

Advancement Guidelines

California Inland Empire Council

These guidelines are intended to assist the district advancement committees of the California Inland Empire Council administer the BSA Advancement Policies. The current copy of the "National BSA Advancement Policies and Procedures" handbook is to be followed by each district. Each district should use these guidelines in addition to the National BSA Advancement Policies to insure that a successful advancement program is being held.

Purpose of Advancement

Advancement is the process by which youth members of the Boy Scouts progress from rank to rank. It is one of the methods used to achieve the aims of Scouting by each program. Advancement is simply a means to helping each boy having an exciting and meaningful experience.

Council Responsibilities

The council advancement committee implements procedures that help achieve advancement goals. The council procedures must be based on the following guidelines contained in the National BSA Advancement Policies and Procedures handbook.

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

District Responsibilities

The function of the district advancement committee is to motivate and train unit leaders and unit committee members in the advancement program. Other responsibilities include approval of the Merit Badge Counselors, Eagle advancement, and being a resource to units.

Merit Badge Counselors

The CIEC will maintain a current list of all approved merit badge counselors at the council level. The approved list will be maintained by each district Merit Badge Coordinator and supplied to the council office as a minimum of twice a year. It is suggested that each district have a Merit Badge Coordinator on the district advancement committee to maintain the merit badge list. Each district is to approve all merit badge counselors to the current qualifications listed in the National BSA Advancement Policy. Each individual district will recruit, approve and train merit badge counselors. A copy of the "troopmaster" merit badge program has been provided to each district to maintain the approved counselor's list.

See Addendum 1 Merit Badge Counselor Approval

See Addendum 2 Merit Badge Counselor Training

Merit Badge Counselor Orientation

Merit Badge Counselor approval letter

Eagle Service Projects

The approval of Eagle service projects is the responsibility of the District Advancement Committee. It is suggested that each district have an Eagle Coordinator who has additional members of the advancement committee who assist in approval of Eagle service projects.

The Eagle Scout service project provides the opportunity for the Eagle Scout candidate to demonstrate the leadership skills he has learned in scouting. As a demonstration of leadership, the

scout must plan the work, organize the personnel needed, and direct the project to its completion. All of this must be documented using the Eagle Scout Service project Workbook. The District Eagle Chairman or designee must review and sign each Eagle Scouts project workbook before the project is started.

The National BSA Advancement Policy states "There is no minimum number of hours that must be spent on carrying out the project. The amount of time spent must be sufficient for the Scout to clearly demonstrate leadership skills. Reference the National BSA Advancement Policy for restrictions on Eagle projects, as well as guidelines to determine if the project was completed successfully. .

See Addendum 3 Eagle Service Project Approval

Life to Eagle Checklist

Eagle Board of Reviews

All Eagle Board of Reviews are to be scheduled under the direction of the District Eagle Chairman. The board of review will be composed of members selected by the District Eagle Chairman according to the guidelines listed in the National BSA Advancement Policy handbook. All districts will follow the twelve steps from Life to Eagle as listed in National BSA Advancement Policy handbook to hold Eagle Board of Reviews. Each district will hold board of reviews on a regular basis as determined by the number of requests. No Eagle candidate should have to wait more than 30 days after submitting his completed application for a board of review. Each district should support the Eagle Coordinator to allow all requests to be done in a timely manner.

See Addendum 4 Eagle Board of Reviews

Extensions

Each District Eagle Chairman is the first point of contact in recommending extensions. The circumstances needed to approve a time extension will depend on the individual case but must be within BSA advancement policies. Each request must be in writing with a recommendation from the district to the council. Final approval will be requested from the Nation BSA through the Council office.

Appealing a Decision

Reference the National BSA Advancement Policy handbook for circumstances that may lead to appeal of a decision. All appeals are made to the next level from unit to district, and from district to council. In all cases the appeals should be made to the district advancement committee or the council advancement committee.

Lifesaving and Meritorious Action Awards

All requests for action awards will be completed by the applicant and submitted to the council advancement committee for review. Each application will be reviewed according to the requirements listed in the National BSA Advancement Polices handbook and the current application requirements.

Changes to Approved Counselor

1. Individual counselor completes merit badge application indicating changes they wish to make.
2. Application is given to the District merit badge coordinator.

3. Changes are reviewed and approved.
4. Changes to existing counselor are added to District merit badge software program
5. District merit badge coordinator then sends letter to counselor indicating status of merit badges that were requested.

