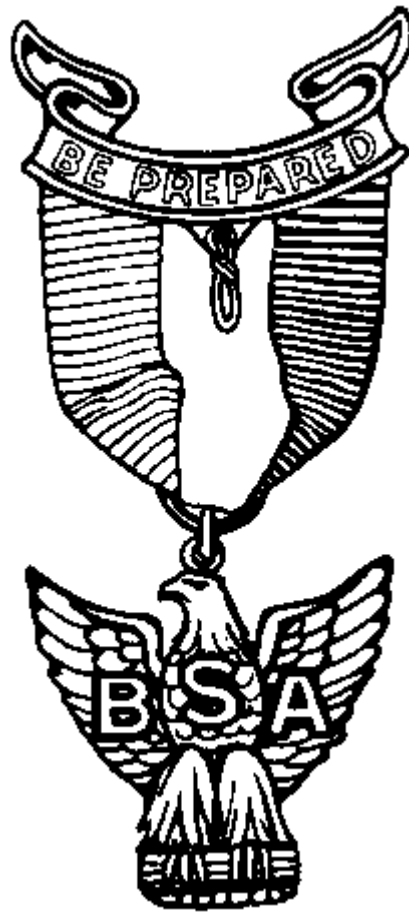


Eagle Rank Advancement Policies and Procedures



A Guide for Scouting Leaders and Parents

Prepared by
Circle Ten Council Advancement Committee

revised June 2001



Explanations and Commonly Expressed Concerns

About Eagle Rank Requirements

It is important for all Scouters to understand that the following policy of the Boy Scouts of America applies to all phases of the Scouting program including rank advancement:

No local council Cub Scouter, Varsity Scouter, Exploring leader, or Scouter shall have authority to increase or diminish requirements and standards established by the Corporation.

Article VI. Clause 4.

Bylaws, Boy Scouts of America

Eagle Requirement #1

Be active in your troop and patrol for at least 6 months as a Life Scout.

?? As long as the Scout is active for six months after becoming a Life Scout, it is not required that he be active for the six month period immediately preceding his board of review for Eagle. Troops may not modify the requirements to require a Scout to be active for a consecutive six-month period, or require that the period must be immediately before the board of review.

?? When it is apparent that a Scout's participation has fallen below that deemed acceptable by the troop leadership, then a letter should be sent to the Scout informing him that he has been dropped from the active role of the troop and placed on the inactive role. The letter should spell out the criteria for the Scout to once again be placed on the active role. Naturally, the Scout should be encouraged to return to this level of participation.

Eagle Requirement #2

Demonstrate Scout spirit by living the Scout Oath (Promise) and Scout Law in your everyday life.

- ?? Scout spirit is defined as the Scout living the Scout Oath and Law in his everyday life. (The Scoutmaster Handbook recommends that living the Scout Oath and Law in a Scout's everyday life be discussed at every Scoutmaster conference all along the Scouting advancement trail. This reinforces the idea of actually making these principles a part of a Scout's daily habits, not just at troop meetings and activities.)
- ?? When determining whether a Scout is living the Scout Oath and Law in his everyday life, it is important to realize that the Scout is human and may make mistakes, just like his troop leaders and those who will sit on his board of review. It is unreasonable to expect perfection, yet at the same time, if there are continuous concerns in this area, it is possible for a Scout to fail to meet this requirement.
- ?? Many times, the troop's only association with a Scout may be at troop meetings and campouts. The references for Eagle may be used as an indicator that the boy lives by Scouting principles in other areas of his life. District Advancement Committees may request that troops secure letters from the references to bring to the District Eagle Board of review. Please note that it is the responsibility of the troop adult leadership to secure the letters, not the Eagle candidate. The national guidelines state that, "*The candidate should not be involved personally in transmitting any correspondence between persons listed as references ...*"
- ?? When an Eagle candidate is told that he fails to demonstrate Scout spirit in his everyday life, it is commonly found that **the troop should have dealt with the issue earlier -- usually several ranks earlier**. A Scout who is not trustworthy or obedient usually doesn't develop this problem just prior to the Eagle board of review. To postpone dealing with the problem until it becomes imperative to do so at Eagle advancement time is a disservice to the boy. However, the fact that it wasn't dealt with does not exempt the Scout from fulfilling this requirement for Eagle.

