

ORDER OF THE ARROW LDS UNIT ELECTION VIDEO

HOW-TO GUIDE

Second Edition, 2/2017

Use of This Guide

This document provides instruction on how to use the LDS Unit Election video. The video can be distributed to unit leaders and other Scouts/Scouters who want to understand OA unit elections and how they are conducted in LDS units.

Lodges are encouraged to provide this guide to all unit election teams, Lodge officers, committees, and advisers.

Feedback

You are encouraged to submit comments, suggestions, and questions regarding the LDS Unit Election video or its process to surge@oa-bsa.org.

Resources

Resources are available on the Western Region web site. Click on the SURGE tab on the upper right of the landing page.

[WWW.western.oa-bsa.org](http://www.western.oa-bsa.org)

For information about the LDS organization and its approach to administering Scouting in Church chartered units, go to the Church's Scouting web site.

<http://scouting.lds.org>

Download and read the LDS Scouting Handbook or google Scouting Handbook – LDS.org.

Guide to Unit Elections

Unit election teams are encouraged to use the Guide to Unit Elections. This guide includes instructions, script, letters, forms, and many other great resources. It is available on www.oa-bsa.org.

(<http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/guide-to-unit-elections>)

Using the Video

The objective of this video is to increase the number of Scouts being selected from units chartered to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This video was produced in a way to seem familiar and inviting to LDS Units.

After showing the video at an LDS unit election, the election team is encouraged to answer any questions Scouts may have.

When using the LDS Unit Election Video, it is important that the election team is prepared to present the program using a computer and projector or large screen TV. If you have access to a projector, make sure it is available, in your possession and working properly at the time of your appointment. Make sure you have rehearsed using your computer, the cable connecting the computer to the projector or TV, an extension cord and plug strip and a way to attach speakers if they are needed.

Most LDS chapels are alike in many ways. Most will have a large screen TV with VGA or HDMI connections and built in speakers. You must confirm what equipment is available, make sure that someone has access to the library where the equipment is stored. There will be a small table you can use for the computer and projector. Most will have a white board you can use as a screen, but some older buildings may have a blackboard. Check with the unit leader to confirm the presence of an appropriate screen or projection surface if you are using a projector.

Make sure you have copies of the video on your desktop and that you know how to use them. Practice is required for a successful presentation. You may need small speakers that can be plugged into your computer. They must amplify the audio from the video enough that everyone in the room can hear comfortably. Do not try to use the internal speaker on your computer.

If the speakers require external power, make sure you can plug them into the plug strip at the computer or have additional extension cords to get the power to the speakers.

Most LDS chapels have a large TV in the library. You will need to make arrangements with the unit leader to get access to the library to borrow the TV. It will provide an adequate picture and sound for most LDS units. Make sure you have the correct cables to get the signal from the computer to the TV. Some TV's are older and will not have the current connectors. If you choose this option, you may need adapters that are not available at the chapel. Again, be prepared!

Experience tells us that units that have election ballots that are printed with the names of all the eligible scouts in the unit elect more Scouts than units where the Scouts write the names on a blank paper. Try and arrange for printed ballots where possible. When it is not possible, come prepared with paper and pencils for each Scout to use when filling out his ballot. Make sure to collect the pencils and unused ballots when the election is over so you can reuse them at the next election.

Be early. Be in proper uniform with your sash. Be prepared. Know the answers to the questions the Scouts and unit leaders may have. The adult member of the election team must read and understand the guide to unit elections and be prepared to answer questions and resolve problems.

The Lodge needs to do its homework before the unit election season. They must secure unit lists with the names of the unit leaders and Scouts that were registered on the last charter. It is common for LDS units to have new leaders that are not the ones listed on the charter. It is easy to get the name of the new unit leader by contacting the bishop of the ward chartering the unit.