Yearly Approval of District Counselors

At the end of each year as part of the district re-charter each approved merit badge counselor needs to be contacted concerning his or her desire to remain a counselor for the upcoming year. Contact can be made by letter, phone or in person using the resources of the district merit badge coordinator. The yearly verification of approved counselors is intended to remove names from the list that have moved or not interested in remaining listed as a counselor.

Merit Badges with Special Requirements

Before a counselor can be approved for the following merit badges they must supply a copy of the current certification to the district merit badge coordinator.

Rife : NRA Rife Instructor or BSA Rangemaster

Shotgun : NRA Shotgun Instructor or BSA Rangemaster

It is strongly suggested that for approval of the following merit badges the individual have a current certification.

Swimming : WSI Certification or BSA Lifeguard Counselor of BSA Aquatics Instructor.

Lifesaving : Certified Lifeguard Instructor or BSA Lifeguard Counselor or BSA Aquatics Instructor.

Climbing : Certified Rock Climbing Experience and equipment.

Addendum 1

Merit Badge Counselor Approval

New Merit Badge Counselor

As an individual wishes to become a counselor they would need to complete the following steps.

1. Each perspective counselor is to complete a BSA Adult application listing code 42, and a merit badge counselor application.
2. All request for approvals are to be submitted directly to the merit badge coordinator for the appropriate District.
3. Any counselor application submitted to the BSA office is Redlands will be forwarded by way of mail to the appropriate District merit badge coordinator.
4. The District merit badge coordinator will review and sign the BSA Adult application under "approval for district scouters". The District coordinator will keep the unit copy and forward the remaining copies of the BSA Adult application to District executive, who will submit the completed application to Council office for addition to your District 42 list.
5. District merit badge coordinator will then review and approve request of selected merit badges for new counselor.
6. New counselor or changes to existing counselor are added to District merit badge software program

7. District merit badge coordinator then sends letter to counselor indicating status of merit badges that were requested.
8. Counselor will return BSA Adult application to District merit badge coordinator indicating new BSA number assigned to specific individual.
9. District merit badge coordinator adds BSA number assigned to counselor in District software program.

Addendum 2

Merit Badge Counselor Training

District Training

Each district is to conduct Merit Badge Counselor Orientation for all new counselors. When an individual asks to be approved as merit badge counselor they should be made aware of the next scheduled district orientation. A counselor may be approved with the understanding that they must take orientation.

The district will choose the time and locations for orientation but should plan on conducting orientation at least twice per year. The orientation may be held on a weekend or at a monthly roundtable meeting.

See the council Merit Badge Counselor Orientation outline as a sample orientation that will cover the purpose and objectives of being a merit badge counselor. This presentation should take about 30-45 minutes.

California Inland Empire Council District Training

Merit Badge Counselor Orientation

Purpose

The purpose of this training is to provide district approved and registered merit badge counselors with a understanding of the methods of counseling and their role in the advancement program of the Boy Scouts of America.

References:

- Boy Scout Requirements.
- Advancement Policies and Procedures.
- Merit Badge Counseling Pamphlet #34520.
- Merit Badge Counselor Orientation #34542.
- Application for Merit Badge.

Objectives

As a result of this training each merit badge counselor should be able to:

- State the purpose of the merit badge program.
- Explain the role of the merit badge counselor.
- List some methods of counseling and coaching.
- Use the buddy system for counseling.

Purpose of Merit Badge Program

The merit badge program is one of Scouting's basic character developing tools. Earning merit badges gives boys the kind of self-confidence that comes only from overcoming difficult obstacles to achieve a goal. Through the merit badge program, boys learn career skills that might help them choose their lifework. Some merit badges help boys develop physical fitness and provide hobbies that give a lifetime of enjoyable recreation.

Working with merit badge counselor gives Scouts contact with an adult with whom they might not be acquainted. This is a valuable experience. Each of the experiences that a Scout learns from earning a merit badge will help accomplish the aims of Scouting.

Buddy System for Counseling

A Scout must have a buddy with him at each meeting with a merit badge counselor. A Scout's buddy could be another scout, or a parent or guardian, brother or sister, relative or friend. At no time should a merit badge counselor meet individual with any Scout without a buddy present.

Role of Merit Badge Counselor

These are the steps that a scout takes to earn a merit badge. As a counselor, I agree to follow these steps, making no deletions or additions to the approved requirements.

