

GUIDE TO ADVANCEMENT
2013

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

BSA Mission Statement

The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

The Aims of Scouting

"Every Scouting activity moves boys toward three basic aims: character development, citizenship training, and mental and physical fitness."

—Scoutmaster Handbook

"Advancement is one of the eight methods used by Scout leaders to help boys fulfill the aims of the BSA."

—Scoutmaster Handbook

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GUIDE TO ADVANCEMENT
2013

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The current edition of the *Guide to Advancement* replaces any previous editions and the publication *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures* and is the official Boy Scouts of America source on advancement procedures.

Policy on Unauthorized Changes to Advancement Program

No council, committee, district, unit, or individual has the authority to add to, or subtract from, advancement requirements. There are limited exceptions relating only to youth members with special needs. For details see section 10, "Advancement for Members With Special Needs."

Mandated Procedures and Recommended Practices

This publication clearly identifies mandated procedures with words such as "must" and "shall." Where such language is used, no council, committee, district, unit, or individual has the authority to deviate from the procedures covered, without the written permission of the national Advancement Team.

Recommended best practices are offered using words like "should," while other options and guidelines are indicated with terms such as "may" or "can." Refer questions on these to your local district or council advancement chairs or staff advisors. They, in turn, may request interpretations and assistance from the national Advancement Team.

The Guide to Safe Scouting *Applies*

Policies and procedures outlined in the *Guide to Safe Scouting* apply to all BSA activities, including those related to advancement and Eagle Scout service projects.

What Does "Unit Leader" Mean?

Throughout this publication the term "unit leader" refers only to a Cubmaster, Scoutmaster, Varsity team Coach, Venture crew Advisor, or Sea Scout Skipper. "Unit leadership" is sometimes used as a generic reference to any adult leader in a unit and as such would include the unit leader along with any other adult leaders.

33088
ISBN 978-0-8395-3088-6
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2013 Printing

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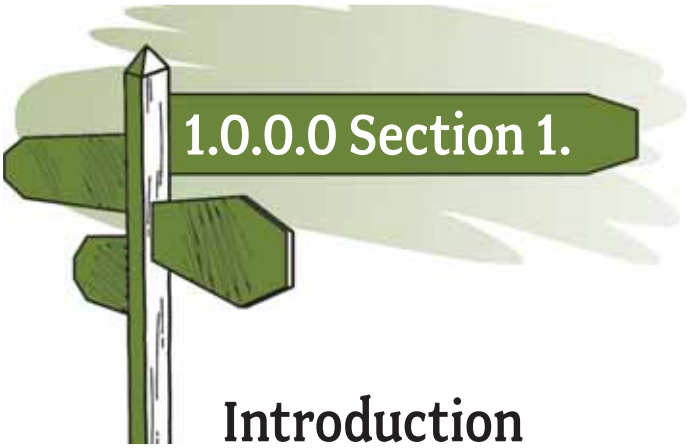
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Introduction

The current edition of the *Guide to Advancement* is the official source for administering advancement in all Boy Scouts of America programs: Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, and Sea Scouts. It replaces any previous BSA advancement manuals, including *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures*, *Advancement and Recognition Policies and Procedures*, and previous editions of the *Guide to Advancement*.

Additional information and best practices appear in other official BSA resources such as *Advancement News*, the national Advancement Team's Twitter feed, and the advancement educational presentations released by the national Advancement Team and national Advancement Committee. See "Orientation and Education Opportunities for Advancement Administrators," 3.0.0.6, for more information on education in advancement policies and procedures. Scouting leaders are encouraged to make full use of these resources but should confirm that updated information has not subsequently been provided. For example, each of the official educational resources released carries an expiration date. As these dates arrive, replacement versions can be downloaded from http://www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/resources.aspx. Expired presentations must not be used.



Online Version

An online searchable version of the Guide to Advancement *can be accessed on http://www.scouting.org/GuideToAdvancement.aspx.*

1.0.1.0 How to Approach Issues Not Covered in the *Guide to Advancement*

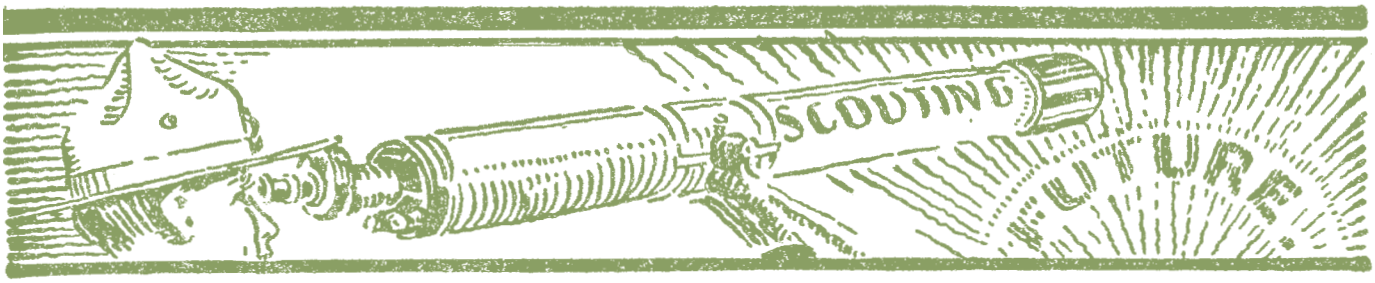
Be aware that statements or interpretations offered from unofficial websites and other such sources may be out of date or incorrect. They will not be considered in resolving advancement questions and issues. In situations not specifically covered in this guide, advancement chairs, coordinators, or other administrators should make decisions based on the aims and mission of the Boy Scouts of America, as well as the Scout Oath and Scout Law, other applicable official and current BSA resources—and common sense.

Regardless the program—Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, or Sea Scouts—where advancement takes place, it is nothing more and nothing less than one of several *methods.* It is a means toward accomplishing the Boy Scouts of America mission. It is not an end in itself. When as advancement administrators—both volunteer and professional—we recognize this, we can expect success. To see it otherwise is to indicate we have forgotten our purpose.

1.0.2.0 Questions and Suggestions

Every effort has been made to provide clear procedures and guidelines for a mission-oriented delivery of advancement. Its administration, however, largely takes place locally. Therefore, volunteer advancement administrators should always consult first with the district and council—the district advancement chair, district executive, council advancement chair, or the council's professional staff advisor for advancement. These officials can provide many answers and a certain level of interpretation.

Note that the national Advancement Team addresses many questions through its Twitter feed (@AdvBSA) and through the e-newsletter, Advancement News. *To subscribe to* Advancement News*, send your name, email, and council name to advancement.team@scouting.org.*



The national Advancement Team is available for recommendations or for questions that cannot be handled locally. Suggested corrections to this publication are also gratefully accepted. Send questions and comments to *advancement.team@scouting.org*, or mail them to *National Advancement Team, Program Impact Department, S209, Boy Scouts of America, 1325 West Walnut Hill Lane, P.O. Box 152079, Irving, Texas 75015-2079*.

Suggestions for new merit badges should be directed to the BSA Innovation Team at merit.badge@scouting.org.

1.0.3.0 Significant Changes, 2013 Edition

Producing the *Guide to Advancement* involved many members of the Boy Scouts of America's national staff and many volunteer advancement administrators at all levels from across the country. The result is an all-new resource intended to more efficiently meet the needs of those who would most often consult it. While every section of the 2013 edition has received at least minor revisions since the 2011 edition, the following topics merit close review.

Section 2. Advancement Defined

1. 2.0.0.2 and 2.0.0.3: Added that learning Scouting skills and concepts is a vehicle for achieving the primary goal of advancement

Section 3. Guidelines for Advancement and Recognition Committees

2. 3.0.0.3: Clarified position on "First Class First Year"
3. 3.0.0.5: New topic on building an advancement committee
4. 3.0.0.6: New topic on educational presentations

Section 4. The Mechanics of Advancement

5. 4.0.0.1: Clarified procedures for when advancement requirements change
6. 4.1.0.4: Added language for Cub Scouts close to earning rank at the end of a school year
7. 4.1.1.0: Clarified that new Cub Scouts begin with Bobcat but may work simultaneously on the rank appropriate to their age or grade
8. 4.1.1.6: Changed that unused Bear badge achievements, or parts of achievements that were used for the Bear badge, may now be counted toward Arrow Points
9. 4.2.0.1: Added language on Boy Scout ranks and simultaneous fulfillment of requirements for Tenderfoot through First Class
10. 4.2.1.2: Added that Scouts who may not have learned a signed off requirement should be given opportunities to practice or teach the related skills or concepts in order to complete learning
11. 4.2.1.5: New topic to clarify how BSA intends skills and knowledge retention to be achieved
12. 4.2.3.3: Added reference to publications related to service projects released in 2012 by the national Health and Safety Committee
13. 4.2.3.4: Clarified that positions in provisional units such as jamboree troops do not fulfill rank requirements
14. 4.2.3.5: Clarified that unit leaders do not have the authority to deny a Scout a unit leader (Scoutmaster) conference that is necessary for rank advancement
15. 4.2.3.6: New topic on procedure for fulfilling more than one requirement with a single activity
16. 4.3.1.4 and 4.4.1.4: Clarified that Eagle Scout and Quartermaster projects must be separate and distinct

Section 5. Special Considerations

17. 5.0.1.2: Revised and expanded the examples of procedures a council advancement committee might consider for camp settings; added statement on advancement in Cub Scout camping

Section 6. Internet Advancement Highlights

18. 6.0.0.1: Added benefits and features of Internet Advancement

19. 6.0.0.3: Introduced presentation, "Getting the Most from Internet Advancement"

20. 6.0.0.4: New topic related to using Internet Advancement and working with board of review signatures, Scout transfers, and dual registration

Section 7. The Merit Badge Program

21. 7.0.0.1: Clarified recommended merit badge process

22. 7.0.0.2: Topic changed to explain more about the blue card; much of the former content in 7.0.0.2 moved to 7.0.0.3

23. 7.0.0.2 and 11.1.0.0: Introduced method for reporting instances of merit badge counseling that do not follow BSA procedures

24. 7.0.0.3: New topic clarifies procedure on the purpose and meaning of a unit leader's signature on the blue card, and a Scout's freedom to choose counselors

25. 7.0.1.1: Added adherence to the Sweet Sixteen of BSA Safety; updated special qualifications for supervisors of Canoeing, Climbing, Rowing, and Scuba Diving merit badges; and added special qualifications for Archery and Kayaking

26. 7.0.1.4: Added language allowing unit leaders to limit the number of merit badges Scouts may earn from one counselor

27. 7.0.1.6: Introduced new presentation, "The Essentials of Merit Badge Counseling"

28. 7.0.3.2: Added suggestions for improving merit badge group instruction quality

29. 7.0.4.6: Covered how to address the use of unregistered, unapproved merit badge counselors

30. 7.0.4.7: New topic on limited recourse for cases where it is clear and evident Scouts could not possibly have fulfilled merit badge requirements

31. 7.0.4.8: Added topic on the use of unofficial worksheets and other learning aids available from the Internet

32. 7.0.4.9: Added topic on merit badge opportunities with non-Scouting organizations or businesses

33. 7.0.4.10: Added topic on charging fees for merit badge opportunities

Section 8. Boards of Review: An Overview for All Ranks

34. 8.0.0.2: Clarified that a board of review must be granted if a Scout believes he has completed rank requirements

35. 8.0.1.0: Clarified approach to observers and parents attending boards of review; added statement discouraging mock boards of review

36. 8.0.2.0: Clarified age qualifications of unit committee members serving on boards of review; added statement on Scouts ready to be reviewed for more than one rank

37. 8.0.3.2: Clarified procedures for boards of review under disputed circumstances, including that they may be appealed

Section 9. The Eagle Scout Rank

38. 9.0.1.3: Clarified dealing with positions of responsibility when a Scout transfers from a troop or team to a crew or ship

39. 9.0.2.9: Redefined role and source of Eagle Scout service project coaches

40. 9.0.2.10: Added language allowing local councils to add parameters for Eagle Scout service project fundraising

41. 9.0.2.10: Added procedure for project beneficiaries that are not allowed to retain funds from an Eagle service project

42. 9.0.2.12: Added mention of new service project beneficiary information sheet, "Navigating the Eagle Scout Service Project," which will be included with the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook,* and can be found at www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/resources.aspx.

43. 9.0.2.14: Clarified unit responsibility for safety on Eagle Scout service projects

44. 9.0.2.16: New topic on Eagle Scout service projects and the Messengers of Peace program

45. 9.0.4.0 and 9.0.4.1: Added various clarifications to the tests and process for time extensions to earn the Eagle Scout rank

Section 10. Advancement for Members With Special Needs

46. 10.2.2.0: Clarified requirements for Scouts with special needs and inclusion of unit leaders and parents in boards of review

Section 11. Appendix

47. 11.1.0.0: New form, "Reporting Merit Badge Counseling Concerns"

1.0.4.0 Frequently Asked Questions

Listed below are questions often asked of the national Advancement Team. Each question is followed by the location of the answer; that is, the heading and topic number under which the answer can be found in this *Guide to Advancement*.

1.0.4.1 General

1. How should advancement issues be handled if they are not covered in the *Guide to Advancement?* ("Introduction," and "How to Approach Issues Not Covered in the *Guide to Advancement*," 1.0.1.0)

2. Where can we find information about nonadvancement awards and recognition such as lifesaving awards, the Award of Merit, Silver Beaver, and Hornaday awards? ("Awards and Recognitions," 3.0.0.4)

3. How should a district or council advancement committee be organized? ("Building an Advancement Committee," 3.0.0.5)

4. Where can we find training for advancement volunteers? ("Orientation and Education Opportunities for Advancement Administrators," 3.0.0.6)

5. What is the responsibility of the council advancement committee in camp settings and camp operations? ("Advancement in Camp Settings," topics 5.0.1.0–5.0.1.5)

1.0.4.2 Cub Scouting

1. May assistant den leaders or parents sign off on requirements in boys' handbooks? ("Who Approves Cub Scout Advancement?" 4.1.0.3)

2. What if a Cub Scout cannot complete a requirement? ("Do Your Best," 4.1.0.4)

3. If a Cub Scout is close to finishing a rank at the end of the school year, can he be allowed extra time to finish the requirements? ("Do Your Best," 4.1.0.4)

4. May a new Cub Scout work on Bobcat simultaneously with the rank appropriate to his age or grade? ("Cub Scout Ranks," 4.1.1.0)

5. May unused achievements be used for electives? ("Arrow Points," 4.1.1.6)

6. May a Cub Scout use electives more than once in earning Arrow Points? ("Arrow Points," 4.1.1.6)

7. Is there an age limit for earning the Arrow of Light Award? ("The Arrow of Light Award," 4.1.1.9)

1.0.4.3 Boy Scouting and Varsity Scouting

1. What should happen if a Scout forgets or did not learn a skill that was signed off? ("Personal Growth Is the Primary Goal," 2.0.0.3; "The Scout Is Tested," 4.2.1.2; and "After the Scout Is Tested and Recognized," 4.2.1.5)

2. What does "active participation" mean? ("Active Participation," 4.2.3.1)

3. What are "positions of responsibility," and how are they evaluated? ("Positions of Responsibility," 4.2.3.4)

4. May the position of responsibility requirements be fulfilled through service in a jamboree troop, Philmont trek crew, or similar provisional unit? ("Position Must Be Chosen From Among Those Listed," 4.2.3.4.1)

5. Must the unit leader (Scoutmaster) conference be the last step before a board of review? ("Unit Leader [Scoutmaster] Conference," 4.2.3.5)

6. Do unit leaders have the authority to deny a unit leader (Scoutmaster) conference? ("Unit Leader [Scoutmaster] Conference," 4.2.3.5)

7. Can one activity be used to fulfill more than one requirement? ("Fulfilling More Than One Requirement With a Single Activity," 4.2.3.6)

8. May the unit leader delegate the authority to sign blue cards? And if so, to whom should the authority be delegated? ("The Scout, the Blue Card, and the Unit Leader," 7.0.0.3)

9. May a Scout choose any registered merit badge counselor? ("The Scout, the Blue Card, and the Unit Leader," 7.0.0.3)

10. Is it permissible for councils to limit the number of merit badges that a counselor may be approved to counsel? ("Counselor Approvals and Limitations," 7.0.1.4)

11. What may be done when Scouts are earning large numbers of merit badges from just one counselor? ("Counselor Approvals and Limitations," 7.0.1.4)

12. Does the National Council have training available for merit badge counselors? ("Training for Counselors," 7.0.1.6)

13. How can districts and councils present group instruction at merit badge events that assure Scouts actually and personally fulfill all requirements as written? ("Group Instruction," 7.0.3.2)

14. Is there a time limit between starting work on a merit badge and finishing it? What if requirements change? ("Partial Completions," 7.0.3.3; "What to Do When Requirements Change," 7.0.4.3)

15. What can be done if a unit leader comes across a Scout who has a blue card signed by a merit badge counselor, but it is clear and evident the Scout did not actually and personally fulfill the requirements? ("Limited Recourse for Unearned Merit Badges," 7.0.4.7)

16. Under what conditions may an outside organization or business present and promote merit badge classes or events? ("Merit Badge Opportunities With Non-Scouting Organizations or Businesses," 7.0.4.9)

17. Is it appropriate to charge fees for merit badge opportunities? ("Charging Fees for Merit Badge Opportunities," 7.0.4.10)

18. Can a Scout be denied a board of review? ("Boards of Review Must Be Granted When Requirements Are Met," 8.0.0.2)

19. What if parents insist on attending a board of review? ("Conducting the Board of Review," 8.0.1.0)

20. What can be done if there are not enough registered unit committee members available to conduct a board of review for a rank other than Eagle? ("Particulars for Tenderfoot Through Life Ranks (or Palms)," 8.0.2.0)

21. How are boards of review handled for Scouts who are ready to be reviewed for more than one of the lower ranks at the same time? ("Particulars for Tenderfoot Through Life Ranks (or Palms)," 8.0.2.0)

1.0.4.4 The Eagle Scout Rank

1. May Eagle candidates choose board of review members? ("Composition of the Board of Review," 8.0.0.3)

2. Shouldn't an Eagle Scout candidate be in uniform for his board of review? ("Wearing the Uniform—or Neat in Appearance," 8.0.0.4)

3. How are Eagle Scout boards of review different from those for the other ranks? ("Particulars for the Eagle Scout Rank," 8.0.3.0)

4. What if an Eagle Scout candidate cannot participate in a board of review right away? ("Eagle Scout Board of Review Beyond the 18th Birthday," 8.0.3.1)

5. May an adult who completed the Eagle Scout requirements but was not so recognized still receive the rank? ("Eagle Scout Board of Review Beyond the 18th Birthday," 8.0.3.1)

6. What is a board of review under disputed circumstances, and what are the grounds for convening one? ("Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances," 8.0.3.2)

7. May the decision of a board of review under disputed circumstances be appealed? ("Appealing a Decision," 8.0.4.0)

8. How is the decision of a board of review appealed? ("Appealing a Decision," 8.0.4.0)

9. Must a candidate be registered at the time of his board of review? ("Complete All the Requirements," 9.0.1.1)

10. Does the Eagle Scout Rank Application have to be completed and submitted to the council office before the Scout's 18th birthday? ("Submit to Council Service Center," 9.0.1.5)

11. Must the council retain Eagle Scout reference documents? ("References Contacted," 9.0.1.7)

12. May an Eagle Scout board of review be delayed until all references respond? ("References Contacted," 9.0.1.7)

13. How do we know if an Eagle Scout service project proposal has sufficient detail to be approved? ("Proposal Must Be Approved … Before You Start," 9.0.2.7)

14. What if an Eagle Scout service project is not approved prior to beginning? ("Proposal Must Be Approved … Before You Start," 9.0.2.7)

15. What does an Eagle Scout service project coach do? ("Eagle Scout Service Project Coach," 9.0.2.9)

16. What is the best source for Eagle Scout service project coaches? ("Eagle Scout Service Project Coach," 9.0.2.9)

17. May a council "preapprove" some Eagle Scout fundraising efforts, such as bake sales or car washes? ("Fundraising Issues," 9.0.2.10)

18. What if a completed Eagle Scout service project is denied final approval? ("Evaluating the Project After Completion," 9.0.2.13)

19. What are the Eagle candidate's and unit leadership's responsibilities for safety on the service project? ("Risk Management and Eagle Scout Service Projects," 9.0.2.14)

20. Do Eagle service projects qualify for the Messengers of Peace program? ("Eagle Scout Service Projects and Messengers of Peace," 9.0.2.16)

21. What are the grounds for a Scout to receive an extension of time to earn the Eagle Scout rank, and what are the responsibilities of the local council in applying for one? ("Time Extensions," 9.0.4.0; "Process for Submitting and Evaluating an Extension Request," 9.0.4.1)

1.0.4.5 Venturing and Sea Scouts

1. Are the Bronze, Gold, and Silver awards considered "advancement"? ("Advancement in Venturing," 4.3.1.0)

2. May the work done for one Venturing award also apply to another? ("Multiple Credit for Venturers," 4.3.1.3)

3. May a Venturer or Sea Scout work on Boy Scout advancement? ("Boy Scout Advancement in Venturing and Sea Scouts," 4.3.1.4)

4. May the same project be used for the Quartermaster and Eagle Scout service projects? ("Quartermaster Rank," 4.4.1.4)

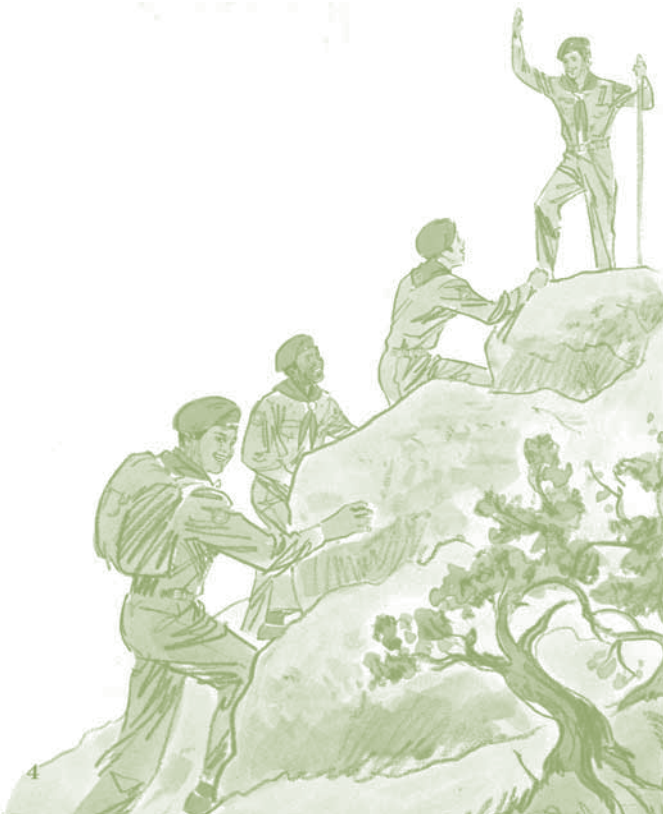
1.0.4.6 Special Needs Scouting

1. Can a boy with a disability of any severity become a Boy Scout? How can he participate and advance? Does he need to join a "special" unit? ("Advancement for Members With Special Needs," 10.0.0.0)

2. Is it possible for a person with special needs to continue to be registered as a youth member after he or she has passed the age of eligibility for a BSA program? ("Registering Qualified Members Beyond Age of Eligibility," 10.1.0.0)

3. What kinds of allowances are made for members with special needs? ("Advancement Flexibility Allowed," 10.2.0.0)

4. What if a Boy Scout or Varsity Scout with special needs is not able to meet advancement requirements as they are written? ("Advancement for Boy Scouts and Varsity Scouts With Special Needs," 10.2.2.0; "Using Alternative Requirements," 10.2.2.1; and "Alternative Merit Badges for Eagle Scout Rank," 10.2.2.3)





2.0.0.0 Section 2.

Advancement Defined

Advancement is the process by which youth members of the Boy Scouts of America progress from rank to rank.

2.0.0.1 It Is a Method—Not an End in Itself

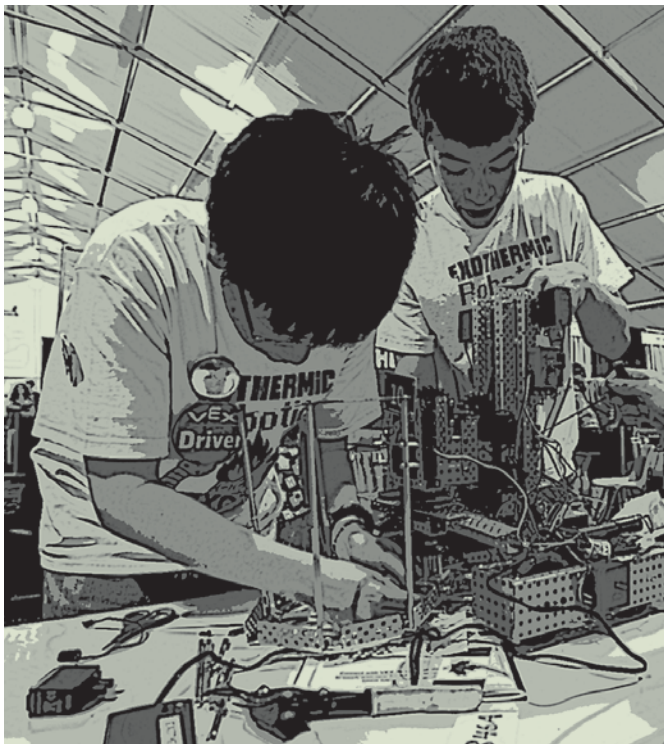
Advancement is simply a means to an end, not an end in itself. It is one of several methods designed to help unit leadership carry out the aims and mission of the Boy Scouts of America. See the inside front cover for text of the aims and mission.

2.0.0.2 Advancement Is Based on Experiential Learning

Everything done to advance—to earn ranks and other awards and recognition—is designed to educate or to otherwise expand horizons. Members learn and develop according to a standard. This is the case from the time a member joins and then moves through the programs of Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, and Venturing or Sea Scouts.

Experiential learning is the key: Exciting and meaningful activities are offered, and education *happens*. Learning comes from doing. For example, youth may read about first aid, hear it discussed, and watch others administer it, but they will not learn it until they practice it. Rushing a Scout through requirements to obtain a badge is not the goal. Advancement should be a natural outcome of a well-rounded unit program, rich in opportunities to work toward the ranks.

It is important to note, as with any educational opportunity, a rank or award is not the end of the learning process. In Scouting, after a requirement has been passed, the Scout is placed in practical situations that build retention through repeated use of skills. For example, he plays games that feature the skills, teaches other Scouts, and perhaps practices them in "real-life" outdoor experiences. A well-rounded and strong unit program takes advantage of these kinds of opportunities, using them to improve retention through practical application.



2.0.0.3 Personal Growth Is the Primary Goal

Scouting skills—what a young person learns to do—are important, but not as important as the primary goal of *personal growth* achieved through participating in a unit program. The concern is for total, well-rounded development. Age-appropriate surmountable hurdles are placed before members, and as they face these challenges they learn about themselves and gain confidence.

Learning Scout skills and concepts through active participation is a vehicle for personal growth, but it is not the primary goal. For example, learning how to tie a knot, plan a menu, swim, or administer first aid may turn out to be critical in one's life, but they are secondary to the goal of personal growth that comes with learning. As a Scout learns a skill and then is tested on it, and reviewed and recognized, he develops confidence. He comes to realize he can learn and do other similar things. The retention of Scouting skills and knowledge is important, of course; but for retention to take place, it will be because Scouting skills and knowledge are used in our programs.

Success is achieved when we fulfill the BSA Mission Statement and when we accomplish the aims of Scouting: character development, citizenship training, and mental and physical fitness. We know we are on the right track when we see youth accepting responsibility, demonstrating self-reliance, and caring for themselves and others; when they learn to weave Scouting ideals into their lives; and when we can see they will be positive contributors to our American society.

Though certainly goal-oriented, advancement is not a competition. Rather, it is a joint effort involving the leaders, the members, other volunteers such as merit badge counselors or Venturing consultants, and the family. Though much is done individually at their own pace, youth often work together in groups to focus on achievements and electives at Cub Scout den meetings, for example, or participate in a Boy Scout campout or Sea Scout cruise. As they do this, we must recognize each young person's unique combination of strengths and weaknesses. As watchful leaders, either adult or youth, we lend assistance as called for and encourage members to help each other according to their abilities.

2.0.0.4 The Methods of Scouting

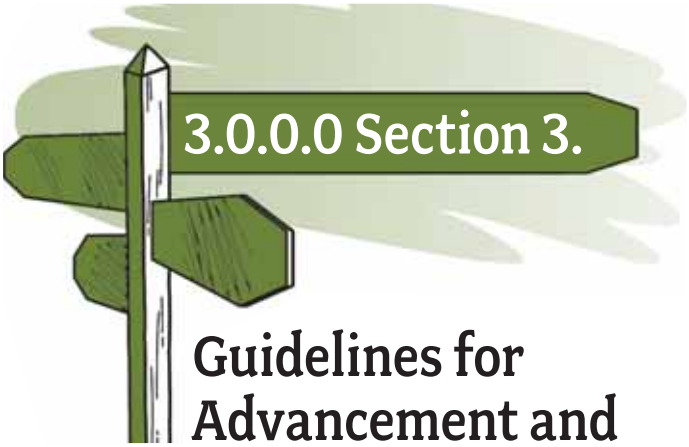
Though the methods vary somewhat from program to program, obvious similarities exist.

Cub Scouting	Boy Scouting and Varsity Scouting	Venturing	Sea Scouts
Living the ideals	Ideals	The ideals	Ideals
Belonging to a den	Patrol method	Group activities	Group activities
Using advancement	Advancement	Recognition (advancement)	Advancement
Involving family and home	Association with adults	Adult association	Adult association
Participating in activities	Outdoors	High adventure and sports	High adventure, outdoors, nautical activities
Serving neighborhood and community	Leadership development	Leadership	Leadership
Wearing the uniform	Uniform	*Though not an expressed method, a uniform is available and often worn*	Uniform
Character Connections®	Personal growth	Teaching others	Teaching others

From Cub Scouting through Venturing and Sea Scouts, we put the methods to work. Together they lead to mission fulfillment. For example, Scouting ideals, put forth in the timeless instruments of the Scout Oath and Scout Law, represent the most basic method. Moving on, we know young people want to belong to groups. Throughout the Scouting program, we provide a place where the sense of belonging is an outcome of practicing skills, exploring interests, learning values, forming friendships, and enjoying adventure. Associations within families and with a variety of adults are critical methods too, especially in terms of providing support and recognition and in developing mutual respect.

Advancement is the method by which we promote and encourage the ongoing involvement and commitment that keeps members coming back for more. It works best when it is built into a unit's program so that simply participating leads to meaningful achievement and recognition—and to a continually improving readiness for more complex experiences.

For more about these and the other methods of Scouting, see the leader manuals specific to each program.



Guidelines for Advancement and Recognition Committees

Council and district advancement and recognition committees (generally referred to in this guide simply as council or district advancement committees) are responsible for implementing and facilitating advancement and processing most special awards and recognitions. This is done according to national procedures and local practices under the direction of the council executive board. Advancement committees operate under the Boy Scouts of America program function. They should cooperate with the other program function elements—outdoor programs, activities and civic service, and training—and also with the membership, finance, and unit-service functions. Accepting the responsibilities outlined in the following pages will help to accomplish this.

Advancement committees operate under the Boy Scouts of America program function. They should cooperate with the other program function elements—outdoor programs, activities and civic service, and training—and also with the membership, finance, and unit-service functions.

3.0.0.1 Council Advancement Committee Responsibilities

The council advancement committee often falls under a vice president for program. The committee's members should represent a breadth of experience in all Scouting programs. Normally, district advancement chairs are included. The council professional staff advisor for advancement provides coaching and guidance—especially as it relates to national policies and procedures. The advancement chair and the staff advisor work together closely, and in harmony with the other efforts and functions involved in delivering and supporting the Scouting program.

A full, functioning council advancement committee should be organized to accomplish the following.

1. Recruit enough committee members to fulfill the responsibilities described below and achieve council advancement objectives.
2. Provide members with ongoing training to maintain awareness of updated procedures, best practices, and details related to all programs of the Boy Scouts of America—Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, and Sea Scouts. See "Building an Advancement Committee," 3.0.0.5.
3. Establish objectives and action plans that stimulate advancement and lead to maximum success in Scouting's Journey to Excellence.
4. Inspire a positive working relationship with district advancement committees, providing clear guidance and direction on their responsibilities and objectives.
5. Plan, present, and submit for the council calendar those advancement conferences and training experiences that will strengthen the performance of district and unit advancement volunteers.
6. As appropriate, support advancement elements involved in training, and in events and activities presented by other council committees.
7. Support outdoor programs where advancement may take place, such as day camps, Cub Scout resident camp, long-term camping experiences, and specialized activities featuring advancement.
8. Establish local practices for adhering to National Council advancement procedures at outdoor programs, summer camp, and events such as merit badge fairs or midways.
9. Support and promote the BSA's Internet Advancement reporting. Accurate advancement records are critical to program planning and analysis. Councils should work toward 100 percent electronic data entry.
10. Share advancement statistics for use in council fundraising materials and for supporting membership recruitment and retention efforts and commissioner service.
11. See to an effective merit badge program administered at either council or district level that functions according to national procedures and recruits, approves, trains, and makes known sufficient counselors to meet the needs of the council.
12. Determine, according to national procedures, consistent and appropriate methods for approving Eagle Scout service project proposals and fundraising applications, providing Eagle Scout service project coaches, and conducting Eagle Scout boards of review and Quartermaster bridges of review.