Eagle Requirement #3

Earn a total of 21 merit badges (10 more than you already have), including the following: (1) Camping, (2) Citizenship in the Community, (3) Citizenship in the Nation, (4) Citizenship in the World, (5) Communications, *(6) Emergency Preparedness OR Lifesaving, (7) Environmental Science, (8) First Aid, *(9) Cycling OR Hiking OR Swimming, (10) Personal Management, (11) Personal Fitness, and (12) Family Life.

* Scouts must choose only one merit badge listed in items (6) and (9). If they have earned more than one of the badges listed in (6) and (9), they must choose one to use as a required badge, and the optional badges may be listed to make the total of 21.

- ?? Eagle candidates cannot be required to earn merit badges other than those listed above.
- ?? All merit badges must be earned with an approved merit badge counselor. According to Clause 13, Article X. of the Rules and Regulations of the Boy Scouts of America, "*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 members of the Boy Scouts of America.*"

- ?? All merit badge counselors must fill out a second leader application with a code “42” designation. This includes Scoutmasters, Assistant Scoutmasters and troop committee members. This is a BSA national policy.
- ?? Because merit badge counselors are called upon only infrequently to counsel for a badge, there is no fee to register with the BSA. Some counselors may go months or a year without being called upon. To register as a merit badge counselor, a person writes the number “42” in the position code space on the application. The application is then submitted to the troop committee (or directly to the District Advancement Committee if recruited by the district). Upon being submitted to the troop committee, it is necessary that the committee review the application at a regularly scheduled troop committee meeting, and take whatever measures are necessary to conclude that there are no discernible reasons to keep the person from working with boys. This could include checking references listed by the person on their application.
- ?? Once a person’s application is approved by the troop committee, the troop is then responsible to submit the person’s name to the District Advancement Committee for approval using form No. 34405, “Merit Badge Counselor Information.” The troop may request that the name not be published or circulated to other troops. All counselors must be approved by the Council Advancement Committee.
- ?? Simply being registered with the BSA does not mean that a merit badge counselor is approved. Final approval is given when the counselor’s name is submitted to the district advancement committee on the Merit Badge Counselor Information form. The counselor must be approved for each badge that he/she will counsel for.
- ?? Additionally, in Circle Ten Council, merit badge counselors recruited from outside the ranks of Scouting (those not currently registered with the BSA and/or who do not have a son in the program) must fill out a Criminal Background Check form and submit it along with a \$4 fee. The troop committee may choose to pay the \$4 fee.

Eagle Requirement #4

While a Life Scout, serve actively for a period of 6 months in one or more of the following troop positions of responsibility: Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Chaplain Aide, Den Chief, Instructor, Junior Assistant Scoutmaster, Librarian, Patrol Leader, Quartermaster, Scribe, Senior Patrol Leader, Troop Guide, Historian, Varsity Team Captain, Co-Captain, Venture President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Boatswain, Boatswain’s Mate, Yeoman, Purser, Store keep, Program Manager, Squad Leader, Team Secretary, or OA Troop Representative.

- ?? If a Scout serves actively in one or more of the listed positions for 6 months as a Life Scout without being removed from the position, the troop must give the Scout credit for fulfilling the requirement, even if the Scout was not effective in the position. Fulfilling this requirement is not dependent on how effective the boy is as a leader, only that he served actively in the position.
- ?? The traditional way that this requirement is fulfilled is by serving in one position for the entire six months. A Scout may also fulfill this requirement by serving in more than one position; however, he must serve in the position(s) during six different months after earning the Life rank.

Eagle Requirement #5

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 idea must be approved by your Scoutmaster, your troop committee, the beneficiary of the project, and approved by the council or district before you start. You must use the “Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook,” No.18-927, in meeting this requirement.

- ?? The “Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook” must be used to meet this requirement, and will help the Eagle candidate through all of the steps necessary to conduct a service project.
- ?? Work involving council property or other BSA activities is not acceptable for an Eagle Scout service project. The service project also may not be performed for a business, or be of a commercial nature, or be a fund-raiser. Fund-raising is permitted only for securing materials or supplies needed to carry out the project.
- ?? Routine labor, or a job or service normally rendered, should not be considered. Therefore, if the Eagle candidate proposes to do a service project for a church that involves painting the fellowship hall, the question to be asked is, Does the church plan to have the hall painted even if the Scout doesn’t do this as a project? If the Scout finds that the answer to this question is “yes,” then it would not qualify as an Eagle project. The work would fall into the category of “routine labor, or a job or service normally rendered.”