- Scouts gets a signed merit badge application from his Scoutmaster, obtains a counselor name from the approved district list, and finds a buddy to attend meetings with the merit badge counselor.
- Scout gets a copy of the merit badge pamphlet for the subject. It is optional that each scout has a copy of the merit badge pamphlet, but each adult counselor should have a current copy of the pamphlet for each badge they are approved to teach.
- Scout contacts approved counselor and schedules meeting time.
- Scout may learn or do the things that the merit badge pamphlet explains. He may go as far as he can to fulfill the requirements on his own before meeting counselor.
- When the scout is ready, he schedules meeting with counselor. The scout brings a buddy to the meeting. The counselor spends time with him going over the important part of the subject being taught. If the counselor is satisfied that the scout has completed the requirements, he will sign the merit badge blue card. If not the counselor will explain what the scout must do to complete the requirements.
- The scout returns the signed form to his Scoutmaster.

Methods of Counseling

For each scout to get the most benefit from earning a merit badge, each counselor can help in the following ways;

- Help the scout to feel at ease and relaxed with meeting with you.
- Review each requirement carefully to be sure the scout understands what he must do.
- The most effective way to teach a skill is to get the scout to practice while learning.
- One of the jobs a counselor is to teach the skills required for earning the merit badge.
- Encourage the scout to ask for any help needed to gain knowledge or skill on subject.
- Take a genuine interest in the projects being done.

Question/Answers

Annually I will notify the district merit badge coordinator indicating my desire to continue serving as a merit badge counselor.

- The scout is expected to meet the requirements as stated - no more and no less.
- Skill or merit badges may be taught to several scouts at one time, however, the completing of the requirements always must be done on an individual basis.
- The number of badges you counsel in should be limited to those that you have personal knowledge about. This would include education, employment, hobbies etc.

**BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
CALIFORNIA INLAND EMPIRE COUNCIL
1230 Indiana Court Redlands, California 92374-2896
(909) 793-2463 or 825-8844
Jan 1, 1999**

Dear (First Name),

Welcome to the Boy Scouts of America Merit Badge program. This program provides an opportunity for (district name) youth to meet outstanding community leaders like yourself. I hope you will find the experience of working with the Scouts rewarding.

On behalf of the Boy Scouts of America within the local community, I would like to thank you for taking the time to help these young men in your area of expertise. The District Advancement Committee has reviewed and approved your application for the following Merit Badge(s). Please take the time to obtain a pamphlet and review the requirements for:

(Location for name of approval merit badge)

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Enclosed with this letter you will find a synopsis of our Council Merit Badge Counselor Orientation and I ask that you study it thoroughly. Two especially important points made in the orientation package are:

1. The scout is expected to meet the requirements as stated - no more and no less.
2. At no time should a merit badge counselor meet individually with any Scout without another scout, or a parent or guardian, brother or sister, relative or friend present.

If you have any questions concerning a merit badge, please contact me at any time.

Yours in Scouting,
(Name of Coordinator)
(District Name) District Merit Badge Coordinator
Address
(909) Phone Number
E-mail address

Addendum 3

Eagle Service Project Approval

Getting Started

The hardest part of your Eagle Service Project is getting started because you are not sure what is expected. This outline is to help prepare you in choosing and completing your project. The Eagle Project will require a lot of time to complete, anywhere from 2 to 6 months. Plan ahead. You may start anytime after earning the rank of Life Scout. Remember your project must be successfully completed before your 18th birthday, so don't delay getting started.

Choosing a Project

Contact your Scoutmaster or Troop committee and obtain a copy of the "Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook" This workbook provides guidelines for completing your project. The workbook will be used to obtain project approval and record the events as they take place. Your project must demonstrate leadership, be of service to others and be a challenge to you.

Contact your troop leader to help you determine ideas that might work for you. Remember that many community agencies and organizations are sources for project ideas. Not being able to think of a project should not keep you from doing one. There are plenty of people in the community who can think of service projects that need to be done. Seek them out.

Initial Planning

After you have selected a possible project that is right for you, contact the agency, which will benefit from your project. Present to them what your project is, explain exactly what you plan to do and obtain their approval. Discuss with the benefiting agency any financial planning that will be needed.

Project Write-up

Now using the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook, begin to prepare your plan. The project plan may be typed or hand written in the workbook, but it must be very neat and written using your best grammar. Your plan should tell someone else everything needed to carry out your project.

Start first with the project description; give a brief summary of your overall project. The project description should contain enough information to easily identify when your project is completed. Then name the group or organization that will benefit from your project and how your project will benefit them. Next cover the planning details on how you plan to carry out the project. This should include schedule, design plan, material needed, supplies, how to obtain this materials, tools required, number of workers and adult supervision.

Approvals

Several approvals are required for your project. The first approval was from your scoutmaster that your idea may qualify as a valid project. After you have written your plan in the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project workbook you need to obtain several signatures. A responsible representative from the organization you are doing the work for is the first signature required. Next the signature of your scoutmaster/coach/advisor and troop committee are needed. Now contact the Eagle Coordinator for the district to which you belong. See your scoutmaster to obtain the individual name and phone number.

