

The Susquehanna Council Advancement Committee maintains this document as a single source compilation of all policies and procedures regarding advancement approved for application in the Susquehanna Council. Please contact your District Advancement Committee or the Council Advancement Committee if you have questions or need clarification of any policy or procedure.

Section 1. Cub Scout rank advancement

1.1.

- 1.1.1. Policy. None at this time.
- 1.1.2. Procedure or practice. None at this time.

Section 2. Boy Scout rank advancement

2.1. Alternative rank requirements.

2.1.1. Policy.

- a. The Council Advancement Committee is the designated approval authority for alternative requirements. The minimum panel to review a request for alternative requirements is the chair of the Council Advancement Committee and one advancement committee member from each district. {Approved by CAC¹, 3/6/18}

2.1.2. Procedure or practice.

- a. The following information and procedures supplements the policies and procedures prescribed in the Guide to Advancement to assist units in submitting a request for alternative requirements.
 - 1) Carefully read the Guide to Advancement, sections 10.2.2.0 – 10.2.2.2, and especially consider the following extracts from those sections before submitting a request.
 - a) “Requests for alternative requirements for Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class ranks can be made ... 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.” [Guide to Advancement, Section 10.2.2.0]
 - b) “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.” [Guide to Advancement, Section 10.2.2.0]

¹ CAC stands for Susquehanna Council Advancement Committee

- c) “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 cognitive disability, or a disability expected to last more than two years, or beyond age 18, who is unable to complete all the requirements for Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, or First Class rank may, ..., 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. ... 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.” [Guide to Advancement, Section 10.2.2.1]
 - d) “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,” [Guide to Advancement, Section 10.2.2.2] a request may be submitted.
- 2) The unit is encouraged to discuss a possible request with the chairman of the district’s advancement committee for counsel and advice before submitting a request.
 - 3) A request must come from the unit and include all of the following:
 - a) “the unit leader or a troop committee member submits to the council advancement committee a written request for alternative requirements ... It must show what has been completed, and suggest the alternatives for those requirements the Scout cannot do.”
 - b) supporting letters from:
 - i. the unit leader,
 - ii. a parent or guardian, and
 - iii. the Scout (if possible)
 - c) “a written statement from a qualified health professional related to the nature of the disability. ... 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.”
 - d) Other information may be included with the request to help in making an informed decision, such as Individualized Education Plans provided to parents by schools, and various treatment summaries and reports, but are not required.
 - 4) The unit must submit the request, including all documentation, to the Council registrar.

{Approved by CAC, 8/13/18}

2.2. Registration beyond the age of eligibility.

2.2.1. Policy.

- a. The Council Executive Board delegates to the Council Advancement Committee the responsibility to review requests for members to register beyond the age of eligibility and authority to make a determination on such requests (approve or disapprove). If a member wants to appeal the decision of the Council Advancement Committee, the Council Executive Board will form an appeal review committee of at least three volunteers to review the appeal and make a determination. The membership of the board's appeal review committee will include a member of the Council Advancement Committee. The Council Advancement Committee is responsible for collecting all documentation for consideration of the appeal.
See Guide to Advancement section 10.1.0.2. {Approved by CEB², 8/27/18}

2.2.2. Procedure or practice. None at this time.

Section 3. Merit badges

3.1. Request to serve as a counselor.

3.1.1. Policy.

- a. The District Advancement Committee is the designated authority for approval of counselors in their District for all merit badges. {Approved by CAC, 3/6/18}
- b. District Advancement Committee is responsible to ensure counselors meet all qualifications established by BSA prior to approval. {Approved by CAC, 3/6/18}
- c. The final approval of the addition or deletion of merit badges for a counselor requires the approval of at least two members of the District Advancement Committee. {Approved by CAC, 3/6/18}
- d. An individual in the Susquehanna Council can serve as a counselor for a maximum of eight merit badges at any one time. {Approved by CEB, 3/17/18}
- e. A merit badge counselor must utilize BSA's most current Merit Badge Counselor Information form to request to add or drop the merit badges for which the counselor requests approval. A complete and signed form must be submitted to the Council Service Center. Incomplete forms will be returned without further action. {Approved by CAC, 4/2/18}

