

**Susquehanna Council  
Advancement Policies and Procedures**

6/4/2024

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**  
**Section 2. Scouts BSA rank advancement**  
**Section 3. Merit badges**  
**Section 4. Advancement to Eagle**  
**Section 5. Venturing advancement**  
**Section 6. Awards**

**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. Scouts BSA 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 CAC<sup>1</sup>, 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]

<sup>1</sup> CAC stands for Susquehanna Council Advancement Committee

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- 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]
- 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 CEB<sup>2</sup>, 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}

<sup>2</sup> CEB stands for Susquehanna Council Executive Board

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- 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}
- 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.**

### **3.4. Requirements prior to meeting with a MB counselor**

#### **3.4.1. Policy.**

- a. A scout is required to meet with a unit leader before contacting a MB counselor to begin the completion of requirements or registering for an on-line MB opportunity. Units must ensure all Scouts and their parents/guardians are aware of this policy. It is suggested that the unit prominently post or provide the policy and frequently remind the Scouts.
- b. The unit leader is required to verify for each MB if the counselor is registered in Scouts BSA and is approved as a counselor for that MB (by any council). This requirement applies to counselors recommended by the unit leader or counselors being considered by

the Scout, to include any on-line offerings. If the unit leader is not satisfied that a registered and council-approved counselor is approving the completion of requirements, the unit leader can direct the Scout to work with another counselor and that completion of requirements by that counselor will not be accepted.

- c. If the Scout is considering an on-line offering,
  - 1) the unit leader must review with the Scout whether the offering provides an acceptable opportunity to learn and complete the requirements as written for the MB. See guidance in Section 3.4.3.
  - 2) and if the unit leader, with the Scout, determines that offering does not provide an acceptable opportunity to complete the requirements for the MB, the unit leader can direct the Scout to seek another opportunity and that completion of requirements by that on-line offering will not be accepted.
- d. If a Scout completes a MB offering without first meeting with the unit leader, the unit leader must utilize the recourse described in GtA 7.0.4.7 to determine if some or all the requirements for a MB could not have been fulfilled, and thus, that the badge was not actually earned.

#### 3.4.2. Procedures for verification of MB offerings

- a. If the Scout is considering an on-line offering with a MB counselor,
  - 1) and the name of the MB counselor is known, the unit leader can verify in Scoutbook if the counselor is registered in Scouts BSA and is approved as a counselor for that MB (in-council and out-of-council).
  - 2) and the name of the MB counselor is unknown, the unit leader must contact the CAC to verify if the counselor is registered in Scouts BSA and is approved as a counselor for that MB.
    - a) The CAC will coordinate with the Scout Executive to obtain the verification from the Scout Executive of the other council.
    - b) The Scout Executive will provide the results of the verification to the CAC and the CAC will provide the information to the unit leader.
- b. If the Scout is attending an out-of-council resident camp, the unit leader must contact the CAC to verify if the camp is utilizing approved MB counselors and whether the offerings provide an acceptable opportunity to learn and complete the requirements as written for the MBs.
  - 1) The unit leader must contact the CAC for this verification at least 60 days before final payment is due for a Scout's attendance at the camp.
  - 2) The CAC will coordinate with the Scout Executive to obtain the verification from the Scout Executive of the other council.
  - 3) The Scout Executive will provide the results of the verification to the CAC and the CAC will provide the information to the unit leader.

### 3.4.3. Guidance

- a. In the case of a Scout considering an on-line offering.
  - 1) The unit leader must involve the Scout in the review to determine whether the offering provides an acceptable opportunity to learn and complete the requirements for the MB.
  - 2) The following criteria should be considered to determine whether the offering provides an acceptable opportunity to learn and complete the requirements for the MB.
    - a) If sufficient time is available for the counselor to observe that each Scout can personally and actually complete all the requirements as written, which includes such considerations as class size and number of requirements to be completed.
    - b) If sufficient time is available for a requirement that involves a duration, such as a requirement that involves a duration longer than the length of the offering (a "calendar" or number of days requirement).
    - c) If the ability to complete a requirement as written is in doubt, such as a requirement that involves an interview, observation, or visit that can't be accomplished during the offering.
  - 3) If the unit leader's assessment is that any of these criteria is not met, the unit leader has a basis to determine that an offering does not provide an acceptable opportunity to complete the requirements for the MB.
  - 4) If a Scout or parent/guardian does not agree with the unit leader's assessment that an offering does not provide an acceptable opportunity to complete the requirements for the MB, the Scout should request a review of the assessment by the troop committee.