To get the name and phone number of the ward bishop, go to LDS.org and look for the link to the "Meetinghouse Locator". Click on the link and enter the name of the LDS ward included on the list you get from the council office. You can also enter the address of the meeting house or even the zip code. Once entered, the web site will provide you with information on the ward including the name of the bishop and his phone number. If you click on the link "View All Wards Meeting Here" you will find all the wards that meet in the building. Click on the other wards and you will find the name and phone number of the bishop for each ward. Since almost all LDS wards have units chartered to them, this will make it quicker to get the bishop's name and number for all the units meeting in the same building. The bishop will always know the name of the current Scoutmaster and will most likely be able to provide his phone number and perhaps his email address. Politely ask if he can tell you about how many of the young men in the ward are active in Scouting. He may be able to give you an update to the roster information you should have from the council office.

Call the Scoutmaster. It is unlikely he will know what the Order of the Arrow is or know why he should want to have a unit election. You will need to develop a relationship with the Scoutmaster. It will take time and effort. It will not be easy convincing him that the OA is important or that his young men and troop will benefit from participation in the OA. You have one thing going for you. Most Scoutmasters have some experience in Scouting and may be an Eagle Scout. It is almost certain that there are adults that are Eagle Scouts in the ward. Try to find out if any were Arrowmen. If there are Arrowmen in the ward or stake, reach out to them and see if they can help communicate what the OA is and what the benefits of membership, leadership and service are for the young men in the unit. Invite them to join you at the meeting for their unit election.

There are thousands of LDS units in the country that have no relationship with the Lodge. They are not going to know what the OA is, does or what it could do to help the young men in the ward to better prepare for their missions. You will need to identify LDS Arrowmen in your council. You will need to nurture relationships with those men that will result in their help when it comes to selling the OA to the LDS units in your Lodge. Those adults are there, you just need to find them, make friends with them and encourage them to help you tell the OA story. You should hope that they had a good experience, a good Ordeal Ceremony, good projects and an Elangomat that followed up with them after their Ordeal when they were youth.

At the Lodge level, your LEC and the Lodge and council leadership will need to reach out to the council LDS Relationship Committee. This committee will most likely meet every other month to discuss Scouting in the LDS community. This committee will be made up of stake presidents or members of the stake presidency or one of the three leaders in the Young Men presidency. These are the key decision makers in the local LDS community. Developing relationships with these key men will be the easiest way to develop a great relationship with your LDS units. Bishops in each ward work directly with the stake president. The three members of the Young Men presidency in each ward coordinate directly with the stake Young Men presidency. If you can get the three members of the stake presidency or the three members of the stake Young Men presidency on board and they understand the merit of their young men's inclusion in Scouting's National Honor Society, it will be much easier to get the bishops and ward leaders including the Scoutmaster to hold unit elections in your LDS units.

The members of the Lodge LEC and the Lodge and Chapter Unit Election Committees need to understand the challenges presented when working with Scouting in the LDS church. They all need to be coached by members of the church in the terminology and organization of Scouting in the LDS Church.

11-year-old Scouts are part of the ward Primary and meet separate from the troop. When a young man turns 12, he receives the Aaronic Priesthood and becomes a member of the Deacon's Quorum. That quorum is where Scouting takes place in an LDS ward. When a Scout turns 14, he becomes a member of the Teachers Quorum and no longer meets with the Scout troop. He can continue to register in the troop and work on Scouting advancement and he may continue to attend summer camp with the troop (Deacon's Quorum). 11 years old Scouts are allowed 3 nights of camping, they do not attend summer camp. Scout that are 12 years and older can camp as much as the troop wants. Most LDS units attend summer camp or an LDS version of summer camp that is a church based Scouting activity. For this reason, LDS Scouts sometimes don't camp as many nights each year as other troops. LDS Scouts do not camp over Saturday night. LDS Scouts rarely travel on Sunday. Their troop camping trips are almost always one night. LDS Scouts almost never camp Saturday or Sunday night at summer camp, district or council camporees and OA activities including the Induction weekend.