13. Determine methods of collecting Eagle Scout or Quartermaster references.
14. Know and precisely follow official procedures for appeals and time-extension requests.
15. Know and follow proper procedures for considering special needs cases involving alternative requirements and merit badges, and registration beyond the normal age of eligibility.
16. Participate in considering and presenting special awards and recognitions according to established council procedures. This responsibility may or may not include the Silver Beaver Award.
17. Support and promote the religious emblems program. A very small percentage of members earn a religious award. Committees should work to build on this important element of spiritual growth.
18. Process lifesaving and meritorious action awards according to council practices and national procedures.
19. Notify the media to recognize significant youth achievements, such as Eagle Scout or Quartermaster rank, the Venturing Silver Award, lifesaving and meritorious action awards, and other noteworthy accomplishments.

3.0.0.2 District Advancement Committee Responsibilities

Although the council advancement committee or executive board determines specific responsibilities for district advancement committees, district advancement chairs report to their respective district chairs. The following is a guide to the responsibilities that might be established.

1. Recruit enough members to fulfill the responsibilities and accomplish any objectives established by the council advancement committee or executive board.
2. Provide members with ongoing training to maintain awareness of updated procedures, best practices, and details related to Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, and Sea Scouts. See "Building an Advancement Committee," 3.0.0.5.
3. Establish objectives and implement action plans that stimulate advancement and lead to maximum success in the Journey to Excellence.
4. Maintain advancement records and share them with commissioners, trainers, and other district volunteers who serve units. Point out units with little or no advancement.
5. Plan, present, and submit for the district and council calendars those advancement conferences and training experiences that will improve the results of unit advancement volunteers.
6. As appropriate, support advancement elements involved in training, and in events and activities presented by other committees of the district.
7. Support outdoor programs where advancement may take place, such as district day camps, camporees, etc.
8. Support and promote the BSA's Internet Advancement. Accurate advancement records are critical to program planning and analysis. Districts should work toward 100 percent electronic data entry.
9. Follow national and local council procedures in administering the merit badge program and in recruiting, approving, and training a sufficient number of merit badge counselors. Provide units with access to a current listing of council-approved merit badge counselors.
10. Follow national and local council procedures as prescribed regarding appeals, Eagle Scout and Quartermaster references, service project proposal approvals, boards and bridges of review support, and time extensions.
11. Support and promote the religious emblems program. A very small percentage of members earn a religious award. Committees should work to build on this important element of spiritual growth.
12. Recommend, according to council and district practices, recipients for the Award of Merit or other recognitions.
13. Notify the media to recognize significant youth achievements such as Eagle Scout or Quartermaster rank, Venturing Silver Award, lifesaving and meritorious action awards, and other noteworthy accomplishments.
14. To strengthen units through strong advancement programs, consider the following:
    a. Assist unit commissioners and others who serve units.
    b. Serve as a resource for roundtables.
    c. Develop relationships with unit advancement volunteers.
    d. Provide units with advancement reports, summarizing and explaining what they mean.
    e. Assist unit leadership with advancement planning and promotion.
    f. Visit pack, troop, team, crew, and ship committee meetings, as warranted.
    g. Visit boards of review, as warranted.

h. Help troops, teams, crews, and ships avoid pitfalls as qualified youth strive for Eagle Scout rank, the Silver Award, or the Quartermaster rank.

i. Encourage prompt and proper recognition, ceremonies, and courts of honor.

j. Recognize units excelling in advancement.

k. According to local council practices, assemble lists of consultants and other resources important to Venturing advancement.

3.0.0.3 Unit Advancement Responsibilities

Unit advancement coordinators (or chairs) and those who assist them have the basic responsibility to support the unit's advancement program, to maximize rank achievement, and otherwise facilitate a smooth implementation of the process. Specific responsibilities are outlined in the leader literature for each program. The following responsibilities are not all-inclusive, but typical.

1. Support and facilitate the unit leader's vision for advancement, providing consultation on the policies and procedures put forth in the *Guide to Advancement.*
2. Educate parents, guardians, unit leadership, and committee members on appropriate methods to stimulate and encourage advancement. For example, help build unit programming rich in advancement opportunities, encourage members who are advancing slowly, and post advancement charts.
3. Help plan, facilitate, or conduct advancement ceremonies. In troops, teams, and crews, schedule and support regular courts of honor—quarterly is generally sufficient. Ships will want regular bridges of honor, and packs should make recognition a key part of every pack meeting.
4. Obtain necessary badges and certificates, etc., and arrange for timely presentation of ranks, Arrow Points, merit badges, awards, and other recognitions. It is best to obtain and present these as soon as possible after they are earned. They can then be re-presented in more formal settings.
5. Ensure Cub Scouts advance in rank annually by the blue and gold dinner (or similar event) or by school year's end.
6. Know and understand the advancement procedures for the program served, especially those applicable to Eagle Scout and Quartermaster candidates.
7. Assist the unit leader in establishing practices that will provide opportunities for each new Boy Scout to achieve First Class rank within 12 to 18 months of joining, and Star rank soon thereafter.
8. Arrange for timely (monthly suggested) boards of review, and see that Scouts ready for them are invited.
9. Maintain advancement records and submit reports to the unit committee. It is appropriate in Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, and Sea Scouts to involve youth leaders in this process.
10. Use the BSA's Internet Advancement to report advancement to the local council.
11. Keep a current and accessible copy of the district or council merit badge counselor list. As needed to fill in, develop and maintain a list of unit merit badge counselors. Note that *all* merit badge counselors must be registered as such, annually, and also approved through the council advancement committee.
12. In troops, teams, crews, and ships, work with the unit's youth leadership to maintain a library of advancement literature, such as merit badge pamphlets and the annual *Boy Scout Requirements* book.
13. Learn about other BSA awards and recognition opportunities that may be helpful in delivering a well-rounded unit program. A good resource for this is the *Guide to Awards and Insignia*.

3.0.0.4 Awards and Recognitions

Awards and recognitions by definition are not part of the advancement plan. They supplement it in many ways, however, and often lead to increased retention. Some awards and recognitions are for youth members, some for adults, and some for both. Some are earned, while others are presented in honor of service rendered. Awards and recognitions can be administered by a council advancement committee or by other committees or task forces as determined by a council executive board.

For more information about awards, visit Awards Central at http://www.scouting.org/Awards_Central.aspx. Application and nomination forms are available at http://www.scouting.org/forms.aspx. In most cases, the forms provide details on where to send the paperwork and also list any additional information that might be required. Questions about awards and recognitions should be directed to the Youth Development Team, Program Impact Department, at the national office.

A separate publication, the *Guide to Awards and Insignia*, released in 2012, is a central source for building a deeper understanding of the opportunities available.

3.0.0.5 Building an Advancement Committee

To accomplish the suggested responsibilities outlined in 3.0.0.1 and 3.0.0.2 above, council and district advancement committees need to be well staffed and

organized. The following positions, in addition to the council advancement chair and any vice chairs, are suggested for a council advancement committee:

1. District advancement chairs support coordinator
2. Volunteerism specialist
3. Advancement promotions specialist
4. Advancement training and events coordinator
5. Camping committee and outdoors program liaison
6. Records keeper, statistician
7. Internet Advancement specialist
8. Merit badge chair
9. Eagle Scout issues coordinator
10. Special needs Scouting specialist
11. Awards and recognition chair
12. Religious emblems coordinator

For thoughts on what each position might entail, look at the October 2011 through December 2012/January 2013 issues of *Advancement News* found in the archive at http://www.scouting.org/GuideToAdvancement/Advancement_News.aspx. A list of positions for a district advancement committee could be very similar. The organization of advancement committees is a local council decision. The above is offered only as a guide in establishing a committee that could fulfill its various traditional responsibilities and also meet the Journey to Excellence call to positively influence the rate of advancement.

Thoughts on where to find advancement committee members were covered in the "Advancement Committee Mechanics" feature of *Advancement News* in the November 2011 and February and March 2012 issues.

Unit advancement coordinators are good prospects for district advancement committees. They become well versed in best practices, policies, procedures, and responsibilities, and may be able to provide vital information on the needs of the units. They also know what it takes to increase the rate of advancement. Note that membership on any advancement committee should reflect and support the variety of programs offered in the council or district.

3.0.0.6 Orientation and Education Opportunities for Advancement Administrators

Training is the foundation for successful leadership in the BSA, and this is no less true for those working in advancement. The national Advancement Committee's Webinars and Education Task Force has produced a number of educational presentations based on the *Guide to Advancement.* These presentations may be downloaded from http://www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/resources.aspx. The sessions are of varying lengths and suitable for personal review or use in instructor-led training. Each presentation has an expiration date and instructions on how to download an updated version when the time comes. New courses will be added periodically to meet specific advancement needs according to feedback received through advancement.team@scouting.org. Additional resources such as *Advancement News* provide ongoing information as well to help advancement administrators provide quality service.

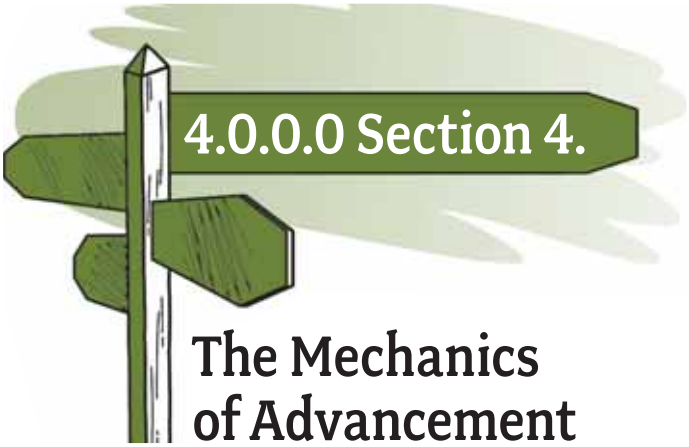
Upon release of this edition of the *Guide to Advancement*, the following educational presentations were available at http://www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/resources.aspx.

Getting the Most From Internet Advancement. This PowerPoint presentation with speaker notes and an FAQ sheet, 60 to 90 minutes, guides participants through methods to make effective use of the Internet Advancement software.

The Essentials of Merit Badge Counseling. This PowerPoint presentation with speaker notes, 60 to 90 minutes, helps merit badge counselors understand their role in the BSA advancement program and the proper methods to use in working with the youth.

Videocasts based on the *Guide to Advancement* and *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook.* These nine PowerPoint presentations of varying lengths, converted to video, help orient volunteer advancement administrators with the following fundamental publications of the Boy Scout advancement program.

1. Introduction to the *Guide to Advancement*
2. Judgment Calls ("Active," Positions of Responsibility, Scout Spirit, and "Reasonable")
3. The Merit Badge Program
4. Boards of Review
5. The Eagle Scout Service Project
6. The Eagle Scout Application Process
7. Eagle Scout Boards of Review
8. Boards of Review Under Disputed Circumstances
9. Appeals of a Board of Review Decision



The Mechanics of Advancement

Advancement in each Scouting program is designed to be age-appropriate for the youth eligible to participate in it. Ranks form the foundation for the experiences; they are established and authorized by the National Executive Board of the Boy Scouts of America and described in the various member handbooks. The advancement program is administered by a combination of adult and youth leaders, with young people taking more responsibility as the members progress. The role of parents also differs with member age and ability, but parents are encouraged to be engaged at all levels.

4.0.0.1 Changes to Requirements

Advancement requirements change from time to time. For Boy Scouting and Varsity Scouting, check the latest annual edition of *Boy Scout Requirements*. Once a new or revised requirement appears in that publication, which is released each January, any Scout beginning work on his next rank or Eagle Palm must use the new or revised requirement as stated there.

If a new or revised rank or Eagle Palm requirement is first introduced in a reprinting of the *Scout Handbook* after the January release of the *Boy Scout Requirements* book, then the Scout has until the following January 1 to decide what to do. He may either continue—or begin work—using the old requirements, or he may switch to—or begin work—using the new requirements. If he chooses to use the old requirements, he may continue using them until he has completed the rank. Sometimes, however—especially for more significant changes—the *Scout Handbook*, the *Boy Scout Requirements* book, or official communications from the National Council may set forth a different procedure that must be used and may establish a date by when use of the old requirements must cease.

For Cub Scouting, Venturing, or Sea Scouts, revisions to rank or Venturing award requirements are introduced in the youth handbook. Unless the handbook says differently, the following applies: The member has until the next January 1 to decide whether to continue work—or to begin work—on the old requirements, or to switch to—or begin work—using the new requirements. Unless otherwise stated in the youth handbook or through official communications from the National Council, if a Cub Scout, Venturer, or Sea Scout chooses to use the old requirements, he or she may continue using them until the rank or award is completed.

For handling changes to merit badge requirements, see "What to Do When Requirements Change," 7.0.4.3.

If BSA membership eligibility rules change, and as a result a former member rejoins a BSA program, still as a youth member, then that youth may carry on in the advancement program, picking up where he left off when last he was a member, but not receiving credit for activities while not registered. A former member who is no longer eligible to participate in a BSA program as a youth member due to age, for example, can neither receive credit for completing advancement requirements nor be awarded any advancement-oriented recognition such as ranks or merit badges, etc., that under the rules in effect at the time of his youth membership he was ineligible to earn.

4.0.0.2 Reporting Advancement

All Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, and Sea Scout ranks, and all Venturing advancement awards must be reported to local councils. The best and most accurate method is through the BSA's Internet Advancement (see "Internet Advancement Highlights," 6.0.0.0, for more detail on reporting). At the council's discretion, the paper form, Advancement Report, No. 34403, may also be submitted, as may electronic files generated by unit management software such as TroopMaster©.



Council advancement committees may elect to accept a completed Eagle Scout Rank Application that is signed by the board of review chair and the Scout executive, in lieu of an advancement report form.

All badges of rank, merit badges, Eagle Palms, and Venturing awards are restricted items. Unit leadership may not purchase these insignia for presentation without having filed an advancement report with the local council.

Units should report advancement monthly. This assures member records are complete. Missing reports are a serious issue, for example, when it comes to documenting advancement for boards of review, the Eagle Scout rank, and membership transfers or reinstatements. To reflect an accurate count in the Journey to Excellence performance recognition program, it is also important that all advancement for a calendar year be recorded during that year.

4.0.0.3 Age Exception for Youth With Special Needs

Youth members with severe and permanent mental or physical disabilities may work toward ranks, Eagle Palms, or Venturing awards even after they have passed the chronological age of eligibility for a program. For details, see section 10, "Advancement for Members With Special Needs," topic 10.1.0.0, "Registering Qualified Members Beyond Age of Eligibility."

4.1.0.0 Mechanics of Advancement: In Cub Scouting

4.1.0.1 Delivering the Cub Scout Program

Den leaders, Cubmasters, and their assistants conduct meetings implementing the three steps in Cub Scout advancement: preparation, qualification, and recognition. The *Den & Pack Meeting Resource Guide*, No. 34409, explains the mechanics for doing so while helping to maximize advancement. It has four parts: Overview of Cub Scouting and Using the *Den & Pack Meeting Resource Guide;* Den Meeting Plans; Pack Meeting Plans; and Resources, Forms, and Applications. Den meetings—ideally two per month—support a traditional school year and are designed to result in advancement for all boys. Supplemental plans provide flexibility for dens that meet more often and to facilitate summertime den and pack activities or adjustments for different school schedules. To achieve a full experience and the greatest impact, regular "home assignments" challenge and encourage parents and sons to work together. Packs should meet monthly to assure timely recognition of the Cub Scouts' efforts.

4.1.0.2 The Role of the Pack Committee

Den leaders, Cubmasters, and their assistants stimulate interest in advancement and present the program where it occurs. The responsibility for Cub Scout advancement *administration,* however, belongs to a pack committee ("Unit Advancement Responsibilities," 3.0.0.3). The pack committee collects den advancement reports, compiles and maintains them in pack records, reports advancement to the council (see "Internet Advancement Highlights," 6.0.0.0), purchases awards and ensures their prompt presentation, and helps plan and facilitate various ceremonies. The committee may also recommend special pack activities that lead to greater levels of achievement.

Consult the *Cub Scout Leader Book,* No. 33221, to learn more about the responsibilities of the pack committee.

4.1.0.3 Who Approves Cub Scout Advancement?

A key responsibility for den leaders is to implement the core den meeting plans as outlined in the *Den & Pack Meeting Resource Guide*, No. 34409. For the Bobcat trail and Tiger Cub achievements, parents (or adult partners) should sign in the boy's handbook; the den leader then approves as progress is recorded in the den's advancement record. For Wolf, Bear, and Webelos advancement, den leaders take the lead in approving requirements, though their assistants, and also parents who help at meetings, may be asked to play the role of "Akela" and assist. Parents sign for requirements that, according to meeting plans and instructions in the handbooks, take place at home.

Akela (Ah-KAY-la) is a title of respect used in Cub Scouting—any good leader is Akela, who is also the leader and guide for Cub Scouts on the advancement trail.

4.1.0.4 "Do Your Best"

Cub Scouts—even those of the same age—may have very different developmental timetables. For this reason, advancement performance in Cub Scouting is centered on its motto: "Do Your Best." When a boy has done this—his very best—then regardless of the requirements for any rank or award, it is enough; accomplishment is

noted. This is why den leaders, assistants, and parents or guardians are involved in approvals. Generally they know if effort put forth is really the Cub Scout's best.

In the same spirit as "Do Your Best," if a boy is close to earning a badge of rank when the school year ends, the pack committee, in consultation with the den leader and the Cub Scout's parent or guardian, may allow him a few weeks to complete the badge before going on to the next rank. Earning it will give him added incentive to continue in Scouting and carry on and tackle the next rank.

4.1.1.0 Cub Scout Ranks

The Cub Scout program is centered primarily in the den, the home, and the neighborhood, but often takes place in the outdoors. It leads to advancement through six ranks.

A new member begins with the Bobcat badge. He may work simultaneously on the Cub Scout rank appropriate to his age or grade but must complete the Bobcat badge before being awarded his rank badge. Once he has progressed past Bobcat, he continues to move forward. In other words, he does not go back and work on ranks that he missed due to his age. Upon earning the Webelos badge and the Arrow of Light Award, he will also have learned most of the requirements for the Scout badge as he begins his journey through Boy Scouting.

4.1.1.1 Bobcat



Regardless of what age or grade a boy joins Cub Scouting, the Bobcat badge is completed first, before any other rank may be awarded. The trail to Bobcat involves learning about the values, signs, and symbols of the Boy Scouts of America and Cub Scouting.

Tiger Cub rank is for boys who have completed kindergarten or are 7 years old.

4.1.1.2 Tiger Cub



Boys who have completed kindergarten or are 7 years old work on the Tiger Cub badge. However, before being awarded the badge they must first earn Bobcat. The 15 Tiger Cub requirements are divided evenly among five achievements. Each of the five includes a family activity, a den activity, and a den outing called a "Go See It."

While working on his Bobcat badge, a Tiger Cub will complete requirements for the Immediate Recognition emblem. Then he adds a bead upon completing each of the 15 parts of the achievements. White beads are for family activities, orange for den activities, and black for Go See It outings. Note that the Immediate Recognition emblem is not a rank.



Once a boy has earned his Tiger Cub badge, he can earn "Tiger Track" beads. These spark interest in new hobbies, activities, or skills. The flat, yellow beads are added to the Immediate Recognition emblem. One is awarded for every 10 electives finished. The elective activities appear in the youth handbook. There is no limit to the number of Tiger Track beads a boy can earn, and he can repeat electives at the discretion of the den leader and adult partner. A boy can work on them at the same time as achievements, but he does not receive beads until he has earned the Tiger Cub badge.

Although participation with an adult partner is required for all Tiger Cub awards, recognition items are for boys only.

The Wolf rank is for boys who have completed first grade or are 8 years old.

4.1.1.3 Wolf



For the Wolf rank, the experience engages 12 achievements involving age-appropriate physical and mental skills covering—for example—knowledge of the U.S. flag, a Cub Scout's religious duties, and other educational activities. When the 12 are completed, the Wolf badge is presented at a pack meeting.

The Bear rank is for boys who have completed second grade or are 9 years old.

4.1.1.4 Bear



For the Bear rank, 12 achievements are required, just as for Wolf. However, boys have 24 from which to choose, organized into four categories: God, Country, Family, and Self. The requirements are more challenging than those for the Wolf rank.

4.1.1.5 Progress Toward Ranks Emblem



The Progress Toward Ranks emblem provides for immediate acknowledgment as Wolf and Bear Cub Scouts complete their achievements. It replaces the Tiger Cub Immediate Recognition emblem hanging from the button on the right pocket of the uniform shirt. It features a lanyard divided in two: one for Wolf, one for Bear. When a boy completes three achievements, he earns a bead: yellow for Wolf, red for Bear.

4.1.1.6 Arrow Points



A newly recognized Wolf or Bear Cub Scout then turns his attention to Arrow Points. Arrow Points develop interests and teach skills, many of which are useful in Boy Scouting. One is awarded for every 10 electives: a Gold Arrow for the first 10, and Silver for every 10 thereafter. There is no limit to the number of Silver Arrows that can be awarded, but they must be completed before a boy moves to the next rank's program. Boys can choose from a number of electives; each represents an opportunity for experiential learning. Though designed to broaden horizons, those so designated may be earned multiple times; but when a boy repeats an elective, he should get credit only when his skills have improved over the previous experience. Boys may work on elective projects concurrently with achievements, but cannot receive Arrow Points until they earn the badge for their age or grade level.

Unused Bear badge achievements, or parts of achievements that were used for the Bear badge, may be counted toward Arrow Points. For example, in Bear Achievement 9, "What's Cooking," four of seven parts listed are required for the achievement. The other three may be used as electives toward Arrow Points. Since 12 achievements will have been used to earn the Bear badge, electives may also be chosen from any of the remaining 12. For the Wolf badge, only electives may be used to earn Arrow Points. Once a boy moves to the next Cub Scouting rank level, he may not earn Arrow Points from the earlier rank.

Webelos, an acronym for "WE'll BE LOyal Scouts," is the rank for boys who have completed third grade or are 10 years old. Webelos Scouts can choose between the diamond and oval patches for uniform wear.

4.1.1.7 Webelos Badge



The Webelos Scout advancement plan has two primary components: the Webelos badge and the Arrow of Light Award. Both are based on activity badges that range from Aquanaut and Sportsman to Geologist and Forester (see "More on Webelos Activity Badges," 4.1.2.3). The Webelos badge calls for earning three of them, along with several other requirements listed in the *Webelos Handbook*.

There are 20 activity badges in all. Webelos Scouts may earn as many as they like.



Sportsman



Artist



Scientist



Craftsman



Communicator

4.1.1.8 Compass Points



Compass points recognize progress beyond the Webelos badge and offer intermediate recognition leading to the Arrow of Light Award. The compass points emblem is presented to each boy who earns seven activity badges—four in addition to those required for Webelos rank. For every four thereafter, a metal compass point is pinned to the emblem. It takes 19 activity badges to earn the emblem and all three points.

4.1.1.9 The Arrow of Light Award



The Arrow of Light Award is Cub Scouting's highest rank. It is earned after fulfilling the requirements for the Webelos badge, usually during the second-year Webelos program. Much of the experience gives Webelos Scouts the chance to practice skills that prepare them to become Boy Scouts. Once completed, the award should be presented during an impressive pack ceremony involving Scouts from a local Scout troop. Their involvement may encourage eventual "bridging" recipients into the troop.

The Arrow of Light Award may be completed only while the following four conditions are met: (1) The Webelos Scout has been registered and active for at least six months since completing the fourth grade or since turning 10 years old; (2) he is still registered in a pack or as a Lone Cub Scout; (3) he has not yet joined a troop; and (4) he has either not yet graduated from the fifth grade or has not yet turned 11, whichever is the latter.

Webelos Scouts who have earned the Arrow of Light Award have also learned most of the requirements for the Scout badge. The Scout badge, however, should not be presented to the Webelos Scout until he has joined a troop and his Scoutmaster has initialed his joining requirements in his Boy Scout Handbook.

The minimum age for a Cub Scout who has earned the Arrow of Light Award to become a Boy Scout is 10 years old. One of the Boy Scout joining requirements as stated in the *Boy Scout Handbook* is this: "Be a boy who is 11 years old, or one who has completed the fifth grade or earned the Arrow of Light Award and is at least 10 years old …"

The Arrow of Light Award is the only Cub Scout badge authorized to be worn on the Boy Scout uniform once a boy transitions into a troop; it is worn below the left pocket. On adult uniforms, the Arrow of Light Award is recognized with a red and green square knot worn above the left pocket.

All achievements, electives, and other requirements for Cub Scout ranks are shown in the respective handbooks. The Webelos Handbook *includes requirements for the Webelos badge, Arrow of Light Award, and all activity badges.*



4.1.2.0 Cub Scouting Activity-Based Programs

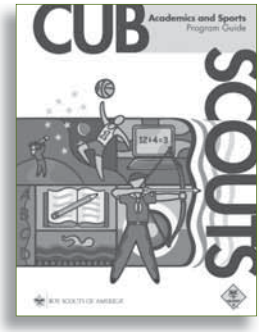
Many activities and related awards are available for Cub Scouts, dens, and packs. A few are outlined here. Others are covered in the *Cub Scout Leader Book*, No. 33221, and featured in the *Guide to Awards and Insignia*.

4.1.2.1 Fun for the Family Program



Cub Scouting's Fun for the Family program is a series of activities designed to help strengthen families. All family members are encouraged to participate and earn the Fun for the Family Award. Details can be found in *Fun for the Family*, No. 33012. The award includes patches along with Fun for the Family program pins in five categories.

4.1.2.2 Cub Scout Academics and Sports Program



More than just a recognition opportunity, this program develops new skills, improves those existing, and otherwise enriches Cub Scouting. Details can be found in the *Cub Scout Academics and Sports Program Guide*, No. 34299. Activities include subjects like science, video games, collecting, and chess; and sports such as baseball, skateboarding, and table tennis. Each has two levels—a belt loop and a pin. Belt loops are awarded when each of three requirements is met. Cub Scouts may then continue with additional requirements and earn the pin. Belt loops and pins may be earned more than one time. Archery and BB gun shooting are included, but can only be conducted at a council-presented activity with certified supervisors.

4.1.2.3 More on Webelos Activity Badges

Activity badges help Webelos Scouts develop interests in areas that may lead to hobbies or career choices. The projects involved help accomplish the purposes of Cub Scouting while providing the foundation for exciting and worthwhile den meetings. Some badges may occupy a den for a few weeks; others may take longer. Families are encouraged to work at home with their boys on projects begun at den meetings, but the Webelos den leader approves completed work.

The Webelos den leader and assistant(s), and the den chief, may handle portions of instruction during meetings.

But the badges will have more meaning when a knowledgeable activity badge counselor teaches most of the requirements, provides resources, leads field trips, and gives other useful service. A parent or family member, pack leader, teacher, coach, or other adult with talents or skills related to the specific badges may serve in this capacity. A local Scoutmaster or the district advancement chair can help identify merit badge counselors who might also work with related activity badges.

Note that except for the references to merit badge counselors, the policies and procedures for activity badges offered through non-Scouting organizations or businesses, and those regarding charging fees for activity badge opportunities, are the same as those described in section 7, "The Merit Badge Program," topics 7.0.4.9 and 7.0.4.10.

4.2.0.0 Mechanics of Advancement: In Boy Scouting and Varsity Scouting





Both adult and youth leaders approve Boy Scout and Varsity Scout advancement. This permits greater emphasis on standards and more consistency in measurement, but it also places another level of importance on teaching and testing. As Scouts work with one another, learning takes place on both sides of the equation as they play teacher and student in turn. Parents are involved at home encouraging, mentoring, and supporting, but they do not sign for rank advancement requirements unless they serve as leaders or Lone Scout counselors (see "Lone Scouting," 5.0.3.0).

Advancement at this level presents a Scout with a series of challenges in a fun and educational manner. As he completes the requirements he achieves the three aims of Scouting: to develop character, to train in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and to develop physical and mental fitness. It is important to remember that in the end, a badge recognizes the Scout has gone through an experience of learning something he didn't previously know. As a result, through increased confidence, he discovers or realizes he is able to learn similar skills or disciplines. Advancement is thus about what a young man is now able to learn and to do, and how he has grown. Retention of skills and knowledge is then developed later by using what has been learned through the natural course of unit programming; for example, instructing others and using skills in games and on outings.

Advancement, thus, is not so much a reward for what has been done. It is, instead, more about the journey: As a Scout advances, he is measured and he grows in confidence and self-reliance, and he builds upon his skills and abilities. The badge signifies that a young man—through participation in a series of educational activities—has provided service to others, practiced personal responsibility, and set the examples critical to the development of leadership; all the while working to live by the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

The badge signifies a young man has provided service to others, practiced personal responsibility, and set the examples critical to the development of leadership.

4.2.0.1 Scouting Ranks and Advancement Age Requirements

All Boy Scout awards, merit badges, badges of rank, and Eagle Palms are for registered Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, and Lone Scouts; and also for qualified Venturers or Sea Scouts who are not yet 18 years old. Venturers and Sea Scouts qualify by achieving First Class rank as a Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, or Lone Scout. The only exceptions for those older than age 18 are related to Scouts registered beyond the age of eligibility ("Registering Qualified Members Beyond Age of Eligibility," 10.1.0.0) and those who have been granted time extensions to complete the Eagle Scout rank ("Time Extensions," 9.0.4.0).

After being awarded the Scout badge, there are six ranks in Boy Scouting that are to be earned sequentially no matter what age a boy joins the program.



Tenderfoot



Second Class



First Class

The first three ranks are oriented toward learning and practicing skills that will help the Scout develop confidence and fitness, challenge his thought processes, introduce him to his responsibilities as a citizen, and prepare him for an exciting and successful Scouting experience. Requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class may be passed at any time after the joining requirements have been met. For example, a Scout working toward Tenderfoot may fulfill and be signed off on all the first aid–related requirements for all three of the ranks. For information on boards of review for these ranks, see "Particulars for Tenderfoot Through Life Ranks (or Palms)," 8.0.2.0, especially point No. 7.


Star


Life



Eagle

All requirements for Star, Life, and Eagle, except for those related to merit badges, must be fulfilled after the successful completion of a board of review for the previous rank.

In Boy Scouting, advancement requirements must be passed as written. If, for example, a requirement uses words like "show," "demonstrate," or "discuss," then that is what Scouts must do.

4.2.1.0 Four Steps in Advancement

A Scout advances from Tenderfoot to Eagle by doing things with his patrol and troop, with his leaders, and on his own. A well-rounded and active unit program that generates advancement as a natural outcome should take boys to First Class in their first 12 to 18 months of membership. Advancement is a straightforward matter when the four steps or stages outlined below are observed and integrated into troop programming. The same steps apply to Varsity Scouting, or where members are qualified to continue with Boy Scout advancement in Venturing or Sea Scouts. In these cases, references to troops and various troop leaders would point to teams, crews, and ships, and their respective leaders.



4.2.1.1 The Scout Learns

He learns by doing, and as he learns, he grows in his ability to do his part as a member of the patrol and troop. As he develops knowledge and skill, he is asked to teach others; and in this way he learns and develops leadership.

4.2.1.2 The Scout Is Tested

The unit leader authorizes those who may test and pass the Scout on rank requirements. They might include his patrol leader, senior patrol leader, an assistant unit leader, another Scout, or the unit leader. Merit badge counselors teach and test him on requirements for merit badges.

Once a Scout has been tested and signed off by someone approved to do so, the requirement has been met. The unit leader is accountable for ensuring proper advancement procedures are followed. A part of this responsibility includes the careful selection and training of those who approve advancement. If a unit leader believes a boy has not learned the subject matter for a requirement, he or she should see that opportunities are made available for the Scout to practice or teach the requirement, so in this way he may complete his learning and further develop his skills.

4.2.1.3 The Scout Is Reviewed

After he has completed all requirements for a rank, the Scout meets with a board of review. For Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, and Life ranks, and Eagle Palms, members of the unit committee conduct it. See "Particulars for Tenderfoot Through Life Ranks (or Palms)," 8.0.2.0. The Eagle Scout board of review is held in accordance with National Council and local council procedures.

4.2.1.4 The Scout Is Recognized

When the board of review has approved his advancement, the Scout deserves recognition as soon as possible. This should be done at a ceremony at the next unit meeting. His achievement may be recognized again later, during a formal court of honor.

4.2.1.5 After the Scout Is Tested and Recognized

After the Scout is tested and recognized, a well-organized unit program will help him practice his skills in different settings and methods: at unit meetings; through various activities and outings; by teaching other Scouts, enjoying games, and leading projects; and so forth. These activities reinforce the learning, show how Scout skills and

knowledge are applied, and build confidence. Repetition is the key; this is how retention is achieved. The Scout fulfills a requirement and then is placed in a situation where he has to put it to work. If he has forgotten what he learned, he may have to seek out a friend, leader, or other resource to help refresh his memory. As he does so, we are able to watch him grow.