{Approved by CAC, 6/3/24}

## 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}
- b. Contingent approval of a proposal for a service project. The following policy applies when the district-level review determines that a proposal does not provide sufficient opportunity to meet the Eagle Scout service project requirement (particularly scope and scale).
  - 1) The primary approach is to provide the Scout suggestions on additions and/or changes to the proposal that, if incorporated, should provide a sufficient opportunity to meet the requirement and ask the Scout to resubmit the proposal for review and approval. The primary approach will apply to all cases where it is determined

that the scout has sufficient time available to revise the proposal for another review and complete the project.

- 2) If it is determined that the scout likely does not have sufficient time available to revise the proposal for another review and complete the project in time (such as nearing his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday), the district representative can provide on-the-spot approval contingent on the inclusion of specific revisions and/or additions to the proposal. The inclusion of the specific revisions and/or additions to the proposal then become required for completion of the project.
- 3) Note: The service project workbook has a section to record suggestions offered by the district representative but not required changes. The use of that section is appropriate if changes are only suggested as optional revisions and/or additions, not expected (required), to improve the project. Those suggestions should be recorded in the workbook at the time of the review.

{Approved by CAC, 5/6/19}

#### 4.1.2. Procedure or practice.

- a. Contingent approval of a proposal for a service project. The following procedures apply in cases when the district representative determines that it is necessary to provide contingent approval of a proposal for a service project.
  - 1) The district representative will clearly identify and explain the specific revisions and/or additions to the proposal that are being required as a condition of approval.
  - 2) The specific revisions and/or additions to the proposal must be recorded on the Addendum to Proposal form during the meeting when the proposal is reviewed and discussed with the Scout.
  - 3) All information on the form must be completed during the meeting, including signatures.
  - 4) At the meeting, two copies of the form must be completed: one copy provided to the Scout and one copy retained by the district representative.
  - 5) In addition, the district representative will record on Proposal Page E in the "Council or District Approval" section, above their signature, the following entry – "Contingent approval". The entry provides a record in the workbook that contingent approval was granted and a "flag" for any subsequent review, including the BoR, to ensure the Scout has incorporated the specific revisions and/or additions to the project.
  - 6) The Scout must include the addendum with his workbook during his planning and submission of the completed workbook.

{Approved by CAC, 5/6/19}

## 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 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, the Council establishes submission within 30 days after the 18<sup>th</sup> 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 18<sup>th</sup> 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.

## **Section 6. Awards.**

### **6.1. Meritorious Action and Lifesaving awards.**

#### **6.1.1. Policy.**

a. The Council Executive Board delegates the following authority to the Council Advancement Committee, serving as the Council Meritorious Action Awards Committee.

- 1) The Council Meritorious Action Awards Committee shall consider and have authority for the council's final approval or denial of a recommendation for a National Certificate of Merit or Medal of Merit.
- 2) The Council Meritorious Action Awards Committee shall consider and have authority for the council's final determination to recommend submission of a nomination to the National Court of Honor for a Heroism Award, Honor Medal, or Honor Medal with Crossed Palms.

{Approved by CEB<sup>2</sup>, 1/25/21}

b. The Council Meritorious Action Awards Committee shall consider and have authority for the council's final approval or denial of a recommendation for a Council Certificate of Merit.

{Approved by CAC, 6/3/24}

6.1.2. Procedure or practice. None at this time.

## 6.2. Scouts BSA individual awards

### 6.2.1. Water Sports awards

- a. Applies to the following awards: Boardsailing BSA, Kayaking BSA, Mile Swim BSA, SCUBA BSA, Snorkeling BSA, and Stand Up Paddleboarding BSA.
  - 1) Available to: Scouts BSA, Venturers, and Sea Scouts.
  - 2) Policy.
    - a) Approval authority for counselor: Council Advancement Committee (CAC). The approval is valid for one year from the date of approval.
    - b) Approval authority for award: Counselor approved by CAC (as prescribed in the Guide<sup>3</sup>).
    - c) Record of completion: The counselor must complete the award application for each individual that completes all the requirements (available in the Guide<sup>3</sup>).
  - 3) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for counselor. Available through the Council advancement website.
    - b) Record of completion. Available through Awards Central on Scouting.org.
  - 4) Procedure or practice.
    - a) Approval as a counselor.
      - i. To serve as a counselor for this award, an adult leader must submit to the CAC, in advance, the council's award counselor application for the award.
      - ii. If the CAC approves the counselor, the counselor will be provided a copy of the approved application.
    - b) Record of completion.
      - i. The counselor must turn in approved award applications to the council service center.
      - ii. The council service center must record completion of the award in the Scout's record.