When you meet with the District Eagle Chairman or his designee you will present the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project workbook that outlines your project. The project plan will be reviewed and any questions answered. It is important that you do not do any work on your project, except planning until the District Eagle Chairman has signed your workbook. After your project has been approved and your workbook signed then you may begin your project.

Final Write-up

After the work on your project is completed, you are ready to document what took place. In your workbook describe what actually happened as you carried out your plan. Provide a record of all the time worked by your volunteers, including names, dates, hours. Provide a list of materials and how you obtained them.

Hopefully you took many photographs during each phase of the project. Include a section that is representative of your project. The photographs should be labeled.

Final Approvals

When you have completed your final report sign and date the workbook on the last page. Next present your workbook to your Scoutmaster/Coach/Advisor for review and signature. Next contact the representative from the organization for whom the project was done for and obtain their signature in the workbook. The signature of your Scoutmaster/Coach/Advisor and representative of the organization for whom the project was for indicates that the Eagle candidate planned, developed and carried out the project. Remember that final approval of your project will take place at your Eagle Board of Review.

California Inland Empire Council Boy Scouts of America Life to Eagle Checklist

Leaders and parents who assist the Eagle candidate on his trail to the Eagle Rank should use the following checklist. Each of the steps listed is intended to identify events that take place to successfully complete the trail to Eagle.

- When the rank of Life Scout has been achieved the unit contacts the Council Office to obtain the "Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook".
- The Eagle Candidate reviews the "Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook" with his Unit Leader.
- A discussion takes place between the Eagle Candidate, Unit Leader and/or Unit Advancement Committee to identify possible Eagle Projects.
- After a Project has been identified, the Eagle Candidate meets with a representative of the benefiting organization to receive approval of project concept.
- The Eagle Candidate meets with his Unit Leader and/or Unit Advancement Committee to complete Project Workbook. On page 5 of the project workbook under "Project Description" the project plan is identified. How the project will benefit the identified organization is covered at the bottom of page 5. A description of the project details is covered on page 6.
- The Eagle Candidate meets with the representative from the benefiting organization to obtain approval signature on page 6 of workbook.
- The Eagle Candidate meets with the Unit Leader to obtain approval signature on page 6 of project workbook.

- The Eagle Candidate meets with the Unit Committee to obtain approval signature on page 6 of project workbook.

Warning - No work may begin on your project before approval is obtained from the District Advancement Committee.

- The Eagle Candidate schedules meeting with the District Eagle Chairman to present his Eagle Project.
- Meeting is held with Eagle Candidate and District Eagle Chairman to discuss project. The review includes discussion on project plan, development of project and leadership requirement. Suggestions may be made to insure that project meets BSA guidelines. After review and approval of project, the remaining pages of the project workbook are explained along with ideas to make project a success. The District Eagle Chairman signs workbook on page 6. The project is now approved and work may begin.
- After the project is completed the Eagle Candidate fills out the Eagle Project workbook. The Eagle Candidate meets with his Unit Leader to review project. If all is in order the Unit Leader and Eagle Candidate sign on page 8 of project workbook to indicate completion of the project.
- The Eagle Candidate meets with the representative from the benefiting organization to obtain completion signature on page 8 of workbook
- Remember that final approval for a successful project happens at the Eagle Board of Review. The meeting between the Eagle Candidate and Unit Leader is to review project and discuss how project was completed. If the project goal was not completed, the Unit Leader should instruct the Scout on ways to complete the project as planned. Do not assume that your project will be approved if you did not complete the project as first approved.
- After the Eagle Candidate has completed all the requirements needed for the Eagle Award, he should meet with the Unit Advancement Committee to review the Eagle Application.
- Eagle Candidate signs completed Eagle Application.
- A Scoutmaster Conference is held between the Eagle Candidate and the Unit Leader. After the conference, the Unit Leader signs the Eagle Application.
- The Eagle Candidate obtains the signature of the Unit Committee Chairman on the Eagle Application.
- The Eagle Application is submitted to the Redlands Council Office to obtain local council certification. A review of the application with council records will take place. All dates for each rank advancement and merit badge are checked. After the application has been verified the Council signs under Council Certification and returns the application to the Eagle Candidate.
- The Eagle Candidate contacts the District Eagle Chairman to schedule an Eagle Board of Review.
- The District Eagle Chairman conducts the Board of Review following current National and Council guidelines. The Eagle Candidate brings the following to the Board of Review: Eagle Scout Rank Application, Life to Eagle Packet, Statement of ambitions and goals, Scout Handbook, Support material, Unit Leader and Scout Uniform, An Advancement form with Unit info entered ready for board signature.
- After successful completion of the Board of Review the District Eagle Chairman signs and dates Eagle Application.

