Roles in a Cub Scout pack

- Pack Committee Chair
- Cubmaster and Assistant Cubmaster
- Den Leader and Assistant Den Leader

Pack Committee Chair

The pack committee owns the operational side of running a pack — the finances, the paperwork, the people, and the decisions that make the program possible. The Pack Committee Chair leads that work.

What a Pack Committee Chair does

You recruit and coordinate the adults who handle advancement, treasurer, membership, fundraising, events, and outdoor activities. You run the monthly committee meeting. You serve as the primary day-to-day contact between the pack and its chartered organization. When the Cubmaster needs something to happen behind the scenes, that comes to you.

The Committee Chair does not run den meetings and is not responsible for delivering the Cub Scout program. That belongs to the Cubmaster and Den Leaders. Your role is to ensure they have what they need to do it.

Your relationship with the Cubmaster

This is the most important working relationship in the pack. The Cubmaster sets the program direction; the Committee Chair makes it operationally viable. Packs where these two roles are working well together tend to run smoothly, even when everything else is a little chaotic.

A straightforward division that works in practice: the Cubmaster owns the program, the Committee Chair owns the committee. Neither steps into the other's lane without conversation.

Your committee and how it works

The pack committee is a group of registered adults who each own a function. The common ones are advancement, treasurer, membership, fundraising, events, and outdoor activities. Your job is not to do all of those things yourself. It is to make sure someone is doing each of them, that they have what they need, and that they're connected to each other.

The committee meets monthly. A typical meeting runs under an hour and covers four things: the pack's finances, upcoming events, unit renewal status when that season is active, and anything the Cubmaster needs committee support on. The Committee Chair sets the agenda and runs the meeting.

Committee meeting agenda template ?

When you're starting from scratch

Many packs have a thin or informal committee. If you're inheriting a committee that exists mostly on paper, start by identifying which functions have someone actively covering them and which don't. Then prioritize filling the gaps that affect the program most directly. Advancement and treasurer are usually where gaps hurt first.

First priorities

If you're new to the role, work through these in roughly this order.

1. **Complete Safeguarding Youth training**
   Required before you take on any registered position. Find it at my.scouting. It takes about 90 minutes and must be renewed every year.
2. **Complete Pack Committee Chair training**
   Pack Committee Chair training is available online at my.scouting as part of Cub Scout Position-Specific Training. Aim to complete it within your first month. It covers committee structure, unit renewal, and your relationship with the chartered organization.
3. **Meet with your Cubmaster**
   Get aligned on the current state of the pack, what the committee is and isn't covering, and what the Cubmaster needs most from you right now.
4. **Connect with your Unit Commissioner**
   Your Unit Commissioner is assigned to support your pack. Introduce yourself early. They can help you understand the district's unit renewal timeline and connect you with resources you may not know exist.
5. **Map your committee**
   List every committee function and identify who, if anyone, is covering it. This gives you a clear picture of where to focus your recruiting.

my.scouting ?

Unit renewal

Unit renewal, formerly called recharter, is the annual process of renewing the pack's charter with Scouting America. In the James River District, this happens in the fall. *(Local deadline to be confirmed and added.)*

Unit renewal and individual member renewals now run as separate processes. Unit renewal confirms the pack's leadership and charter for the coming year. Individual members renew their own registrations on a rolling basis tied to their anniversary date. In practice you will be coordinating both during the fall season.

Your role in unit renewal means verifying the roster, confirming that leadership positions are filled and training requirements are met, and processing the charter fee with your treasurer. The Chartered Organization Representative must sign the annual charter agreement before the renewal is complete. Your Unit Commissioner will be in contact as the window opens. Reach out early if you have questions about timing or what is needed.

Unit renewal overview ?

Your chartered organization

The pack exists under the authority of a chartered organization, a community group, faith community, or civic organization that has agreed to sponsor the pack.