<sup>3</sup> Guide is the Aquatics Supervision Guide for Leaders

6.2.2. Other awards

a. 50-Miler Award

- 1) Available to: Scouts BSA, Venturers, and Sea Scouts.
- 2) Policy.
  - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
  - b) Approval authority for award: unit leader or tour leader.
  - c) Record of completion. The unit leader or tour leader must complete the award application for each individual that completes all the requirements.
- 3) Forms
  - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A.
  - b) Record of completion. Available through Awards Central on Scouting.org.
- 4) Procedure or practice.
  - a) Approval as a counselor. N/A.
  - b) Record of completion.
    - i. The unit leader or tour leader must turn in approved award applications to the council service center.
    - ii. The council service center must record completion of the award in the Scout's record.

b. Complete Angler Recognition

- 1) Available to: Scouts BSA, qualified Venturers and Sea Scouts<sup>4</sup>
- 2) Policy.
  - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
  - b) Approval authority for award: unit leader.
  - c) Record of completion: The unit leader must complete the recognition form for each individual that completes all the requirements.
- 3) Forms
  - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A.
  - b) Record of completion. Available through Awards Central on Scouting.org.
- 4) Procedure or practice.
  - a) Approval as a counselor. N/A.
  - b) Record of completion.
    - i. The unit leader must turn in approved recognition form to the council service center.
    - ii. The council service center must record completion of the award in the Scout's record.

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- c. Conservation Good Turn Award
  - 1) Available to: Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturers, and Sea Scouts.
  - 2) Policy.
    - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
    - b) Approval authority for award: unit leader.
    - c) Record of completion: The unit leader must complete the award application for each individual that completes all the requirement.
  - 3) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion. Available through Awards Central on Scouting.org.
  - 4) Procedure or practice.
    - a) Approval as a counselor. N/A
    - b) Record of completion.
      - i. The unit leader must record completion of the award in Scoutbook.
      - ii. The unit leader must turn in approved award applications to the council service center to obtain the certificate.
- d. Den Chief Service Award
  - 1) Available to: Scouts BSA and Venturers.
  - 2) Policy.
    - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
    - b) Approval authority for award: Den Leader and Cubmaster.
    - c) Record of completion: The Den Leader and Cubmaster must complete the Program Record in the back of the Den Chief Handbook.
  - 3) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
    - b) Record of completion. Available in the Den Chief Handbook.
  - 4) Procedure or practice.
    - a) Approval as a counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion.
      - i. The Cubmaster must record completion of the award in Scoutbook.
      - ii. The unit keeps the completion record on file.

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- e. Historic Trails Award
  - 1) Available to: Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturers, and Sea Scouts.
  - 2) Policy.
    - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
    - b) Approval authority for award: unit leader or tour leader.
    - c) Record of completion: The unit leader or tour leader must complete the award application for each individual that completes all the requirements.
  - 3) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion. Available through Awards Central on Scouting.org.
  - 4) Procedure or practice.
    - a) Approval as a counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion.
      - i. Prior to completing any requirements, need to contact Council Service Center overseeing the award to confirm requirements and process to record and report completion.
      - ii. The unit leader or tour leader must turn in approved award applications to the council service center overseeing the award for entry into database.
      - iii. The council service center must record completion of the award in the Scout's record.
- f. International Spirit Award
  - 1) Available to: Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturers, and Sea Scouts.
  - 2) Policy.
    - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
    - b) Approval authority for award: unit leader.
    - c) Record of completion. The unit leader must complete the award application for each individual as a record of completion of all the requirements.
  - 3) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion. Available through Awards Central on Scouting.org.
  - 4) Procedure or practice.
    - a) Approval as a counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion.
      - i. The unit leader must record completion of the award in Scoutbook.
      - ii. The unit keeps the completion record on file.

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- g. Interpreter Strip
  - 1) Available to: Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturers, and Sea Scouts.
  - 2) Policy.
    - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
    - b) Approval authority for award: Unit leader once an approved individual verifies completion.
    - c) Record of completion. The approved individual must complete the award application for each individual that completes all the requirements.
  - 3) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A
    - b) Record of completion. Available through the Council advancement website.
  - 4) Procedure or practice.
    - a) Approval as a counselor.
      - i. Unit leader must approve an individual to work with a Scout to verify the completion of requirements.
    - b) Record of completion.
      - i. The unit leader must record completion of the award in Scoutbook.
      - ii. The unit keeps the completion record on file.
- h. Long Cruise Badge
  - 1) Available to: Sea Scouts
  - 2) Policy.
    - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
    - b) Approval authority for award: ship skipper.
    - c) Minimum rank: Scout must have earned Ordinary rank before they can start recording cruising time for the Long Cruise badge.
    - d) Record of completion. The Scout must maintain a log of their cruising experiences. The log must contain at least the following information:
      - i. Dates of the cruise.
      - ii. Name of the ship or vessel on which the cruise was taken.
      - iii. The body of water on which the cruise was taken.
  - 3) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion. Log of cruising experience.
  - 4) Procedure or practice.
    - a) Approval as a counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion.
      - i. The ship skipper leader must record completion of the award in Scoutbook.
      - ii. The unit keeps the completion record on file.

