



## How To Charter A Troop

### *The Key Steps Involved*

1. Talk with the leadership of your church or Christian organization. The Pastor of your church (or, in some cases, the leader of a Christian organization aligned with our mission) is also known as the Senior Ministry Leader (SML). The SML and adult registered members should be in agreement with our [Core Values](#) and must sign our [Trail Life USA Statement of Faith and Values](#) as a part of the registration process.

**Our Troops are Christ-centered, and church owned and operated.** The Charter Organization (most commonly churches) in the TLUSA program do not merely allow the organization to use space to meet in their building. The Charter Organization is expected to own and operate the Troop through selecting its adult leaders, integrating the Troop into the life of the church, and by involving the boys in mission trips, service projects and/or other ministry or ceremonial purposes. Each Charter Organization influences its Troop differently, but is encouraged to take ownership of the Troop as an active part of its ministry offerings to the members of the church and/or the community at large. Refer to this diagram of [How a Troop is Chartered and Operates](#).

2. Your Pastor/organization leader (SML) will then decide to serve as, or appoint his liaison (known as the Troop Ministry Liaison (TML). The TML will then select the rest of the “core leadership team” consisting of a Committee Chairman, a Troop Chaplain, a Treasurer, and a Troopmaster. See the [Troop Level Positions](#) document for general position descriptions. Neither the SML or the TML pay the member registration fee; all other members do—both adult and youth.

*The Senior Ministry Leader (SML) is the highest authority in his organization (for example, the Senior Pastor of a church). He approves the existence of a Trail Life Troop and ensures it is an active ministry of the organization (usually a church). He understands the mission and policies of Trail Life USA. He **appoints or serves as** the Troop Ministry Liaison (TML), and delegates the responsibility of selecting volunteer leaders to the TML.*

*The SML can actually serve as a TML and Chaplain, however, this may be too large of a commitment for the organization’s top leader as the time required to serve as TML is substantial; it’s recommended that the SML select a TML. The TML can also serve as Chaplain, if he desires. Other core leaders cannot serve in duplicate positions.*

*Troop Ministry Liaison (TML) | The TML is the most important Troop leader and is appointed by the Senior Ministry Leader. The TML is the Charter Organization’s appointed official, their Troop liaison, an Area resource, and a National voter. The TML is responsible for selecting and recruiting the rest of the core leadership team. The TML can serve as the Chaplain also.*

3. All core leaders are invited to register by email, and complete their Adult Membership Application and the chartering process online (which includes acceptance and agreement with Trail Life USA policies and the Statement of Faith and Values), consent to a criminal background check, and submit payment of the membership fee.

4. After successful completion of the Adult Membership Application, applicants will receive an e-mail invitation to complete the required online Child Safety Youth Protection Training.

Adult leaders are only approved by Trail Life USA after an approved criminal background check, their successful completion of the Child Safety Youth Protection Training, and certification by their Troop Ministry Liaison.

5. Once the chartering process is complete and the Troop is official, additional leaders register and youth and their families are invited to participate. The Troop Committee meets to review the [Annual Troop and Membership Costs information](#) document and to begin establishing a Troop budget.
6. Schedule a special informational meeting (a “Join the Trail” event), where participants will sign up, submit fees, and become members.