4.2.2.0 Varsity Scouting Particulars

Rank requirements for Varsity Scouts are the same as for Boy Scouts, except positions of responsibility are met in Varsity-specific roles that can be found in *Boy Scout Requirements*. Advancement is supervised not by adult leaders, but by a young man called an advancement program manager, with assistance from a team committee member. Methods for conducting boards of review are covered in "Boards of Review: An Overview for All Ranks," 8.0.0.0. Council and district advancement committees should consult the *Varsity Scout Guidebook*, No. 34827, for a full understanding of how the program works.

4.2.2.1 Varsity Scout Letter

The Varsity Scout letter is available to Varsity Scouts and adult team leaders. Requirements include attendance at meetings and activities, active participation in high-adventure or sports programs, and living the Scout Oath and Scout Law. It can be worn on the Varsity Scout jacket or the merit badge sash. Gold bars may be added to signify additional letters earned. For more, see the *Varsity Scout Guidebook*, No. 34827.

4.2.2.2 Varsity Scout Denali Award



The Denali Award is a Varsity Scouting pinnacle. It is available only to team members who have earned a Varsity letter, and features requirements such as advancement in rank, a position of leadership, and service as a team captain or program manager leading and supporting activities. A unit level board of review is conducted according to the procedures outlined in section 8, "Boards of Review: An Overview for All Ranks." District or council representatives are not involved. Note the exception under 8.0.2.0, "Particulars for Tenderfoot Through Life Ranks or Palms," relating to the composition of the board.

4.2.3.0 Rank Requirements Overview

When people are asked what they did in Scouting, or what it is they think Scouts do or learn, they most often mention the outdoor activities, such as camping and hiking. A First Class Scout would surely add first aid or fire building or swimming or cooking or knot tying. And those who made at least Star or Life would doubtless talk about the merit badges they had earned to achieve those ranks—especially those required for Eagle. But these hands-on experiences, as memorable as they are, make up only a portion of what must be done to advance. And the remaining requirements—those beyond the merit badges and skills activities—are generally the most difficult to administer and judge. This section concentrates on those. Consult the *Scoutmaster Handbook*, No. 33009, for guidance on implementing the others.

The concepts of "reasonable" and "within reason" will help unit leadership and boards of review gauge the fairness of expectations for considering whether a Scout is "active" or has fulfilled positions of responsibility. A unit is allowed of course, to establish expectations acceptable to its chartered organization and unit committee. But for advancement purposes, Scouts must not be held to those which are so demanding as to be impractical for today's youth (and families) to achieve.

Ultimately, a board of review shall decide what is reasonable and what is not. In doing so, the board members must use common sense and must take into account that youth should be allowed to balance their lives with positive activities outside of Scouting.

Since we are preparing young people to make a positive difference in society, we judge that a member is "active" when his level of activity in Scouting has had a sufficiently positive influence toward this end.

4.2.3.1 Active Participation

The purpose of Star, Life, and Eagle Scout requirements calling for Scouts to be active for a period of months involves *impact*. Since we prepare young people to go

forth, and essentially, make a positive difference in our American society, we judge that a member is "active" when his level of activity in Scouting, whether high or minimal, has had a sufficiently positive influence toward this end.

Use the following three sequential tests to determine whether the requirement has been met. The first and second are required, along with either the third *or its alternative*.

1. **The Scout is registered.** The youth is registered in his unit for at least the time period indicated in the requirement, and he has indicated in some way, through word or action, that he considers himself a member. If a boy was supposed to have been registered, but for whatever reason was not, discuss with the local council registrar the possibility of back-registering him.

2. **The Scout is in good standing.** A Scout is considered in "good standing" with his unit as long as he has not been dismissed for disciplinary reasons. He must also be in good standing with the local council and the Boy Scouts of America. (In the rare case he is not, communications will have been delivered.)

3. **The Scout meets the unit's reasonable expectations; or, if not, a lesser level of activity is explained.** If, for the time period required, a Scout or qualifying Venturer or Sea Scout meets those aspects of his unit's pre-established expectations that refer to a level of activity, then he is considered active and the requirement is met. Time counted as "active" need not be consecutive. A boy may piece together *any* times he *has* been active and still qualify. If he does not meet his unit's reasonable expectations, then he must be offered the alternative that follows.

Units are free to establish additional expectations on uniforming, supplies for outings, payment of dues, parental involvement, etc., but these and any other standards extraneous to a level of activity shall not be considered in evaluating this requirement.

Alternative to the third test if expectations are not met: If a young man has fallen below his unit's activity-oriented expectations, then it must be due to other positive endeavors—in or out of Scouting—or due to noteworthy circumstances that have prevented a higher level of participation.

A Scout in this case is still considered "active" if a board of review can agree that Scouting values have already taken hold and have been exhibited. This might be evidenced, for example, in how he lives his life and relates to others in his community, at school, in his religious life, or in Scouting. It is also acceptable to consider and "count" positive activities outside Scouting when they, too, contribute to his growth in character, citizenship, or personal fitness. Remember: It is not so much about what a Scout has done. It is about what he is *able* to do and how he has grown.

Additional Guidelines on the Three Tests. There may be, of course, registered youth who appear to have little or no activity. Maybe they are out of the country on an exchange program, or away at school. Or maybe we just haven't seen them and wonder if they've quit. To pass the first test above, a Scout must be registered. But he should also have made it clear through participation or by communicating in some way that he still considers himself a member, even though—for now—he may not fulfill the unit's participation expectations. A conscientious leader might make a call and discover the boy's intentions.

If, however, a Scout has been asked to leave his unit due to behavioral issues or the like, or if the council or the Boy Scouts of America has directed—for whatever reason—that he may not participate, then according to the second test he is not considered "active."

In considering the third test, it is appropriate for units to set reasonable expectations for attendance and participation. Then it is simple: Those who meet them are "active." But those who do not must be given the opportunity to qualify under the third-test alternative above. To do so, they must first offer an acceptable explanation. Certainly, there are medical, educational, family, and other issues that for practical purposes prevent higher levels of participation. These *must* be considered. Would the Scout have been more active if he *could* have been? If so, for purposes of advancement, he is deemed "active."

We must also recognize the many worthwhile opportunities beyond Scouting. Taking advantage of these opportunities and participating in them may be used to explain why *unit* participation falls short. Examples might include involvement in religious activities, school, sports, or clubs that also develop character, citizenship, or personal fitness. The additional learning and growth experiences these provide can reinforce the lessons of Scouting and also give young men the opportunity to put them into practice in a different setting.

It is reasonable to accept that competition for a Scout's time will become intense, especially as he grows older and wants to take advantage of positive "outside" opportunities. This can make full-time dedication to his unit difficult to balance. A fair leader therefore, will

seek ways to empower a young man to plan his growth opportunities both inside and outside Scouting, and consider them part of the overall positive life experience for which the Boy Scouts of America is a driving force.

A board of review can accept an explanation if it can be reasonably sure there have been sufficient influences in the Scout's life that he is meeting our aims and can be awarded the rank regardless of his current or most recent level of activity *in Scouting*. The board members must satisfy themselves that he presents himself, and behaves, according to the expectations of the rank for which he is a candidate. Simply put: Is he the sort of person who, based on present behavior, will contribute to the Boy Scouts of America's mission? Note that it may be more difficult, though not impossible, for a younger member to pass through the third-test alternative than for one more experienced in our lessons.

4.2.3.2 Demonstrate Scout Spirit

The ideals of the Boy Scouts of America are spelled out in the Scout Oath, Scout Law, Scout motto, and Scout slogan. Members incorporating these ideals into their daily lives at home, at school, in their religious life, and in their neighborhoods, for example, are said to have *Scout spirit*. In evaluating whether a member has fulfilled this requirement, it may be best to begin by asking him to explain what Scout spirit and living the Scout Oath and Scout Law mean to him. Young people know when they are being kind or helpful, or a good friend to others. They know when they are cheerful, or trustworthy, or reverent. All of us, young and old, know how we act when no one else is around.

"Scout spirit" refers to ideals and values; it is not the same as "school spirit."

A leader typically asks for examples of how a Scout has lived the Oath and Law. It might also be useful to invite examples of when he did not. This is not something to push, but it can help with the realization that sometimes we fail to live by our ideals, and that we *all* can do better. This also sends a message that a Scout can admit he has done wrong, yet still advance. Or in a serious situation—such as alcohol or illegal drug use—understand why advancement might not be appropriate just now. This is a sensitive issue, and must be treated carefully. Most Scout leaders do their best to live by the Oath and Law, but any one of them may look back on years past and wish that, at times, they had acted differently. We learn from these experiences and improve and grow. We can look for the same in our youth.

Evaluating Scout spirit will always be a judgment call, but through getting to know a young man and by asking probing questions, we can get a feel for it. We can say however, that we do not measure Scout spirit by counting meetings and outings attended. It is indicated, instead, by the way he lives his life.

4.2.3.3 Service Projects

Basic to the lessons in Scouting, especially regarding citizenship, service projects are a key element in the Journey to Excellence recognition program for councils, districts, and units. They should be a regular and critical part of the program in every pack, troop, team, crew, and ship.

Service projects required for Second Class, Star, and Life ranks may be conducted individually or through participation in patrol or troop efforts. They also may be approved for those assisting on Eagle Scout service projects. Second Class requires a minimum of one hour on an approved project. An approval is important because it calls on a boy to think about what might be accepted, and to be prepared to discuss it. It is up to the unit to determine how this is done. In many troops, it is the Scoutmaster's prerogative. Service project work for Second Class, Star, and Life clearly call for participation only. Planning, development, or leadership is not to be required.

Star and Life ranks require a Scout to take part in service projects that total at least six hours and have been preapproved by the unit leader.

Time spent on Eagle Scout service projects should be allowed in meeting these requirements. Note that Eagle projects do not have a minimum time requirement, but call for planning and development, and leadership of others, and must be preapproved by the council or district. (See "The Eagle Scout Service Project," 9.0.2.0.)

The national Health and Safety Committee has issued two documents that work together to assist youth and adult leaders in planning and safely conducting service projects: *Service Project Planning Guidelines*, No. 680-027, and its companion, *Age Guidelines for Tool Use and Work at Elevations or Excavations*, No. 680-028. Unit leadership should be familiar with both documents.

4.2.3.4 Positions of Responsibility

"Serve actively in your unit for a period of … months in one or more … positions of responsibility" is an accomplishment every candidate for Star, Life, or Eagle must achieve. The following will help to determine whether a Scout has fulfilled the requirement.

4.2.3.4.1 Positions Must Be Chosen From Among Those Listed. The position must be listed in the position of responsibility requirement shown in the most current edition of *Boy Scout Requirements*. Since more than one member may hold some positions—"instructor," for example—it is expected that even very large units are able to provide sufficient opportunities within the list. The only exception involves Lone Scouts, who may use positions in school, their place of worship, in a club, or elsewhere in the community. Units do not have authority to require specific positions of responsibility for a rank. For example, they must not require a Scout to be senior patrol leader to obtain the Eagle rank.

Service in positions of responsibility in provisional units, such as a jamboree troop or Philmont trek crew, do not count toward this requirement.

For Star and Life ranks only, a unit leader may assign, as a substitute for the position of responsibility, a leadership project that helps the unit. If this is done, he or she should consult the unit committee and unit advancement coordinator to arrive at suitable standards. The experience should provide lessons similar to those of the listed positions, but it must not be confused with, or compared to, the scope of an Eagle Scout service project. It may be productive in many cases for the Scout to propose a leadership project that is discussed with the unit leader and then "assigned."

4.2.3.4.2 Meeting the Time Test May Involve Any Number of Positions. The requirement calls for a period of months. Any number of positions may be held as long as total service time equals at least the number of months required. Holding simultaneous positions does not shorten the required number of months. Positions need not flow from one to the other; there may be gaps between them. This applies to all qualified members including Lone Scouts.

When a Scout assumes a position of responsibility, something related to the desired results must happen.

4.2.3.4.3 Meeting Unit Expectations. If a unit has established expectations for positions of responsibility, and if, *within reason* (see the note under "Rank Requirements Overview," 4.2.3.0), based on his personal skill set, the Scout meets them, he fulfills the requirement. When a Scout assumes a position, *something* related to the desired results must happen. It is a disservice to the Scout and to the unit to reward work that has not been done. Holding a position and doing nothing, producing no results, is unacceptable. Some degree of responsibility must be practiced, taken, or accepted.

4.2.3.4.4 Meeting the Requirement in the Absence of Unit Expectations. It is best when a Scout's leaders provide him position descriptions, and then direction, coaching, and support. Where this occurs, and is done well, the young man will likely succeed. When this support, for whatever reason, is unavailable or otherwise not provided—or when there are no clearly established expectations—then an adult leader or the Scout, or both, should work out the responsibilities to fulfill. In doing so, neither the position's purpose nor degree of difficulty may be altered significantly or diminished. BSA literature provides the basis for this effort: the *Scoutmaster Handbook*, No. 33009, ("The Boy-Led Troop"); the *Patrol Leader Handbook*, No. 32502 ("Your Patrol and Your Troop"); the *Varsity Scout Guidebook*, No. 34827 (in explanations of team organization); the *Venturing Leader Manual*, No. 34655 ("Leadership in the Crew"); and the *Sea Scout Manual*, No. 33239 ("Officers' Responsibilities").

Under the above scenario, if it is left to the Scout to determine what should be done, and he makes a reasonable effort to perform accordingly for the time specified, then he fulfills this requirement. Even if his results are not necessarily what the unit leader, members of a board of review, or others involved may want to see, he must not be held to unestablished expectations.

4.2.3.4.5 When Responsibilities Are Not Met. *If* a unit has *clearly* established expectations for position(s) held, then—*within reason*—a Scout must meet them through the prescribed time. If he is not meeting expectations, then this must be communicated early. Unit leadership may work toward a constructive result by asking him what he thinks he should be accomplishing. What is *his* concept of the position? What does he think his troop leaders—youth and adult—expect? What has he done well? What needs improvement? Often this questioning approach can lead a young man to the decision to measure up. *He* will tell the leaders how much of the service time should be recorded.

If it becomes clear nothing will improve his performance, then it is acceptable to remove the Scout from his position. It is the unit leader's responsibility to address these situations promptly. Every effort should have been made while he was in the position to ensure he understood expectations and was regularly supported toward reasonably acceptable performance. It is unfair and inappropriate—after six months, for example—to surprise a boy who thinks he has been doing fine, with news that his performance is now considered unsatisfactory. In this case, he must be given credit for the time.

Only in rare cases—if ever—should troop leaders inform a Scout that time, once served, will not count.

If a Scout believes he has performed his duties satisfactorily, but his leaders disagree, then the possibility that expectations are unreasonable or were not clearly conveyed to the youth should be considered. If after discussions between the Scout and his leaders—and perhaps including his parents or guardians—he believes he is being held to unreasonable expectations, then upon completing the remaining requirements, he must be granted a board of review. If he is an Eagle candidate, then he may request a board of review under disputed circumstances (see "Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances," 8.0.3.2).

4.2.3.4.6 "Responsibility" and "Leadership." Many suggest this requirement should call for a position of "leadership" rather than simply of "responsibility." Taking and accepting responsibility, however, is a key foundation for leadership. One cannot lead effectively without it. The requirement as written recognizes the different personalities, talents, and skill sets in all of us. Some seem destined to be "the leader of the group." Others provide quality support and strong examples behind the scenes. Without the latter, the leaders in charge have little chance for success. Thus, the work of the supporters becomes part of the overall leadership effort.

4.2.3.5 Unit Leader (Scoutmaster) Conference

The unit leader (Scoutmaster) conference, regardless of the rank or program, is conducted according to the guidelines in the *Scoutmaster Handbook*, No. 33009. Note that a Scout must participate or take part in one; it is not a "test." Requirements do *not* say he must "pass" a conference. While it makes sense to hold one after other requirements for a rank are met, it is not required that it be the last step before the board of review. This is an important consideration for Scouts on a tight schedule to meet the requirements before age 18. Last-minute work can sometimes make it impossible to fit the conference in before then, so scheduling it earlier can avoid unnecessary extension requests.

The conference is not a retest of the requirements upon which a Scout has been signed off. It is a forum for discussing topics such as ambitions and life purpose, goals for future achievement, and also for obtaining feedback on the unit's program. In some cases, work left to be completed—and perhaps why it has not been completed—may be discussed just as easily as that which is finished. Ultimately, conference timing is up to the unit. Some leaders hold more than one along the way, and the Scout must be allowed to count any of them toward the requirement.

Unit leaders do not have the authority to deny a Scout a conference that is necessary for him to meet the requirements for his rank. If a unit leader conference is denied, a Scout—if he believes he has fulfilled all the remaining requirements—may still request a board of review. See "Boards of Review Must Be Granted When Requirements Are Met," 8.0.0.2. If an Eagle Scout candidate is denied a conference, it may become grounds for a board of review under disputed circumstances. See "Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances," 8.0.3.2.

4.2.3.6 Fulfilling More Than One Requirement With a Single Activity

From time to time it may be appropriate for a Scout to apply what was done to meet one requirement toward the completion of another. In deciding whether to allow this, unit leaders or merit badge counselors should consider the following.

When, for all practical purposes, two requirements match up exactly and have the same basic intent—for example, camping nights for Second Class and First Class ranks and for the Camping merit badge—it is appropriate and permissible, unless it is stated otherwise in the requirements, to use those matching activities for both the ranks and the merit badge.

Where matching requirements are oriented toward safety, such as those related to first aid or CPR, the person signing off the requirements should be satisfied the Scout remembers what he learned from the previous experience.

Some requirements may have the appearance of aligning, but upon further examination actually differ. These seemingly similar requirements usually have nuances intended to create quite different experiences. The Communication and Citizenship in the Community merit badges are a good example. Each requires the Scout to attend a public meeting, but that is where the similarity ends. For Communication, the Scout is asked to practice active listening skills during the meeting and present an objective report that includes all points of view. For Citizenship, he is asked to examine differences in opinions and then to defend one side. The Scout may attend the same public meeting, but to pass the requirements for both merit badges he must actively listen and prepare a report, and also examine differences in opinion and defend one side.

When contemplating whether to double-count service hours or a service project, and apply the same work to pass a

second advancement requirement, each Scout should ask himself: "Do I want to get double credit for helping others this one time, or do I want to undertake a second effort and make a greater difference in the lives of even more people?" To reach his decision, each Scout should follow familiar guideposts found in some of those words and phrases we live by, such as "helpful," "kind," "Do a Good Turn Daily," and "help other people at all times."

As Scout leaders and advancement administrators, we must ask ourselves an even more pointed question: "Is it my goal to produce Scouts who check a task off a list or Scouts who will become the leaders in our communities?" To answer our own question, we should consult the same criteria that guide Scouts.

4.3.0.0 Mechanics of Advancement: In Venturing



Venturing is for young men and women who are 14 through 20 years old, or who are 13 and have completed the eighth grade. Its purpose is to build character, promote citizenship, and develop personal and mental fitness. Each Venturing crew is responsible for achieving these aims by designing a program that appeals to its members. Thus, Venturing is a catalyst: It brings together adults and young people, and incredible things happen. It is all about asking themselves and one another what is possible, and then setting out to plan and execute toward fulfillment.

Sea Scouts is a specialized branch of Venturing with its own handbook, program, and system of advancement and recognition. Its members also may work on and earn any of the Venturing awards and recognitions (see "Mechanics of Advancement: In Sea Scouts," 4.4.0.0).

4.3.0.1 The Goals of Venturing

There are four goals for Venturers:

1. Gain practical experience from knowledgeable people.
2. Engage in activities centered on leadership, service, social activities, fitness, the outdoors, and citizenship. The idea is to develop balance, to take responsibility, and to become mentally, emotionally, and physically fit.
3. Experience and provide positive leadership, set and follow examples, and learn by doing.
4. Have a chance to learn and grow in a supportive, caring, and fun environment.

4.3.1.0 Advancement in Venturing

The purpose of the Venturing awards program is to facilitate these four goals; provide a pathway for personal development; encourage learning, growth, and service; and recognize high levels of achievement. Advancement is accomplished when an active program emphasizes it and pays attention to the four steps of the process: preparation, learning, qualification, and recognition. Bronze, Gold, and Silver are the awards for the advancement track, but others also are described below. Venturers have until their 21st birthday to complete their awards.

For detailed requirements and more information on Venturing advancement or recognition, see the *Venturer/Ranger Handbook*, No. 33494; *Sea Scout Manual*, No. 33239; *Quest Handbook*, No. 33151; *TRUST Handbook*, No. 33154; and *Venturing Leader Manual*, No. 34655. Except in Sea Scouts, Venturers work on awards, not ranks, and they can choose to work along with others in a crew or go it alone. They may also work simultaneously on the Bronze, Gold, and Silver awards; there are time-oriented requirements, but not between the earning of one award to the next.

The Gold and Silver awards require a crew review. There is no council or district involvement, except perhaps guidance on best practices. All work for the awards must be completed by the member's 21st birthday, but the review may be held after that.

4.3.1.1 The Venturing Awards



4.3.1.1.1 Bronze Award. Venturers may choose to earn just one Bronze Award—perhaps the one best matching the crew's interest area—or more, or all five of them. They represent an introduction to skills and life experiences, and include Arts and Hobbies, Sports, Sea Scouts, Outdoor, and Religious Life. These entry-level awards encourage achievement of the Gold and Silver awards. Crew Advisors or specialty "consultants" approved by the crew Advisor, who are much like merit badge counselors, pass members on requirements. No committee review or board of review is involved.

Venturing is dynamic, with built-in flexibility at many levels. In some cases this carries over to Bronze Award requirements, where limited substitutions are allowed based on what is available in your area. For specifics, please refer to the *Venturer/Ranger Handbook*, No. 33494, and the *Venturing Leader Manual*, No. 34655.



4.3.1.1.2 Gold Award. One Bronze award is required for the Gold Award, and candidates must be active (regardless of award level) and registered for at least 12 months. They must serve in a leadership role (within or outside the crew); participate in a district, council, or national* Venturing activity; accomplish personal goals; and plan and lead activities. Letters of recommendation are required, along with a written presentation for a crew review committee. This consists of four to six Venturers and adults appointed by the crew president in conjunction with the crew Advisor. Venturers may choose to deliver the presentation orally at the review meeting, but this is not required. The review committee provides final approval. There is no district or council review board, but the advancement must be reported to the council.

*Note that a "national" Venturing activity may be one that is held at the area, regional, or national level.

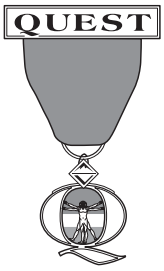


4.3.1.1.3 Silver Award. Silver is the highest award for Venturers. It says they are leaders who serve, who are fit and prepared, and who have honor. Candidates must earn the Bronze and Gold awards, be proficient in emergency preparedness, participate in Ethics in Action, and complete Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews or Introduction to Leadership Skills for Ships. For the Silver Award, Venturers first establish a plan of action and then carry it out. When requirements are fulfilled, they go through a formal review with four to six Venturers and adults appointed by the crew president in conjunction with the crew Advisor. There is no district or council involvement in the review process.

Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews (ILSC) and Introduction to Leadership Skills for Ships replace Venturing Leadership Skills Course (VLSC).



4.3.1.1.4 Ranger Award. High adventure and the outdoors have always been emphasized in the Boy Scouts of America, and Venturing is no different. The Ranger Award encourages a high level of achievement and proficiency in outdoor skills. It exemplifies challenge. Eight core requirements and at least four of 18 electives must be completed. If the Outdoor Bronze Award has been earned, the Venturer is already halfway there. Candidates may work on their own or with other crew members. Advisors and consultants must sign for requirements. No crew review or board of review is involved.



4.3.1.1.5 Quest Award. The Quest Award is about fitness and sports. Candidates learn about nutrition, exercise plans, and what is required for a healthy life. They may be introduced to an enjoyable sport helpful toward that end. As with other Venturing awards, members share with others what they have learned. This can be done through presentations or even sports clinics. Five core requirements and at least one of five electives must be completed. The Sports Bronze Award comes first. There is no review board.



4.3.1.1.6 TRUST Award. The TRUST (Tending, Respecting, Understanding, Serving, Transforming) Award helps Venturers learn about themselves, their communities, and religion and culture. It recognizes that trust is an essential part of relationships; that learning to trust is the challenge; and that learning to understand one another—especially those from different backgrounds and nationalities—represents a good start. The five core requirements are Tending Your Faith, Respecting the Beliefs of Others, Understanding Other Cultures, Serving Your Community, and Transforming Our Society. Candidates must work with a religious leader or with consultants in a related field of expertise. No board of review is involved.

4.3.1.2 Past Credit for Venturers

The requirements for all Venturing awards require the work to be done as Venturers. For example, even though a young man earned the Backpacking merit badge as a Boy Scout, before he became a Venturer, he must pass the Ranger backpacking elective once registered as a Venturer. Some requirements may call for certification such as Scuba Open-Water Diver, American Red Cross Standard First Aid, or BSA Lifeguard. Current certifications such as these may be used regardless where they were earned.

4.3.1.3 Multiple Credit for Venturers

Venturers may receive multiple credit for requirements. In the above example, if the Backpacking merit badge was earned while the member was also a Venturer, the effort could also count toward the Ranger elective. Further, experiences such as the Red Cross Emergency Response course could be used for the Ranger first aid requirement and the first aid and lifesaver electives, and also for the Silver Award's emergency preparedness requirement. Venturers may not receive multiple credit for something

like a tabletop display or a presentation. These must be done separately and relate directly to each situation requiring them.

4.3.1.4 Boy Scout Advancement in Venturing and Sea Scouts





Venturers and Sea Scouts who earned First Class rank as registered Boy Scouts or Varsity Scouts are qualified until their 18th birthday to continue with Boy Scout advancement. If desired, they may maintain multiple (dual) registration in a troop or team, and also in a crew or ship, and work on ranks in either unit. Wherever the member is registered, the Scoutmaster and crew Advisor or Skipper decide with the young man which one will oversee his advancement. If the Advisor or Skipper does so, but is unfamiliar with Boy Scouting, the district advancement committee should identify an experienced Scouter to assist. It is important for Venturing and Sea Scout leaders to understand that Boy Scout advancement procedures must be followed.

With the exception of the Eagle and Quartermaster service projects, any work done *while a Venturer or Sea Scout* can count toward both Boy Scout and Venturing or Sea Scout advancement at the same time. The Eagle and Quartermaster projects must be separate and distinct from each other.

Position of responsibility requirements for Boy Scout ranks may be met by the Venturer or Sea Scout serving in crew or ship positions as outlined in the *Boy Scout Requirements* book. The Advisor or Skipper conducts the unit leader conference. The crew or ship committee conducts Star and Life boards of review, and Eagle Scout boards follow the local council's established procedure.

4.4.0.0 Mechanics of Advancement: In Sea Scouts



Although a special-interest program carried on as part of Venturing, Sea Scouts has its own distinct language, customs, and advancement track. It combines traditions of the past with technology of the future, and whether one looks to the sea as a career or lifelong hobby, it is worth exploring. Sea Scout units, called "ships," use a variety of power boats and sailing vessels of all sizes, and promote service to others and advancement that rewards individual pursuits of excellence. Each level marks progressive growth as a seaman and leader, culminating in the prestigious Quartermaster rank.

4.4.1.0 Sea Scout Ranks and Awards

The 11th printing of the *Sea Scout Manual*, No. 33239, was published in fall 2010. At that time, Sea Scout advancement requirements were revised. Those working on a rank when this occurred had one year to complete it under the previous edition. Then the new requirements must be used. The ship committee should regularly update its library to reflect changes to Boy Scout requirements, and also other references not in the manual, such as U.S. Coast Guard navigation rules, International Sailing Federation Rules, and Occupational Safety and Health Administration requirements, many of which change frequently.

The awards and four ranks in Sea Scouts are described below. All requirements must be completed before the 21st birthday, and the ranks are available to registered Sea Scouts only.

Note that a Sea Scout who earned the First Class rank as a Boy Scout or Varsity Scout in a troop or team may continue work through the Boy Scouting advancement program. See "Boy Scout Advancement in Venturing and Sea Scouts," 4.3.1.4.

4.4.1.1 Apprentice Rank



Striving for Apprentice rank, active Sea Scouts learn ideals, courtesies, procedures, and responsibilities, and how members of a ship are organized and uniformed. Basic swimming and beginning seamanship skills are required, as is knowledge of safety, emergency procedures, and Safe Swim Defense. Sixteen hours of service in ship projects, activities, or equipment maintenance fill out the requirements.

4.4.1.2 Ordinary Rank



Active Sea Scouts attain Ordinary rank through additional service, knowledge of the Sea Scout emblem, U.S. flag etiquette, and land and sea protocols. Successful candidates will participate in strengthening ship membership, serve as an event chair, complete quarterdeck training, pass the Swimming merit badge requirements, and qualify on various safety and emergency procedures, drills, communication methods, and Safety Afloat. They learn about the galley, build on seamanship and boat-handling skills, and learn about anchoring, piloting and navigation, and related regulations. Overnight cruise planning and participation provides for skills application, and completing three electives broadens horizons.

4.4.1.3 Able Rank



To achieve Able rank, Sea Scouts master ceremony presentation and demonstrate knowledge of maritime history. They also teach others—perhaps Boy Scouts and Venturers—about the program and fulfill leadership responsibilities. They must pass the Lifesaving merit badge requirements and develop further expertise in safety and first aid. There is a continued progression in seamanship, boat-handling skills, anchoring, and piloting and navigation, as well as a deeper understanding of maritime environmental issues. The Sea Scout Long Cruise badge is required for Able, as is completion of three electives.

4.4.1.4 Quartermaster Rank



The highest award for Sea Scouts presents a challenge that, when met, will affect a young person lifelong. The Quartermaster candidate must think analytically about how the program is delivered and supported, while developing a deeper understanding of Scouting ideals. Most requirements represent intensification of what was learned for previous ranks, but with significant additions in the Quartermaster service project, cruise, and study of weather and forecasting. The cruise involves taking long-term command of a vessel and crew and conducting critical drills.

Note: Sea Scouts must use the *Quartermaster Service Project Workbook,* available at www.seascout.org, and secure approval from the Skipper, ship committee, project beneficiary, and the council or district advancement committee. A youth's Quartermaster service project and Eagle service project must not be the same project; these projects must be separate and distinct from each other.

4.4.1.4.1 Time Extensions for Earning Quartermaster Rank. If a Sea Scout foresees that, due to no fault of his or her own, the requirements to complete the Quartermaster rank are not achievable before age 21, he or she may apply for a limited time extension. These are rarely granted, and reserved only for work on Quartermaster. The tests that apply and the procedures to follow are the same as those outlined for an extension to earn the Eagle Scout rank (see "Time Extensions," 9.0.4.0). Note that references to age 18 in the Eagle Scout procedure would relate to age 21 in Sea Scouts, and that extension requests are sent to, and approved by, the national Sea Scout director. Quartermaster time extensions are not granted through the national Advancement Team.

The local council does not grant or deny Quartermaster time extensions. These are granted only by the national Sea Scout director after consideration of local council recommendations.

4.4.1.4.2 Submitting the Quartermaster Application. Once approved by the Skipper, the ship committee, and the bridge of review, the Quartermaster application must be approved by the district or council advancement committee. It must then be sent to the national Sea Scout director. A certificate is returned to the local council service center.

4.4.1.5 The Skipper Conference

Skippers hold a conference with youth who indicate they are ready to advance to the next Sea Scout rank. Once the conference has taken place and the other requirements for the rank are fulfilled, the application for rank is forwarded to the ship's bridge of review. The process is similar to that for a Scoutmaster conference. (See "Unit Leader [Scoutmaster] Conference," 4.2.3.5.)

Sea Scouts working on the Eagle Scout rank follow the procedures listed in "The Eagle Scout Rank," 9.0.0.0.

4.4.1.6 Sea Scout Bronze Award

Any Venturer may earn the Sea Scout Bronze Award. Study materials and the requirements can be found in the *Sea Scout Manual*, No. 33239. They are the same as those for the Sea Scout Ordinary rank.

Sea Scouts are qualified to earn any of the Venturing awards. See "The Venturing Awards," 4.3.1.1.

4.4.1.7 Other Sea Scout Awards

Other awards Sea Scouts may earn include the Small-Boat Handler bar, the Qualified Seaman bar, and the Long Cruise badge and arcs. The requirements are detailed in the *Sea Scout Manual*, No. 33239. All Venturing awards are also available, as are any BSA recognitions that are not limited to Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, or Varsity Scouts. Examples that may interest Sea Scouts include BSA Lifeguard, Boardsailing BSA, Snorkeling BSA, Paddlecraft Safety, Kayaking BSA, Mile Swim BSA, and many more.

4.4.1.8 Bridges of Honor

A bridge of honor, like a court of honor in Boy Scouting, is the forum where awards are presented. It should be impressive and well planned. It is often held in connection with a social affair. As in any other BSA program, it is important that Sea Scouts receive prompt recognition; thus it may be a good idea to present awards informally first at a ship meeting and then again (more formally) at the next bridge of honor.

4.4.2.0 The Sea Scout Bridge of Review

Sections 4.4.2.1 through 4.4.2.3 below cover bridge of review procedures that apply to all Sea Scout ranks. These are followed by "Particulars for Apprentice Through Able Ranks," 4.4.2.4; sections 4.4.2.5 through 4.4.2.8 pertain only to the Quartermaster rank.

4.4.2.1 Purpose and Timeliness of Bridges of Review

After completing the requirements for any Sea Scout rank, the Sea Scout appears before a bridge of review. He or she cannot be denied this opportunity. The purpose of the review is to determine the quality of the candidate's experience and decide whether the youth is qualified to advance. The bridge of review date becomes the effective advancement date.