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- i. Messengers of Peace (MOP) Awards (3)
  - 1) Available to: Cub Scout, Scouts BSA, Venturers, and Sea Scouts.
  - 2) Policy.
    - a) Approval authority for MOP advisor: The unit leader must approve a MOP project advisor for the Scout.
    - b) Approval authority for award: final approval is the Scout Executive.
    - c) Record of completion. The MOP advisor must complete the award application for each individual that completes all the requirements.
  - 3) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for MOP advisor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion. Available through Awards Central on Scouting.org.
  - 4) Procedure or practice.
    - a) Approval as a MOP advisor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion.
      - i. The MOP project advisor approves the completion of requirements.
      - ii. The unit leader must submit the completed application to the CAC.
      - iii. The CAC must review the application for a recommendation for approval, as the council international representative, and forward to the Scout Executive.
      - iv. The council service center must record completion of the award in the Scout's record.
- j. National Outdoor Awards (6)
  - 1) Available to: Scouts BSA, Venturers, and Sea Scouts.
  - 2) Policy.
    - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
    - b) Approval authority for award: unit leader.
    - c) Record of completion. The unit leader must complete the award application for each individual that completes all the requirements.
  - 3) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion. Available through the Council advancement website.
  - 4) Procedure or practice.
    - a) Approval as a counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion.
      - i. The unit leader must turn in approved award applications to the council service center to obtain the patch.
      - ii. The council service center must record completion of the award in the Scout's record.

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- k. Outdoor Ethics Action Award
  - 1) Available to: Scouts BSA and Venturers.
  - 2) Policy.
    - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
    - b) Approval authority for award: unit leader.
    - c) Record of completion. The unit leader must complete the award application for each individual that completes all the requirements.
  - 3) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion. Available through Awards Central on Scouting.org.
  - 4) Procedure or practice.
    - a) Approval as a counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion.
      - i. The unit leader must record completion of the award in Scoutbook.
      - ii. The unit keeps the completion record on file.
- I. Outdoor Ethics Awareness Award
  - 1) Available to: Scouts BSA and Venturers.
  - 2) Policy.
    - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
    - b) Approval authority for award: unit leader.
    - c) Record of completion. The unit leader must complete the award application for each individual that completes all the requirements.
  - 3) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion. Available through Awards Central on Scouting.org.
  - 4) Procedure or practice.
    - a) Approval as a counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion.
      - i. The unit leader must record completion of the award in Scoutbook.
      - ii. The unit keeps the completion record on file.

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**m. Paul Bunyan Award**

- 1) Available to: Scouts BSA, qualified Venturers and Sea Scouts<sup>4</sup>
- 2) Policy.
  - a) Approval authority for qualified person: unit leader.  
A qualified person, other than the unit leader, must be designated as qualified for approval of the award by the unit leader or the resident camp Program director.
  - b) Approval authority for award: unit leader or qualified person.
  - c) Record of completion. The unit leader or qualified person must complete the award application for each individual that completes all the requirements.
- 3) Forms
  - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A.
  - b) Record of completion. Available through the Council advancement website.
- 4) Procedure or practice.
  - a) Approval as a qualified person.
    - i. If a qualified person, other than the unit leader, is designated for approval of the award, the designation must be done in writing.
  - b) Record of completion.
    - i. In cases where a qualified person is approving the award, the record of completion must be provided to the unit leader.
    - ii. The unit leader must record completion of the award in Scoutbook.
    - iii. The unit keeps the completion record on file.

**n. Quest Award**

- 1) Available to: Venturers
- 2) Policy.
  - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
  - b) Approval authority for award: crew advisor.
  - c) Record of completion. The unit must use the record of completion for requirements for each individual.
- 3) Forms
  - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A.
  - b) Record of completion. Available on Scouting.org through Venturing Awards and Advancement, then Specialty Awards.