² CEB stands for Susquehanna Council Executive Board

- f. In order for a request to be complete, the merit badge counselor must provide a list of qualifications for each merit badge for which the counselor requests approval. The list must provide specific information that demonstrates the individual's qualifications in the subject of the merit badge, such as training or education completed, certifications received, and experience (work or personal activity). The counselor should use as much space as necessary to provide their qualifications (such as using additional lines on the form or attach an extra page). The counselor must provide copies of appropriate certificates with the Information form. {Approved by CAC, 4/2/18}
 - g. The counselor's signature on the Merit Badge Counselor Information form certifies that the counselor agrees to fully comply with all of the standards and instructions provided on the front and back of the form. Counselors are strongly encouraged to carefully read: a) the required qualifications and stipulations that they are agreeing to on the front of the form and b) all of the instructions on the back of the form. {Approved by CAC, 4/2/18}
- 3.1.2. Procedure or practice.
- a. Approval procedure.
 - 1) Prerequisites. The Council Registrar is responsible to first verify that the counselor requesting approval meets the following prerequisites.
 - a) Registered with BSA
 - b) YPT current
 - c) PA clearances current
 - 2) Qualifications. Following receipt of the request to add or drop merit badges with verification that all prerequisites are met, the Advancement Committee is responsible to make the determination if the applicant is qualified for each merit badge by reviewing the qualifications submitted by the applicant to serve as a counselor.
 - 3) Notification. The Advancement Committee will provide to the Council Registrar their determination on requests to add or drop merit badges. The Council Registrar will notify the counselor of the committee's determination.
- {Approved by CAC, 3/6/18}

3.2. Renewal as a counselor

3.2.1. Policy.

- a. Counselors must reregister annually to continue as a counselor for previously approved merit badges. The Council registrar will assist counselors in reregistering by sending them a re-registration letter. The counselor must submit a complete and signed re-registration letter to the Council Service Center by the stated date in order to reregister. Failure to meet prerequisites and submit the re-registration letter will result in suspension as a counselor for all previously approved merit badges. Continued failure to meet prerequisites and submit the re-registration letter will result in the requirement to reapply for approval as a counselor for those merit badges. The counselor's signature on the re-registration letter certifies that the counselor agrees to fully comply with all of the standards and instructions provided on the front and back of the Merit Badge Counselor Information form. {Approved by CAC, 4/2/18}
- b. The Council will periodically publish a list of all approved merit badge counselors in the Council with personal contact information. The Council Advancement committee will determine the frequency. The Council registrar will send the list only to each unit's chartered organization representative, committee chair person, and scoutmaster (the key three), in order to protect privacy. Scouts are prohibited from receiving a copy of the Council's list. At a minimum, the registrar will publish the list following completion of the annual re-registration of counselors. {Approved by CAC, 4/2/18}

3.2.2. Procedure or practice

- a. Advancement committee involvement in re-registration.
The following procedures are established for the involvement of the Council and District advancement committees in the annual process of re-registration of merit badge counselors.
 - 1) Shortly after the published deadline for submission of the re-registration letters from counselors, the Registrar will provide a list to the Council and District Advancement committees of the counselors that have not responded.
 - 2) The Council Advancement committee will establish a final cut-off date for submission of re-registration letters following the published deadline for submission of the letters. The failure to submit a re-registration letter by that date will result in removal of the counselor from the approved list of counselors and possibly require them to reapply for approval as a counselor with the Merit Badge Counselor Information form.

- 3) Using the list provided by the Registrar, each District Advancement committee will follow-up with the counselors in their district that have not submitted their re-registration to ensure they are aware that their status as an approved MB counselor in the Council is in jeopardy, remind them of the actions they need to take, and ensure that they are informed of the final cut-off date.
- 4) The Registrar will finalize the list of approved merit badge counselors immediately following the final cut-off date.
- 5) After the final cut-off date, the Registrar will provide a list to the Council and District Advancement committees of the counselors that have still not responded and are now no longer an approved MB counselor. The list of no longer approved counselors will be included with the list of approved counselors when that list is sent to leaders in the units.

{Approved by CAC, 5/7/18}

3.3. Merit badge blue cards

3.3.1. Policy.

- a. It is the Scoutmaster's responsibility to sign blue cards, because of the counseling opportunity involved. The Scoutmaster's signature constitutes approval for a Scout to proceed with working on a merit badge and verification that the Scout plans to work with a counselor that is registered and approved by the council advancement committee. The Scoutmaster may delegate authority to sign cards and conduct the discussions. If delegated, this authority should be entrusted to a knowledgeable assistant Scoutmaster through a specific and formal assignment of the authority that is communicated to the troop's Scouts, adult leaders, and parents and enforced. The Scoutmaster should consider making more of the process than just providing a signature. The opportunity exists to provide inspiration and direction in a young man's life.