The chartered organization appoints a Chartered Organization Representative, or COR, who serves as the direct contact between the organization and the pack. Day-to-day, the COR's involvement varies by organization. Some CORs are active partners in pack operations; others are less visible. Either way, keep the relationship current. The COR reviews and approves adult leader applications, represents the pack to the district and council, and is part of the pack's Key 3 alongside you and the Cubmaster. During unit renewal, the COR's signature is required on the annual charter agreement.

One structural note: the COR appoints the Pack Committee Chair. That appointment authority sits with the chartered organization, not the pack.

Who supports you

Your Unit Commissioner is assigned to support your pack. They can help with unit renewal questions, flag unit health concerns early, and connect you with district resources. If you are not sure who your Unit Commissioner is, ask at roundtable or contact the Cub Scouts Roundtable Commissioner.

The Cubmaster is your primary partner in pack leadership. Between the two of you, most pack decisions should be workable. When they are not, your Unit Commissioner is the right next call.

The committee exists so the pack does not depend on one person for everything. Build it that way, and the role becomes manageable.

Cubmaster and Assistant Cubmaster

The Cubmaster is the pack's program leader. It is the only role in the pack that works across every den, every Scout, and every pack meeting. Where Den Leaders work within a single den, and the committee works behind the scenes, the Cubmaster works across the whole pack, connecting its parts into something that feels like a program.

What the Cubmaster actually does

The Cubmaster is responsible for the pack's program: planning and leading monthly pack meetings, supporting Den Leaders as they run their dens, and working with the committee chair to plan the program year. That planning process sets the calendar, aligns the budget, and gives Den Leaders what they need to plan their dens around pack events. A pack without a program plan reacts to every month rather than building toward something.

Pack meetings are the most visible part of the role. The Cubmaster plans the agenda, leads ceremonies, recognizes Scouts for their advancement, and sets the energy for the room. A good pack meeting feels purposeful, and the Cubmaster is the reason.

Scouting America describes the Cubmaster as a recruiter, supervisor, director, planner, and motivator of other leaders. In practice, that means staying in regular contact with Den Leaders, making sure they have what they need, and serving as the connective tissue between dens and the pack as a whole. Den Leaders run their dens independently. The Cubmaster supports them, not the other way around.

Practically, that means knowing when each den meets, confirming ahead of pack meetings who is presenting what, and making sure advancement is being tracked so recognition can happen at the right time.

The Cubmaster and the pack committee

The pack committee chair is the top volunteer in the pack, responsible for ensuring qualified adults are in place and that the pack's administrative functions run. The Cubmaster's lane is the program. Both roles are essential, and they are not interchangeable.

The committee owns the operations that make the program possible: finances, record keeping, recharter, recruiting adult volunteers, and maintaining the pack's relationship with its chartered organization. The Cubmaster's job is to lead a program worth supporting and to trust the committee to handle the infrastructure behind it. If recharter paperwork, pack finances, or volunteer recruitment are landing on the Cubmaster by default, that is a sign the committee needs more members or clearer role assignments, not a sign that the Cubmaster should absorb the work.

Before your first pack meeting, sit down with the committee chair and confirm you are aligned on the program year, the budget, and who owns what. If there is not a plan yet, that conversation is where building one starts.

The Assistant Cubmaster

The Assistant Cubmaster supports the Cubmaster and steps in when the Cubmaster is unavailable. The minimum age for this position is 18, compared to 21 for the Cubmaster, which makes it a natural entry point for older Scouts who have aged out of the youth program and want to stay connected.

Packs that use the position well give the Assistant Cubmaster real ownership of specific parts of the program: a recurring element of pack meetings, a particular event, or a working relationship with one or more dens. An Assistant Cubmaster who has been actively involved is also the most natural successor when the Cubmaster's term ends. Intentional development of the Assistant Cubmaster is one of the most practical things a Cubmaster can do for the long-term health of the pack.

Getting started

Get registered and complete Youth Protection Training

The Cubmaster must be at least 21 and registered as an adult leader before serving in the role. Youth Protection Training (YPT) is required before your first meeting. Both are handled at my.scouting. If you are stepping into this mid-year, confirm both are complete before you lead your first pack meeting.

