

# The Key

Blue Grass Council  
Venturing



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## **Preamble**

This edition of "The Key," updated in 2016, contains the official bylaws of the Blue Grass Council Venturing Officers' Association (VOA). All previous VOA bylaws and editions of "The Key" are hereby rendered null and void.

## **Official Bylaws**

### **I. Name and Organization**

#### **A. Affiliations**

1. The Venturing Officers' Association (VOA) is under the authority of the Blue Grass Council and reports to the council Program Committee.
2. The VOA is associated with Area 6 of the Southern Region.

#### **B. Purpose of the VOA**

1. Serve the Venturing crews in the council and help them grow.
2. Plan and run certain events for Venturers in the council.
3. Provide youth input into council operations.
4. Maintain good relationships with resources, influential groups, and key individuals.
5. Promote Venturing as the co-ed, older youth program of the Boy Scouts of America.

### **II. Operating Procedures**

#### **A. Organization of Members in the Venturing Program**

1. All members under the age of 18 shall be youth Venturers.
2. All members between the ages of 18 and 21 shall be considered youth Venturers. The only exceptions to this are Youth Protection and other areas as per BSA policy, where they shall be considered adult members.

3. All members over the age of 21 shall be adult members.

B. The council Venturing Key 3 shall consist of the following members.

1. Council Venturing president (youth)
2. Council Venturing advisor (volunteer)
3. Council Venturing staff advisor (professional)

C. Organization of the VOA

1. Membership

a) Voting Members

- (1) All current council VOA officers
- (2) All current appointed youth members
- (3) All Venturing crew presidents within the Blue Grass Council
- (4) The council Venturing president from the past year (if under 21)

b) Non-Voting Members

- (1) The council Venturing advisor and all council Venturing associate advisors
- (2) All council Venturing subsidiary advisors
- (3) The council Venturing president from the past year (if over 21)
- (4) The council Scout Executive
- (5) The council Venturing staff advisor
- (6) A representative of the council Program Committee
- (7) Any active Venturer in the council

## 2. Duties

- a) Have the power to approve and pay unbudgeted justifiable purchases of \$500 or less.
- b) Have the power to establish honors and recognitions for deserving Venturers in the council.
- c) Have the power to set prices for merchandise and events.
- d) Have the power to draft modifications to “The Key” proposed by any Venturer in the council.
- e) Have the power to set times and dates for all council Venturing events.

## 3. Meeting Frequency

- a) VOA meeting should happen at least quarterly, but more frequently is recommended.
- b) VOA meetings may be requested by any member, but they must be called by a member of the Venturing Key 3 and have at least two members of the Venturing Key 3 present, including the council Venturing president or his/her designee.

## D. Council Venturing Committee

- 1. The VOA is supported by the council Venturing committee, similar to how a troop or crew is supported by their troop or crew committee.
- 2. The council Venturing committee is composed of adults who have a vested interest in the Venturing program and possess the resources that the youth need in order to succeed.
- 3. The council Venturing committee is chaired by the council Venturing advisor and reports to the council Venturing president and advisor.
- 4. Positions on the council Venturing committee are linked to one of the three vice presidential areas (Administration, Program, and Communications). Committee members in each position interface with

their respective VOA Vice President in terms of logistics and support, but they do not advise the youth or replace the youth's VOA advisor.

#### E. Attendance Policy for VOA Officers and Appointed Youth Members

1. Each VOA officer and appointed youth member will be held accountable for their attendance of VOA meetings and events.
2. There will be an allowance of two non-excused absences per term.
3. Excused absences will be allowed in special circumstances, and should be requested no later than one week prior to a meeting and two weeks prior to an event.
4. The council Venturing Key 3 will determine what constitutes an excused absence.
5. In the event that a VOA member is absent, that member must arrange for another youth to assume their responsibilities at the meeting or event, and must provide them with all the information and tools to be an effective substitute.

#### F. Modifications and Updates to "The Key"

1. Modifications may be proposed by any active Venturer in the council.
2. The council Venturing Key 3 will prepare a draft of any proposed modifications and submit it to the VOA. The VOA must then approve the draft with a  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority vote for the modifications to take effect.
3. The current and updated version of "The Key" must be made available to any Venturer upon request.

### **III. VOA Youth Members**

#### A. Officer Responsibilities

1. Council Venturing President (also referred to as VOA President)
  - a) Is responsible for the total council-level Venturing program.

b) Shall represent the council Venturing program to the Blue Grass Council, to the area, and as needed to other organizations.

c) *Selections*

(1) Shall appoint vice presidents, VOA liaisons, and any other VOA youth members.