See Guide to Advancement section 7.0.0.3. {Approved by CAC, 6/4/18}

3.3.2. Procedure or practice. None at this time.

Section 4. Advancement to Eagle

4.1. Service project.

4.1.1. Policy.

- a. The District Advancement Committee is the designated authority to review and approve service project proposals for advancement to Eagle for Scouts in their District. {Approved by CAC, 4/2/18}

4.1.2. Procedure or practice. None at this time.

4.2. Fund raising

4.2.1. Policy.

- a. The District Advancement Committee is the designated authority to review and approve the Eagle Scout Service Project Fundraising Application for Scouts in their District for expected fund raising amounts up to \$500. The Council Advancement Committee is the designated authority to review and approve applications for expected fund raising over \$500. {Approved by CAC, 4/2/18}
- b. The Council prohibits Scouts from using a crowd funding platform (such as GoFundMe) to raise funds for an Eagle Scout Service Project. See Guide to Advancement section 9.0.2.10. {Approved by CAC, 4/2/18}

4.2.2. Procedure or practice. None at this time.

4.3. References.

4.3.1. Policy.

- a. For Eagle requirement 2, a Scout must identify on his Eagle Scout Rank application six potential references to provide a recommendation on his behalf (at least five if not employed).
 - 1) The Scout must provide a reference for each category listed on the application (except employer, if not employed). However, if the Scout is not affiliated with an organized religion, then the parent or guardian provides this reference.
 - 2) There are no restrictions on who the Scout may list for his two other references. He can list anyone he chooses, including parents or guardians not previously listed, other relatives, Scout leaders including those from his unit, or other Scouts and friends. However, the Council suggests (does not require) the Scout consider identifying these references from individuals that he knows outside of his family and scouting, such as school, church, sports, or other activities to provide a broader insight to his character and leadership.

See Guide to Advancement sections 9.0.1.3. {Approved by CAC, 4/2/18}

- b. The Council requests the Scout contact each reference and ask the individual to submit a letter of recommendation on the Scout's behalf. The Scout is encouraged to use the letter of instruction provided by the Council to provide to the reference the information regarding the letter of recommendation (available on the Council's web site). However, the Scout is not required to contact the references. The Council highly encourages obtaining written letters of recommendation from references for inclusion in the Scout's Eagle packet. The Council requests that unit leaders encourage and help, if needed, obtaining the letters before submission of the packet. If the Scout chooses not to contact the references, the unit is expected to inform the District Advancement Committee of that decision when the application is

submitted to Council. {Approved by CAC, 4/2/18; revised by CAC 6/4/18}

- c. If the Scout does not submit any letters of recommendation from his references with his Eagle packet, it is the responsibility of the District Advancement Committee to try to secure recommendations from the references appearing under requirement 2 on the Eagle Scout Rank Application. The District Advancement Committee will establish its own procedures to secure any recommendations. The committee is encouraged to make contact as soon as possible following receipt of the packet and before the board of review to determine if the reference will provide a recommendation. The submission of a written recommendation is strongly encouraged to facilitate review by members of the board. {Approved by CAC, 6/4/18}

4.3.2. Procedure or practice. None at this time.

4.4. Submission of packet for advancement.

4.4.1. Policy.

- a. Complete packet. The unit must submit a complete packet to the Council Service Center for the final process to begin for approval of the advancement to Eagle. The unit, not the Scout, is responsible for delivering the complete packet to the Council Service Center. A complete packet includes the following:
 - 1) Eagle Scout Rank Application with all information complete and required signatures obtained. If the unit leader and/or the committee chair choose not to sign the application, the application will be accepted if all other information is complete.
 - 2) Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook with all sections (project proposal, project plan, project report, and fund raising application, if applicable) complete and required signatures obtained. If the project beneficiary and/or unit leader choose not to sign the workbook, the workbook will be accepted if all other information is complete.
 - 3) The Scout's statement of ambitions and life purpose, with a list of leadership positions held and honors and awards received.

It is the unit's responsibility to ensure a complete packet is submitted to the Council Service Center. When the Council Service Center determines a packet is incomplete, the processing of the packet will stop, the unit and District Advancement Committee will be notified of the discrepancies, and the packet will be returned to the unit. It is the unit's responsibility to pick up the packet as soon as possible and assist the Scout in correcting the discrepancies."

See Guide to Advancement sections 9.0.1.4 and 9.0.1.5.