Securing Approval

- ?? Securing approval is a two-step process, which is accomplished by writing in the appropriate white spaces and lines on pages 5 and 6 of the workbook. (If the Eagle candidate needs extra space, he may add more pages if he chooses to. The brochure says “You may remove staples and add pages if you wish.” This is the choice of the Eagle candidate.)
- ?? Step 1 is for the Scout to propose his project concept to his Scoutmaster. The Scout shows the Scoutmaster his project concept on page 5 of the “Service Project Workbook.” If the Scoutmaster agrees that the Scout is on the right track, the Eagle candidate then proposes the project to the beneficiary.
- ?? Step 2 is for the Scout to describe his project in more detail on page 6 of the “Service Project Workbook.” At this time, the project plans are formally approved by the beneficiary, the unit leader, the unit committee, and a representative of the District Advancement Committee who each sign the “Service Project Workbook” on page 6. Only after this occurs, should the Scout proceed to carry out his project.
- ?? The space provided in the workbook should be adequate to write a description of the project and how it will benefit the beneficiary, and to describe the plan. Troops that desire more detail than can be written in the appropriate spaces and blanks in the workbook are expecting more than is necessary.

Role of Parents

- ?? Parents should not be involved in planning, supervising or carrying out the project.

Carrying Out the Project

- ?? Pages 7 - 8 of the Eagle workbook have adequate space for the Eagle candidate to keep notes and records of how the project progresses, who assisted on the project, any changes that were made, materials used and time spent. **There is no minimum or maximum number of hours required.** The project should be of sufficient duration for the Scout to clearly demonstrate his leadership in the effort. Remember, the objective is completion of the approved Eagle service project, not how many hours it takes.
- ?? The troop should not micro-manage the Eagle candidate's project. Rather, once the project is approved, the Scout should be allowed to carry out the project on his own. If mistakes are made, the Scout has an opportunity to learn and to make changes.
- ?? Upon completion of the project, the Eagle candidate and the Scoutmaster sign the appropriate spaces on page 8 of the Eagle workbook representative of group benefiting.
- ?? Many boys choose to make a notebook or scrapbook of their Eagle project. However, troops or districts are not allowed to require Scouts to make a notebook/scrapbook or to type the information. If a Scout chooses to document his project in this manner, it is his decision. If he does not want to make a typed notebook with photographs or a scrapbook, that is OK. The Eagle workbook does call for the information to be presented legibly.

Eagle Requirement #6

Attach to [the Eagle] application a statement of your ambitions and life purpose and a listing of positions held in your religious institution, school, camp, community, or other organizations during which you demonstrated leadership skills. Include honors and awards received during this service. Take part in a Scoutmaster conference.

- ?? All requirements up to this point, including this one, must be met before the Scout's 18th birthday.
- ?? Upon completion of this requirement, the Eagle candidate is ready for his board of review.

Eagle Requirement #7

Complete your board of review.

- ?? Scouts who have completed Eagle requirements 1-6 prior to their 18th birthday may be reviewed and recognized within three months after that date. For Eagle Scout boards of review conducted between three and six months after the candidate's 18th birthday, a written statement explaining the reason for the delay must be attached to the Eagle Scout Rank Application when it is submitted to the council office. Circle Ten Council must be contacted for procedures to follow if a board of review is to be conducted more than six months after a candidate's 18th birthday.

Eagle Scout Extensions

Excerpt from *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures* from the Boy Scouts of America.

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"Scouts 18 or older. Scouts who have completed all requirements for a rank prior to their 18th birthday should submit their application and be reviewed and recognized within three months after that date. **For Eagle Scout boards of review conducted between three and six months after the candidate's 18th birthday, a statement explaining the reason for the delay must be attached to the Eagle Scout Rank Application when it is submitted to the Eagle Scout Service.** If an Eagle Scout board of review will be held after the six months following the candidate's 18th birthday, the Eagle Scout must petition the National Boy Scout Committee for an extension of time to hold the board of review. The petition must be processed through the local council, detailing the extenuating circumstances that prevented the board of review from being held within the six-month period following the candidate's 18th birthday, and be accompanied with a copy of the Eagle Scout Rank Application."