4.4.2.2 Composition of the Bridge of Review

A bridge of review must consist of no fewer than three members and no more than six. For further specifications, see "Particulars for Apprentice Through Able Ranks," 4.4.2.4, and "Particulars for the Quartermaster Rank," 4.4.2.5. Skippers and mates may not serve on a bridge of review for a Sea Scout in their own ship. Parents or guardians may not serve on a bridge for their son or daughter. The candidate or his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall have no part in selecting any bridge of review members.

4.4.2.3 Conducting the Bridge of Review

Procedures for conducting Sea Scout bridges of review are very similar to those for Boy Scout rank boards of review. The applicable references, with exceptions noted for Sea Scouts, are listed below. Where there are references to "unit leader" or "Scoutmaster," to "troop" or "unit," or to "Scout," these can be read as "Skipper," "ship," and "Sea Scout."

- **8.0.0.4 Wearing the Uniform—or Neat in Appearance.** The same limitations on requiring a uniform for a Boy Scout board of review apply to Sea Scouts, with the exception that the Sea Scout dress uniform is preferred for a bridge of review.
- **8.0.1.0 Conducting the Board of Review.** Note the same exception that parents who insist on being present at a board of review applies to bridges of review.
- **8.0.1.1 Not a Retest or "Examination."** Identical for Sea Scouts.
- **8.0.1.2 What Should Be Discussed.** With the exception that the primary reference is the *Sea Scout Manual,* and that the Sea Scout must also keep the Sea Promise.
- **8.0.1.4 Board Members Must Agree Unanimously on Decisions to Approve.** Identical for Sea Scouts.
- **8.0.1.5 After the Review.** With the exception that if it is thought that a Sea Scout, before his or her 21st birthday, can benefit from an opportunity to properly complete the requirements, the bridge of review may adjourn and reconvene at a later date.

4.4.2.4 Particulars for Apprentice Through Able Ranks

The preceding applies to bridges of review for all Sea Scout ranks, but there are a few differences for those leading up to Quartermaster. See "Particulars for the Quartermaster Rank," 4.4.2.5, below, to learn about the differences for Quartermaster.

1. After a Skipper conference, the youth advancing meets with the bridge of review made up of three to six members of the quarterdeck or ship committee.
2. The boatswain serves as bridge of review chair, conducts the review according the BSA procedures, and reports results to the ship advancement coordinator.
3. The location should be comfortable, such as the unit meeting place or a leader's home.
4. The review should take approximately 15 minutes, but no longer than 30 minutes.
5. Ranks may not be presented until the advancement is reported to the local council through the BSA's Internet Advancement or on the official Advancement Report form.

4.4.2.5 Particulars for the Quartermaster Rank

With the few exceptions listed below, the particulars for handling bridges of review for Quartermaster rank are identical to those for Eagle Scout boards of review. See "Particulars for the Eagle Scout Rank," 8.0.3.0.

4.4.2.6 Quartermaster Bridge of Review Beyond the 21st Birthday

See "Eagle Scout Board of Review Beyond the 18th Birthday," 8.0.3.1; the procedures are the same, with a few exceptions:

- References to the 18th birthday are replaced with the 21st birthday for Sea Scouts.
- Where petitions, etc., are indicated to be sent to the national Advancement Team, for Sea Scouts they are sent to the national Sea Scout director.
- Procedures for awarding the Quartermaster rank to someone who completed the requirements as a youth but never received the recognition are the same as outlined for those in the same circumstances who are seeking the Eagle Scout rank. The required documentation, however, would relate to proving Quartermaster requirements were met.

4.4.2.7 Initiating Quartermaster Bridge of Review Under Disputed Circumstances

A Quartermaster bridge of review under disputed circumstances can be requested if:

- A Skipper or ship committee chair does not sign the Quartermaster application
- A Skipper conference is denied
- It is thought a ship will not provide a fair hearing
- The Skipper or Quartermaster service project beneficiary refuses to sign final approval for what might be considered a satisfactory project

The procedures are the same as those outlined in "Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances," 8.0.3.2.

4.4.2.8 Appealing a Quartermaster Bridge of Review Decision

If a bridge of review does not recommend a candidate for Quartermaster rank, only the Sea Scout or his or her parent or guardian may appeal the decision to the local council. The procedures are the same as those for advancement in Boy Scouting (see "Appealing a Decision," 8.0.4.0, "Filing and Processing an Appeal," 8.0.4.1, and "Appeal Board Must Research the Case," 8.0.4.2); simply replace the Boy Scouting references with those relating to Sea Scouts. Note that only Quartermaster rank may be appealed beyond the ship, and appeals to the national level are sent to the national Sea Scout director, not to the national Advancement Team.





Special Considerations

5.0.1.0 Advancement in Camp Settings

5.0.1.1 Procedures Established by Council Advancement Committee

Procedures for advancement in camp are established by the council advancement committee in compliance with national procedures, and under the direction of the council executive board. The camp director and program director, and the committee responsible for camp program should be included in the process. Their expertise will be important in evaluating practicality, and their buy-in can improve cooperation from the camp staff. Once procedures are in place, advancement committee representatives should periodically visit each resident camp to assist in efforts to achieve compliance. The visits can also surface new ideas on improving implementation and building a worthwhile partnership.

5.0.1.2 Procedural Examples

Below are examples of procedures a council advancement committee might consider for camp settings.

1. How to handle staff training on the particulars of advancement in each program—Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, and Sea Scouts—as appropriate. This training could be conducted or supervised by members of the council advancement committee.
2. Which merit badges may be offered at camp. Note that summer camp is not the best place for some merit badges, such as the citizenship merit badges, which can be earned at home under the direction of an experienced merit badge counselor.
3. Recommendations on reasonable instructor-to-Scout ratios for classes or activities related to advancement.
4. A process by which the council advancement committee will approve camp merit badge counselors. Note that camp leaders should recognize that it may be unlikely for members of the camp staff to have the expertise or maturity to instruct a wide range of merit badge subjects.
5. How to handle the training of merit badge counselors and camp staff to help ensure Scouts meet requirements as written—no more, no less.
6. How to develop lesson plans and guidelines for the instruction of merit badges and other advancement opportunities that make the best use of the time available and assure campers get credit only for requirements they actually and personally fulfill.
7. A process for accepting work completed before camp begins, and for issuing partials for merit badges that take more time to complete than is available at camp.
8. Communication plans to build awareness of camp practices, such as those related to scheduling, prerequisites, Scoutmaster approvals, paperwork, etc.
9. Procedures for approving requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class ranks. It is appropriate for camps to offer "Trail to First Class" programs, and camp staff members are permitted to sign off related requirements; however, they should offer unit leaders the opportunity to do so.
10. Record-keeping practices that facilitate accurate reporting to unit leadership of completed requirements and partial merit badges and provide documentation if units need it later.

While Cub Scout outdoor programs such as day camp and resident camp should support advancement, this should not be the focus *of the camp activities. Instead, advancement should occur naturally as an end product of the experience. The keys to facilitating this approach lie in implementing the Cub Scouting performance standard of "Do Your Best" and ensuring programs are age appropriate. It is important to understand that skill mastery is not the objective in Cub Scouting, and that boys—even in the same age group and grade—can have very different developmental time tables.*



5.0.1.3 Advancement Committee Approves Merit Badge Counselors

Resident camp standards require a letter from the council advancement committee approving merit badge counselors. There are no camp-related exemptions from the qualifications described under "Qualifications of Counselors," 7.0.1.1. Councils are not permitted to change the rules about who qualifies. Staff members under 18 are not to serve as, or be treated as, merit badge counselors; however, those with subject-matter knowledge may assist qualified and approved counselors with instruction. Classes and activities may take place in group settings, but this must be done in accordance with the procedures described in "Group Instruction," 7.0.3.2, assuring that only Scouts who actually and personally fulfill requirements receive credit.

No council, committee, district, unit, or individual has the authority to add to or subtract from advancement requirements.

5.0.1.4 Statement on Unauthorized Changes to Advancement in Camp Programs

Though stated earlier in this publication, it bears repeating here: *No council, committee, district, unit, or individual has the authority to add to or subtract from advancement requirements*. There are no camp-related exemptions except those described in "Advancement for Members With Special Needs," 10.0.0.0. Camp counselors and those assisting them, regardless the circumstances, are not permitted to modify requirements. If requirements as written cannot be competed at camp, they must be done elsewhere, before or after the camp experience. The Application for Merit Badge "blue card" (see "About the Application for Merit Badge ("Blue Card"), 7.0.0.2) has space to record and initial what is finished, and age 18 is the only limit to finishing partials.

If unit leadership or others dissatisfied with the quality of advancement instruction at camp become concerned Scouts are being approved for merit badges they have not earned, a report should be filed with the council advancement committee. The form found in the appendix (see "Reporting Merit Badge Counseling Concerns," 11.1.0.0) may be used for this purpose. See also "Once It Is Earned, It's Earned," 7.0.4.6, and "Limited Recourse for Unearned Merit Badges," 7.0.4.7.

5.0.1.5 Advancement Committee as a Partner in Camp-Related Advancement

Council advancement committees that partner with camp staffs and approach solutions jointly are more likely to see strong programs. Implementing a merit badge program at camp is not a simple task. It is not something to consider from afar and then make rules about. Committees with members who make the trip and lend a hand are more likely to see successful results. An example might be helping the staff meet the camp standards requiring training in several areas around advancement.

5.0.2.0 Extended Absence From Scouting

Members who leave the Boy Scouting or Varsity Scouting program are welcome to return if they are eligible and in good standing. They take up where they left off, assuming the last verifiable rank. It may be necessary for them to produce advancement documentation, or to have records updated or transferred from another council. The time away shall not be held against them, and they shall not be made to redo requirements.

Because time spent in positions of responsibility ("Positions of Responsibility," 4.2.3.4) or active participation ("Active Participation," 4.2.3.1) need not be continuous, any periods of activity before leaving count toward the next rank. The new unit leader, however, may check with past unit leaders, parents, or others to confirm time spent meets the respective requirements. The use of Internet Advancement as described in section 6 can be a helpful tool to ensure a Scout's records are up to date and easily verifiable.

5.0.3.0 Lone Scouting

Boys who do not have access to traditional Scouting units can become Lone Cub Scouts and Lone Boy Scouts. In the following or similar circumstances, they may find this an appropriate option:

1. Home-schooled where parents do not want them in a youth group
2. U.S. citizens living abroad
3. Exchange students away from the United States
4. Disability or communicable illness that prevents meeting attendance

5. Rural communities far from a unit
6. Conflicts with a job, night school, or boarding school
7. Families who frequently travel or live on a boat, etc.
8. Living arrangements with parents in different communities
9. Environments where getting to meetings may put the Scout in danger

Lone Scouts is limited to Cub Scouting and Boy Scouting. Varsity Scouting, Venturing, and Sea Scouts do not offer equivalent experiences.

Each Lone Cub Scout or Lone Boy Scout must work with a Lone Scout counselor—preferably his parent, but the counselor might also be a religious leader, teacher, neighbor, or Scouting volunteer. Regardless, even if a parent, he or she must complete Youth Protection training, be at least 21 years of age, registered with the Boy Scouts of America, and meet its adult membership requirements. More details can be found in the *Lone Scout Friend and Counselor Guidebook*, No. 605978, an essential tool in carrying out this program.

To register as a Lone Cub Scout or Lone Boy Scout, application can be made through the council service center. Lone Scout counselors must register using the standard adult application. Those living abroad may inquire with the Boy Scouts of America International Department at the national office. Lone Scouting is not an alternative for those who just don't like the local units or cannot get along with them.

It is permissible and even beneficial for Lone Scouts to meet from time to time with others in the area, or visit a unit if possible. These meetings can provide additional instruction and counseling to promote further advancement, and also a more public forum for recognizing achievement.

5.0.3.1 Lone Scout Advancement Procedures

Because Lone Scouts are not registered with units, we can exercise some responsible flexibility with advancement. This is not to say anything goes: Lone Scouting is not a place to register a boy simply to facilitate parental approval of advancement. Requirements for ranks, merit badges, or any other advancement-related awards that can be met by one Scout working with his counselor must be fulfilled as written. In some instances, family members, neighbors, or friends can be used in place of a "den" or "troop" to increase the number of requirements that can be met as stated.

Some wording issues are simple and do not require council approval. For example, a Lone Scout may fulfill a position of responsibility by serving in his school, place of worship, in a club, etc. Where it is not possible to meet requirements as written, a Lone Scout counselor may suggest equal or very similar alternative requirements. These must have council advancement committee approval. Dissimilar requirements should be allowed only in extreme circumstances, or when they cannot be met without extreme hazard or hardship. See the *Lone Scout Friend and Counselor Guidebook* for details.

5.0.3.2 Lone Scouts and Merit Badges

A Lone Scout earns merit badges by working with adult counselors who meet the qualifications as stated under "Qualifications of Counselors," 7.0.1.1. They can be recruited from among teachers, hobbyists, business leaders, members of various clubs, etc. Before they serve, the council or district advancement committee, according to local practices, must approve them. A list of preapproved counselors can be obtained by calling the local council service center. For more information, see "The Merit Badge Program," 7.0.0.0. In instances where the Lone Scout is unable to meet a merit badge requirement as written, the procedure outlined in 5.0.3.1 is to be followed.

5.0.3.3 Eagle Scout Applications for Lone Scouts

When a Lone Scout has completed the Eagle Scout requirements, he works with the district or council advancement committee according to local practices (see "Boards of Review," 8.0.0.0). The Eagle Scout Rank Application is reviewed and processed according to topics 9.0.1.0 through 9.0.1.10. These steps include verification at the local council, scheduling and conducting a board of review, and submitting the application to the national Advancement Team.

Since the Lone Scout is not affiliated with a unit, the local council processor must send the application to the national Advancement Team for processing. It cannot be submitted through ScoutNET. Since there is no "unit committee" for a Lone Scout, the unit committee chair signature line on the Eagle Scout application is left blank. No unit committee approval is required for the Eagle Scout service project proposal. The Lone Scout counselor conducts the unit leader conference and signs as the unit leader on the Eagle Scout Rank Application and in the project workbook.

5.0.4.0 Youth From Other Countries

Youth from other countries who temporarily reside in the United States, or have moved here, may register in a BSA unit and participate in advancement. If progress from a foreign Scouting association is to be considered and applied to BSA requirements, then the foreign Scout must meet in person (or over electronic media) with members of the council or district advancement committee, along with at least one adult leader or committee member of the receiving unit. Previous advancement work is reviewed to determine the BSA rank—up to, but not including Eagle Scout rank—the youth is qualified to receive. The candidate must present evidence of membership and advancement from the previous association. Once a rank is determined, it is reported through the BSA's Internet Advancement or on an advancement report.

This procedure applies to all ranks except Eagle Scout, which is not considered equivalent to any other association's rank. If it can be established that Life rank has been achieved, then the council or district advancement committee can determine which BSA merit badges may be awarded based on previous effort and experiences that meet BSA merit badge requirements as written. This may leave a number of additional badges to earn—required or not—to achieve Eagle. Requirements for active participation, position of responsibility, Scout spirit, the service project, and the unit leader conference must be completed in a BSA unit. This procedure also applies to members of the BSA who, while living abroad, have earned advancement in another Scouting association.

5.0.5.0 Religious Principles

From time to time, issues related to advancement call for an understanding of the position of the Boy Scouts of America on religious principles. In the appendix (section 11), see the Declaration of Religious Principle, from article IX in the Charter and Bylaws of the BSA. The following interpretative statement may help to clarify this position:

The Boy Scouts of America does not define what constitutes belief in God or practice of religion. Neither does the BSA require membership in a religious organization or association for membership in the movement. If a Scout does not belong to a religious organization or association, then his parent(s) or guardian(s) will be considered responsible for his religious training. All that is required is the acknowledgment of belief in God as stated in the Declaration of Religious Principle and the Scout Oath, and the ability to be reverent as stated in the Scout Law.

5.0.6.0 Bestowing Posthumous Awards

If, prior to death, a youth member in any BSA program has met the requirements for a rank or award, including age and service, he or she may receive it posthumously. If a required board of review has not been conducted, it is held according to the methods outlined in "Boards of Review," 8.0.0.0. It is appropriate to invite parents or guardians and friends to discuss the efforts made toward the rank.

For the Eagle Scout rank, the application is verified at the council service center, but it must be sent to the national Advancement Team for processing. A cover letter from the Scout executive or designee must indicate it as posthumous. This triggers changes to the congratulatory letter returned with the pocket card and certificate. Note that the same procedures regarding timing of an Eagle Scout board of review apply in posthumous cases. See "Eagle Scout Board of Review Beyond the 18th Birthday," 8.0.3.1.

5.0.7.0 Spirit of the Eagle Award

The Boy Scouts of America has created the Spirit of the Eagle Award as an honorary posthumous recognition for registered youth members who have lost their lives through illness or accident. It is offered by the National Court of Honor as a final salute and tribute in celebration of the recipient's life, and publicly recognizes his or her contributions to the mission of Scouting.

An application can be found at http://www.scouting.org/Awards_Central/SpiritoftheEagle.aspx. A unit committee must complete and submit it to the local council within six months of the member's death. After acceptance there, it is forwarded to the National Youth Development Team for review and approval.





Internet Advancement Highlights

Reporting advancement is a requirement of the Boy Scouts of America. Internet Advancement makes this a straightforward process. All councils should strive for 100 percent of their units using this functionality.

6.0.0.1 Importance and Benefits of Internet Advancement

Internet Advancement is available to any council using Internet Rechartering. It is for reporting Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, and Sea Scout ranks; Venturing advancement awards; Webelos activity badges; merit badges; and various other awards available in all BSA programs.

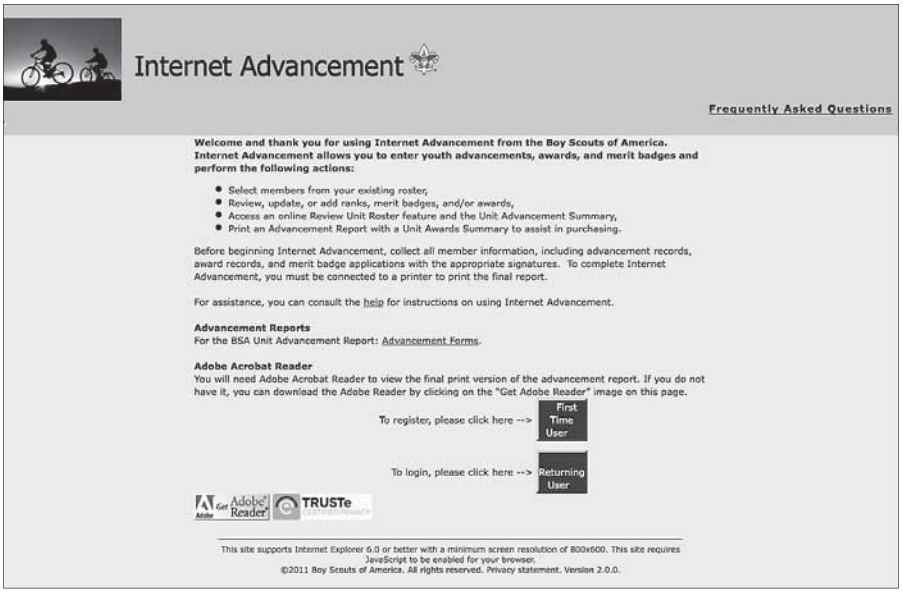
As stated in "Reporting Advancement," 4.0.0.2, all advancement must be reported to local councils. This is important in keeping member records up to date, and it assures an accurate count in the Journey to Excellence performance recognition program. "Unit Advancement Responsibilities," 3.0.0.3, suggests the unit advancement coordinator should use Internet Advancement to accomplish the reporting.

When Internet Advancement is used to comply with reporting responsibilities, it alleviates issues in documenting progress as Scouts submit Eagle applications or transfer from one unit to another within a council. Consistent and constant reporting also assures accurate records for use by commissioners, other district and council volunteers, and the National Council. These are critical in evaluating unit health, adjusting service delivery, and researching changes in programs and requirements.

Features in Internet Advancement allow unit personnel to view past advancement reports submitted through the Internet Advancement system and to see the dates their leaders have taken Youth Protection training.

6.0.0.2 How Internet Advancement Works

Simple and intuitive, Internet Advancement works best from a faster Internet connection using Internet Explorer 6 or higher. Units can enter advancement at any time, print reports, obtain current rosters from the BSA system, and print order sheets for the Scout shop.



This is the Internet Advancement portal home page. There are two types of users at this point: first-time users and returning users. For more information, see "Getting the Most From Internet Advancement," which can be downloaded from http://www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/resources.aspx.

Benefits of Internet Advancement

- *Provides straightforward and intuitive interface for volunteers*
- *Helps in local council certification of Eagle Scout Rank Applications*
- *Records ranks, badges, and awards in accordance with BSA advancement rules*
- *Consolidates data files to reduce or eliminate record gaps when Scouts transfer units*
- *Supports national data analysis for advancement statistics*
- *Assures advancement is counted in the Journey to Excellence*

Units select an advancement processor who is granted access with a council-provided unit ID. It is recommended that units report advancement monthly. They must submit a final annual report each December. These reporting cycles are important because they support local and National Council data collection for the Journey to Excellence program as well as statistical analysis.

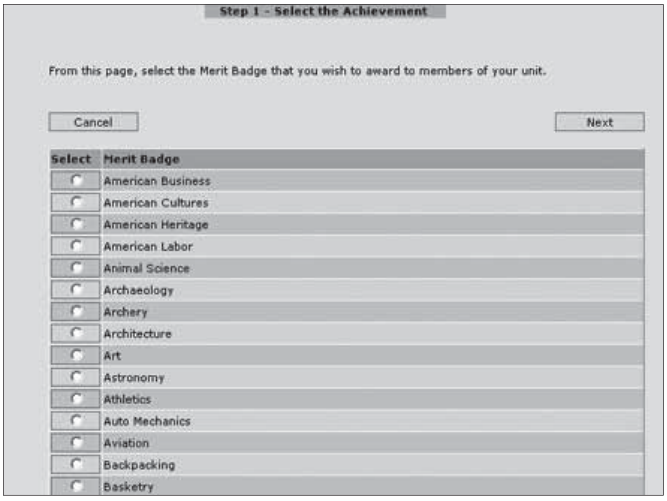
Because of documentation requirements, the Eagle Scout rank may not be entered through this system. Neither may nominated recognitions such as meritorious action awards.

Internet Advancement is accessed through the local council's website or from MyScouting. When first-time unit processors enter, they are greeted by a welcome page with instructions and invited to log in and accept a confidentiality agreement.

Once they have provided some registration information, they move to an overview page with additional instructions. Returning users skip these steps and go directly to selecting members for advancement.

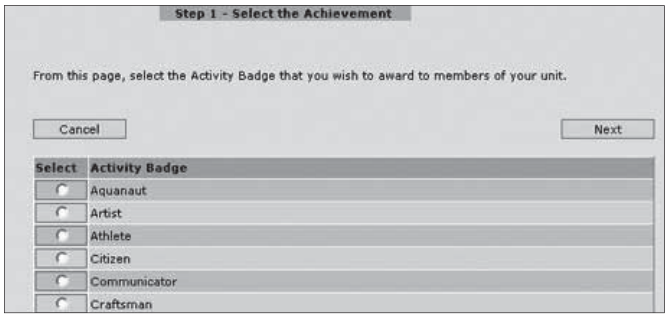
If units choose to upload advancement files generated from PackMaster©, TroopMaster©, or ScoutSoft© instead of manually entering information, Internet Advancement will load the unit's roster and then allow upload of new advancement information. When manually entering ranks, you must enter each individual's rank in proper sequence. Once everything is done and verified, an advancement report is printed, signed, and provided to the local council so awards can be purchased.

Councils may continue to accept file uploads created by the commercially available unit-management software applications such as PackMaster©, TroopMaster©, and ScoutSoft©.



Merit badge screen





Activity badge screen

Because unit advancement processors access data directly from ScoutNET, deciphering handwriting is not an issue. The system also validates entries against advancement rules and generates error messages when needed. Errors must be corrected before the process can proceed.

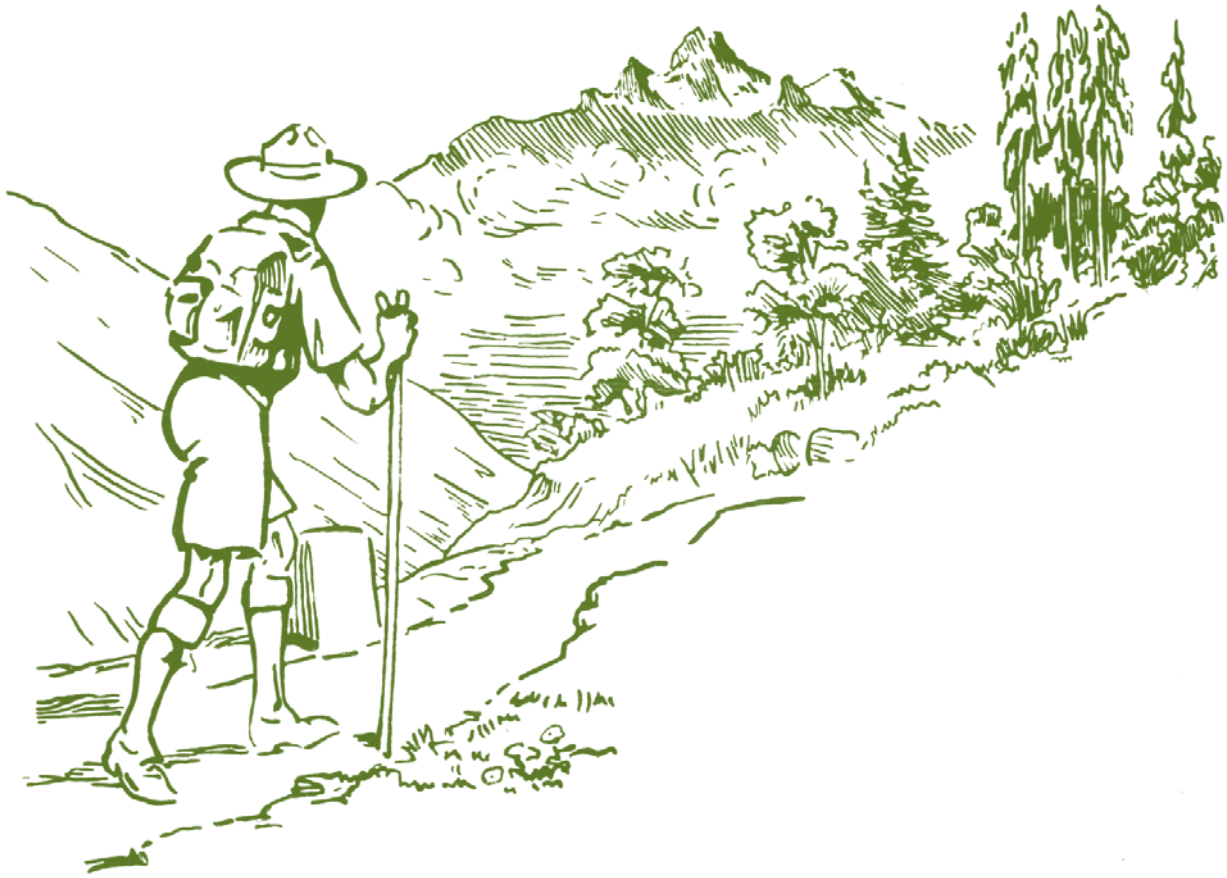
6.0.0.3 Where to Find Internet Advancement Help

The system includes a link to Frequently Asked Questions on every page, as well as an indexed help tool that can be searched by keyword or topic. The presentation "Getting the Most From Internet Advancement," found at http://www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/resources.aspx, has been developed by the national Advancement Committee's Webinars and Education Task Force to help in orienting unit and district volunteers on functionality and benefits. It also covers the operating systems and browsers with which Internet Advancement works or does not work. Councils can add local processes and information to the presentation.

Most councils have established "Help Desk"–style assistance. Staff members can answer questions, provide unit access IDs, monitor activity, change passwords, reset profiles and data, and create reports requested by council management for staff and volunteer use.

6.0.0.4 Internet Advancement Miscellany

Board of Review Signatures. Because entering rank advancement into Internet Advancement and printing the system-generated Unit Advancement Reports typically occur sometime after boards of review are held, obtaining signatures on the report may not be practical. Therefore, after a board of review is held, it is permissible for board members to sign a completed copy of the Unit Advancement Report found at http://www.scouting.org/forms.aspx. This signed report may then be attached to the Internet Advancement–generated report and submitted to the local council.





Important Features of Internet Advancement

- *Secure website with high encryption protects Scouts' information.*
- *Report templates prevent errors due to illegible handwriting.*
- *Records can be corrected before submitting.*
- *Date corrections are allowed.*
- *Past advancement reports can be recalled and reviewed.*
- *Rosters, order sheets, and advancement summaries can be printed.*
- *Records from PackMaster©, TroopMaster©, and ScoutSoft© can be uploaded.*

Scout Transfers. BSA member identification numbers are unique only within each local council. They are not nationally universal, although it is likely they will become so as the National Council updates its computer systems in the future. Thus, advancement data associated with a Scout's ID number cannot be accessed by any other councils. For this reason, if a Scout moves to a different council, he must obtain either a printout of his advancement from the council he is leaving or a copy of the Internet Advancement Member Summary Report from his old unit. Either of these should be attached to the application used to transfer the youth's membership to his new council and unit. It is important to enter the Scout's name and BSA identification number on the youth application exactly as they appear in the records of the former council. Nicknames and other differences will only delay the transfer process.

Dual Registration. If a Scout has multiple registrations with units in different councils, his advancement records should be maintained in only one of the units. As he passes requirements in any other unit, the information should be relayed to his primary unit so only one advancement record is maintained. It is not possible to electronically consolidate data across different units in different councils. If advancement records are maintained in multiple units, then cooperation between the units will be required in order to generate the reports necessary to report and obtain the awards.



The Merit Badge Program

7.0.0.1 The Benefits of Merit Badges

There is more to merit badges than simply providing opportunities to learn skills. There is more to them than an introduction to lifetime hobbies, or the inspiration to pursue a career—though these invaluable results occur regularly. The uncomplicated process—beginning in a discussion with the unit leader or a designated assistant, continuing through meetings with a counselor, and culminating in advancement and recognition—provides several learning experiences. It gives a Scout the confidence achieved through overcoming obstacles. Social skills improve. Self-reliance develops. Examples are set and followed. And fields of study and interest are explored beyond the limits of the school classroom.

APPLICATION FOR MERIT BADGE

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

is a registered

☐ Boy Scout ☐ Varsity Scout ☐ Venturer

of _____ No._____
Troop, team, crew, ship

District _____

Council _____

I have discussed this merit badge with this Scout and recommended at least one merit badge counselor.

_____ _____
Date Signature of unit leader

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

34124

All merit badge requirements must be met while a registered Boy Scout or Varsity Scout, or a qualified Venturer or Sea Scout. Accomplishments before joining, or while a Cub Scout, do not apply.

7.0.0.2 About the Application for Merit Badge ("Blue Card")

It is important to note the "blue card" is the nationally recognized merit badge record. It has been updated from time to time and carries the information needed for proper posting and for evidence and reference as needed later. The card has three parts: the actual "Application for Merit Badge" portion, the "Applicant's Record," and the "Counselor's Record." It requires a total of four signatures—two each from the unit leader and a merit badge counselor. The unit leader signs first on the front of the Application for Merit Badge portion and gives the entire blue card to the Scout. See "The Scout, the Blue Card, and the Unit Leader," 7.0.0.3.

Typically after the unit leader signs the blue card, the Scout contacts the merit badge counselor and sets an appointment. While a boy may begin working on a merit badge at any time after he is registered, it is the counselor's decision whether to accept work or activities completed prior to the issuing of the signed blue card. Common sense should prevail, however. For example, nights already camped as a Boy Scout, or coins or stamps already collected, would count toward their respective badges.

A merit badge counselor—once he or she is satisfied a Scout has met all the requirements—signs in two places: on the reverse of the Application for Merit Badge (to the left) and on the Applicant's Record (in the middle). These two parts are returned to the Scout. The approving counselor should retain the part of the card called the Counselor's Record for at least one year—in case questions are raised later. If the Scout did not complete all the requirements, the counselor simply indicates and initials those that were fulfilled in the spaces provided on the back of the Applicant's Record part. This is called a "partial" (see "Partial Completions," 7.0.3.3). Once a registered counselor signs that all requirements have been met, the Scout should meet with his unit leader to discuss his experience. The unit leader then signs the Applicant's Record portion and returns it to the young man, who should retain it in his personal permanent records.

For very large events—such as the national Scout jamboree—the National Council may approve an alternative format and sizing for the blue card. This is done through the national Advancement Team.

In the event unit leaders or other volunteers discover that any merit badge counselors are not following mandated procedures regarding the use of blue cards or working with the requirements as they are written, they should complete and submit to the council advancement committee the Reporting Merit Badge Counseling Concerns form, 11.0.0.0. Unit leaders should regularly review the policies and procedures related to the merit badge process with Scouts, parents, and leaders, and counsel them on proper methods as the need arises.

Though it has not been clearly stated in the past, units, districts, and local councils do not have the authority to implement a different system for merit badge approval and documentation. In any case, through the years, many councils have created new forms and approaches to the process, some including IT components. In an effort to gather and consider these potential best practices, councils are now asked to submit descriptions and copies of their blue card alternatives to the national Advancement Team.