(2) Shall lead the VOA youth officer selection process.

(3) Shall assist VOA members with the selection of subsidiary youth members.

(4) Shall assist the VOA advisor with the selection of subsidiary advisors.

d) *Leadership*

(1) Shall lead and motivate members of the VOA, including assigning tasks and conducting meetings as needed.

(2) Shall help train and mentor crew and district presidents.

(3) Shall plan and lead regular VOA meetings.

e) *Administrative*

(1) Shall work with the VOA to create a strategic plan and track progress towards achieving it.

(2) Shall facilitate the selection and presentation of the Venturing Leadership Award and other appropriate awards.

2. Vice President of Program

a) *General*

(1) Shall be first in succession to the VOA President in his/her absence.

(2) Reports to the VOA President.



- (3) In consultation with the president, appoints and supervises subsidiary youth positions needed to perform program functions.

*b) Activities*

- (1) Shall supervise the planning of all VOA activities (conferences, outings, summits, etc.).
- (2) Shall coordinate and implement innovative ideas for development.

*c) Training*

- (1) Shall facilitate council-level Venturing training events, including council-level ILSC, Venturing classes at University of Scouting, and Kodiak.
- (2) Shall promote youth and adult training in crews, and notify Venturers about any external training events.

- d) Shall perform any other duties applicable to the office that are assigned by the VOA.

3. Vice President of Administration

*a) General*

- (1) Shall be second in succession to the VOA President in the absence of both the VOA President and the Vice President of Program.
- (2) Reports to the VOA President
- (3) With the president, shall appoint and supervise any VOA subsidiary youth positions needed to perform administrative functions.

*b) Public Relations*

- (1) Shall be responsible for the council's Venturing membership recruiting efforts.

- (2) Shall maintain a database of chartered organizations, key individuals, resources and other items of interest to the VOA and Venturing, including relevant facts and contact information.
- (3) Shall actively pursue positive relationships with chartered organizations and other groups of interest to the VOA and Venturing.
- (4) Shall promote and organize the VOA youth officer selection process.
- (5) Shall see that the VOA achieves the Council Standards of Venturing Excellence award.

*c) Record Keeping*

- (1) Shall maintain records of recognitions, membership, officer selections, and VOA leadership alumni.
  - (2) Shall keep in contact with VOA alumni for possible future mentor or advisor roles when needed.
  - (3) Shall take minutes at VOA meetings.
  - (4) Shall be responsible for managing VOA finances, if required.
- d) Shall perform any other duties applicable to the office that are assigned by the VOA.

#### 4. Vice President of Communications

*a) General*

- (1) Shall be third in succession to the VOA President in the absence of the VOA President, the Vice President of Administration, and the Vice President of Program.
- (2) Reports to the VOA President.

- (3) In consultation with the president, appoints and supervises subsidiary youth positions needed to perform the communication functions of the VOA.

*b) Internal Communications*

- (1) Shall be responsible for the compilation and distribution of a periodic Venturing newsletter.
- (2) Shall determine the best ways to communicate with Venturers, both on the VOA and in the council, and manage the necessary communication tools (such as GroupMe and MailChimp).
- (3) Shall maintain rosters of VOA members and frequently involved persons.

*c) External Communications*

- (1) Shall be responsible for creating, maintaining, and updating the VOA website.
- (2) Shall be responsible for maintaining and updating the VOA social media presence.

*d) Public Relations*

- (1) Shall be responsible for submitting articles and information about Venturing and VOA activities to the council newsletter and local media outlets.
- (2) Shall create, publish, and update promotional materials for Venturing.
- (3) Shall perform any other duties applicable to the office that are assigned by the VOA.

## B. Appointed Member Responsibilities

### 1. VOA Liaison

- a) VOA liaisons serve as the link of communication between the VOA and another organization, either within the council (such as the Camping and Outdoor Program Committee) or outside the council.
- b) Liaisons represent the VOA to these organizations and may provide status updates or recommendations, but do not have the power to make agreements binding upon the VOA (unless directly authorized by the council Venturing Key 3) or upon the council.
- c) Liaisons report primarily to the VOA Vice President in their area and secondarily to the council Venturing President.
- d) If a liaison is a youth Venturer, they are considered a subsidiary youth member. If a liaison is an adult or a non-Venturer, they are not considered a subsidiary youth member.

### 2. Subsidiary Youth Member

- a) Subsidiary youth members carry out tasks assigned by the VOA Vice President in their area. For example, the Vice President of Communications may appoint a subsidiary youth member to serve as webmaster.
- b) Subsidiary youth members report to the VOA Vice President in their area and are subject to the same rules as VOA officers (with the exception of the selection procedure).

