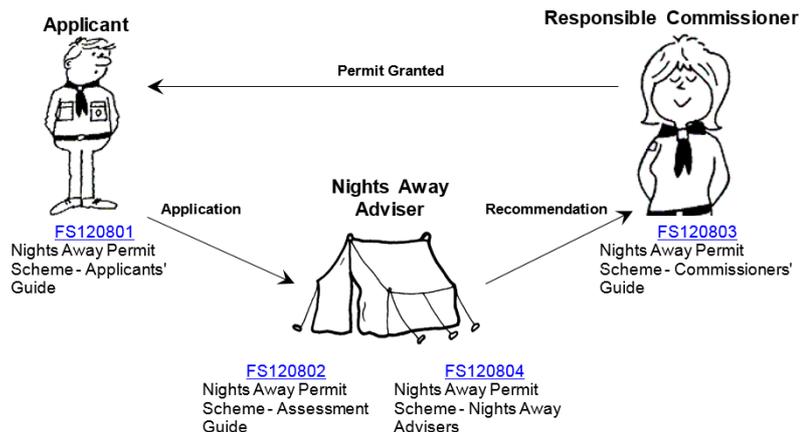
The Nights Away Permit Scheme promotes quality residential and camping experiences. It shows that all those leading nights away events for young people within Scouting have the skills, experience and personal suitability to take young people away safely. It is designed so that it can be tailored to be as flexible as possible, while at the same time providing a robust checking process for leaders of nights away events. The permit should be seen as an enabling device to show a person's competence and provide reassurance to parents of the young people, while at the same time encouraging adults to acquire and improve the skills required to provide residential experiences. Permits are only available to members of The Scout Association and cease to be valid if membership lapses.

#### What Is The Permit Scheme?

Everyone who leads a nights away event for young people within Scouting is required to hold a Nights Away Permit for the type of event they are running.

Although managed locally, the Nights Away Permit Scheme is a national scheme, so once gained, a permit will allow you to run a nights away event in any District or County.

#### How The Scheme Works



The person who grants your permit will be your responsible Commissioner. This will be your District Commissioner (DC) if you have a Group or District appointment, and your County Commissioner (CC) if you have a County appointment.

A responsible Commissioner can only grant a permit to the level of the recommendation of the NAA. The NAA will provide the responsible Commissioner with a recommendation after an assessment based on the Nights Away Assessment Checklist.

A permit is time limited up to a maximum of five years at which point it expires. If you wish to continue leading nights away events for young people you will need to apply for a new permit. However if the new permit is to exactly the same level as the old permit and you have been running residential events, there may be no need for a practical assessment. That decision is up to the NAA.

A permit is only valid if recorded on Compass.

There are no prerequisites to gaining a permit, so there is no requirement to have attended a module 16 (Introduction to Residential Experiences) or module 38 (Skills for Residential Experiences) course. Indeed the Nights Away Permit Scheme is different to these modules, so there is no requirement to gain a nights away permit to finish your Wood Badge training, and validating modules 16 and 38 does not automatically grant you a nights away permit. However gaining a permit is one way of validating modules 16 and 38, and it is the best way to gain the skills and knowledge needed for a nights away permit where training is required.

#### What Is Assessed?

There are four areas assessed to gain a permit:

1. **Technical Competence** – This is assessed by the NAA and looks at the eight core skill areas required to run a nights away event. It is usually assessed through a practical assessment of running an event.

2Â **Scout Association Rules** â€” This can be assessed by either a NAA or the responsible Commissioner. It looks at whether the Applicant is aware of the Rules and guidance for running nights away events within Scouting.

3Â **Child Protection** â€” This will be carried out by the responsible Commissioner and ensures that the necessary criminal record checks have been carried out and the appropriate child protection training has taken place.

4Â **Personal Suitability** â€” This is carried out by the responsible Commissioner, often in conjunction with a Group Scout Leader or similar, to check the Applicant is suitable (in terms of attitude) to be leading nights away events for young people.

### **Event Passports**

To encourage young people led residential events, such as patrol camps or Explorer Scout expeditions, a nights away permit holder can grant a nights away passport to an under 18 year old. This will be done after a check on the young personâ€™s knowledge and ability to lead the event by the permit holder. It will allow the young person to lead a residential event for members of their own section and will last for a single event. The permit holder can only issue a Passport to the level of their own permit.

Passports cannot be used if adults, without permits, are present for the duration (or a significant part) of the residential event. Passports cannot be used to take members of a younger section away, i.e. an Explorer Scout Young Leader taking a Patrol of Scouts away.

### **Notification**

Once an applicant has been granted a permit they can start running nights away events. Each time they run an event they need to notify their District Commissioner, before the event takes place. This is done through either passing the information in the Nights Away Notification (NAN) form to the District Commissioner or by submitting the NAN online through the events module of Compass.

If one permit is being used for more than one group the responsibility lies with the Permit holder to inform the appropriate Commissioner for each group.

### **Renewal**

All permits have an expiry date which is a maximum of 5 years from the date of issue. After this the permit ceases to be valid.

Renewal of a permit is conducted in the same way as initial application except the method of assessment which is likely to differ. The permit holder will need to complete an application form and pass it to their NAA, the NAA will then decide on the most appropriate method of assessment. A practical assessment is unlikely to be required but the NAA may wish to meet the applicant or may simply consider the experience and issue a recommendation to the commissioner on the log book supplied.

### **Useful Links**

Full information and resources regarding the Nights Away Permit Scheme can be found at <http://members.scouts.org.uk/nightsawaypermits> (<http://members.scouts.org.uk/nightsawaypermits>).

<http://www.sbuk.org.uk/info/centre/Catalog.php>