Complete Cubmaster Position-Specific Training

Available online at my.scouting. Not required before your first meeting, but prioritize it early. It covers pack meeting planning, working with Den Leaders, and the annual program planning process in a way that makes the rest of the job clearer. In the Heart of Virginia Council, position-specific training is included at no additional cost with the $15 adult registration fee.

Come to Cub Scouts roundtable

Monthly, first Wednesday, 7:00 to 8:30 PM at the Heart of Virginia Council Leadership Center. Cubmasters are a core part of the roundtable audience alongside Den Leaders and committee members. It is where you will connect with Cubmasters from other packs, get program ideas for the coming month, and stay current on district and council updates. Roundtable attendance counts toward the Scouter's Key, the Heart of Virginia Council's recognition for sustained leadership excellence. University of Scouting, offered annually by the council, also counts toward the Scouter's Key and is worth putting on your calendar in your first year. *Roundtable dates and location ? University of Scouting ?*

Den Leader and Assistant Den Leader

Your job is your den. Not the pack, not the district, not the calendar of things happening above your den meeting. What happens in your den meetings is what Scouting is for your Scouts. Everything else on this page exists to support that.

New to the role? *So you're a Den Leader now* has the short list of what actually matters in your first 60 days. ?

When you need help

You can't get Scoutbook access. This is the most common early frustration. Scoutbook access requires someone with admin rights in your pack — usually the Committee Chair or Cubmaster — to add you as Den Leader. If you've asked and it hasn't happened, contact your Unit Commissioner. Getting your pack's administrative access sorted is something they can push through. Don't wait on this — you need Scoutbook to record advancement.

You're not sure whether something a Scout did at home counts. For most Cub Scouts requirements, it counts. Cub Scouts advancement is family-centered by design. If a Scout did the thing, record it. When you're not sure about a specific requirement, bring it to Cub Scouts roundtable — someone in the room has been in exactly this situation.

Something went sideways at a meeting and you're not sure what to do. Call your Cubmaster first. If it's a Youth Protection concern, follow the reporting obligations outlined in *YPT — who needs it and when* ? — don't wait and don't handle it alone. For anything else, your Cubmaster is the right first call. Your Unit Commissioner is the right second call if your Cubmaster isn't available or the situation is beyond the pack level.

You're burning out. Tell your Cubmaster before you reach the point of walking away. A temporary adjustment to meeting frequency, a co-leader arrangement, or even just someone acknowledging the load you're carrying can make the difference. The district would rather help you stay than find someone to replace you.

> **Maintainer note:** Are there specific council or district support contacts for Den Leaders beyond the Unit Commissioner? Gather from Roundtable Commissioner and experienced Den Leaders before publishing.

Working with your pack

The Cubmaster runs the pack. Your relationship with them is the most important working relationship you have in Scouting. Bring pack-level questions — calendar, pack meeting structure, what's expected of your den at events — to them first.

The pack committee handles everything administrative: recharter, finances, chartered organization paperwork. You don't need to know how all of that works. You do need to know who your Committee Chair is so you know who to call when an administrative question lands in your lap.

Your Unit Commissioner and how they can help ?

Cub Scouts roundtable

Cub Scouts roundtable meets the first Wednesday of every month. It's the fastest way to connect with other Den Leaders who are doing exactly what you're doing and have solved problems you haven't hit yet. Bring your questions — there are no wrong ones.

What is Cub Scouts roundtable? ?

Assistant Den Leader

Most Assistant Den Leaders are parents who got recruited informally — someone asked, they said yes, and now they're figuring out what that means. If that's you, the Den Leader sections above apply equally to you. The title is different; the work is the same when the Den Leader needs backup.

Two things matter most in this role. First: know the plan for each meeting well enough to run it independently. A den with two adults who both know what's happening is a resilient den. A den where only one person knows the plan is one scheduling conflict away from a cancelled meeting. Second: get officially registered on my.scouting if you haven't already. Two registered adults must be present at every Scouting activity. Your registration is what makes two-deep leadership possible — not just your physical presence.