## C. Officer Selection

### 1. Election Rules

- a) No elected officer may hold the same office for more than two consecutive years.
- b) Adult members may not endorse or campaign for any candidate.

- c) Officer candidates must be youth members for the entire duration of their term.

## 2. Election Procedures

- a) VOA officer elections shall be held at a Blue Grass Council VOA event held during the fall, unless otherwise decided by the council Venturing Key 3. Typically, this event would be the KCA Camporee.
- b) VOA officers shall be elected by the full youth Venturing membership present at the election. Adult members are not allowed to vote.
- c) Only youth Venturers present at the election shall be allowed to run for office, unless an exception is approved by the council Venturing Key 3.
- d) In order to run for office, a candidate must submit an *Officer Commitment* form to the council Venturing advisor or their designee. The *Officer Commitment* form can be found in the appendix to this document.
- e) The council Venturing advisor, at their discretion, should require all commitments to be submitted by a certain date, which is a suitable distance away from the election date.
- f) All candidates must be approved by the council Venturing advisor prior to the election. For this reason, the floor shall not be opened for all nominations at the election unless the council Venturing Key 3 determine otherwise.
- g) Voting shall be by secret ballot unless only one person is running for a given office. In that case, a verbal vote of acclamation is sufficient.
- h) The election itself shall include speeches from each candidate and questions from the youth audience. The exact times and manner of the election is reserved to the judgement of the youth conducting the election.

- i) A candidate must receive a majority vote in order to win. If no candidate receives a majority vote in the first round of voting, run-offs will be held until one candidate does receive a majority vote. In the case of a run-off, the candidate with the lowest number of votes will be dropped and another vote will be held.
  - j) The youth conducting the election shall not vote except to break a tie.
  - k) If a tie occurs, a re-vote will be held. If the tie holds, then questions or additional speeches may be required prior to a second re-vote. If the tie still holds after the second re-vote, the youth conducting the election may cast sufficient votes to break the tie in favor of the candidate of his or her choice.
- 3. If a VOA position is left unfilled at the election, the newly elected council Venturing president may appoint that position with the consent of the current council Venturing Key 3.
  - 4. In extraordinary circumstances, when a regular election is not able to be held, the council Venturing president may be appointed by the council Venturing advisor, the council Venturing staff advisor, and the council Vice President of Program.

#### D. Appointed Member Selection

- 1. Appointed members shall be appointed by the council Venturing Vice President of their area, with the consent of the council Venturing Key 3.
- 2. For example, a website administrator would be appointed by the Vice President of Communications with the consent of the council Venturing Key 3.

#### E. Removal from Office

- 1. In the event that a VOA officer or subsidiary member is not in compliance with the *Officer Commitment* they have made, they may be asked to resign or be removed from office at the discretion of the council Venturing advisor, the council Venturing staff advisor, and the council Vice President of Program.

2. This process may not be used arbitrarily, but only in extreme cases. Prior to initiating the removal process, the council Venturing advisor must explain to the youth member what they are doing wrong, that they can be removed from office for doing it, and what they can do to correct it. The youth member must then be given a chance to correct their action before they may be asked to resign or be removed from office.

#### **IV. Advisors**

- A. Each elected officer will have an advisor appointed by the council Venturing advisor with the approval of the council Venturing staff advisor.
- B. At the discretion of the council Venturing advisor, subsidiary members may have specific advisors or may be advised by the advisor of the VOA Vice President in their area.

#### **V. Resources**

- A. National Venturing Standard Operating Procedures
- B. Venturing Officers' Association Administration Guide
- C. National Venturing Website: <http://www.venturing.org>

## Appendix: Officer Commitment Form

*A youth Venturer must complete this form in order to be a candidate for a VOA office in the Blue Grass Council. Please type or print neatly.*

Officer Candidate Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Crew Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Offices Seeking: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read and understand the list of responsibilities in "The Key" for all offices I am seeking. I agree that, if elected/appointed, I will take responsibility for my position and fulfill all my duties to the best of my ability.

I agree to live the Scout Oath and Scout Law in my daily life.

I understand that I am expected to attend all VOA events, and have a maximum of two unexcused absences for events. I have reviewed the dates for the following events, have placed them on my calendar, and agree to do my utmost best to attend them. I also understand that I am expected to make every possible effort to attend VOA meetings, and other events at which my presence is requested, which are not on the below list. If I have an unavoidable conflict, I agree to request an excused absence from the council Venturing Key 3 no later than two weeks before the event or meeting.

*Spring Adventure • KCA Camporee*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date