If there is an Eagle Scout who needs an extension:

1. There must be extenuating circumstances beyond the Scout's control.
2. A letter must be written outlining the extenuating circumstances and submitted to the District Advancement Chairman.
3. Upon review by the District Advancement Committee, the committee should forward the letter and a copy of the Scout's Eagle Scout Application (front and back) to the Program Director of Circle Ten Council.
4. The Program Director will then forward the request to the National Office for an official decision on whether the request for an extension will be accepted.

Eagle Board of Review

- ?? The Eagle Board of Review should be conducted as soon as possible after the Eagle candidate has completed requirements 1-6 and should not be delayed to coincide with boards of review conducted by the unit for candidates for other ranks.
- ?? According to the National BSA Advancement Policies and Procedures, *“The Boy Scouts of America has placed the Eagle Scout board of review in the hands of either the troop, team, post, or ship committee or the district or council committee responsible for advancement. The council will decide and promulgate which method or methods may be used.”*
- ?? Circle Ten Council requires Eagle Scout boards of review to be conducted on the district level. A district level board of review may be conducted and considered official if held in one of the following two ways:
1. Comprised of Eagle board members selected by the troop and at least one member of the District Advancement Committee.
 2. Comprised solely of members of the District Advancement Committee.

- ?? The Scout must go through the district Eagle board of review in the district in which his troop is located.
- ?? It is a violation of policy to conduct one or more preliminary boards of review prior to the official district board of review.
- ?? The District Eagle board of review is composed of a minimum of three members and a maximum of six members. Other than the district representative, these members of the board of review do not have to be registered in Scouting, but they must have an understanding of the importance and purpose of the Eagle board of review.
- ?? The candidate's unit leader introduces him to the members of the district Eagle board of review, and may remain in the room, but does not participate in the board of review. In addition, Unit leaders, Assistant unit leaders, relatives or guardians may not serve as members of a Scout's board of review. In no case should a relative or guardian of the candidate attend the review, even as a unit leader. After the review, the candidate and his unit leader leave the room while the board members discuss the acceptability of the candidate as an Eagle Scout.

Purpose of the Eagle Board of Review

- ?? The members of the board of review should have the following objectives in mind when they conduct the board of review:
 - ?? To make sure the Scout has done what he was required to do for the rank -- no more or no less.
 - ?? To see how good an experience the Scout is having in the unit.
 - ?? To encourage the Scout to progress further.
- ?? The district Eagle board of review is not an examination; the board does not re-test the candidate on any of the requirements. For example, a Scout should not be asked to demonstrate tying knots or other Scout skills, including merit badge requirements, at the board of review. The Scout can be asked where he learned a skill, who taught him and the value he gained from passing the requirement.
- ?? The district Eagle board should attempt to determine the Scout's attitude towards Scouting's ideals and his acceptance of those ideals. A discussion of the Scout Oath and Law is in keeping with the purpose of the review to make sure that the candidate recognizes and understands the value of Scouting in his home, unit, school and community. (This, in effect, is a discussion of Eagle requirement #2.)
- ?? Examples of appropriate questions to ask about the Eagle candidate about his service project are listed below. These are taken from the "Eagle Service Project Workbook:"
 - ?? Did you demonstrate leadership to others?
 - ?? Were you indeed the project director, rather than doing the work yourself?
 - ?? Was the project helpful to the religious institution, school, or community group?
 - ?? Did the project follow the plan?
 - ?? If changes were made, why were they made?

Can a Candidate Be Turned Down By The District Eagle Board of Review?