You will need to make sure you are prepared to accommodate these schedule requirements if you are going to successfully include LDS Scouts in your Lodge.

A key to the success of SURGE in your Chapter and Lodge is to find a key adult Arrowman, perhaps the Chapter Adviser, who can develop a good relationship with the Young Men president in each of your Stakes. This will make reaching out to units easier. The stake Young Men presidents are key leaders and typically serve longer than a LDS Scoutmaster.

The Chapter Adviser should find out who the Young Men Presidency members are and send them the letter provided in the SURGE resources. Talk to them and make sure they got the letter, watched the video and understand what the OA is and what it can do for their young men. Ask them to contact their unit leaders. Ask them to provide you with the current contact information for all the unit leaders in their stake. Follow up again only if the stake leader does not provide the requested information.

With all contacts make sure you are clear what you want the person to do and when. Follow up only if they don't follow through. Make sure you know who from the Chapter or Lodge is going to follow up on the letter or email and when. Please don't send emails to Scoutmasters and other Church leaders and fail to follow up. Adults need to play a role in the process of developing relationships with these leaders. Adults need to make sure the process is successfully completed meaning there is either a unit election scheduled or a unit visitation if they don't have eligible Scouts.

If the Young Men president provides the list of unit leaders, you will know he is engaged. Check the list he provides against your BSA list and note the differences.

When Church leaders ask what's in it for their young men, tell them there are two things they should consider.

First the Order of the Arrow is Scouting's Honor Society. Being selected and inducted into the OA is an honor. Just like "once and Eagle Scout, always an Eagle Scout" "once and Arrowman, always an Arrowman". Membership in the Order of the Arrow is an honor that lasts a life time.

Second, LDS Scouts will be able to take leadership roles in the Chapter, Lodge and perhaps the Section or as a national officer. They will have the opportunity to lead Scouts outside their ward. They can lead exciting projects and events large and small in the Lodge and council. Scouting and the Order of the Arrow will help them prepare for their missions.

Building a good relationship with the Young Men president may require some time but the time invested in this relationship may have significant results for the future of your Chapter or Lodge.

How do you find the names of the Stake presidency or Young Men presidency for the stakes in your Chapter and Lodge?

Members of the Church have access to this information as well as the current unit leaders for the wards in their stake. You will need to identify a member that is willing to help.

Ask them to log into LDS.org then "My Account and Ward". Then choose "Directory" where they will see their ward. Choose "Ward Leaders" then "Young Men" to find the Scoutmaster and Troop Committee Chairman contact information.

Using the pull down choose "Stake Information" then "Stake Leaders and Organizations" then either "Stake Presidency" or "Stake Young Men". There they will find the president's email and phone number along with the information for the First and Second Counselor. Using the same pull down, they can choose the other wards in their stake and looking at "Ward Leaders" then "Young Men" they can look up the Scoutmaster and Troop Committee Chairman for each of the other wards in their stake.

Most members only have access to information for their stake. If you have more than one stake in your Chapter or Lodge, you will need to find a member in each stake and ask for help.

Looking for a member of the Church that can help? Start with your District Commissioner. Often a member of the stake high council or Young Men presidency is an Assistant District Commissioner. Have your District Commissioner introduce you then explain how he can help. Tell him you are going to send an email with a link to a six-minute video. Ask him if he will please watch the video and share it with the other members of the stake leadership.

If the District Commissioner doesn't know anyone on his Commissioner staff that is LDS, ask your District Executive. There is no shortage of Eagle Scouts in LDS units, it should not be hard to find someone involved in Scouting that will help. Perhaps you will discover an Arrowman! Once you have a friend that has access to LDS.org, you will have all the contact information for those involved in Scouting in that stake. Keep in mind that Church records are more up to date than the council records. When Scoutmasters change, it is recorded in the ward's records before the council's.

Please keep in mind that if you are going to make these contacts you must be committed to finishing the process. That includes successful unit elections and visitations, really great inductions and exciting Chapter and Lodge programs and events.