7.0.0.3 The Scout, the Blue Card, and the Unit Leader

A few merit badges have certain restrictions, but otherwise any registered Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, or qualified Venturer or Sea Scout may work on any of them at any time. Before he begins working with a merit badge counselor, however, he is to have a discussion with his unit leader. That a discussion has been held is indicated by the unit leader's signature on the Application for Merit Badge, No. 34124, commonly called the "blue card." Although it is the unit leader's responsibility to see that at least one merit badge counselor is identified from those approved and made available, the Scout may have one in mind with whom he would like to work. The unit leader and Scout should come to agreement as to who the counselor will be. Lacking agreement, the Scout must be allowed to work with the counselor of his choice, so long as the counselor is registered and has been approved by the council advancement committee. However, see "Counselor Approvals and Limitations," 7.0.1.4, for circumstances when a unit leader may place limits on the number of merit badges that may be earned from one counselor.

The Scout may also want to take advantage of opportunities at merit badge fairs or midways, or at rock-climbing gyms or whitewater rafting trips that provide merit badge instruction. This is also acceptable, but the Scout must still discuss the merit badge with the unit leader and get a signed blue card. Should a Scout want to change counselors, he should once again speak with the unit leader to verify that the counselor is properly registered and approved. Whatever the source, all merit badge counselors must be registered and approved for the merit badges they counsel. See "Counselor Approvals and Limitations," 7.0.1.4, and "Registration and Reregistration," 7.0.1.5.

A unit leader should consider making more of the process than just providing a signature. The opportunity exists, then and there, to provide inspiration and direction in a young man's life. Preliminary merit badge discussions can lead to conversations about talents and interests, goal setting, and the concept of "challenge by choice." The benefits can be much like those of a well-done Scoutmaster conference.

The discussion a Scout is to have with the unit leader is meant to be a growth-oriented and positive conversation. The unit leader should discuss any concerns related to working on the merit badge and provide appropriate counseling. It is then the Scout's decision whether or not to proceed with the merit badge. The process is intended to inform the Scout about what he may encounter along the way, and perhaps to give him suggestions on how the work might be approached. It also has the purpose of keeping the unit leader up to date with what the members of the unit are doing.

Because of the counseling opportunity involved, it is the unit leader's responsibility to sign blue cards. In the role of giving leadership to the delivery of the troop program, a Scoutmaster, for example, has a better opportunity than other leaders to get to know the youth. This background with the Scouts allows a unit leader to add greater value in the discussion and counseling intended to take place with the signing of the card. However, in circumstances when this may be impractical—for example, in large units or when the unit leader may be absent—the unit leader may delegate authority to sign cards and conduct the discussions. This authority should be entrusted to a knowledgeable assistant unit leader.

7.0.1.0 About Merit Badge Counselors

7.0.1.1 Qualifications of Counselors

People serving as merit badge counselors, including those working at summer camp, must maintain registration with the Boy Scouts of America as merit badge counselors and be approved by the local council advancement committee for each of their badges. See "Counselor Approvals and Limitations," 7.0.1.4.

There are no exceptions. For example, Scoutmasters must be approved for any badge they wish to counsel or sign off in their troop. Before working with Scouts, counselors must have completed Youth Protection training within the last two years. They must be men or women of good character, age 18 or older, and recognized as having the skills and education in the subjects they cover. It is important, too, they have good rapport with Scout-age boys and unit leaders.

It is acceptable for a counselor registered in one council to approve merit badges for Scouts in another. This is an important consideration, especially in areas where counselors are scarce, or when Scouts are away from home and want to continue advancing.

Several badges involve activities for which the Boy Scouts of America has implemented strategies to improve safety, enhance the Scouts' experiences, and manage risk. These activities often require supervision with specialized qualifications and certifications. Merit badge counselors who do not meet the specific requirements may use the services of helpers who do. Additional details can be found below, and also in the *Guide to Safe Scouting* and the merit badge pamphlets.

General Supervision Requirements

- Swimming and watercraft activities must be conducted in accordance with BSA Safe Swim Defense or BSA Safety Afloat, respectively, and be supervised by mature and conscientious adults at least 21 years old and trained in the program applicable. Counselors for merit badges involving swimming or the use of watercraft must be so trained, or use helpers who are.
- All physical activities presented in any Scouting program must be conducted in accordance with "The Sweet Sixteen of BSA Safety." These 16 points, embodying good judgment and common sense, can be found at http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/Sweet16.aspx.
- CPR instruction, wherever it is required, must be taught by instructors currently trained by a nationally certified provider. Several such providers are mentioned in the *Guide to Safe Scouting*.

The following merit badges have special qualifications or certifications for either the merit badge counselor or the supervisor of certain activities that may be involved. Counselors and advancement administrators should consult the merit badge pamphlets for details and to maintain awareness of changes and updates as pamphlets are revised.

Archery. Archery activities must be supervised by a BSA National Camping School–trained shooting sports director or USA Archery or National Field Archery Association instructor, or by someone who has been trained by one of the three; or alternatively, the activities may be supervised by someone with at least Level 1 training in the operation of an archery range from USA Archery, NFAA, or an equivalent.

Canoeing. Those supervising canoeing activities must have either BSA Aquatics Instructor or Canoeing Instructor certification from the American Canoe Association, American Red Cross, or equivalent; OR local councils may approve individuals previously certified as such, or trained by an instructor so qualified.

Climbing. All climbing, belaying, and rappelling exercises and activities must be supervised by a rock climbing instructor who is a mature and conscientious adult at least 21 years old, and who is trained in BSA Climb On Safely and understands the risks inherent to these activities. Training as a BSA climbing Level 2 Instructor is highly recommended. Someone with certification in First Aid/CPR/AED from the American Red Cross (or equivalent) must be present at these activities.

Kayaking. Those supervising kayaking activities must have formal training in kayaking and paddle craft instruction, evidenced by either BSA Aquatics Instructor or Paddle Craft Safety Instructor certification, or kayaking instructor certification from the American Canoe Association, British Canoe Union, or American Red Cross, or equivalent; OR local councils may approve individuals previously certified as such, or trained by an instructor so qualified.

Lifesaving. Demonstrations or activities in or on the water must be supervised by an adult at least 21 years old with certification in Red Cross First Aid/CPR/AED or equivalent, and also as BSA Lifeguard or Aquatics Instructor or equivalent.

Rifle Shooting. The merit badge counselor is responsible for ensuring that all instruction or other activities involving any handling of firearms or live ammunition is consistent with state and federal law and supervised by a certified BSA National Camping School (NCS) shooting sports director, or National Rifle Association (NRA) Rifle Shooting Instructor or Coach. Instruction or other activities involving handling muzzleloaders must be supervised by an NCS shooting sports director or NRA/National Muzzleloader Rifle Association (NMLRA)–certified muzzleloader firearms instructor. Shooting must be supervised by an NRA-certified Range Safety Officer (RSO). If instruction and shooting are to occur at the same time, both the RSO and qualified instructor must be present. The supervisor and instructor may not be the

same person. Note that commercial shooting ranges may provide RSOs. See the *Guide to Safe Scouting* and the BSA *National Shooting Sports Manual,* No. 30931, for further details on shooting sports.

Rowing. Those supervising rowing activities must have either BSA Aquatics Instructor certification or equivalent; OR local councils may approve individuals previously certified as such, or trained by an instructor so qualified.

Scuba Diving. All phases of scuba instruction—classroom, pool, and open-water training—are limited to instructors trained and certified by one of the BSA's recognized scuba agencies as found in the *Guide to Safe Scouting.*

Shotgun Shooting. The merit badge counselor is responsible for ensuring that all instruction or other activities involving any handling of firearms or live ammunition is consistent with state and federal law and supervised by a certified NCS shooting sports director or NRA Shotgun Instructor or Coach. Instruction or other activities involving handling muzzle-loading shotguns must be supervised by an NCS shooting sports director or NRA/NMLRA certified muzzle-loading shotgun instructor. Shooting must be supervised by an NRA-certified Range Safety Officer. If instruction and shooting are to occur at the same time, both the RSO and qualified instructor must be present. They may not be the same person. Note that commercial shooting ranges may provide RSOs. See the *Guide to Safe Scouting* and the BSA *National Shooting Sports Manual,* No. 420029, for further details on shooting sports.

Snow Sports. Activities in the field must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult 21 years or older who is committed to compliance with BSA Winter Sports Safety as defined in the *Guide to Safe Scouting*.

Swimming. Demonstrations or activities in or on the water must be conducted according to BSA Safe Swim Defense and BSA Safety Afloat.

Whitewater. Those supervising whitewater activities must be and certified as whitewater canoeing or kayaking instructors by the American Canoe Association or have equivalent certification, training, or expertise.

All certifications listed above must be current.

The required qualifications above for merit badge counseling and supervision not only assist in managing risk, but also give counselors credibility. Scouts will see them as people of importance they can look up to and learn from. A well-qualified counselor can extend a young person's attention span: More will be heard and understood, discussions will be more productive, and true interest developed. The conversations can lead to a relationship of mutual respect where the Scout is confident to offer his thoughts and opinions and value those of his merit badge counselor. Thus it is that social skills and self-reliance grow, and examples are set and followed.

In approving counselors, the local council advancement committee has the authority to establish a higher minimum, reasonable level of skills and education for the counselors of a given merit badge than is indicated in "Qualifications of Counselors," 7.0.1.1. For example, NRA certification could be established as a council standard for approving counselors for the Rifle Shooting or Shotgun Shooting merit badges.

7.0.1.2 Sources of Merit Badge Counselors

District or council advancement committees are charged with recruiting and training sufficient counselors to meet unit needs. As with any recruitment effort, it begins with prospecting: gathering names of people who may be qualified to serve. This can be done in a group setting through brainstorming as outlined in *Friendstorming On Tour*, No. 510-003, or considered on an individual basis. Merit badge counselor prospects are most often found from the following sources:

- Schools and colleges
- Parents groups
- Local businesses
- Service clubs
- Trade groups
- Religious organizations
- Neighborhood associations
- Government agencies
- The armed services
- Chartered organizations
- Nonprofit organizations such as the Boys & Girls Clubs of America
- Parents and guardians of Scouts

A Guide for Merit Badge Counseling, No. 34532, can be useful in recruiting. Visits to district meetings, roundtables, training sessions, and other events may also uncover prospects. While there, unit and district volunteer feedback may be sought on the quality of those currently active.

To learn more about Friendstorming, have your council call the Program Impact Department at the national office.

7.0.1.3 Venturing Consultants as Merit Badge Counselors

Venturing consultants are people whose special skills or talents are needed for a crew activity or project. Usually they are adults recruited on a one-time basis. More information can be found in the *Venturing Leader Manual*, No. 34655. Consultants generally would be considered qualified to counsel merit badges related to their expertise. To do so, they must be approved and registered as merit badge counselors, according to the procedures below.

7.0.1.4 Counselor Approvals and Limitations

The council advancement committee is responsible for approval of all merit badge counselors before they provide services, although it is acceptable to delegate authority for this function to districts. The process should not be rushed to the point where unqualified counselors are allowed to serve. The National Council places no limit on the number of merit badges an individual may be approved to counsel, except to the extent a person lacks skills and education in a given subject. The intent is for Scouts to learn from those with an appropriate level of expertise.

Merit badge counselors must submit the Merit Badge Counselor Information sheet, No. 34405, according to local council practices. The form must show each badge for which the counselor requests approval. Additions or subtractions may be submitted using the same form. Although it is permissible for councils to limit the number of badges that one person counsels, it must not do so to the point where Scouts' choices, especially in small or remote units, are so limited as to serve as a barrier to advancement.

Neither does the National Council place a limit on the number of merit badges a youth may earn from one counselor. However, in situations where a Scout is earning a large number of badges from just one counselor, the unit leader is permitted to place a limit on the number of merit badges that may be earned from one counselor, as long as the same limit applies to all Scouts in the unit. Approved counselors may work with and pass any member, including their own son, ward, or relative. Nevertheless, we often teach young people the importance of broadening horizons. Scouts meeting with counselors beyond their families and beyond even their own units are doing that. They will benefit from the perspectives of many "teachers" and will learn more as a result. They should be encouraged to reach out.

7.0.1.5 Registration and Reregistration

Merit badge counselors register at no fee, using the Boy Scouts of America's standard adult registration form with position code 42. Designated members of the council or district advancement committee should provide the approval signature. The council advancement committee annually coordinates counselor reregistration. This may be done as part of the local council charter renewal process. A letter or message extending an invitation can be sent to each counselor who is to be approved for another year. Those identified as not following Boy Scouts of America policies and procedures, or not providing services as promised, should not be invited to return.

Volunteers who are properly registered as merit badge counselors can renew annually without completing an adult application; their names will appear on the district roster for renewal. Anyone who is currently unregistered, or who is registered in another position but also desires to serve as a merit badge counselor, must complete an adult application.

The invitational message or letter could include the following:

1. Gratitude for service
2. Invitation to reregister
3. Reminder to maintain current Youth Protection training
4. Listing of merit badges each is currently approved to counsel
5. Contact name in the district or council who can provide assistance and information
6. Response card, e-form, or other way for counselors to return updated contact information, preferred method for contact, merit badges they wish to add or drop, updates to their skills and education profile, and anything else that may be helpful
7. News and information regarding merit badge "midways" or "fairs," counselor training opportunities, other activities or meetings of interest, and additional volunteer opportunities
8. FAQs or suggestions covering "best practices" for counseling

7.0.1.6 Training for Counselors

The council or district advancement committee must assure counselors understand the Boy Scouts of America's aims, methods, and mission. It is also important they know how Scouts can learn and grow through the merit badge process. To enhance the merit badge counselor experience, the national Advancement Committee's Webinars and Education Task Force has developed the presentation "The Essentials of Merit Badge Counseling." It can be downloaded from http://www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/resources.aspx, and viewed individually, featured in merit badge counselor training events, or delivered as part of a wider experience covering several levels of Scout leader training. Where a counselor corps is organized into groups based on the popularity or subject matter of badges, with "head counselors" for each group (see below), there is also an opportunity for "on-the-job coaching." This is helpful where individual counselors need a better understanding of the merit badge plan.

In multicultural communities, local councils should endeavor to offer bilingual training and mentoring.

7.0.2.0 Merit Badge Counselor Lists

7.0.2.1 Getting Started

It is the responsibility of the council advancement committee to maintain a current list of registered and approved counselors, although this may be delegated to districts. To get started, the council advancement committee should consider organizing the badges into logical groups, such as business and industry, natural science, communications, and public service, and recruiting a head counselor for each group.

Head counselors are not expected to be experts in each badge, but they should be capable of recruiting those who meet the qualifications. Remember that counselor recruiting is an ongoing responsibility. As new ones are added and others drop off, it is vital these changes be communicated to the district or council advancement committee.

The number of counselors needed for the list depends on badge popularity. First consider badges required for Eagle Scout rank, which are obvious "musts." Next think about those most popular in the local area. Reports on merit badges earned can be generated at your council service center. For low-demand subjects, counselors may appear on more than one district list. Urge troops, teams, crews, and ships to make as many of their counselors as possible available districtwide.

The council or district counselor list is reproduced for distribution to troops, teams, crews, and ships. It is most efficient to set the list up as an electronic document that includes all counselors in the council. Establishing it as a spreadsheet or database can allow sorting for counselors willing to serve at the council, district, or unit level. It is important to maintain and update this list regularly so that users can depend upon it.

7.0.2.2 Web-Based Counselor Lists

Online counselor lists present a number of challenges. They should only be placed on official council websites that conform to the National Council guidelines at http://www.scouting.org/Marketing/Resources/CouncilWeb.aspx. Give attention to protecting counselor privacy. Limit access to those who have merit badge–related responsibilities, such as advancement committee members and chairs, or unit leaders and selected assistants. Scouts should not have access. Their interaction with the Scoutmaster in discussing work on a badge, and obtaining a counselor's name, is an important part of the merit badge plan.

7.0.2.3 Unit Counselor Lists

Units may establish their own lists of counselors, who may or may not opt to work with youth in other units. This may be necessary in wide geographic areas. It can also be helpful to have ready counselors for the most popular badges. Recognize, however, that Scouts learn from the perspectives of counselors outside their own troop. Note that all merit badge counselors, including those serving only one unit, must be registered and be approved by the council (or district, if authorized) advancement committee.

7.0.3.0 The Process of Counseling

Earning merit badges should be Scout initiated, Scout researched, and Scout learned. It should be hands-on and interactive, and should not be modeled after a typical school classroom setting. Instead, it is meant to be an active program so enticing to young men that they will want to take responsibility for their own full participation.

If subject matter relates to a counselor's vocation, meetings with youth might take place at an office or work site. Hobby-related badges are usually counseled at home. For others like Rowing, Rifle Shooting, or Geocaching, learning could occur in the field where special facilities or an appropriate venue are available. Once a counselor has reviewed the signed Application for Merit Badge, he or she might begin with discussions about what the Scout already knows. This could be followed with coaching, guidance, and additional

meetings, not only for passing the candidate on the requirements, but also to help him understand the subject.

The health and safety of those working on merit badges must be integrated with the process. Besides the *Guide to Safe Scouting*, the "Sweet 16 of BSA Safety" must be consulted as an appropriate planning tool. It can be found online at "Scouting Safely," http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/Sweet16.aspx.

Recommended Merit Badge Process

1. *The Scout indicates an interest and discusses it with his unit leader.*
2. *The unit leader signs a blue card and provides the Scout with at least one counselor contact.*
3. *The Scout contacts the counselor.*
4. *The Scout, his buddy, and the counselor meet (often several times).*
5. *The Scout completes the requirements.*
6. *The counselor approves completion.*
7. *The Scout returns the signed blue card to his unit leader, who signs the applicant record section of the blue card.*
8. *The unit leader gives the Scout the applicant record.*
9. *The unit reports the merit badge to the council.*
10. *The Scout receives his merit badge.*

7.0.3.1 The Buddy System and Certifying Completion

A youth member must not meet one-on-one with an adult. Sessions with counselors must take place where others can view the interaction, or the Scout must have a buddy: a friend, parent, guardian, brother, sister, or other relative—or better yet, another Scout working on the same badge—along with him attending the session.

When the Scout meets with the counselor, he should bring any required projects. If these cannot be transported, he should present evidence, such as photographs or adult verification. His unit leader, for example, might state that a satisfactory bridge or tower has been built for the Pioneering merit badge, or that meals were prepared for Cooking. If there are questions that requirements were met, a counselor may confirm with adults involved. Once satisfied, the counselor signs the blue card using the date upon which the Scout completed the requirements, or in the case of partials, initials the individual requirements passed.

Note that from time to time, it may be appropriate for a requirement that has been met for one badge to also count for another. See "Fulfilling More Than One Requirement With a Single Activity," 4.2.3.6.

7.0.3.2 Group Instruction

It is acceptable—and sometimes desirable—for merit badges to be taught in group settings. This often occurs at camp and merit badge midways, fairs, clinics, or similar events, and even online through webinars. These can be efficient methods, and interactive group discussions can support learning. Group instruction can also be attractive to "guest experts" assisting registered and approved counselors. Slide shows, skits, demonstrations, panels, and various other techniques can also be employed, but as any teacher can attest, not everyone will learn all the material. Because of the importance of individual attention and personal learning in the merit badge program, group instruction should be focused on those scenarios where the benefits are compelling.

There must be attention to each individual's projects and his fulfillment of *all* requirements. We must know that every Scout—actually and *personally*—completed them. If, for example, a requirement uses words like "show," "demonstrate," or "discuss," then every Scout must do that. It is unacceptable to award badges on the basis of sitting in classrooms *watching* demonstrations, or remaining silent during discussions.

It is sometimes reported that Scouts who have received merit badges through group instructional settings have not fulfilled all the requirements. To offer a quality merit badge program, council and district advancement committees should ensure the following are in place for all group instructional events.

- Merit badge counselors are known to be registered and approved.
- Any guest experts or guest speakers, or others assisting who are not registered and approved as merit badge counselors, do not accept the responsibilities of, or behave as, merit badge counselors, either at a group instructional event or at any other time. Their service is temporary, not ongoing.
- Counselors agree to sign off only requirements that Scouts have actually and personally completed.

- Counselors agree not to assume prerequisites have been completed without some level of evidence that the work has been done. Pictures and letters from other merit badge counselors or unit leaders are the best form of prerequisite documentation when the actual work done cannot be brought to the camp or site of the merit badge event.
- There is a mechanism for unit leaders or others to report concerns to a council advancement committee on summer camp merit badge programs, group instructional events, and any other merit badge counseling issues—especially in instances where it is believed BSA procedures are not followed. See "Reporting Merit Badge Counseling Concerns," 11.1.0.0.

There must be attention to each individual's projects and his fulfillment of all requirements. We must know that every Scout—actually and personally—completed them.

It is permissible for guest speakers, guest experts, or others who are not merit badge counselors to assist *in the counseling process. Those providing such assistance must be under the direction of a registered and approved counselor who is readily available on-site, and provides personal supervision to assure all applicable BSA policies and procedures—including those related to BSA Youth Protection—are in place and followed.*

7.0.3.3 Partial Completions

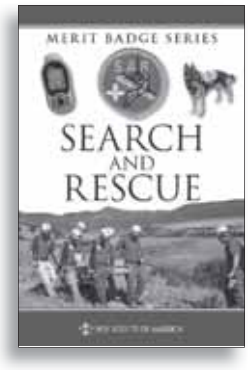
A Scout need not pass all the requirements of one merit badge with the same counselor. It may be that due to timing or location issues, etc., he must meet with a different counselor to finish the badge. The Application for Merit Badge has a place to record what has been finished—a "partial." In the center section on the reverse of the blue card, the counselor initials for each requirement passed. In the case of a partial completion, the counselor does not retain his or her portion of the card. A subsequent counselor may choose not to accept partial work, but this should be rare. A Scout, if he believes he is being treated unfairly, may work with his unit leader to find another counselor. An example for the use of a signed partial would be to take it to camp as proof of prerequisites. Partials have no expiration except the Scout's 18th birthday. Units, districts, or councils shall not establish other expiration dates for partial merit badges.

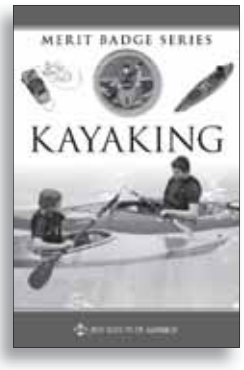


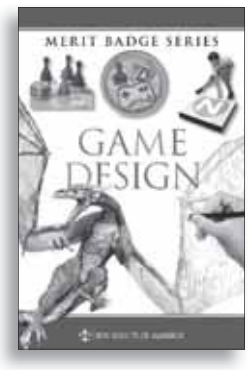
7.0.4.0 Merit Badge Miscellany

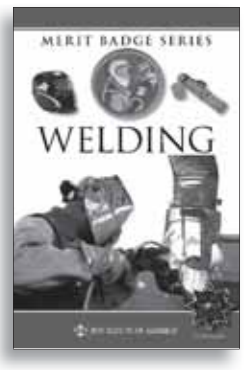
7.0.4.1 New Merit Badges

Suggestions for new merit badges may be sent to the Innovation Team at the National Council, *merit.badge@scouting.org*. Ideas are researched for relevance to the BSA mission and the needs of today's youth and families. Subject matter must spark interest in Scout-age boys; thus part of the process involves presenting submissions to a youth panel.









7.0.4.2 Revising Merit Badges

Through a process managed by the national Advancement Team, all merit badges are reviewed periodically to improve relevance, consistency, and requirement and content accuracy. Merit badge counselors, unit leadership, parents, and youth are encouraged to send suggestions or comments to merit.badge@scouting.org. *All submissions* are reviewed and considered as merit badges and pamphlets are revised. Feedback has been invaluable in correcting errors, updating material, and enhancing content.

7.0.4.3 What to Do When Requirements Change

The current annual edition of *Boy Scout Requirements* lists the official merit badge requirements. Once new or revised merit badge requirements appear in this publication, which is released each January, any Scout just beginning work on a merit badge must use the requirements as stated there.

If changes to merit badge requirements are introduced in a revised merit badge pamphlet after the January release of the *Boy Scout Requirements* book, then the Scout has until the following January 1 to decide what to do. He may continue—or begin work—using the old merit badge requirements and the old pamphlet; or he may switch to—or begin work—using the new requirements and the new pamphlet. Unless it is otherwise stated in the merit badge pamphlet, *Boy Scout Requirements*, or official communications from the National Council, if a Scout chooses to use the old merit badge requirements and pamphlet, he may continue using them until he has completed the badge.

There is no time limit between starting and completing a badge, although a counselor may determine so much time has passed since any effort took place that the new requirements must be used.

The authoritative source for all merit badge requirements is the current year's Boy Scout Requirements book.

7.0.4.4 Discontinued Merit Badges

Scouts are not allowed to begin work on discontinued merit badges. If actual and purposeful effort that is more than simply incidental to participation in Scouting activities has already begun by the time discontinuation becomes effective, and work actively continues, then the badge may be completed and can count toward rank advancement. However, presentation of the badge itself will be subject to availability. It is a misconception that discontinued merit badges may be earned as long as the patch and requirements can be found.

7.0.4.5 Earning Eagle-Required Merit Badges for Star or Life Rank

Candidates for Star or Life, in the selection of "any four" or "any three," respectively, of the merit badges required for Eagle, may choose from all those listed, including where alternatives are available: Emergency Preparedness OR Lifesaving; Cycling OR Hiking OR Swimming; and, beginning July 2013, Environmental Science OR Sustainability. For example, if a Scout earns Cycling, Hiking, and Swimming, all three of them count as Eagle-required for Life rank. Only one, however, would serve toward the required merit badges for the Eagle Scout rank. The other two would count toward the optional merit badges required to make up the total of 21 merit badges.

Note that Star and Life requirements each allow two non-Eagle-required merit badges. It is the Scout's decision, however, to earn more—or all—of his Star and Life badges from the Eagle-required list. Beginning July 2013, Sustainability may be used for a Star or Life Eagle-required merit badge as well, even if Environmental Science has also been earned, but only one of the two would count toward an Eagle rank.

7.0.4.6 Once It Is Earned, It's Earned

A Scout who has earned a merit badge from a registered and approved counselor by actually and personally fulfilling the requirements as written will have met the purpose of the merit badge program and the contribution to the aims of Scouting. The badge is his to keep and count toward his advancement. See "Personal Growth Is the Primary Goal," 2.0.0.3. The same holds true if a Scout, without intent to violate national BSA procedures or policies, fulfills merit badge requirements with someone who is not registered and approved as a counselor. This could happen, for example, if a Scout, in good faith, contacts someone who has inadvertently been dropped from a unit or district charter or otherwise has an expired membership, but who remains on an approved list of counselors.

In cases where it is discovered that unregistered or unapproved individuals are signing off merit badges, this should be reported to the council or district advancement committee so they have the opportunity to follow up. But it is also the responsibility of unit leaders to help Scouts understand that only registered and approved counselors are to be used. Because background checks, Youth Protection training, and merit badge program quality control are involved, BSA registration and council advancement committee approval are mandated procedures. If a Scout to whom this mandated procedure has been made clear has ignored it, then unit leaders may require the youth to work with other counselors who are properly documented

who will verify that requirements were met and sign the blue cards. A unit leader should discuss any potential follow-up counselors with the Scout and provide the name of at least one, but Scouts must be allowed to work with registered and approved counselors of their choice as outlined in "About the Application for Merit Badge ("Blue Card")," 7.0.0.2.

7.0.4.7 Limited Recourse for Unearned Merit Badges

From time to time, however, it may be discovered that merit badges could not actually have been *earned*. For example, a Scout who returns from summer camp or a merit badge fair with signed blue cards for an extraordinary number of badges could raise concerns. If, after consulting with those involved in the merit badge program—such as an event coordinator, the camp director, or a merit badge counselor—it becomes plainly evident that a youth could not have actually and personally fulfilled requirements as written, then the *limited* recourse outlined below is available. It may result in a decision that some or all of the requirements for a badge could not have been fulfilled, and thus, that the badge was not actually earned.

After such a consultation, the unit leader, in a positive environment similar to that of a unit leader conference, discusses with the Scout the circumstances under which a merit badge in question was approved. A parent or an assistant unit leader should attend as an observer. The young man *shall not be retested* on the requirements, but a conversation with him can reveal if he was present at the class and actually and personally fulfilled all the requirements. Such a discussion could cover who taught a class, what sort of activities took place, where and when they occurred, how testing was done, what the Scout might have brought home from the class, and other similar process-oriented details.

In most cases, with a fair and friendly approach, a young man who did not complete the requirements will admit it. Short of this, however, if it remains clear under the circumstances that some or all of the requirements *could not* have been met, then the merit badge is not reported or awarded, and does not count toward advancement. The unit leader then offers the name of at least one other merit badge counselor through whom any incomplete requirements may be finished. Note that in this case a merit badge is not "taken away" because, although signed off, it was never actually earned.

Just as we avoid penalizing Scouts for the mistakes of adults, it should be a rare occurrence that a unit leader finds the need to question whether merit badges have been earned. This procedure for recourse is limited and reserved only for clear and evident cases of noncompletion or nonparticipation. For example, the recourse could be allowed when it would *not have been possible* to complete a specific requirement at the location of the class, event, or camp; if time available was not sufficient—perhaps due to class size or other factors—for the counselor to observe that each Scout personally and actually completed all the requirements; if time available was insufficient for a "calendar" requirement such as for Personal Fitness or Personal Management; or if multiple merit badges in question were scheduled at the same time.

This procedure is not to be viewed as an opportunity for retesting on requirements, for interjecting another set of standards over those of a merit badge counselor, or for debating issues such as whether a Scout was strong enough, mature enough, or old enough to have completed requirements.

Unit leaders who find it necessary to make use of this recourse must act quickly—if possible, within 30 days of discovery. It is inappropriate to delay a Scout's advancement with anything less than a prompt decision.

If a Scout or his parent or guardian believes a unit leader has incorrectly determined a Scout has not earned a merit badge, or more than 30 days have passed without a reasonable explanation for the lack of a decision, they should address their concerns with the unit committee. They should first, however, develop a thorough understanding of the merit badge requirements and that each one must be passed exactly as it is set forth.

Upon encountering any merit badge program where BSA standards are not upheld, unit leaders are strongly encouraged to report the incident to the council advancement committee, preferably using the form found in the appendix (see "Reporting Merit Badge Counseling Concerns," 11.1.0.0).

7.0.4.8 Unofficial Worksheets and Learning Aids

Worksheets and other materials that may be of assistance in earning merit badges are available from a variety of places including unofficial sources on the Internet and even troop libraries. Use of these aids is permissible as long as the materials can be correlated with the current requirements that Scouts must fulfill. Completing "worksheets" may suffice where a requirement calls for something in writing, but this would not work for a requirement where the Scout must discuss, tell, show, or demonstrate, etc. Note that Scouts shall not be required to use these learning aids in order to complete a merit badge.

7.0.4.9 Merit Badge Opportunities With Non-Scouting Organizations or Businesses

There may be opportunities for Scouts to earn merit badges through participation in activities presented by organizations or businesses not affiliated with the BSA. Zoos, museums, recreation centers, major home improvement stores, and even individuals may be involved. There are, however, a number of important considerations council advancement committees should keep in mind.

It is permissible for outside organizations or businesses to present various programs where fulfilling merit badge requirements is *incidental*. For example, a youth recreation center or school could present a basketball camp for the purpose of teaching basketball skills—even charge a participation fee—and mention in promotional material that participating boys may fulfill some of the requirements for the Sports merit badge. That some merit badge requirements might be fulfilled during such an activity does not make it a *Scouting* activity, so therefore the activity would not require BSA approval. A registered and approved merit badge counselor, however, would have to sign off on each requirement passed. Even when merit badge opportunities are incidental to the programs presented, outside organizations are not allowed to use protected BSA trade names, images, logos, or artwork without the express written consent of the National Council, BSA. If registered and approved merit badge counselors are available within the organization, then merit badge blue cards may be signed according to BSA policies and procedures. That counselors are present, however, and blue cards may be signed, does *not* make the program a Scouting activity.

Outside organizations and businesses are not allowed to present classes, events, or similar activities that are largely for the purpose of offering merit badges—even if no fee is involved—without approval from the local council. For example, the recreation center mentioned above would not be allowed to present a "Sports merit badge camp" without permission. A written agreement should be involved in approving such a merit badge opportunity. The council must assure compliance with applicable BSA policies and procedures, including those related to Youth Protection and safety, National Council consent to use protected brand images, and the merit badge counseling and approval process.

The council advancement committee should be involved in the approval. However, because there are issues beyond advancement, the Scout executive should be the one to grant final permission. Council approval should not be granted if it is believed merit badge opportunities will generate a profit or revenue that is surplus to recovering costs related to presenting the opportunity.

7.0.4.10 Charging Fees for Merit Badge Opportunities

Council, district, and multiunit merit badge fairs have become increasingly popular over the past several years.



While they provide a service to our Scouts, they should not be presented as fundraisers. There are many other methods available to raise the funds necessary to operate the Scouting programs at any level.

Although charging fees for merit badge fairs, clinics, or similar events is not prohibited, any fees charged should be limited to recovering the costs related to presenting the opportunity. Local councils and districts may also include in the fee a reasonable contribution to the council's overhead and administrative costs. Using merit badge events as fundraisers, however, is discouraged, and councils may exercise their authority not to approve them.