{Approved by CAC, 4/2/18; revised by CAC 6/4/18}

- b. Timely submission. The timely submission of a complete packet is critical, especially if a Scout is approaching or has already turned 18. The timely submission for a Scout turning 18 is critical to allow time for

review of the packet, including resolution of any discrepancies, and scheduling and conduct of the board of review within the normal limitations established for the conduct of an Eagle board of review after a Scout has turned 18 (within three months after a Scout's 18th birthday without an approved exception).

- 1) The Scout must complete all requirements for earning the rank of Eagle before they turn 18. Scouts are strongly encouraged to also complete and submit their complete packet to the Council Service Center before they turn 18. However, it is not a requirement that the application must be completed or submitted before the 18th birthday.
- 2) If a complete packet is not completed and submitted before the 18th birthday, the Council establishes submission within 30 days after the 18th birthday as meeting the requirement for timely submission. It is critical that units ensure that Scouts know about and meet the expectations for timely submission.
- 3) If significant extenuating circumstances prevent a Scout that has turned 18 from submitting a complete packet to the Council Service Center within 30 days after his/her birthday, the packet must be submitted as soon thereafter as possible and must include a statement explaining the delay and requesting the Council approve an extension of the time to complete the board of review. The statement may be from the Scout, his parent or guardian, the unit leader, or a unit committee member. The Council may approve an extension of no more than three to six months after the 18th birthday for the conduct of an Eagle board or review.
- 4) For the council's policies regarding the materials required in a complete Eagle packet, see sections 4.3.1 and 4.4.1.a.

{Approved by CAC, 12/3/18}

4.4.2. Procedure or practice. None at this time.

4.5. Board of Review.

4.5.1. Policy.

- a. The District Advancement Committee is the designated authority to convene and administer Eagle Scout boards of review for Scouts in their District, including the scheduling of the boards (date, time, and location) and the selection and training of members for the board. The Chair of the District Advancement Committee will designate a chair person for each board. {Approved by CAC, 4/2/18}
- b. The composition of an Eagle board of review must include at least one troop committee member from the same troop as the scout appearing before the board. Districts are encouraged to include local business and community leaders as members of Eagle boards of review.

{Approved by CAC, 6/4/18}

4.5.2. Procedure or practice. None at this time.

4.6. Eagle palms.

4.6.1. Policy. None at this time.

4.6.2. Procedure or practice

- a. After a Scout has been validated as an Eagle Scout by the National Service Center, the Scout is entitled to receive an Eagle Palm for each additional five merit badges earned beyond those applied towards meeting the requirement for Eagle and completed before the Scout's Eagle board of review. The Council establishes the following procedures for approval of Eagle palms for additional merit badges earned by a Scout before his Eagle board of review.
 - 1) The Scout and his unit leadership must utilize the Eagle Scout Palm application [available on the Council's website] to identify the merit badges to be applied for each palm the Scout is eligible to receive [one form per eligible palm]. List each of the five merit badges earned beyond those applied towards meeting the requirement for Eagle or another palm and completed before the Scout's Eagle board of review.
 - 2) The time requirement of 3 months elapsing since the board of review for the Eagle Scout award does not apply to merit badges earned before the Scout's Eagle board of review, so line through the first that portion of the statement in the application section of the form. Also, cross out the section for action by a board of review on the right side of the form.
 - 3) The unit's scoutmaster or committee chair must verify through the internet advancement records the following:
 - a) The listed merit badges were not applied towards the merit badge requirements for Eagle or another Eagle palm.
 - b) The Scout completed the merit badges before the date of the Eagle board of review.
 - 4) Once the unit's leader has verified the prerequisites above, the unit leader will approve the award by signing the application. The unit should maintain a copy of the approved application in the unit's advancement records.
 - 5) Following approval of the application for a palm by a unit leader, the unit must enter the award of the palm into the internet advancement system.
 - 6) The unit will submit a copy of the approved application and the internet advancement record to the Council when purchasing the palm device and card. Submission of this documentation is required to authorize purchase of the Eagle palm items from the Council's Scout Store.
 - 7) The award of palms that include merit badges earned after the Scout's Eagle board of review must meet all of the requirements established by BSA for Eagle palms.

{Approved by CAC, 4/2/18}

Section 5. Venturing Advancement.

5.1. Board of Review.

5.1.1. Policy.

- a. The District Advancement Committee is the designated authority to convene and administer Venturing Summit Award boards of review for Venturers in their District, including the scheduling of the boards (date, time, and location) and the selection of members for the board. See Guide to Advancement section 8.0.7.0. {Approved by CAC, 4/2/18}

5.1.2. Procedure or practice. None at this time.