- Eagle Candidate or District Eagle Chairman returns the approved Eagle Application and a completed Advancement Form to the Redlands Council Office.
- The official Eagle Certificate is returned to the Unit Leader by mail in approximately 4-6 weeks.
- The Eagle Candidate may schedule and hold a Court of Honor after they receive the Eagle Certificate from the National BSA Office.

Addendum 4 Eagle Board of Review

Eagle Boards of Reviews

All Boards of Review are organized under the direction of the District Eagle Chairman or appointed designee. This includes the date, time, location and members of the Board of Review according to the requirements listed in the National BSA Advancement Policies governing Eagle boards.

Step 1

The Eagle candidate has completed all the advancement requirements as presently identified.

Step 2

Using the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, the candidate has completed his Eagle Service Project. Refer to Eagle Service Project in these guidelines concerning how projects should take place.

Step 3

It is imperative that all requirements for the Eagle Scout rank except the board of review have been completed before the candidate's 18th birthday. Those cases that have extenuating circumstances may allow for a candidate unable to meet this requirement to apply for a time extension through the council to the National Boy Scout Committee. The petition must be in writing directed through the District Eagle Chairman to the Council Advancement Committee.

Step 4

The unit leader signs the Eagle application. The unit committee reviews and approves the Eagle application and signs in designated location. The failure of the unit leader or committee to sign the Eagle application may be appealed to the District Eagle Chairman. The appeal of such will result in a Board of Review being held which may consider the failure to these signatures in determining the qualifications of the Eagle candidate.

Step 5

The signed application is taken or mailed by the candidate or troop designee to the council service center. The application will be checked to verify that all ranks and merit badges have been recorded correctly. If all is in order, the council will sign and return the application to the candidate. The candidate does not need to include his Project Workbook or letter of accomplishments when having application verified by the council service center.

Step 6

After the verified and appropriately signed application has been returned to the Eagle candidate the District Eagle Chairman is contacted by the Eagle candidate to schedule a board of review. At the option of the District Eagle Chairman the request may be made of the council service center to forward all verified applications after signature is obtained to his or her attention.

Step 7

Candidate forwards at request of the District Eagle Chairman verified application, Eagle Application, Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook and letter listing goals and accomplishments. The District Eagle Chairman or designee reviews references listed on application by way of mail, phone, or in person. The method or methods to be used should not include having the Eagle candidate request letters from the references. The District Eagle Chairman is not required to contact each reference to hold a board of review. If during the board of review the question of needing clarification on the character of the candidate the board of review may be postponed until the references have been contacted.

Step 8

The board of review is scheduled and held within 30 days of request. At no time should a candidate request a board of review and have a date selected that will take longer than 30 days unless both the candidate and District Eagle Chairman agree to date selected. The District Eagle Chairman is responsible in selecting the members of the board according to the guidelines listed in the BSA Advancement Policies. Each board of review must have at least one member from the District Eagle Advancement committee.

Step 9

The board of review is held per the guidelines listed in the BSA Advancement Policies. The candidate should present himself in uniform for the board of review. But passing a uniform inspection to take part in or pass the board of review is not appropriate. His unit leader introduces the candidate to the board. Questions asked by the board cover both the Oath and Law and experiences the scout has had. After the review, the candidate leaves the room while the members of the board discuss the acceptability of the candidate as an Eagle Scout. The decision must be unanimous. After the decision is made the candidate is asked to return and is informed that he will receive the board's recommendation for the Eagle Scout rank. If the candidate does not meet the requirements he will be told of the reasons for his failure to qualify. A discussion should be held with him as to how he may meet the requirements within a given time period. If appropriate a new date is selected for a board of review. In cases where a disagreement is reached the process for appealing a decision is to be followed.

Step 10

Immediately after the board of review the chairman of the board signs the application. The members of the board sign a properly completed advancement report. The original signed application and a completed advancement report need to be returned to the council service center. These records may be turned in by the District Eagle Chairman or returned to the candidate/troop who may deliver or mail them to the council service center.

Step 11

The council service center review application, the scout executive signs application. The application is forwarded to the National Eagle Scout Service.

Step 12

The application is screened and signed by the National Eagle Scout Service. The Eagle Scout certificate is returned to the council service center. The unit leader is mailed certificate. The Eagle award is purchased from the council office. The unit may now hold a court of honor to present the award.