In considering whether to approve outside organizations, businesses, or individuals for the presentation of merit badge opportunities, the same limitations should be placed on fees. Any fees should cover only those costs directly related to presenting the opportunity. Such costs could include wages an organization or business pays to employees who present classes. However, if employees are to serve as merit badge counselors and sign blue cards, they must take Youth Protection training, become registered, submit to a background check, and be approved by the council advancement committee.

The Boy Scouts of America is proud of its tradition of volunteer service. It does not endorse merit badge opportunities where fees are paid directly to individuals, or to groups of individuals, especially if the individuals are looking to Scouting as a source of income that could be considered taxable. The council advancement committee should not approve merit badge counselors who will not honor the tradition of volunteer service.



8.0.0.0 Section 8.

Boards of Review: An Overview for All Ranks

This section first covers board of review procedures for all Boy Scout ranks. It is followed by "Particulars for Tenderfoot Through Life Ranks (or Palms)," 8.0.2.0; and "Particulars for the Eagle Scout Rank," 8.0.3.0.

Procedures for Sea Scout bridges of review, and several related topics, are much the same as those for Boy Scouting. There are some exceptions, however, as noted in the sections beginning with "The Sea Scout Bridge of Review," 4.4.2.0, and ending with "Appealing a Quartermaster Bridge of Review Decision," 4.4.2.8.

8.0.0.1 Purpose and Timeliness of Boards of Review

After a Scout has completed the requirements for any rank or Eagle Palm, he appears before a board of review. Its purpose is to determine the quality of his experience and decide whether he has fulfilled the requirements for the rank. If so, the board not only approves his advancement or Palm but also encourages him to continue the quest for the next rank or Palm. Because the board of review date becomes the effective advancement date, boards should be scheduled promptly as Scouts are ready or set up on a regular basis that assures Scouts are not delayed in beginning time-oriented requirements for the next rank.

8.0.0.2 Boards of Review Must Be Granted When Requirements Are Met

A Scout shall not be denied this opportunity. When he believes he has completed all the requirements for a rank, including a Scoutmaster conference, a board of review must be granted. Scoutmasters—or councils or districts in the case of the Eagle Scout rank—for example, do not have authority to expect a boy to request or organize one, or to "defer" him, or to ask him to perform beyond the requirements in order to be granted one. In a case where there is concern the Scout has not fulfilled the requirements for a rank as written, it is appropriate to advise the young man that he might not pass the board and to make suggestions about what he might do to improve his chances for success. It is, however, the Scout's decision to go ahead with a board of review or not.

Except in disputed circumstances as noted in "Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances," 8.0.3.2, the Scout or his parents or guardians shall not be responsible for requesting that a board take place.

8.0.0.3 Composition of the Board of Review

A board of review must consist of no fewer than three members and no more than six, all of whom must be at least 21 years of age. For further specifications, see "Particulars for Tenderfoot Through Life Ranks (or Palms)," 8.0.2.0, and "Particulars for the Eagle Scout Rank," 8.0.3.0. Unit leaders and assistants shall not serve on a board of review for a Scout in their own unit. Parents or guardians shall not serve on a board for their son. The candidate or his parent(s) or guardian(s) shall have no part in selecting any board of review members.

Note the exception in Varsity Scouting. See "Particulars for Tenderfoot Through Life Ranks (or Palms)," 8.0.2.0.

8.0.0.4 Wearing the Uniform—or Neat in Appearance

It is preferred a Scout be in full field uniform for any board of review. He should wear as much of it as he owns, and it should be as correct as possible, with the badges worn properly. It may be the uniform as the members of his troop, team, crew, or ship wear it. If wearing all or part of the uniform is impractical for whatever reason, the candidate should be clean and neat in his appearance and dressed appropriately, according to his means, for the milestone marked by the occasion. Regardless of unit, district, or council expectations or rules, boards of review shall not reject candidates solely for reasons related to uniforming or attire, as long as they are dressed to the above description. Candidates shall not be required to purchase uniforming or clothing such as coats and ties to participate in a board of review.

8.0.1.0 Conducting the Board of Review

Most adults would admit to nervousness if told they were to appear before a "board of review." Imagine how a boy must feel. A certain level of formality and meaningful questioning should exist, but it is important that the atmosphere be relaxed and that the review is conducted with the Scout Law in mind. It may help if the unit leader introduces the candidate, and if a few minutes are spent getting acquainted.

The unit leader may remain in the room, but only to observe, not to participate unless called upon. The number of "observers" at a board of review should otherwise be minimized. The members of the board of review, however, have the authority to exclude the unit leader or any other observers if they believe their presence will inhibit open and forthright discussion.

The Scout's parents, relatives, or guardians should not be in attendance in any capacity—not as members of the board, as observers, or even as the unit leader. Their presence can change the discussion dynamics. In cases where parents or guardians insist on attending a board of review, they should be counseled that their presence can change how their son addresses questions, and that the opportunity to further self-reliance and courage may be lessened. However, if parents or guardians insist on being present, they must be permitted to attend as observers. For Scouts with special needs, see additional information under topic 10.2.2.0.

In situations where—before a board is held—one or more members are of an opinion the Scout should be rejected, they should discuss their reasoning with the unit leader or others who know the Scout. Generally, a unit leader is closer to the youth; he or she may be able to present a different perspective and prevent an uncomfortable or unfair scenario.

The BSA discourages mock or practice boards of review. "Practice" reviews may imply that board members will ask predetermined questions or that the board of review is anticipated to be other than a positive experience. Instead, the advancement committee should aim for unrehearsed, spontaneous answers revealing character, citizenship, and personal fitness at the boards of review.

8.0.1.1 Not a Retest or "Examination"

Though one reason for a board of review is to help assure the Scout did what he was supposed to do to meet the requirements, it shall become neither a retest or "examination," nor a challenge of his knowledge. In most cases it should, instead, be a celebration of accomplishment. Remember, it is more about the journey. A badge recognizes what a young man has done toward achieving the primary goal of personal growth. See "Personal Growth Is the Primary Goal," 2.0.0.3. It is thus more about the learning *experience* than it is about the specific skills learned. See also "Mechanics of Advancement: In Boy Scouting and Varsity Scouting," 4.2.0.0.

A Scout must not be rejected at a board of review for reasons unrelated to advancement requirements. For example, he must not be rejected just because he did not bring his *Boy Scout Handbook* with him or because he was tardy for a board of review, but the reason for his tardiness may certainly be a topic for discussion.

8.0.1.2 What Should Be Discussed

During the review, board members may refer to the *Boy Scout Handbook*, *Boy Scout Requirements* book, *Scoutmaster Handbook*, and other such references. The *Troop Committee Guidebook*, No. 34505, has examples of appropriate questions. A Scout may be asked where he learned his skills and who taught him, and what he gained from fulfilling selected requirements. The answers will reveal what he did for his rank. It can be determined, then, if this was what he was supposed to do. Discussion of how he has lived the Scout Oath and Scout Law in his home, unit, school, and community should be included. We must remember, however, that though we have high expectations for our members, as for ourselves, we do not insist on perfection. A positive attitude is most important, and that a young man accepts Scouting's ideals and sets and meets good standards in his life.

A positive attitude is most important, and that a young man accepts Scouting's ideals and sets and meets good standards in his life.

A board is not required to record "minutes," but it is a good idea. Any such notes must remain confidential to the members of the board or to administrators with a need to know. They may be used in preparing a follow-up letter, should a Scout be turned down, and they can be helpful in an appeal process. In any case, once a review or appeal is completed, all notes must be destroyed.

A board of review may be conducted posthumously if all the requirements were met prior to the Scout's death. See topic 5.0.6.0 for more information.

8.0.1.3 How Boards Can Lead to Program Improvement

Periodic reviews of members' progress can provide a measure of unit effectiveness. A unit might uncover ways to increase the educational value of its outings, or how to strengthen administration of national advancement procedures. For example, if it is discovered troop leaders are not assuring that all requirements have been met before Scouts present themselves for the board of review, then process improvements can be recommended. A board can also help by considering the style of leadership best suited to current circumstances and ways to adjust it to different needs. Note that boards of review may also be held for Scouts who are *not* advancing. Much can be learned from them, as well.

8.0.1.4 Board Members Must Agree Unanimously on Decisions to Approve

After the board of review the Scout is asked to wait outside the room or out of hearing range while the board deliberates. To approve awarding a rank or Palm, the board must agree unanimously. Every effort should be made to deliberate with careful consideration of each member's perspective, and in sufficient detail as to avoid factual misunderstanding. It is appropriate to call the candidate back if additional questions may provide clarification. Still, if any member dissents, the decision cannot be for approval. In the case of such disagreement, the Scout shall not be informed about the specifics of the conversations or any arguments taking place. As indicated below ("After the Review," 8.0.1.5), he is told only how he can improve.

8.0.1.5 After the Review

If the members agree a Scout is ready to advance, he is called in and congratulated. The board of review date—not that of a subsequent court of honor—becomes the rank's effective date.

If a board does not approve, the candidate must be so informed and told what he can do to improve. Most Scouts accept responsibility for their behavior or for not completing requirements properly. If it is thought that a Scout, before his 18th birthday, can benefit from an opportunity to properly complete the requirements, the board may adjourn and reconvene at a later date. If the candidate agrees to this, then if possible, the same members should reassemble. If he does not agree, then the board must make its decision at that point. In any case, a follow-up letter must be promptly sent to a Scout who is turned down. It must include actions advised that may lead to advancement, and also an explanation of appeal procedures. (See "Appealing a Decision," 8.0.4.0, or—if applicable—"Appealing a Quartermaster Bridge of Review Decision," 4.4.2.8.) The council must keep a copy of the letter.

After any board of review, the unit leader is informed of the decision.

8.0.2.0 Particulars for Tenderfoot Through Life Ranks (or Palms)

The preceding applies to boards of review for all ranks, but there are a few differences for the ranks other than Eagle, and for Eagle Palms:

1. The board is made up of three to six unit committee members—no more and no less. In units with fewer than three registered committee members available to serve, it is permissible to use knowledgeable parents (not those of the candidate) or other adults (registered or not) who are at least 21 years of age and who understand Boy Scouting's aims. Using unregistered adults for boards of review must be the exception, not the rule. Registered committee members familiar with the unit program, who have had a background check, and who are Youth Protection trained are preferred. Scheduling boards of review when and where committee members can attend usually alleviates the problem of not having enough committee members for a board.
2. For a Varsity Scout team, the committee member responsible for advancement, the advancement program manager (youth), and the coach serve on the board.
3. One member serves as chair. The unit committee decides how he or she is chosen. The chair conducts review meetings according to BSA procedures and reports results to the unit advancement coordinator.
4. The location should be comfortable, such as the unit meeting place, a camp, or a leader's home.
5. The review should take approximately 15 minutes, but not longer than 30 minutes.
6. Ranks and Palms shall not be presented until the signed advancement report is submitted to the local council.
7. If a Scout is to be reviewed for more than one rank (Tenderfoot, Second Class, or First Class), each rank should have a separate board of review. While these boards may be conducted on the same date, it is preferred—if feasible—that different members be involved on the boards to give the young man an enhanced experience and an opportunity to interact with a variety of adults.

8.0.3.0 Particulars for the Eagle Scout Rank

The particulars below pertain only to the Eagle Scout rank.

1. Council advancement committees must determine—and make known—method(s) for conducting Eagle Scout boards of review: whether unit committees or the council or district advancement committees administer them, and also how board chairpersons are selected.

2. If conducted at the unit level, at least one district or council representative must serve as a member. If the unit requests it, more than one may do so.

3. There shall be no fewer than three and no more than six members, all at least 21 years old. They need not be on an advancement committee or registered with the Boy Scouts of America, but they must have an understanding of the rank and the purpose and importance of the review.

4. A board of review shall not occur until after the local council has verified the application.

5. The chair works with all involved parties to schedule the date, time, and place. Eagle boards are often held in more formal settings than a home or troop meeting site.

6. A board of review must not be denied or postponed due to unresponsive references. See "References Contacted," 9.0.1.7.

7. If a unit leader or unit committee chair fails to approve an application, the candidate is still granted a board of review, but the lack of approval may be considered in the decision. See "Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances," 8.0.3.2.

8. To go over the application, references, and service project workbook, members should convene at least 30 minutes before the scheduled board of review.

9. Eagle boards generally last 30 minutes or somewhat longer. This is the highest rank a Scout may achieve; there should be a discussion of his successes, experiences, and future plans, but rarely should one last longer than 45 minutes.

10. An Eagle candidate may have only one board of review (though it may be adjourned and reconvened). Subsequent action falls under the appeals process. (See "Appealing a Decision," 8.0.4.0.)

11. The Eagle Scout medal or patch must not be sold or otherwise provided to any unit or to the Scout, nor should the court of honor be scheduled until after the certificate is received at the council service center from the national Advancement Team.

An Eagle Scout board of review shall not be denied or postponed due to unresponsive references.

8.0.3.1 Eagle Scout Board of Review Beyond the 18th Birthday

1. An Eagle Scout board of review may occur, without special approval, within three months after a Scout's 18th birthday. If a board of review is to be held three to six months afterward, the local council must preapprove it. To initiate approval, the candidate, his parent or guardian, the unit leader, or a unit committee member attaches to the application a statement explaining the delay.

2. To hold a board beyond six months after the 18th birthday, the candidate, his parent or guardian, the unit leader, or a unit committee member must petition the national Advancement Team for authority to do so. The request must explain the reason for the delay, and it must be processed through the local council and sent to the national Advancement Team with a copy of the application. A position statement from the Scout executive, designee, or council advancement committee must be included.

3. It is possible for those who completed the requirements for the Eagle Scout rank in their youth, but never received it, to obtain credentials necessary for acquiring it. If a board of review was not held, and the individual met the BSA membership eligibility rules in effect at the time, then a board of review may be requested. In any case, all requirements must have been completed before age 18. Using the Belated Eagle Scout application, No. 512-076 (see 11.3.0.0), evidence of completion must be submitted to the national Advancement Team through the local council where the individual resides. An Eagle Scout Rank Application signed at the time work was finished can serve as evidence of requirements such as active participation, Scout spirit, or positions of responsibility. Blue cards, advancement reports, or troop records may be used for merit badges. Because of their availability on the Internet, actual merit badges or sashes are not normally accepted. Only when documentation is verified as complete and compelling shall credentials be released or permission granted for a board of review. Requirements in effect at the time of membership are used, but regardless the practices of the day, all must have been accomplished by age 18.

8.0.3.2 Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances

A board of review under disputed circumstances is available only for the Eagle Scout rank. It is held at the district or council level. Volunteers from the candidate's unit are not involved. It is indicated when a unit leader or committee chair does not sign the application, if a unit leader (Scoutmaster) conference is denied, if it is thought a unit will not provide a fair hearing, or if the unit leader or project beneficiary refuses to sign final approval for what might be considered a satisfactorily completed service project. See "Evaluating the Project After Completion," 9.0.2.13. The process outlined below, for a board of review under disputed circumstances, also applies in councils where Eagle boards of review are already held at the council or district level.

If a unit leader or committee chair does not agree a Scout has met the requirements, then before a board of review is held, he or she should confer with the Scout and his parents and come to an understanding of all viewpoints. Guidance should also be sought from the district or council advancement chair to assure expectations are not more than are actually required. If the leader or chair remains unconvinced, then they may deny approval of the Eagle Scout Rank Application. In this case, the application is returned to the Scout or his parent or guardian, who may then choose to request a board of review under disputed circumstances.

In any case, if a Scout or his parent or guardian has legitimate concern that a unit cannot deliver a fair hearing, one of them may write a letter explaining the reasons and request a board of review under disputed circumstances. The letter is attached to the completed Eagle Scout application and sent with the service project workbook to the council service center. The council advancement chair or staff advisor, or other designated volunteer or professional, should notify the unit leader or unit committee chair that the request has been received, and then guide the process through the council or district advancement committee according to local practices. After the board has met, the unit leader or unit committee chair should be informed of the decision.

It should be rare that a council or district would deny a request for a board of review under disputed circumstances. However, the request may be denied if it is deemed frivolous, or any concerns about the unit's inability to deliver a fair hearing are deemed invalid. In that case, the initial board of review must be held according to local council practices (not under disputed circumstances). If that board decides not to approve, the Scout may appeal the decision (see "Appealing a Decision," 8.0.4.0).

Procedures for a board of review under disputed circumstances, including the option for the Scout or his parent or guardian to appeal the decision, are the same as for any Eagle Scout board. The members should be well versed in related policies and organized in advance so they can research background and facts. Written statements or telephone interview summaries must be obtained from the unit leader, knowledgeable committee members, a representative of the service project beneficiary (if applicable), and others familiar with the case. Every effort should be made to have balanced representation. Only review-board members and administrators with a need to know may see the evidence. The review is like any other for Eagle, but with extra attention to the concerns at issue. Afterward, all statements, summaries, or notes are sent to the council and then destroyed once any appeal efforts are concluded. Note that in councils where Eagle boards of review are already held at the council or district level, the time and effort put into researching the background and facts may be the only real difference from a typical board of review.

If a board of review under disputed circumstances approves a candidate, his application goes through the process as outlined under "The Eagle Scout Rank Application Process," 9.0.1.0. The board must attach a letter to the application indicating it may be processed without the signature of the unit leader or unit committee chair, the date of the Scoutmaster conference if it had been denied, or the date of the final Eagle service project signature if that was at issue.

8.0.4.0 Appealing a Decision

If a board of review or a board of review under disputed circumstances does not recommend a candidate for rank advancement, only the Scout or his parent or guardian may appeal the decision to the local council.

Adverse decisions for Star and Life ranks can be appealed to the local council. Should this occur, the national Advancement Team is available for advice only. Adverse decisions for Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, and Eagle Palms are not appealable. The National Council reviews appeals only for the Eagle Scout rank.

All interviews, deliberations, conversations, and related details in summaries and statements are kept confidential to appeals board members and those assigned oversight, such as the designated appeals coordinator or staff advisor. Others' knowledge should be limited to overview information as required for reports to advancement committees.

8.0.4.1 Filing and Processing an Appeal

1. The Scout should have received communication from the board of review advising actions that could lead to advancement and explaining appeal procedures. If this was not received, the Scout or his parent or guardian should contact the council advancement chair, staff advisor for advancement, or the Scout executive to request it. To initiate the appeal, the Scout or his parent or guardian prepares a letter notifying the local council of the appeal. It should detail the reasons it is believed the Scout met all the requirements and should not have been denied. The letter is sent to the council service center, to the attention of the council advancement committee. The communication from the board of review mentioned above should be attached.

2. To assure all appeal requests are handled consistently throughout the council, they are first routed to the council advancement committee.

3. The council advancement committee, through its chair or a designated member or its staff advisor, coordinates the appeals process. This designated appeals coordinator's primary role is to get the paperwork in the right place and orient and guide those who will hear the appeal.

4. The council-designated appeals coordinator routes a copy of the request to the district or council advancement committee according to local practices. It is recommended that appeals of a unit decision go to the district, and those elevated from a district go to the council. This allows an additional step before the national Advancement Team is involved.

5. For appeals heard by a district, the district advancement chair and district staff advisor (usually the district executive) must agree on appeal-board members. The council advancement chair and staff advisor have the authority to approve them (or to call for different members) should they believe this action will lead to more equitable appeals consideration.

6. If the appeal is to be heard by the council, then the council advancement chair and staff advisor must agree on appeal-board members.

7. There shall be an odd number of appeal-board members—either three or five. A board chair may be one of these voting members, or serve additionally with no vote. All must be objective volunteers with thorough knowledge of advancement and appeals procedures. The council-designated appeals coordinator may be present and provide advice. No other guests, including the candidate's parents or guardians, are allowed. If the Scout is being interviewed, and the parents insist on attending with him, see "Conducting the Board of Review," 8.0.1.0.

8. An appeal board is not another board of review. It focuses only on the issues that brought about rejection at the lower level(s). A majority is sufficient for a decision.

9. If an appeal is rejected at the district level, the Scout or his parent or guardian may appeal to the council advancement committee.

10. If a council-level Eagle Scout board of review or appeal board rejects a candidate, then he or his parent or guardian may appeal through the local council to the national Advancement Team.

11. A decision at any level that finds in favor of a Scout shall be final. Units, districts, and councils are not allowed to appeal them. Similarly, decisions for rejection delivered through the national Advancement Team are final. For rulings in favor of a Scout, the date of the original board—not the appeal board—is the effective date of advancement.

8.0.4.2 Appeal Board Must Research the Case

To allow time to research background and facts, appeal-board members must be organized in advance. Written statements or telephone interview summaries are obtained from those with pertinent knowledge of the case. These individuals might include the unit leader and assistants, parent(s) or guardian(s), unit committee members, and, as applicable, a representative of the chartered organization or Eagle service project beneficiary. Every effort should be made to have balanced representation. Only appeal-board members and administrators with a need to know may see the evidence. If a face-to-face meeting with the Scout is impractical, extra care should be taken to collect information from his perspective. After the meeting, any notes are filed with the council and destroyed once the appeal is resolved. A written report setting out the details of the appeal and the reasons for the decision shall be prepared and forwarded to the council Scout executive. A copy is sent to the Scout who brought the appeal.

Appeals to be forwarded to the national Advancement Team are processed through the local council. A designated appeals coordinator combines, into a packet, the Eagle Scout application and service project workbook (if at issue); all letters, statements, and interview summaries; and any reports or minutes from the original board of review and appeal board(s) held. The packet is covered by a letter from the Scout executive (not designee) briefly summarizing the facts and stating the council's position.



The Eagle Scout Rank

9.0.1.0 The Eagle Scout Rank Application Process

The following steps for preparing and submitting the Eagle Scout Rank Application and accompanying materials to the local council will help the Scout, his parent or guardian, or any adult leaders or advancement administrators from the unit, district, or council to prevent delays in securing National Council approval and certification.

9.0.1.1 Complete All the Requirements

Confirm *all* requirements have been completed before the 18th birthday: merit badges, service project, active participation, Scout spirit, position of responsibility, and unit leader conference. Note that the unit leader (Scoutmaster) conference need not be the last item accomplished. The board of review may be conducted after the 18th birthday. For details, see "Boards of Review," 8.0.0.0. A candidate must be registered through the time he is completing requirements but need not be registered thereafter or when his board of review is conducted.

9.0.1.2 Prepare the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook

The most current workbook must be used. It can be found at http://www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/resources.aspx. The workbook shows the project proposal was approved ahead of time, and then properly accepted by all parties when finished. Ideally, it will be a proud reminder of a significant accomplishment. See "Use the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*," 9.0.2.8.

9.0.1.3 Complete the Application



The Scout must complete the official Eagle Scout Rank Application, No. 512-728. No other form or application method is permitted. A fillable PDF can be found at http://www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/resources.aspx. The application can also be printed and completed by hand. Careful review and thorough proofreading will help prevent delays. Remember, everything is verified by the local council; discrepancies and errors will lead to a form's return. Pay special attention to the following *red-flag* items.

1. **Dates:** Became a Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, or Venturer/Sea Scout; First Class and Star boards of review; birthdate; Life board of review (on both the front and back); all merit badges earned; position(s) of responsibility since earning Life rank with "FROM" and "TO"; Eagle service project finished; Scoutmaster (unit leader) conference; and applicant, unit leader, and unit committee chair signatures.

2. **Signatures:** Applicant, unit leader, and unit committee chair. (Remaining signatures come later.)

3. **References:** Must list all six (five if not employed). If not affiliated with an organized religion, then the parent or guardian provides this reference.

4. **Merit badges:** Dates as mentioned above; check the unit number in which each badge was earned. Attach the Application for Alternative Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges, if applicable.

5. **Position of responsibility:** Must be one of those listed in Eagle Scout rank requirement 4, and must relate to the unit where the Scout was registered and active at the time service was rendered. For example, "SPL" would not be used by a crew member unless he was, or is, also registered in a troop. For a Scout who has transferred from a troop or team to a Venturing crew or Sea Scout ship, any qualifying position(s) held after the Life rank board of review in the troop or team shall count, and the six-month element of the requirement may be met through a combination of nonconcurrent positions served in the troop, team, crew, or ship. See also "Boy Scout Advancement in Venturing and Sea Scouts," 4.3.1.4.

6. **Attachments:** Service project workbook, statement of ambitions and life purpose, and listing of positions, honors, and awards.

9.0.1.4 Obtain Required Signatures

The unit leader and committee chair signatures represent approval for the candidate to move on to a board of review. In providing them, the signers carefully check the application. It may be helpful to compare the application to the Scout's current advancement profile obtained through Internet Advancement or to a printout from ScoutNET obtained from the local council service center. If there are "red-flag" issues (see previous page), such as time spans between ranks that don't meet the requirements, then the dates should be confirmed. If they are correct but do not fit the requirement, then the Scout, parents, or unit leader should contact the district advancement chair for guidance. Usually, as with unavoidable discrepancies, a letter of explanation will be helpful in addressing the issue. Note there is no requirement that the signatures of the unit leader and committee chair must be dated before the Scout's 18th birthday.

If either of the approvals from the unit leader or the committee chair is withheld, the Scout, if he desires it, must still be granted a board of review. For details, see "Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances," 8.0.3.2.

9.0.1.5 Submit to Council Service Center

A copy should be made of the application, service project workbook, and the other attachments. Once copies are in safekeeping, the originals should be delivered *promptly* to the council service center. The candidate should not have to wait. Timeliness is especially critical if he is approaching, or has already turned, 18. Sending materials late can imply the work continued afterward. If possible, everything should be hand-delivered. Otherwise it should be sent by registered or certified mail. There is no requirement that the application must be completed or submitted before the 18th birthday. Councils do not have the authority to reject applications submitted on or after that date.

Councils may suggest service project workbooks (only) be sent or taken to a different person or location, such as a district advancement committee member. This has the potential for cost savings in sending it out for the board of review. An Eagle Scout candidate, however, should confirm that any related instructions are correct and up to date. If there is any concern the workbook will go to the wrong place, it should accompany the Eagle application to the service center.

9.0.1.6 Council Verifies Application and Board of Review Scheduled

Everything is checked against council records. If information in ScoutNET or council files is incomplete, the Scout or the unit will be asked to provide certificates, blue cards, or other suitable proof that merit badges and ranks were earned and that dates are accurate. The regular use of Internet Advancement as described in section 6 will help expedite this process. If everything is correct, the council provides a certification signature, files a copy of the application, and sends the original with the service project workbook and other items (such as reference letters received) to the board of review chair or other designated volunteer. The board is scheduled only after the council-certified application is received.

9.0.1.7 References Contacted

Council advancement committee members—or others designated—have the responsibility to secure recommendations from the references appearing under requirement 2 on the Eagle Scout Rank Application. This may be done by letter, form, or phone call. For reasons of privacy and confidentiality, electronic submissions are discouraged. It is acceptable to send or deliver to the references an addressed envelope with instructions, and perhaps a form to complete. The Scout may assist with this, but that is the limit of his participation. He is not to be responsible for follow-through or any other aspect of the process.

It is up to the council's designated representatives to collect the responses. If after a reasonably diligent effort no response can be obtained from any references, the board of review must go on without them. It must not be postponed or denied for this reason, and the Scout shall not be asked to submit additional references or to provide replacements.

Completed reference responses of any kind are the property of the council and are confidential, and only review-board members and those officials with a specific need may see them. The responses are not to be viewed by or returned to the Scout. Doing so could discourage the submission of negative information. For the same reason, those providing references do not have the option of giving the reference directly to the Scout and shall not be given the option of waiving confidentiality. Once a review has been held, or an appeal process conducted, responses shall be returned to the council, where they will be destroyed after the Eagle Scout credentials are released or the appeal is concluded.

In Boy Scouting, advancement references are required only for Eagle Scout rank. The council determines methods of contact.

9.0.1.8 Application Returned to Council Service Center

If a board of review approves a candidate, the signed application, reference letters, and any information that might be considered confidential are returned to the local council. Unless otherwise directed, the service project workbook and statement of ambitions and life purpose (requirement 7, Eagle Scout Rank Application) can be returned to the Scout. If approval is denied, *all* materials are returned to the council.

9.0.1.9 Council Sends Application to National Advancement Team

At the council the Scout executive signs the application, certifying proper procedures were followed. The application is then entered into ScoutNET, filed locally, and then extracted from ScoutNET by the national Advancement Team. In special cases, such as those for Lone Scouts or Scouts more than six months past their 18th birthday, councils must submit applications via mail, email, or fax for manual processing.

9.0.1.10 National Advancement Team Returns Credentials

The national Advancement Team validates all applications received. Then the National Distribution Center generates the credentials and prints, packages, and mails the certificate, pocket card, and congratulatory letter to the council. Applications sent for manual processing go to the national Advancement Team and take several weeks to complete. Upon receipt of the Eagle credentials, council service center personnel should alert unit leadership immediately.

9.0.2.0 The Eagle Scout Service Project

While a Life Scout, plan, develop, and give leadership to others in a service project helpful to any religious institution, any school, or your community. (The project must benefit an organization other than Boy Scouting.) A project proposal must be approved by the organization benefiting from the effort, your unit leader and unit committee, and the council or district before you start. You must use the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, *No. 512-927, in meeting this requirement.*

—Eagle Scout requirement 5

9.0.2.1 What an Eagle Scout Candidate Should Expect

While working toward completion of the Eagle Scout service project, especially during the proposal approval process, a candidate has the right to expect the following:

1. Questioning and probing for his understanding of the project, the proposal, and what must be done, shall be conducted in a *helpful*, *friendly*, *courteous*, and *kind*-hearted manner. We will respect the Scout's dignity. He will be allowed, if he chooses, to have a parent, unit leader, or other adult present as an observer at any time he is discussing his proposal or project with someone who is reviewing it.

2. Project expectations will match Eagle Scout requirement 5, and we will not require proposals to include more than described in the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*.

3. If requested by the Scout or his parent or guardian, an explanation of a proposal rejection will be provided in writing, with a copy sent to the council advancement chair and staff advisor. It will indicate reasons for rejection and suggestions concerning what can be done to achieve approval.

4. Guidance that maximizes the opportunity for completion of a worthwhile project will be readily available and strongly recommended. Ultimately, however, the responsibility for success belongs to the Scout, and final evaluation is left to the board of review.

5. If the candidate believes he has been mistreated or his proposal wrongfully rejected, he will be provided a method of redress. This will include the opportunity for a second opinion and approval, either through another volunteer or professional advancement administrator, or the Scout executive, as determined by the council advancement committee or executive board.

An advancement administrator is a member or chair of a council or district advancement committee, or a volunteer or professional designated according to local practices, to assist in advancement administration.

9.0.2.2 "While a Life Scout ..."

Work on a project, including planning, begins after the Life Scout board of review. But this is not meant to preclude an enthusiastic Star Scout from talking with his Scoutmaster, religious leader, or principal about what a good project might be.

9.0.2.3 "Plan, Develop ..."

Planning and development require forethought, effort, and time—sometimes more than for execution. Thus, for the most part, they are considered part of the project and are detailed further once a proposal is approved.

It is inappropriate to expect a Scout to invest the time required for *detailed* planning, only to face the prospect of rejection. See "Proposal Must Be Approved … Before You Start," 9.0.2.7.

It is important not to categorically reject projects that, on the surface, may not seem to require enough planning and development. Consider, for example, a blood drive. Often rejected out of hand, this project, if done properly, could be acceptable. Few would question the beneficiary. Blood banks save lives—thousands of them: maybe yours, maybe that of a loved one. If the candidate proposes to use a set of "canned" instructions from the bank, implemented with no further planning, the planning effort would not meet the test.

On the other hand, there are councils in which Scouts and advancement committees have met with blood bank officials and worked out approaches that *can* comply. Typically these involve developing marketing plans and considering logistics. People successful in business know how important these skills are. Some blood banks will also set a minimum for blood collected as a measure of a successful plan. To provide another valuable lesson, they may require the candidate to keep at it until he's met this goal.

A good test of any project is to evaluate its complexity. In the case of a blood drive, for example, elements of challenge and complexity can be added so there is a clear demonstration of planning, development, and leadership.

9.0.2.4 "Give Leadership to Others …"

"Others" means at least two people besides the Scout. Helpers may be involved in Scouting or not, and of any age appropriate for the work. In cases where just three people are not able to conduct a project to the satisfaction of a beneficiary, then more would be advisable. It may be, however, that a well-chosen project conducted by only three provides an impact not achievable in those involving more.

One of the purposes for the project is to demonstrate leadership, but this could be considered a more important element, perhaps, for a Scout who has not yet established himself as a leader. It is for reasons like these that every project must be evaluated, case-by-case, on its merits, and on lessons that will *advance* the candidate's growth. Councils, districts, and units shall not establish requirements for the number of people led, or their makeup, or for time worked on a project. Nor shall they expect Scouts from different backgrounds, with different experiences and different needs, all to work toward a particular standard. The Eagle Scout service project is an individualized experience.

Councils, districts, and units shall not establish requirements for the number of people led, or their makeup, or for time worked on a project.

9.0.2.5 "Helpful to Any Religious Institution, Any School, or Your Community"

"Any religious institution" and "any school" are self-explanatory. But what does "your community" mean? In today's world of instant communications and speedy travel, we are affected more and more by what goes on all over the world. Prices for goods and services, investment values, our very safety, and how we feel about those less fortunate in other countries, all are involved. Thus, if a Scout wants to take his oath "to help other people" more expansively and put his project to work for the "community of the world," he is allowed to do so. A council may emphasize more local efforts but should not deny worthy projects of a wider scope.

