



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

On February 18, 2020, the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. As the case progresses, we continue to receive questions about the bankruptcy filing and what it may mean for ELCA congregations that presently charter a BSA troop or have chartered a BSA troop in the past.

As a reminder, neither the churchwide organization nor your synod can provide congregations with legal advice or representation related to the BSA or any other matter. Additionally, the ELCA cannot dictate to congregations what their relationship with the BSA should be; these decisions are up to each congregation.

Your congregation's decision to continue or end its relationship with the BSA should be made with the protection and well-being of children as the primary focus. As you make decisions about your congregation's association with the BSA (if any), please be aware that the congregation could be sued for anything that happens in the troop. In addition, as a result of the bankruptcy, the congregation cannot confidently rely on the BSA, the local council, or their insurers to defend it. The congregation needs to make sure that it has sufficient insurance and that its own insurance will cover them if something happens with the troop.

The ELCA stands with survivors of scouting abuse, and we strongly encourage congregations to take any allegations they receive seriously. If any allegations of abuse involve a minor, please immediately contact the local authorities and make the proper reports as required by relevant laws in your jurisdiction.

Lastly, while the time has past to file a proof of claim in the BSA bankruptcy case, your congregation may still have coverage for claims if an insurance policy with relevant coverage was in force during the time the alleged abuse occurred. You should review your congregation's insurance records in the event a lawsuit is filed against your congregation. You should also retain these records as a matter of general practice and ongoing records maintenance. Further information about the importance of retaining insurance records can be found [here](#).