- ?? An Eagle candidate may be turned down for the rank of Eagle **only** if he has failed to meet the stated Eagle rank requirements. All decisions of the board of review are arrived at through discussion and must be unanimous. District Eagle boards of review should completely understand that the **only** reason to turn a boy down for Eagle is failure to complete the Eagle requirements as set forth in current BSA literature.
- ?? If the district Eagle board of Review cannot reach a unanimous decision, an appeal may be made to the Council Advancement Committee.
- ?? A Scout may not be turned down because the district Eagle board of review feels he is too young to be an Eagle Scout. This violates BSA policy. It is also a violation of policy to turn down a Scout because he doesn't appear to be "Eagle material." An Eagle Scout does not have to be a "natural born leader of men," who exudes confidence and inspiration. A small, quiet boy can complete the requirements and be an Eagle just like a tall, confident boy.
- ?? If the Scout is turned down, a follow-up letter must be sent to the Scout by the District Advancement Committee outlining which Eagle rank requirement(s) the Scout still needs to complete to qualify for the rank. If the Scout chooses to appeal, the name of the person to be contacted at the council should be supplied to the Scout. This contact can be made by the Scout or any interested party.
- ?? The National BSA Advancement Policies and Procedures states that, "*If the candidate meets the requirements, he is asked to return and is informed that he will receive the board's recommendation for the Eagle Scout rank.*" Concerning Scouts who fail to meet the stated Eagle rank requirements, the book goes on to say that, "*A discussion should be held with him as to how he may meet the requirements within a given period. Should the applicant disagree with the decision [i.e. the Scout believes that he, in fact, has completed the requirements], the appeal procedures should be explained to him.*"

Appeal Procedures

- ?? Two sets of circumstances may lead to the appeal of a decision:
 - ?? when the unit leader does not recommend the Scout for a district Eagle board of review, or if the unit leader or unit committee refuses to sign the Eagle Scout application.
 - ?? when a Scout is turned down at the district Eagle board of review because, in the assessment of the members of the board, the Scout did not complete one or more of Eagle rank requirements #1 through #6 as written.
- ?? If any of these situations exists, the Scout or other interested parties may appeal the decision. On receipt of the appeal, the district or council committee responsible for advancement will provide for a prompt review to determine the facts. All parties must be interviewed either individually or as a group. After a review of the facts, the district or council advancement committee will make a decision. Once a decision is reached, the district or council advancement committee will notify the troop leadership.

Stalling a Scout for Eagle

- ?? It is unacceptable for a troop to delay a Scout's work towards his Eagle rank for any reason as long as he is meeting the requirements.

Advancement for Special Needs Scouts

- ?? The BSA has incorporated provisions to allow Scouts with special needs to advance. For Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class ranks, the Scout, his parents or the troop may submit proposed alternative rank requirements to the Council Advancement Committee for approval. This option is not available for Star, Life or Eagle ranks; however, certain merit badges are allowed as substitutes for specified merit badges that may be a problem for a Scout with special needs.
- ?? Special needs Scouts may also register beyond the normal age range provided certain conditions are met.
- ?? If assistance in these areas is needed, contact the Council Program Director.

Venture Advancement

- ?? 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 Scout rank as a Venturer until his 18th birthday.
- ?? Position of responsibility requirements may be met by the Venturer serving as president, vice president, secretary, or treasurer in his crew, or as boatswain, boatswain's mate, yeoman, purser, or storekeeper in his ship.

- ?? The Scoutmaster conference will be conducted by the Advisor or Skipper.
- ?? As the Venturer meets the requirements for the Star and Life ranks, a board of review is conducted by the crew or ship committee. The Eagle board of review is conducted by the District Advancement Committee of the regular Scouting District (not Venture District) that the Eagle candidate resides within.
- ?? The Eagle service project must be approved by the District Advancement Committee of the regular Scouting District (not Venture District) that the Eagle candidate resides within.

Troop Policies

- ?? Scouting units may not establish unit policies that conflict with the Charter and Bylaws of the Boy Scouts of America.

Scheduling Eagle Courts of Honor

- ?? Once an Eagle application is submitted to the council office, the turnaround period normally takes six to eight weeks. **Please do not schedule an Eagle court of honor earlier than eight weeks from the date that the paperwork is submitted to the council office because you may not have the materials necessary to award the rank.**

In Closing

- ?? Most infractions of BSA policies probably begin innocently, likely by untrained leaders or those who don't fully understand the advancement program of the BSA. The program is designed with specific objectives in mind.
- ?? Altering or adding requirements, such as requiring a Scout to attend multiple boards of review or make scrapbooks of his service project, does not help meet Scouting's goals. In fact, these alterations of the program are an injustice to the Scout and are a violation of BSA policy.

If You Need Assistance

If you need more information or assistance with any areas discussed in this packet, please contact your District Advancement Chairman, your District Executive, or the Council Program Director at 214-902-6710.