If a Scout wants to take his oath "to help other people" more expansively and put his project to work for the "community of the world," he is allowed to do so.

Normally "your community" would not refer to individuals, although a council or district advancement committee may consider scenarios where an individual in need can affect a community. An example might involve elderly persons able to live at home but *un*able to maintain their property, with the result being an "attractive nuisance" or related dangerous situations, or even an eyesore—something that raises concern to more than that of just an individual. If it can be determined the *community* benefits, then it is a matter of identifying who will provide approvals. They must come from a source representing the "community," such as a neighborhood association, watch group, homeowners association, or perhaps a division of a town or county.

The project beneficiary need not be a registered nonprofit. Projects may not be of a commercial nature or for a business, but this is not meant to disallow community institutions that would otherwise be acceptable to the council or district advancement committee. These might include museums and various service agencies, or some homes for the elderly, for example. Some aspect of a business's operation provided as a community service may also be considered; for example, a park open to the public that happens to be owned by a business. In cases such as these, the test is whether the project

primarily benefits the community, as opposed to the profits of the business.

9.0.2.6 "Benefit an Organization Other Than Boy Scouting"

"To help other people at all times" is a basic tenet. The Eagle Scout service project is an important and meaningful opportunity to practice what we teach. Projects may not be performed for the Boy Scouts of America or its councils, districts, units, camps, and so forth. The unit's chartered organization, however, is certainly a good candidate, as are other youth organizations such as the American Heritage Girls or the Girl Scouts of the USA.

To help project beneficiaries understand the Eagle Scout service project requirement along with the responsibilities and the rights that come with the benefit, the national Advancement Committee has prepared an information sheet for project beneficiaries, called "Navigating the Eagle Scout Service Project," which will appear in the revised Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook *scheduled for release at the same time as the Guide to Advancement.*

9.0.2.7 "Proposal Must Be Approved ... Before You Start"

The Five Tests of an Acceptable Eagle Scout Service Project. The proposal is an overview, but also the *beginnings* of planning. It shows the unit leader and any representatives of a unit committee, council, or district, that the following tests can be met.

1. The project provides sufficient opportunity to meet the requirement.
2. The project appears to be feasible.
3. Safety issues will be addressed.
4. Action steps for further detailed planning are included.
5. The young man is on the right track with a reasonable chance for a positive experience.

The detail required for a proposal depends on project complexity. It must be enough to provide a level of confidence for a council or district reviewer that the above tests can be met, but not so much that—based on the possibility a proposal can be rejected—it does not respect the time it takes to prepare.

The unit committee is responsible for an approval of the proposal. It is acceptable for a troop, team, crew, or ship committee to designate representative(s) to act on its behalf. This is a unit decision. Neither the district nor the council may institute restrictions, such as how many committee members are to be involved.

The form for preparing a proposal appears in the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*, No. 512-927. Completing it will represent a reasonable time investment and an introductory learning experience, and also provide the information needed for approval. The candidate shall not be required to submit more than is described there, or more than is necessary to establish that a project can meet the above tests.

Space is provided in the workbook for the candidate to record comments made during discussions with the district or council volunteer going over the proposal. A thorough review should generate numerous suggestions, cautions, and perhaps concerns (see "What an Eagle Scout Candidate Should Expect," 9.0.2.1). The Scout should be encouraged to write these down and take them seriously. When the reviewer is satisfied the above tests can be met, then approval is granted.

It is important to be as considerate of an Eagle Scout candidate's time as we expect him to be of ours. He is probably just as busy. Every attempt should be made to complete the approval process in one meeting. Then he should be challenged to work on his planning action steps and to consider scheduling time with his Eagle Scout service project coach for progress reports and further guidance (see "Eagle Scout Service Project Coach," 9.0.2.9). It is advisable that one of these meetings with the coach be held after a final plan is completed and the Scout is ready to begin actual work on his project.

It is acceptable for the coach or the advancement administrator responsible for approval—if he or she becomes concerned the project will not meet the requirements or it will not be completed to the satisfaction of the benefiting organization—to contact the Scout and his parent or guardian, or unit leader and, as appropriate, a representative of the beneficiary. However, even though the project coach may provide guidance critical to success, final design issues are ultimately between the Scout and the beneficiary. For limitations on the coach's role, see "Eagle Scout Service Project Coach," 9.0.2.9.

From time to time Scouts will "jump the gun" and begin fundraising efforts—or even work on the project itself—before a proposal is approved. This is counter to the

requirements and well covered in multiple documents, but still it happens. Normally then, a Scout should select a different project. If circumstances are compelling, however—indicating leniency can be extended and a lesson learned without significant detriment to fulfilling the project's purpose—the Scout may be allowed to carry on and have his proposal or project approved after the fact.

Because it is virtually impossible to forecast every contingency, candidates must be allowed a level of flexibility in carrying out proposals and planning action steps. But essential elements of a proposal should not be changed without good reason. If this must occur, the Scout should consult his project coach or unit leader for advice. It is appropriate to strongly suggest he share substantive changes with the project beneficiary, and also with those involved in preapprovals.

If it appears changes will cause results to fall below what is required, then cautionary advice is in order. Except under extreme circumstances, it is not acceptable for unit, or council or district, approval to be withdrawn. If the young man decides to strike out on his own, this is his prerogative. At some point, responsibility must take over. The board of review decides whether planning was sufficient and if the requirement was met.

The project beneficiary can stop work on an approved project at any time. If enough has been done—such that the requirement's intent has been met—then the project should still be given final approval. In extreme cases where changes could involve such issues as violations of law or BSA policy, or if they bring about unacceptable levels of risk, then district or council advancement administrators may bring this to the attention of the Scout, his parent or guardian, and his unit leader, and call for work to be suspended until compliance is achieved.

9.0.2.8 "Use the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*"

Using the workbook, No. 512-927, helps candidates avoid pitfalls. If properly used, it very nearly assures success. It shows approvals have been secured, lists important limitations, suggests questions for those approving the project, and includes outlines for the proposal and the more detailed final plan that should come next.

The workbook should not, however, become a basis for rejecting candidates based on "technicalities" that have nothing to do with requirement intent. The use of the workbook is required, but occasionally Scouts will submit it without everything called for. In most cases they should be required to fully complete the proposal and project report, and be strongly encouraged to complete the final plan. However, at times it may not be feasible or just not necessary for establishing that the requirement was met.

If it is clear the project was completed and approved of, and meets Eagle Scout requirement 5 as it is written, then it should be considered. If it will be a hardship, or a poor use of time to fill in missing information or obtain a signature of a party who is unavailable or by some other means known to have approved it, then it is appropriate to accept it. There is something to be said for "object lessons," but keep in mind that write-ups and signatures, though important, are simply supportive. It is a *project* that we require. Boards of review should use common sense: Did the project meet the requirements or not? Was there planning and development? Was there leadership of others?

The workbook should not become a basis for rejecting candidates based on "technicalities" that have nothing to do with the intent of the requirement.

The requirement that Scouts use the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook *means they must use the official document as produced by the Boy Scouts of America. Although it is acceptable to copy and distribute it, and even to transfer it to a different software platform or operating system, it must maintain the same appearance. No council, district, unit, or individual has the authority to require additional forms, or to add or change requirements, or to make any additions, deletions, or changes in the text, outlines, graphics, or other layout or informational elements of the workbook.*

9.0.2.9 Eagle Scout Service Project Coach

The Eagle Scout service project coach is the key to success in council or district efforts to guide Scouts through the service project process. The following are important examples of ways in which the coach can influence a Scout's project:

- Meet with a Scout after his proposal has been approved but before work begins on the final plan.
- Ask the Scout to describe how he will plan the project, then offer him advice accordingly.
- Emphasize those elements of a plan that, if ignored, could stop work or create health and safety issues.

- Remind the Scout to share his plan with the project beneficiary; the beneficiary should be fully aware of what will be done. Note that a final plan for an Eagle Scout service project is between the Scout and the beneficiary. *Coaches do not approve final plans.*
- Be available to the Scout as a consultant should he have questions about the planning process.
- Meet with the Scout to review his final plan; discuss its strengths, weaknesses, and risks; and suggest critical improvements.
- Discuss the project report with the Scout and offer advice on how to make a strong presentation at his board of review.

Remember that any contact with the Scout must be conducted according to Youth Protection procedures.

Experience has taught us the most effective approach to providing coaches is for the *council or district* to organize a pool of volunteers willing to serve in that capacity, and then designate them to individual Eagle Scout candidates. Many units have used service project "mentors" or "advisors" through the decades since the Eagle Scout service project came to be. This practice has provided consistent positive contributions and should continue. Their efforts, however, should serve to provide ongoing support throughout project planning and execution and to prepare a Scout to work with the council or district *designated* project coach.

The role of the designated project coach is not intended to require so close an association with a Scout that it becomes impossible for a council or district to recruit enough of them to work with candidates whose proposals have been approved. The more ongoing and close association should come from unit volunteers or parents assisting in support roles. It is recognized, however, that some councils or districts may not have the volunteer capacity to provide *designated* coaches. For this reason, the council advancement committee may decide to designate the project coach from among unit volunteers. But they should do so with the understanding that a coach who is designated within a unit should represent the perspective of the council or district.

Regardless the source of project coaches, they must adhere to the Eagle Scout service project process as described in this section of the *Guide to Advancement*. Coaches do not have approval authority. Instead they serve to *encourage*—not direct—the young men to make the kinds of decisions that will lead to successful outcomes.

It is true a Scout need not accept the assistance of the service project coach. Regardless, it is considered best for the council or district to designate one for every Scout who submits a project proposal for approval. The coach should then contact the Scout and suggest a first meeting, or telephone or video conference. Scouts have already promised when they submit a proposal that they have read the service project workbook, and thus they should already understand a coach is optional. If a young man suggests he doesn't need one, he should be counseled on the value a coach can add. Ultimately, however, working with a designated Eagle Scout service project coach is the Scout's decision.

It is important to note that Eagle service project coaches do not have the authority to dictate changes; withdraw approval that was previously granted, such as by the council or district; or take any other such directive action. Instead, coaches must use the BSA method of positive adult association, logic, and common sense to help the candidate make wise decisions.

It is up to the council to determine who may serve as project coaches and how they might be assigned or otherwise provided to candidates. Coaches must be registered with the BSA (in any position) and be current in BSA Youth Protection training.

In many cases, candidates will not have undertaken something like an Eagle service project. Thus, we want them to obtain guidance from others, share ideas, seek plan reviews, and go through other processes professional project planners might use. But like a professional, *the Scout* makes the decisions. He must not simply follow others' directions to the point where his own input becomes insignificant. On the other hand, adult leaders must bear in mind he is yet a youth. Expectations must be reasonable and fitting.

9.0.2.10 Fundraising Issues

Projects may not be fundraisers. In other words, the candidate may not stage an effort that primarily collects money, even if it is for a worthy charity. Fundraising is permitted only for securing materials and otherwise facilitating a project. And unless it involves contributions *only* from the beneficiary, or from the candidate, his parents or relatives, his unit or its chartered organization, or from parents or members in his unit, it must be approved by the local council.

The Scout must make it clear to all donors or event participants that the money is being raised on behalf of the project beneficiary, which will retain leftover funds. Should any donors want documentation of a gift, this must be provided through the project beneficiary, not the Boy Scouts of America. Once collected, money raised

must be turned over to the beneficiary or the candidate's unit until needed for the project. If the unit receives the funds, it must release any excess to the beneficiary once expenses have been paid.

If the beneficiary is not allowed, for whatever reason, to retain any excess funds, supplies, or materials, the beneficiary should be asked to designate a suitable charity to receive them or allow the unit to retain the funds. The unit must not influence this decision.

For additional detail see "Procedures and Limitations on Eagle Scout Service Project Fundraising," found in the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook,* No. 512-927, on the reverse of the Eagle Scout Service Project Fundraising application.

The Eagle Scout Service Project Fundraising application, found in the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, *is used to obtain approval when required. Note that local councils may add further definition to the standards established here or on the application form. For example, they could state that fundraisers such as bake sales and car washes do not require a fundraising application and are, in essence, preapproved. They could also establish dollar thresholds; for example, "Any effort expected to raise less than $500 does not require an application." Completed forms are sent to the local council service center where they are routed to those responsible for approval. This may be a district executive or another staff member, the council or district advancement committee, a finance committee, etc., as determined appropriate by the local council.*

9.0.2.11 Routine Labor

Routine labor is not normally considered appropriate for a project. This might be defined as a job or service that a Scout may provide as part of his daily life, or a routine maintenance job normally done by the beneficiary (for example, picking the weeds on the football field at a school). But the real test has to do with scale and impact. If "routine labor" is conducted on so large a scale it requires planning, development, and leadership, it may have sufficient impact.

9.0.2.12 Addressing Common Misconceptions

1. No unit, district, council, or individual shall place any requirement or other standard on the number of hours spent on a project. The Boy Scouts of America is concerned with hours worked on Eagle Scout service projects and collects this data only because it points to a level of excellence in achieving the BSA aim related to citizenship.
2. Eagle Scout service projects are individual matters. No more than one candidate may receive credit for working on the same project.
3. There is no requirement a project must have lasting value.
4. Any final plan that is completed after the project proposal has been approved by the council or district is between the Scout and the beneficiary. The role of beneficiaries in reviewing plans is explained in the service project beneficiary information sheet, "Navigating the Eagle Scout Service Project," that is posted on the Advancement Resources page at http://www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/resources.aspx, and will be included in the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook.*

9.0.2.13 Evaluating the Project After Completion

Eagle Scout service projects must be evaluated primarily on impact—the extent of benefit to the religious institution, school, or community, and on the leadership provided by the candidate. There must also be evidence of planning and development. This is not only part of the requirement, but relates to practicing our motto to "Be Prepared." *However,* in determining if a project meets requirement 5, reviewers must not require more planning and development than necessary to execute the project. These elements must not overshadow the project itself, as long as the effort was well led, and resulted in otherwise worthy outcome acceptable to the beneficiary.

There may be instances where, upon its completion, the unit leader or project beneficiary chooses not to approve a project. One or the other may determine modifications were so significant that the extent of service or the impact of the project were insufficient to warrant approval. The candidate may be requested to do more work or even start over with another project. He may choose to meet these requests, or he may decide—if he believes his completed project worthy and in compliance—to complete his Eagle Scout Rank Application and submit his project workbook without final approval. He must be granted a board of review, should he request it.

If it is thought a unit board may not provide a fair hearing, a board of review under disputed circumstances may be initiated. (See "Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances," 8.0.3.2.) The risk in this approach—that the board may decide negatively—should be discussed with the Scout. But at the same time, the fact

he is so convinced may point to a need to reevaluate what was done. Perhaps, despite the lack of final approval, the project did indeed meet the requirement.

At the board of review, if an approved proposal and any subsequent effort represents planning and development that was adequate to the project, and the project was well led and carried out to the satisfaction of the unit leader *and* project beneficiary, only in a very rare case would rejection result. It would have to be clearly established that Eagle Scout requirement 5—*as written*—was not completed. Under no circumstances may project approval at any point in the process be withheld for reasons that have nothing to do with the project.

At the board of review, if an approved proposal and any subsequent effort represents planning and development that was adequate to the project, and the project was well led and carried out to the satisfaction of the unit leader and *project beneficiary, only in a very rare case would rejection result.*

9.0.2.14 Risk Management and Eagle Scout Service Projects

All Eagle Scout service projects constitute official Scouting activity and thus are subject to Boy Scouts of America policies and procedures. Projects are considered part of a unit's program and are treated as such with regard to policies, procedures, and requirements regarding Youth Protection, two-deep leadership, etc.

The health and safety of those working on Eagle projects must be integrated into project execution. Since an Eagle Scout service project is a unit activity, unit leadership has the same responsibility to assure safety in conducting a project as with any other unit activity. The unit leader or unit committee should reject proposals for inherently unsafe projects. The candidate should plan for safe execution, but it must be understood that minors cannot and must not be held responsible for safety concerns. As with any Scouting activity, the *Guide to Safe Scouting* applies. The "Sweet 16 of BSA Safety" must also be consulted as an appropriate planning tool. It can be found online at "Scouting Safely," http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/Sweet16.aspx.

Unit leadership should be aware of project plans and schedules, and also familiar with the council's requirements for filing tour plans (tour "permits") in order to determine whether projects require them. More information can be found at http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/TourPlanFAQ.aspx.

See "Service Projects," 4.2.3.3, for general guidelines on service project safety requirements and for information about related documents from the national Health and Safety Committee.

9.0.2.15 Insurance and Eagle Scout Service Projects

The Boy Scouts of America's General Liability Policy provides general liability insurance coverage for official Scouting activities. Registered adult leaders are provided primary coverage. Unregistered adults participating in a Scouting activity are provided coverage in excess of their personal insurance.

Every council has the opportunity to participate in the BSA Accident and Sickness insurance program. It provides some insurance for medical and dental bills arising from Scouting activities. If councils do not purchase this, then units may contract for it. In some cases chartered organizations might provide insurance, but this must not be assumed. Most of these programs provide only secondary coverage, and are limited to registered youth and adults and those interested in becoming members.

9.0.2.16 Eagle Scout Service Projects and Messengers of Peace

Any Scout or Scouter who participates in a service project—Eagle Scout service projects included—that has a significant impact on the community in any one of the following three dimensions may qualify as a "Messenger of Peace" and wear the Messenger of Peace ring patch available from Scout shops.

1. The personal dimension: harmony, justice, and equality
2. The community dimension: peace as opposed to hostility or violent conflict
3. Relationships between humankind and its environment: security, social and economic welfare, and relationship with the environment

Since Eagle Scout service projects are conducted for religious institutions, schools, or the community—and would thus directly or indirectly impact one of the three dimensions—almost all Eagle projects would certainly qualify as Messenger of Peace projects. Thus, when reporting project hours through the Journey to Excellence service hours website, "Messengers of Peace" should be selected as one of the categories for the project description.

For more information about Messengers of Peace, please visit www.scouting.org/messengersofpeace.

9.0.3.0 About Eagle Palms

Scouts or qualified Venturers and Sea Scouts may earn Palms after they have achieved the Eagle Scout rank. The requirements can be found in the *Boy Scout Requirements* book. All of the requirements except the board of review must be completed before age 18, and time extensions are not available. Merit badges earned at any time since becoming a Scout may be used. Palms must be earned in sequence, one at a time (Bronze, Gold, Silver), with the time requirement observed for each one. Palms are not considered ranks, but rather degrees of the Eagle Scout rank.

9.0.4.0 Time Extensions

If a youth foresees that, due to no fault or choice of his own, he will be unable to complete the Eagle Scout rank requirements before age 18, he may apply for a limited time extension. See "Request for Extension of Time to Earn Eagle Scout Rank,"11.2.0.0, found in the appendix. These are rarely granted and reserved only for work on Eagle. If a Scout requests a time extension, he should continue working on the requirements as processing occurs. In most cases, for a request to be considered the following five tests must be met.

1. The member joined or rejoined—or became active again after a period of inactivity—in time to complete all requirements before turning 18. That is, the time remaining between joining, or rejoining, and when the Scout turns 18 is more than the total of the active-time requirements for the ranks left to achieve.

The Boy Scouts of America will welcome Scouts back after periods of inactivity. However, all time-oriented requirements must still be met. Scouts reactivating too late to complete time-related requirements will not be granted extensions, nor will those who remained active but simply did not focus on advancement.

2. A circumstance came to exist that now precludes completion before the deadline. Examples might include a health-related incident requiring a hospital stay, a disabling injury, a *significant* employment conflict, a family relocation, a family emergency, a natural disaster, severe unseasonable weather that could not have been anticipated, or unforeseen actions of others affecting the youth's ability to complete the requirements. It is extremely unlikely an extension will be granted if resolution of the circumstance—such as recovery from an injury, for example—still allows enough time for an adequate service project, or for completing the position of responsibility, active participation, or merit badge requirements if they have not already been met.

3. The circumstance is totally beyond the control of the youth member. Injuries, unanticipated family incidents, or various mistakes or omissions by adults, for example, *could* be legitimate causes. The Boy Scouts of America assumes anyone working on Boy Scout ranks has a *Boy Scout Handbook* and has read the requirements. Despite this, misinformation from unit leadership is often cited as grounds for extensions. These cases will be considered, but they should be very rare and would point to a need for basic training and assistance.

4. The circumstance is severe and not the norm of the Scout's life. In most cases, Scouts are expected to overcome life's ordinary trials. Cause for an extension normally requires an extraordinary circumstance uncommon to the youth. For example, known circumstances such as moderate learning disabilities or ADD/ADHD that the Scout has faced over many years and which he has coped with in the past, should not suddenly become an issue shortly before his 18th birthday.

   It is important for council and district advancement committees to keep unit leadership informed of this so it does not become a surprise. An exception might be considered for Scouts with significant disabilities that do not meet the level of severity or permanence required for registration beyond the age of eligibility with a disability code, but are such that they essentially preclude advancement within the timeframe allowed.

Scouts with permanent and severe disabilities such as those described in section 10, "Advancement for Members With Special Needs," have the opportunity to be registered beyond the age of eligibility. (See "Registering Qualified Members Beyond Age of Eligibility," 10.1.0.0.) They do not need to request an extension.

5. The circumstance could not have been planned for or anticipated. If it is health-related, it should have been unforeseen and of recent onset, or a complication or intensification of an ongoing issue.

The list above is meant to give volunteers an idea of how requests for time extensions are evaluated. They are not precise tests. Each case is considered individually.

9.0.4.1 Process for Submitting and Evaluating an Extension Request

The council advancement committee's role is to select at least two committee members to research the request, collect and evaluate evidence, recommend action to the Scout, and if requested, provide the evidence with a position statement to the national Advancement Team. Throughout the process, it must be remembered that time is of the essence.

If a Sea Scout foresees that, due to no fault or choice of his or her own, he or she will be unable to complete the Quartermaster rank requirements before age 21, the same tests, process, and form described here in topics 9.0.4.0 and 9.0.4.1 apply, and must be followed to request an extension of time to earn the Quartermaster rank.

See "Request for Extension of Time to Earn Eagle Scout Rank," 11.2.0.0, in the appendix, and check the box at the top of the page indicating the Quartermaster rank is involved.

The local council does not grant or deny time extensions. These are granted only through the national Advancement Team after consideration of local council recommendations.

1. The Scout, his parent or guardian, his unit leader, or a member of the unit committee may file the request. It is sent to the council service center to the attention of the council's designated appeals coordinator. It is preferred that requests be submitted before the 18th birthday or, if not, the reason for the delay is stated. The request must indicate the number of months after the 18th birthday that will be necessary to complete the requirements.

See "Filing and Processing an Appeal," 8.0.4.1, for information about the designated appeals coordinator.

2. The request must document the circumstances. For example, if the cause is health related, then a statement from a health professional must be provided. If the cause relates to adult error or misinformation,



then the adult(s) involved, if available, must provide a statement. It is not sufficient simply to provide a summary of occurrences without the support of information from those with personal knowledge of what happened.

3. The council advancement chair and staff advisor select at least two council advancement committee members who will research the request and prepare a summary report for the council advancement committee. The council-designated appeals coordinator should brief them on the procedures outlined herein. They should obtain statements from those with knowledge of the case, or interview them and then prepare written summaries. The candidate must be included in the process in order to ascertain circumstances were beyond his control, as must any adults available who committed errors or provided misinformation. In some cases, it is a good idea to hold face-to-face interviews—for example, those where the lack of a *Boy Scout Handbook* or ignorance of requirements is cited.

4. The council advancement committee must review the evidence and prepare a position statement. This is shared with the Scout, his parent or guardian, and his unit leader.

5. The Scout then decides whether to pursue the extension with the national Advancement Team. If affirmative, the Request for Extension of Time to Earn Eagle Scout Rank form (see 11.2.0.0) must be completed and then signed by the Scout executive. It must provide a recommendation for acceptance or denial, and indicate the length of the desired extension. A packet with the supporting documentation, the position statement, and the extension request form is then forwarded to the national Advancement Team. The position statement must be more than a cover letter; it must address the evidence gathered and include an explanation of how the requested amount of time was calculated. All requests, letters, and position statements must include the date and signature of the author. A decision can usually be delivered within two to four weeks. Packets without complete information will be returned to the council without further review.

Prior to submitting a request for an extension to the national Advancement Team, the council should confirm that the Scout's advancement records in ScoutNET are up to date.



Advancement for Members With Special Needs

Youth with physical disabilities and youth and adults with developmental or cognitive challenges are welcome in the Boy Scouts of America. As outlined in this section, various accommodations exist to facilitate advancement. These youth do not need to join a special unit oriented to serving members with disabilities, although those exist and may be beneficial in some cases. The severity of disability will indicate how members should be registered. See "Registering Qualified Members Beyond Age of Eligibility," 10.1.0.0.

When knowledgeable parents or volunteers are able to provide assistance and oversight, most anyone can be a member. While leaders should be enthusiastic about helping those with special needs, they should also recognize the demands that will be placed on their patience, understanding, and skill in working on advancement.

10.1.0.0 Registering Qualified Members Beyond Age of Eligibility

Youth and adults who are developmentally disabled, or youth with severe physical challenges, may be considered for registration beyond the age of eligibility for their program: age 11 or older for a Cub Scout, 18 or older as a Boy Scout or Varsity Scout, or 21 or older as a Venturer or Sea Scout. An adult of any age who has developmental disabilities, for example, may be considered for *youth* membership and join Scouting if a qualified medical professional is able to correlate cognitive abilities to less than the upper limit of an eligibility age. Members approved to be so registered are indicated in the system with a disability code.

A disability, to qualify an individual for registration beyond the age of eligibility, must be permanent and so severe that it precludes advancement even at a rate significantly slower than considered normal. If ranks can be achieved under accommodations already provided in official literature, or with modifications as outlined below, then the disability probably does not rise to the level required. This is often the case in considering advancement potential for youth who have only moderate learning disabilities or such disorders as ADD/ADHD. If ranks can be earned, but it just takes somewhat longer, the option is not warranted.

Note that registration beyond the age of eligibility is intended as a permanent arrangement to allow ongoing participation as a youth member in the Scouting program. This is different from a "time extension," which is available to a young man working toward the Eagle Scout rank should circumstances not due to his choice or fault arise that preclude achievement before his 18th birthday. Extensions of time are available only for the Eagle Scout and Quartermaster ranks, they have specific end dates, and they may or may not involve disabilities. See "Time Extensions," 9.0.4.0.

10.1.0.1 Possible Criteria for Registering Beyond Age of Eligibility

In considering registration beyond the age of eligibility, members with conditions such as those listed below *may* meet the severity requirement, but every case must be considered individually. If members are able to take advantage of the flexibility already built into Scouting advancement, and participate in essentially the same way as typical youth, then they must not be registered beyond the age of eligibility.

Examples of conditions that, if severe, *may* be criteria that qualify a youth for registration beyond the age of eligibility include these:

1. Autism spectrum disorders
2. Blind or sight-impaired
3. Deaf or hard of hearing
4. Developmental cognitive disability
5. Developmental delay
6. Down syndrome
7. Emotional or behavioral disorder
8. Physically disabled
9. Traumatic brain injury
10. Multiple coexisting disabilities

"Multiple coexisting disabilities" refers to a diagnosis of two or more disabilities, none of which alone may be significant enough to warrant registration beyond the age of eligibility but when considered in combination may qualify. For example, a youth with a moderate learning

disorder related to ADHD may not be approved to register as a Boy Scout after age 18. If another disability also exists, however, the cumulative impact including that from medication can be significant.

Find additional information and resources on working with Scouts who have special needs at http://www.scouting.org/specialneeds.aspx.

10.1.0.2 How to Register a Member Beyond Age of Eligibility

To register a person who will remain as a youth member beyond the age of eligibility, the following documents must be assembled and submitted to the local council.

1. A letter from a parent or guardian describing the disability and its severity and permanence, and petitioning the council for approval of registration beyond the age of eligibility
2. A completed youth membership application or proof of current membership
3. A completed and signed Annual BSA Health and Medical Record form (parts A and C), online at http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/ahmr.aspx
4. A signed statement from a qualified health professional attesting to the nature of the disability, its severity, and *permanent* limitations connected with it. For physical disabilities, this must be a licensed physician; for developmental or cognitive issues, a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist, or as appropriate, a neurologist or other medical professional in a specialty related to the disability.
5. A letter from the unit leader advocating and supporting the registration
6. Other supporting documentation, such as an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), treatment summaries, etc., which are optional, but can make a difference in the decision

If well done, and available from the parents, an Individualized Education Plan can give valuable information on how to work with an individual Scout and help him achieve at the best of his abilities.

The council executive board must approve petitions directly, or delegate action to a council operating committee or other group of responsible volunteers at the council level. This may or may not be the advancement committee. Individual cases must be deliberated upon. Consideration of registration beyond the age of eligibility shall not be delegated to any district or to any single individual, either professional or volunteer. If granted, the Scout executive prepares an approval letter and sends it to the Scout's parent or guardian and unit leader or committee chair. A copy is retained in the unit's registration file for as long as the member remains registered. Upon entering the member, the council registrar selects the appropriate code based on the nature of the disability, and follows any other procedures as outlined in the most current edition of the *Registrar Procedures Manual*, No. 524-901. The national Membership Resources Team is available to assist as needed.

Young people approved for registration beyond the age of eligibility may continue working on advancement, including the Eagle Scout rank and Eagle Palms, for as long as they continue to be so registered. The local council or the National Council, upon uncovering evidence that a youth was improperly registered with a disability code, or for whatever reason no longer meets the required level of severity, may make the decision to expire the registration. Registration of an adult as a youth member with a disability code may also be expired if it is determined the registrant has progressed sufficiently to be registered as an adult.

10.2.0.0 Advancement Flexibility Allowed

Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, Venturers, or Sea Scouts who have disabilities may qualify for *limited flexibility* in advancement. Allowances possible in each program are outlined below. It does not necessarily matter if a youth is approved to be registered beyond the age of eligibility. Experience tells us those members whose parents are involved, or at least regularly consulted, progress the farthest. Some units have also followed the example set by Individualized Education Plans, and have established "individual Scout advancement plans" with the same benefits.

10.2.1.0 Advancement for Cub Scouts With Special Needs

Advancement is so flexible that, with guidance, most Cub Scouts with disabilities can complete requirements. The standard is, "Has he done his best?" It may take him longer to attempt requirements and demonstrate this, but his accomplishments will be rewarding to him, his parents, and his leaders.

There could be times, however, when a Cub Scout's "best" isn't enough even to get a start. For example, a boy in a wheelchair cannot pass requirements calling for walking or running. In these cases, Cubmasters and pack

committees may jointly determine appropriate substitutions that are consistent with the Cub Scout showing he can "do his best." For example, elective requirements could take the place of those found in achievements. Or in consultation with parents, other adjustments representing similar challenges could be made.

10.2.2.0 Advancement for Boy Scouts and Varsity Scouts With Special Needs

Members must meet current advancement requirements as written for merit badges, all ranks, and Eagle Palms—no more and no less—and they are to do exactly what is stated. If it says, "Show or demonstrate," that is what they must do; just "telling" isn't enough. The same holds for words and phrases such as "make," "list," "in the field," "collect," "identify," and "label." Requests for alternative requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class ranks can be made using the information outlined below.

It is important to remember that the advancement program is meant to challenge our members; however, not all of them can achieve everything they might want to—with or without a disability. It is for this reason all Scouts are required to meet the requirements as they are written, with no exceptions.

For boards of review for Scouts with special needs, the board members should be informed ahead of time about the special circumstances and needs. It may be helpful, too, if the unit leader is present at the review. He or she may be able to help answer questions and provide background. It may be important to allow parents or guardians to be present at the meeting as well—especially if they are able to help interpret and communicate what the Scout is saying. At the least, parents should be available to help board members understand the Scout's challenges and how he copes with them.

10.2.2.1 Using Alternative Requirements

A degree of modification in advancement requirements may be necessary to mainstream as many members with disabilities as possible. Thus a Scout with a permanent physical or mental disability (or a disability expected to last more than two years or beyond the 18th birthday) who is unable to complete all the requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class, or First Class rank may, with his parent or guardian, and also the unit leader or a member of the troop committee, submit a request to the council advancement committee to complete alternative requirements. Unless a Scout has been approved to register beyond the age of eligibility, alternative requirements must be completed by the 18th birthday. The procedures appear below. This avenue is also available to youth with longer-term disabilities (such as those related to a severe injury) who want to continue advancing during recovery.

Simple modifications very close to existing requirement need not be approved. A Scout in a wheelchair, for example, may meet the Second Class requirement for hiking by "wheeling" to a place of interest. Allowing more time and permitting special aids are also ways leaders can help Scouts with disabilities make progress. Modifications, however, must provide a very similar challenge and learning experience.

Alternatives are not available for the Star, Life, and Eagle rank requirements. Scouts may request approval for alternative merit badges, but the other requirements for those three ranks must be fulfilled as written.

The outcomes of the Scouting experience should be fun and educational, and not just relate to completing rank requirements that might place unrealistic expectations on a member who has special needs.

10.2.2.2 How to Apply for Alternative Requirements

Before applying for alternative requirements, members must complete as many of the existing requirements as possible. Once they have done their best to the limit of their abilities and resources, the unit leader or a troop committee member submits to the council advancement committee a written request for alternative requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class ranks. It must show what has been completed, and suggest the alternatives for those requirements the Scout cannot do.

The request must be accompanied by supporting letters from the unit leader, a parent or guardian, and the member (if possible), as well as a written statement from a qualified health professional related to the nature of the disability. This may be, for example, a physician, neurologist, psychiatrist, psychologist, etc., or when appropriate, an educational administrator in special education. Statements must describe the disability; cover the Scout's capabilities, limitations, and prognosis; and outline what requirements cannot be completed. Additional information such as Individualized Education Plans provided to parents by schools, and various treatment summaries and reports, may help an advancement committee make an informed decision.

Normally, it is expected that youth with only moderate learning disabilities, or such disorders as ADD or ADHD can—albeit more slowly—complete standard requirements.

The advancement committee reviews the request, using the expertise of professionals involved with youth who have special needs. To make a fair determination, the committee may want to interview the Scout, his parent(s) or guardian(s), and the unit leader. The committee's decision is then recorded and delivered to the Scout and the unit leader.

Note that topics 10.2.2.1 and 10.2.2.2 do not apply to merit badge requirements. See topic 10.2.2.3 to learn about earning alternative merit badges to those required for Eagle.

10.2.2.3 Alternative Merit Badges for Eagle Scout Rank

Though individual requirements for merit badges may *not* be modified or substituted, youth with special needs may request approval for alternative badges they *can* complete. This is allowable on the basis of one entire badge for another. To qualify, a Scout or qualified Venturer or Sea Scout must have a permanent physical or mental disability, or a disability expected to last more than two years, or beyond age 18. The member does not need to be registered beyond the age of eligibility with a disability code. Before applying, he must earn as many of the Eagle-required merit badges as possible. Any alternatives must present the same challenge and learning level as those they replace, and must be completed by the 18th birthday unless the member is registered beyond the age of eligibility (see "Registering Qualified Members Beyond Age of Eligibility," 10.1.0.0).

Scouts with special needs must complete all merit badge requirements as written. No substitutions for individual requirements are allowed.

Upon finishing the Eagle-required merit badges that are possible, the Scout, with his parent or guardian, reviews the detailed requirements covered in the Application for Alternative Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges. The completed application is sent first to the district advancement committee and is then routed to the council advancement committee. It must be accompanied by supporting letters from the unit leader, a parent or guardian, and the member (if possible), as well as a written statement from a qualified health professional related to the nature of the disability. This may be, for example, a physician, neurologist, psychiatrist, psychologist, etc., or when appropriate, an educational administrator in special education. Statements must describe the disability; cover the Scout's capabilities, limitations, and prognosis; and outline why the merit badge(s) cannot be completed. Additional information such as Individualized Education Plans provided to parents by schools, and various treatment summaries and reports, may help an advance-ment committee make an informed decision. All alternative badges should be included on just one form.

The advancement committee reviews the application, using the expertise of professionals involved with youth who have disabilities. To make a fair determination, the committee may want to interview the Scout, his parent(s) or guardian(s), and the unit leader. The committee's decision should be recorded and delivered to the Scout and the unit leader. Once this is done, the Scout may begin working with a merit badge counselor on the approved alternative merit badges.

When applying for the Eagle Scout rank, a candidate with disabilities must attach the Eagle Scout Rank Application to the approved Application for Alternative Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges. The form can be found at http://www.scouting.org/forms.aspx. It is important to remember that requirements for merit badges cannot be changed in any way, and all requirements must be completed as written.

10.2.2.4 Approval for Special Needs Eagle Candidates Over Age 18

Men age 18 and older, properly approved by the council executive board to register beyond the age of eligibility with a disability code, may apply for the Eagle Scout rank. Since they are considered youth members for as long as they are so registered, they do not need a time extension; nor is special permission needed for an Eagle Scout board of review that is held more than three months after the 18th birthday. A letter from an advancement committee or Scout executive, indicating the member is 18 or older and registered with a disability code, must accompany the Eagle Scout application. If the candidate is not so registered, but should be, then the procedures under "Registering Qualified Members Beyond Age of Eligibility," 10.1.0.0, must be followed.

Eagle Scout candidates who have disabilities but who do not qualify for registration beyond the age of eligibility must complete all requirements before the 18th birthday. In some cases, however, they may qualify for an extension of time. See "Time Extensions," 9.0.4.0.

10.2.3.0 Advancement for Venturers and Sea Scouts With Special Needs

With a parent or guardian, Venturer-age youth with disabilities must consider the programs presented by individual crews or ships. The activities involved must fit within the capabilities of the prospective member. Discussions with crew Advisors or ship Skippers can reveal what is possible and what is not. Generally, crews may be more able to offer flexibility for members with disabilities than ships. For example, safety concerns onboard a vessel may present barriers difficult or impossible to overcome.



10.2.3.1 Working Toward Boy Scout Advancement

Qualified Venturers and Sea Scouts with disabilities, who are working on Star, Life, or Eagle ranks or Eagle Palms, must meet the same requirements and follow the same procedures as outlined for Boy Scouts. See especially "Alternative Merit Badges for Eagle Scout Rank," 10.2.2.3.

10.2.3.2 Working Toward Venturing Awards

The candidate must meet all current award requirements. There are no substitutions or alternatives permitted except those specifically stated in current requirements, or as outlined below or set forth in official literature, or where crew Advisors have been provided flexibility with certain awards. The Venturer is expected to meet requirements as stated—no more and no less. If it says, "Show or demonstrate," for example, that is what he or she must do; just telling about it isn't enough. The same holds true for such words or phrases as "make," "list," "in the field," "collect, identify, and label," and so on.

Requests for alternative requirements for Bronze, Gold, Silver, Ranger, Quest, and TRUST awards may be made, however, using the same qualifications and process outlined under "How to Apply for Alternative Requirements," 10.2.2.2. As with alternative requirements for Tenderfoot through First Class ranks, we must be dealing with permanent physical or mental disabilities, or in the case of Venturers, disabilities expected to last more than two years or beyond age 21. Council advancement committee approval for alternative requirements is required in the same way, but to approve those for Venturing, the committee must involve an adult with thorough knowledge of Venturing advancement and awards. Unless a Venturer has been approved to register beyond the age of eligibility, alternative requirements must be completed by the 21st birthday.

10.2.3.3 Working Toward Sea Scout Ranks

All current Sea Scout rank requirements must actually be met by the candidate. There are no substitutions or alternatives permitted except those specifically stated in current requirements, or as outlined below or otherwise set forth in official literature. The Sea Scout is expected to meet the requirements as stated—no more and no less. If it says, "Show or demonstrate," for example, that is what he or she must do; just telling about it isn't enough. The same holds true for such words or phrases as "teach," "lead," "take command," and so on.

With the full cooperation of a ship committee and Skipper, it may be possible for some youth with disabilities to participate in Sea Scout advancement. The requirements are specific, not based on interchangeable merit badges, and they build from rank to rank. The prospective member, with his parent or guardian, should review the requirements to determine whether advancement is feasible with reasonable flexibility. If ship leaders agree, then the same qualifications and process apply, as outlined under "How to Apply for Alternative Requirements," 10.2.2.2. As with alternative requirements for Tenderfoot through First Class, we must be dealing with permanent physical or mental disabilities, or in the case of Sea Scouts, disabilities expected to last more than two years or beyond age 21. Council advancement committee approval for alternative requirements is required in the same way, but to approve those for Sea Scouts the committee must involve an adult with thorough knowledge of Sea Scout advancement and rank requirements. Unless a Sea Scout has been approved to register beyond the age of eligibility, alternative requirements must be completed by the 21st birthday.

10.2.4.0 Awards for Outstanding Service Benefiting Special Needs Members

10.2.4.1 Woods Services Award

This annual award has been established to recognize volunteers who have performed exceptional service and leadership in the field of Scouts with disabilities. Nominations must be submitted by December 31. The council nomination form for the Woods Services Award can be found at http://www.scouting.org/Awards_Central/WoodServices.aspx. One person is selected each spring for national recognition. He or she must be currently registered and have three or more years of volunteer service in any capacity related to Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, or Venturers with disabilities.

Council Nomination Form for the Woods Services Award

Boy Scouts of America
Woods Services Award
Youth Development, S209
1325 West Walnut Hill Lane
P.O. Box 152079
Irving, TX 75015-2079

Nomination for year _____

Region _____

Date _____

The _____ Council, No. _____, takes pleasure in submitting this nomination for the Woods Services Award for **exceptional service and leadership by an adult in the field of Scouts with disabilities,** to be presented in memory of Luther W. Lord.

Nominee _____

Address (home) _____
Street

_____
City State Zip

Address (business) _____
Street

_____
City State Zip

Home phone _____ Business phone _____

Other phone _____ E-mail _____

Person completing nomination for the council _____ Business phone _____

Other phone _____ E-mail _____

Address _____
Street

_____
City State Zip

Current council position _____

_____

_____

_____ _____
Council name *Scout executive approval*

Local councils must mail this application to the Scouts With Special Needs Task Force at the national office before December 31 to be considered for the following year's selection.

1



10.2.4.2 Torch of Gold Certificate

The Torch of Gold certificate, No. 33733, awarded by local councils, provides recognition to individuals who, over an extended period of time, have provided exceptional service to Scouting youth with special needs and disabilities. National approval is not involved.



Appendix

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11.5.0.0 Charter and Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the Boy Scouts of America: Articles Related to Advancement 87

11.1.0.0 Reporting Merit Badge Counseling Concerns

Use this form to report to your council advancement committee questionable processes or procedures discovered in merit badge counseling at group instruction events such as fairs, clinics, workshops, in camp settings, or by individual counselors. Note that reports are primarily for the information of the advancement committee as methods to improve the merit badge program are considered; however, committees may elect to follow up on specific cases.

Prior to submitting to your council advancement committee:

a. Consult the *Guide to Advancement,* section 7, with special attention to topics 7.0.4.6 through 7.0.4.10.
b. Gather information that may help the council advancement committee to understand what has happened. This could include items such as advertisements or brochures, schedules, any required workbooks or worksheets, or other documentation of the questionable processes or procedures.

Merit badge(s)_____ Instructor_____ Date(s) of instruction_____

Event title (if applicable) _____ Sponsor _____

Location_____ City _____ State_____

Method of merit badge instruction:
❑ Individual counselor instruction ❑ Summer camp ❑ Merit badge fair/clinic ❑ Outside organization ❑ Other: _____

Nature of concern (check all that apply):
❑ The merit badge counselor is not registered with the BSA.
❑ The merit badge counselor is not approved by the council advancement committee.
❑ The merit badge counselor did not ensure that each Scout actually and personally completed requirements.
❑ Requirements that could not have been completed were signed off.
❑ Requirements as written were changed or not used.
❑ The Scout was at the event but did not attend class.
❑ The Scout was signed off for a merit badge but did not attend the event.
❑ An outside organization, business, or individual generated a profit from presenting merit badges.
❑ An outside organization, business, or unaffiliated individual presented merit badge opportunities without permission from the BSA.
❑ An outside organization, business, or unaffiliated individual used the BSA brand, trade names, protected images, or logos without permission.
❑ Other: _____

Statement of facts and concerns. *Use additional sheets, if required. Include any comments on steps taken to resolve the issue.*

***Guide to Advancement* topic number related to questionable process or procedure (required):** (For example, 7.0.4.6, 7.0.4.7, etc.)

Contact person (should the council advancement committee need more information):
❑ Event coordinator ❑ Camp director ❑ Merit badge counselor ❑ Other: _____

Name _____

Phone_____ Email _____

Have you previously reported this event or counselor? ❑ No ❑ Yes; approximate date of previous report:_____

Submitted by: *(*Required)*
Name*_____ District_____ Unit _____ Phone*_____

Scouting position_____ Email*_____

The information presented is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature _____ Date_____

Council advancement committee notes **Received by** _____ **Date** _____

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11.2.0.0 Request for Extension of Time to Earn Eagle Scout Rank

❑ Check if this is for extension of time to earn Quartermaster rank.

> *"If a youth foresees that, due to no fault or choice of his own, he will be unable to complete the Eagle Scout rank requirements before age 18, he may apply for a limited time extension. These are rarely granted and reserved only for work on Eagle."*
> —Guide to Advancement

Before completing this form, please refer to the *Guide to Advancement*, "Time Extensions," 9.0.4.0. It outlines the circumstances under which an extension may be considered, and the process that must be followed.

Eagle candidate's name _____ PID No. _____

Date _____ Council name or headquarter city _____ Council No. _____

Date of birth _____ Date first joined Boy Scouts _____ Life board of review date _____

Current unit membership—choose one: ◯ TROOP ◯ TEAM ◯ CREW ◯ SHIP Unit No. _____

The following must be included with this application:

- ☐ The request for extension filed by Scout, his parent or guardian, unit leader, or unit committee member
- ☐ Council advancement committee report of findings and position statement
- ☐ Written statements (or interview summaries) from persons with knowledge of the case
- ☐ Other evidence and documentation considered by the council advancement committee in preparing the report of findings and position statement (such as meeting notes, statement from a health professional if applicable, etc.)

All requests, letters, and position statements must include the date and signature of the author or committee chair.

Please provide a brief summary of circumstances preventing completion of requirements prior to 18th birthday.
Use this space or attach a summary. Please limit the summary to 150 words or less.

The council advancement chair and staff advisor are to select at least two council advancement committee members who research a request for extension. Their names and contact information, along with others requested below must be provided. They may be contacted as this case is considered.

Position or Relationship	Name	Preferred Phone No.	Email Address
Council advancement chair			
Council advancement staff advisor			
Council advancement committee member			
Council advancement committee member			
Unit leader			
Parent			

I certify the procedures regarding time extensions as outlined in the *Guide to Advancement* were followed, and based on our council advancement committee's research, I recommend the following decision:

- ☐ Acceptance No. of months of extension recommended _____
- ☐ Denial

Scout executive's signature _____ Date request submitted _____

Send this signed form and all required documents and evidence noted above to the national Advancement Team:

Email Advancement.team@scouting.org	OR	***Fax*** 972-580-7894	OR	***U.S. Postal Service, UPS, Federal Express, etc.*** S209, 1325 W. Walnut Hill Lane, Irving, TX 75038

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9.0.4.0 Time Extensions

If a youth foresees that, due to no fault or choice of his own, he will be unable to complete the Eagle Scout rank requirements before age 18, he may apply for a limited time extension. These are rarely granted and reserved only for work on Eagle. If a Scout requests a time extension, he should continue working on the requirements as processing occurs. In most cases, for a request to be considered the following five tests must be met.

1. The member joined or rejoined—or became active again after a period of inactivity*—in time to complete all requirements before turning 18. That is, the time remaining between joining, or rejoining, and when the Scout turns 18 is more than the total of the active-time requirements for the ranks left to achieve.

   The Boy Scouts of America will welcome Scouts back after periods of inactivity, and in considering advancement will not hold time lost against them. All time requirements, however, must still be met. Scouts reactivating too late to complete time-oriented requirements will not be granted extensions, and nor will those who remained active but simply did not focus on advancement.

2. A circumstance came to exist that now precludes completion before the deadline. Examples might include a health-related incident requiring a hospital stay, a disabling injury, a *significant* employment conflict, a family relocation, a family emergency, a natural disaster, severe unseasonable weather that could not have been anticipated, or unforeseen actions of others affecting the youth's ability to complete the requirements. It is extremely unlikely an extension will be granted if resolution of the circumstance—such as recovery from an injury, for example—still allows enough time for an adequate service project, or for completing the position of responsibility, active participation, or merit badge requirements if they have not already been met.
3. The circumstance is totally beyond the control of the youth member. Injuries, unanticipated family incidents, or various mistakes or omissions by adults, for example, *could* be legitimate causes. The Boy Scouts of America assumes anyone working on Boy Scout ranks has a *Boy Scout Handbook* and has read the requirements. Despite this, misinformation from unit leadership is often cited as grounds for extensions. These cases will be considered, but they should be very rare and would point to a need for basic training and assistance.
4. The circumstance is severe and not the norm of the Scout's life. In most cases, Scouts are expected to overcome life's ordinary trials. Cause for an extension normally requires an extraordinary circumstance uncommon to the youth. For example, known circumstances such as moderate learning disabilities or ADD/ADHD that the Scout has faced over many years and which he has coped with in the past, should not suddenly become an issue shortly before his 18th birthday. It is important for council and district advancement committees to keep unit leadership informed of this so it does not become a surprise. An exception might be considered for Scouts with significant disabilities that do not meet the level of severity or permanence required for registration beyond the age of eligibility with a disability code, but are such that they essentially preclude advancement within the timeframe allowed.
5. The circumstance could not have been planned for or anticipated. If it is health-related, it should have been unforeseen and of recent onset, or a complication or intensification of an ongoing issue.

The list above is meant to give volunteers an idea of how requests for time extensions are evaluated. They are not precise tests. Each case is considered individually.

9.0.4.1 Process for Submitting and Evaluating an Extension Request

The council advancement committee's role is to select at least two committee members to research the request, collect and evaluate evidence, recommend action to the Scout, and if requested, provide the evidence with a position statement to the national Advancement Team. Throughout the process, it must be remembered that time is of the essence.

The local council does not grant or deny extensions. These are granted only through the national Advancement Team after consideration of local council recommendations.

1. The Scout, his parent or guardian, his unit leader, or a member of the unit committee may file the request. It is sent to the council service center to the attention of the council's designated appeals coordinator.* It is preferred that requests be submitted before the 18th birthday or, if not, the reason for the delay is stated. The request must indicate the number of months after the 18th birthday that will be necessary to complete the requirements.

   See "Filing and Processing an Appeal," 8.0.4.1 in the* Guide to Advancement*, for information about the designated appeals coordinator.

2. The request must document the circumstances. For example, if the cause is health-related, then a statement from a health professional must be provided. If the cause relates to adult error or misinformation, then the adult(s) involved, if available, must provide a statement. It is not sufficient simply to provide a summary of occurrences without the support of information from those with personal knowledge of what happened.
3. The council advancement chair and staff advisor select at least two council advancement committee members who will research the request and prepare a summary report for the council advancement committee. The council-designated appeals coordinator should brief them on the procedures outlined herein. They should obtain statements from those with knowledge of the case, or interview them and then prepare written summaries. The candidate must be included in the process in order to ascertain circumstances were beyond his control, as must any adults available who committed errors or provided misinformation. In some cases, it is a good idea to hold face-to-face interviews—for example, those where the lack of a *Boy Scout Handbook* or ignorance of requirements is cited.
4. The council advancement committee must review the evidence and prepare a position statement. This is shared with the Scout, his parent or guardian, and his unit leader.
5. The Scout then decides whether to pursue the extension with the national Advancement Team. If affirmative, the Request for Extension of Time to Earn Eagle Scout Rank form must be completed and then signed by the Scout executive. It must provide a recommendation for acceptance or denial, and indicate the length of the desired extension. A packet with the supporting documentation, the position statement, and the extension request form is then forwarded to the national Advancement Team. The position statement must be more than a cover letter; it must address the evidence gathered and include an explanation of how the requested amount of time was calculated. All requests, letters, and position statements must include the date and signature of the author. A decision can usually be delivered within two to four weeks. Packets without complete information will be returned to the council without further review.

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11.3.0.0 Belated Eagle Scout Rank Application

To avoid lengthy processing delays, please refer to the *Guide to Advancement*, "Eagle Scout Board of Review Beyond the 18th Birthday," 8.0.3.1, No. 3, before completing this form. It outlines required documentation and the process that must be followed.

Eagle petitioner's name _____ Date of birth _____

Council name or headquarter city (current residence) _____ Council No._____

Phone Nos. _____ Email _____

Address _____ City _____ State ____ Zip_____

Unit type at the time Eagle requirements were completed (check one): ◯ TROOP ◯ TEAM ◯ CREW ◯ SHIP ◯ POST Unit No.:____

Council name or headquarter city where Eagle requirements were completed _____ Year completed_____

Evidence of completion must be submitted to the national Advancement Team through the local council where the petitioner currently resides.

Please check any of the following items included with this application:

- ☐ Original Eagle Scout rank application signed at the time work was completed
- ☐ Merit badge certificates or "blue cards"
- ☐ Photo of merit badge sash (because of availability on the Internet, sashes are not accepted as sole proof of merit badges earned)
- ☐ Rank certificates or cards
- ☐ Membership card
- ☐ Signed and dated handbook or Progress Toward Ranks cards
- ☐ Unit or council records (unit rosters, advancement reports, etc.)
- ☐ Newspaper articles
- ☐ Program or photos from Eagle court of honor
- ☐ Letters from former leaders or individuals substantiating the claim
- ☐ A statement from the petitioner and corroborating witness(es)
- ☐ Other evidence (describe):_____

All statements and letters must include the date and author's signature. Usually several pieces of evidence are necessary to make a compelling case.

Please provide an explanation of why the Eagle Scout rank was not awarded.
(Use this space or attach a summary. Please limit the summary to 150 words or less.)

I support and endorse this application but understand a well-documented and compelling case must be made in order for credentials to be granted.

Scout executive's signature _____ Date request submitted _____

Send this signed form and all required documents and evidence noted above to the national Advancement Team:

Email	OR	***Fax***	OR	***U.S. Postal Service, UPS, Federal Express, etc.***
Advancement.team@scouting.org		972-580-7894		S209, 1325 W. Walnut Hill Lane, Irving, TX 75038

8.0.3.1 Eagle Scout Board of Review Beyond the 18th Birthday

3. It is possible for those who completed the requirements for the Eagle Scout rank in their youth, but never received it, to obtain credentials necessary for acquiring it. If a board of review was not held, and the individual met the BSA membership eligibility rules in effect at the time, then a board of review may be requested. In any case, all requirements must have been completed before age 18. Evidence of completion must be submitted to the national Advancement Team through the local council where the individual resides. An Eagle Scout Rank Application signed at the time work was finished can serve as evidence of requirements such as active participation, Scout spirit, or positions of responsibility. Blue cards, advancement reports, or troop records may be used for merit badges. Because of their availability on the Internet, actual merit badges or sashes are not normally accepted. Once documentation is verified as complete and compelling, credentials can be released or permission granted for a board of review. Requirements in effect at the time of membership are used, but regardless the practices of the day, all must have been accomplished by age 18.

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11.4.0.0 Advancement and Recognition Literature and Resources

Title	*No. or URL for Online Access*
General	
Advancement Report	34403
Analysis of Unit Progress—Charts That Talk	34818
Annual Health and Medical Record form	Online only at http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/ahmr.aspx
District Committee Training Workshop	34160
Guide to Awards and Insignia	614937
Guide to Safe Scouting	34416; http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx

Cub Scouting	
Bear Handbook	33451; coil-bound 34753; Spanish 30509
Cub Scout Academics and Sports Program Guide	34299
Cub Scout Advancement wall chart	34192
Cub Scout Ceremonies for Dens and Packs	33212
Cub Scout Leader Book	33221; Spanish 611618
Cub Scouting's *Fun for the Family*	33012; Spanish 30131
Den Advancement Report	Online only at http://www.scouting.org/CubScouts/Leaders/Forms.aspx
Den & Pack Meeting Resource Guide	34409; Spanish 611619
Family (Parent) Talent Survey	Online only at http://www.scouting.org/CubScouts/Leaders/Forms.aspx
Individual Cub Scout Record	Online only at http://www.scouting.org/CubScouts/Leaders/Forms.aspx
National Summertime Pack Award	33748; http://www.scouting.org/CubScouts/Leaders/Forms.aspx
Tiger Cub Advancement wall chart	34715
Tiger Cub Handbook	34713; coil-bound 32552; Spanish 30507
Webelos Den Record	Online only at http://www.scouting.org/CubScouts/Leaders/Forms.aspx
Webelos Handbook	33452; coil-bound 34754; Spanish 30510
Webelos Leader Guide	33853
Webelos Scout Advancement wall chart	34187
Wolf Handbook	33450; coil-bound 34752; Spanish 30508

Cub Scouting pocket certificates	
Bobcat pocket certificate	34267 single; 34218 (8 per sheet)
Tiger Cub pocket certificate	34268 single; 34714 (8 per sheet)
Wolf pocket certificate	34269 single; 34220 (8 per sheet)
Bear pocket certificate	34270 single; 34221 (8 per sheet)
Webelos Scout pocket certificate	34271 single; 34222 (8 per sheet)
Webelos activity badge pocket certificate	34272 single; 33423 (8 per sheet)
Arrow of Light Award pocket certificate	34273 single; 34219 (8 per sheet)
Arrow Point pocket certificate	34392 single; 34233 (8 per sheet)

Boy Scouting and Varsity Scouting	
Application for Alternative Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges	Online only at http://www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/resources.aspx
Application for Merit Badge ("blue card")	34124
Boy Scout Handbook	34554; coil-bound 34622; Spanish 34718
Boy Scout Requirements	616334
Eagle Palm application	Online only at http://www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/resources.aspx
Eagle Scout Rank Application	Online only at http://www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/resources.aspx
Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook	Online only at http://www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/resources.aspx
A Guide for Merit Badge Counseling	34532
Merit Badge Counselor Orientation	34542
My Scout Advancement Trail	33499
Scoutmaster Handbook	33009
Troop Committee Guidebook	616928
Troop Resource Survey	Online only at http://www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/resources.aspx
Troop/Team/Crew Advancement wall chart	34506
Troop/Team Record Book	34508
Varsity Scout Leader Guidebook	34827
Worksheet for Building a Merit Badge Counselor List	Online only at http://www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/resources.aspx

Boy Scouting and Varsity Scouting pocket certificates	
Boy Scout pocket certificate	33050 single; 33410 (8 per sheet)
Tenderfoot pocket certificate	33051 single; 33411 (8 per sheet)
Second Class pocket certificate	33052 single; 33412 (8 per sheet)
First Class pocket certificate	33053 single; 33413 (8 per sheet)
Star pocket certificate	33054 single; 33426 (8 per sheet)
Life pocket certificate	33055 single; 33425 (8 per sheet)
Merit badge pocket certificate	34393 single; 33414 (8 per sheet)
Bronze Palm pocket certificate	33401
Gold Palm pocket certificate	33402
Silver Palm pocket certificate	33403

Venturing	
Quest Handbook	33151
Sea Scout Manual	33239
TRUST Handbook	33154
Venturer/Ranger Handbook	33494
Venturing Leader Manual	34655

Website addresses listed herein were current at press time.

11.5.0.0 Charter and Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the Boy Scouts of America

Articles Related to Advancement

"Executive Board," below, refers to the National Executive Board of the National Council, Boy Scouts of America.

Article IX. Policies and Definitions—From the Charter and Bylaws

Section 1. Declaration of Religious Principle, clause 1. The Boy Scouts of America maintains that no member can grow into the best kind of citizen without recognizing an obligation to God. In the first part of the Scout Oath or Promise the member declares, "On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law." The recognition of God as the ruling and leading power in the universe and the grateful acknowledgment of His favors and blessings are necessary to the best type of citizenship and are wholesome precepts in the education of the growing members. No matter what the religious faith of the members may be, this fundamental need of good citizenship should be kept before them. The Boy Scouts of America, therefore, recognizes the religious element in the training of the member, but it is absolutely nonsectarian in its attitude toward that religious training. Its policy is that the home and the organization or group with which the member is connected shall give definite attention to religious life.

Section 1. Activities, clause 2. The activities of the members of the Boy Scouts of America shall be carried on under conditions which show respect to the convictions of others in matters of custom and religion, as required by the twelfth point of the Scout Law, reading, "Reverent. A Scout is reverent toward God. He is faithful in his religious duties. He respects the beliefs of others."

Section 1. Freedom, clause 3. In no case where a unit is connected with a church or other distinctively religious organization shall members of other denominations or faith be required, because of their membership in the unit, to take part in or observe a religious ceremony distinctly unique to that organization or church.

Section 1. Leaders, clause 4. Only persons willing to subscribe to these declarations of principles shall be entitled to certificates of leadership in carrying out the Scouting program.

Article X. Program, Advancement—From the Rules and Regulations

Section 1. General Principles, clause 1. Education is the chief function of the Scouting Movement and it shall be the basis of the advancement program. A fundamental principle of advancement shall be that the boy's progress is a natural outcome of his activities in his unit. The rank requirements in these phases of the Scouting program, as set forth in the official publications, shall furnish the basis of the activities of the unit.

(a) In Cub Scouting, recognition is earned in the home and the neighborhood by passing certain achievements related to simple skills, habits, ideals, and hobbies.

(b) In Boy Scouting, recognition is gained through leadership in the troop, attending and participating in its activities, living the ideals of Scouting, and proficiency in activities related to outdoor life, useful skills, and career exploration.

(c) In Varsity Scouting, recognition is gained through leadership in the team, attending and participating in its activities, living the ideals of Varsity Scouting, and proficiency in activities related to outdoor life, useful skills, and career exploration.

(d) In Venturing, recognition takes on a wider scope, involving the assumption of adultlike roles, identification with adult careers, and participation in community and citizenship responsibilities.

Section 1. Administration, clause 2. All advancement procedures shall be administered under conditions which harmonize with the aims and purposes of the Boy Scouts of America.

Section 1. Cub Scout Advancement, clause 3. Basis for Advancement. The Cub Scout advancement program shall be the basis for the Cub Scout's advancement. There shall be three steps in Tiger Cub, Cub Scout, and Webelos Scout advancement procedures: preparation, qualification, and recognition.

Section 1. Cub Scout Advancement, clause 4. Ranks. There shall be the following ranks in Cub Scouting: Bobcat, Tiger Cub, Wolf, Bear, Webelos, and Arrow of Light. The requirements shall be as authorized by the Executive Board and set forth in Cub Scout publications.

Section 1. Boy Scout Advancement, clause 5. Basis for Advancement. The Boy Scout requirements for ranks shall be the basis for the Scout's advancement. There shall be four steps in Boy Scout advancement procedure: learning, testing, reviewing, and recognition.

Section 1. Boy Scout Advancement, clause 6. Ranks. There shall be the following ranks in Boy Scouting: Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle. The requirements shall be those authorized by the Executive Board and set forth in the official Scouting publications. Eagle palms may also be awarded on the basis of requirements authorized by the Executive Board and set forth in the official Scouting publications.

Section 1. Boy Scout Advancement, clause 7. Responsibility of the Troop Committee. It shall be the responsibility of the troop committee, under the leadership and guidance of the local council, to make sure that the program of the troop is conducted in such a way that Scouts have an opportunity to advance on the basis of the four steps outlined in clause 5.

Section 1. Varsity Scout Advancement, clause 8. Basis for Advancement. Basis for Advancement. The Boy Scout requirements for advancement shall be the basis for the Varsity Scout advancement.

Section 1. Varsity Scout Advancement, clause 9. Responsibility of the Team Committee. It shall be the responsibility of the team committee, under the leadership and guidance of the local council, to make sure that the program of the team is conducted in such a way that Varsity Scouts have an opportunity to advance on the basis of the four steps outlined in clause 5.

Section 1. Venturing Recognition, clause 10. Basis for Advancement.

(a) The Venturing advancement program shall be the basis for the Venturer's advancement. There shall be four steps in Venturing advancement procedures: preparation, learning, qualification, and recognition.

(b) A male Venturer who has achieved the First Class rank as a Boy Scout in a troop or as a Varsity Scout in a team may continue working toward the Eagle Award while a Venturer until his 18th birthday. There is no Venturing advancement route to qualify for the Eagle Award.

Section 1. Venturing Recognition, clause 11. Ranks.

(a) There shall be awards and ranks in Sea Scouts, BSA, the requirements for which shall be approved by the Executive Board as proposed by the Venturing Committee and set forth in Sea Scouting and Venturing publications.

(b) With the exception of Sea Scouts, BSA, there are no ranks in the Venturing program.

Clause 12. Examination in Camps.

(a) In special instances, where Scouts are attending educational or similar institutions and/or camps which give an intensive Scouting program, said institutions and camps may, upon application, be authorized by the Corporation to give the prescribed examinations and pass Scouts in such manner and with such special conditions as the facts presented (as to the facilities and leadership of the institution or camp) may, in the judgment of the Corporation, warrant.

(b) Upon the recommendation of the Corporation, authority may be granted annually for the above privileges to Scout camps or camps conducted by authorized representatives of the Boy Scouts of America that submit evidence of maintaining the program standards, provided their programs have been approved by the Corporation. No exception shall be made to the time requirements to qualify for rank advancement or for the award of Eagle Palms.

Section 1. Responsibility for Merit Badges, clause 13. The responsibility for merit badges shall rest with the merit badge counselor approved by the local council and district advancement committee. Merit badge counselors shall be registered adult members of the Boy Scouts of America. The merit badge counselor shall prepare and qualify youth members. There shall be no board of review procedure for merit badges, but public recognition may be given at a unit court of honor or other suitable occasion.

Article XI. Business, Finance, Properties, Contracts, Registration—From the Rules and Regulations

Section 3. Special Types of Registration, clause 20. Members Who Have Disabilities. Only at the discretion of the Executive Board, and under such rules and regulations as may be prescribed upon consultation with appropriate medical or educational authorities, an individual with a severe mental or physical disability who meets the BSA's standards of membership and is over age 11 (as a Cub Scout), over age 18 (as a Boy Scout or a Varsity Scout), or over age 21 (as a Venturer), is authorized to register and participate in the respective appropriate advancement and recognition program appropriate within that specific program.

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For additional assistance with referencing specific content, see "Frequently Asked Questions," 1.0.4.0.

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1325 West Walnut Hill Lane
P.O. Box 152079
Irving, Texas 75015-2079
http://www.scouting.org

SKU 618673
7 30176 32329 9
33088 2013 Printing