<sup>4</sup> Guide to Advancement, section 4.2.0.1, a qualified Venturer or Sea Scout is not yet 18 years old and earned at least the First Class rank in a Scouts BSA troop.

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- 4) Procedure or practice.
  - a) Approval as a counselor. N/A.
  - b) Record of completion.
    - i. The crew advisor must record completion of the award in Scoutbook.
    - ii. The unit keeps the completion record on file.
- o. Ranger Award
  - 1) Available to: Venturers
  - 2) Policy.
    - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
    - b) Approval authority for award: crew advisor.
    - c) Record of completion. The unit must use the record of completion for requirements for each individual.
  - 3) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion. Available on Scouting.org through Venturing Awards and Advancement, then Specialty Awards.
  - 4) Procedure or practice.
    - a) Approval as a counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion.
      - i. The crew advisor must record completion of the award in Scoutbook.
      - ii. The unit keeps the completion record on file.
- p. Recruiter Strip
  - 1) Available to: Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturers, and Sea Scouts.
  - 2) Policy.
    - a) Requirement to earn the award: The requirement to earn the award is that an individual brought by the Scout to visit a unit subsequently registers in Scouting in any program or unit.
    - b) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
    - c) Approval authority for award: unit leader.
    - d) Record of completion. None.
  - 3) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion. N/A.
  - 4) Procedure or practice.
    - a) Approval as a counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion.
      - i. The unit leader must record completion of the award in Scoutbook.

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- q. Sea Scout Leadership Award (SSLA)
  - 1) Available to: Sea Scouts
  - 2) Policy.
    - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
    - b) Approval authority for award: SSLA Selection Committee.
    - c) Procedures:
      - i. The Council Advancement Committee will establish the deadline each year for submission of nominations.
      - ii. The Council Advancement Chair will select SSA Selection Committee Chair each year.
      - iii. The procedure for forming the committee and conducting the review of nominations must comply with the most current version of the VLA Best Practices and SOPs.
  - 3) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A.
    - b) Nomination. A nomination can only be submitted using the current nomination form found on Seascout.org by searching for "leadership award" and selecting the nomination form.
- r. Trust Award
  - 1) Available to: Venturers
  - 2) Policy.
    - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
    - b) Approval authority for award: crew advisor.
    - c) Record of completion. The unit must use the record of completion for requirements for each individual.
  - 3) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion. Available on Scouting.org through Venturing Awards and Advancement, then Specialty Awards.
  - 4) Procedure or practice.
    - a) Approval as a counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion.
      - i. The crew advisor must record completion of the award in Scoutbook.
      - ii. The unit keeps the completion record on file.

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- s. Council Venturing Leadership Award (VLA)
  - 1) Available to: Venturers
  - 2) Policy.
    - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
    - b) Approval authority for award: VLA Selection Committee.
    - c) Procedures:
      - i. The Council Advancement Committee will establish the deadline each year for submission of nominations.
      - ii. The Council Advancement Chair will select VLA Selection Committee Chair each year.
      - iii. The procedure for forming the committee and conducting the review of nominations must comply with the most current version of the VLA Best Practices and SOPs.
  - 3) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A.
    - b) Nomination. A nomination can only be submitted using the current nomination form found on Scouting.org under the Award section of the Venturing Program.
- t. World Conservation Award
  - 1) Available to: Scouts BSA, Venturers, and Sea Scouts.
  - 2) Policy.
    - a) Approval authority for counselor: N/A.
    - b) Approval authority for award: unit leader.
    - c) Record of completion. The unit leader must complete the award application for each individual that completes all the requirements.
  - 3) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion. Available through Awards Central on Scouting.org.
  - 4) Procedure or practice.
    - a) Approval as a counselor. N/A.
    - b) Record of completion.
      - i. The unit leader must record completion of the award in Scoutbook.
      - ii. The unit keeps the completion record on file.

{Approved by CAC, 6/3/24; updated 9/8/25, 11/10/25, and 1/5/26}

### **6.3. Council Certificate of Merit.**

#### **6.3.1. Policy.**

- a. A Council Certificate of Merit may be awarded to an adult leader for sustained service or a specific achievement.
- b. The criteria for recommendation of the award are as follows:
  - 1) General. Any registered adult leader in the Susquehanna Council is eligible to receive the Council Certificate of Merit if the individual is currently registered and distinguishes themselves by sustained service or a specific achievement using the stated criteria.
  - 2) Certificate of Merit for service. Sustained service which merits the award must:
    - a) Be a specific type of service that reflects a commitment to the Scouting program and has been sustained over a period of time;
    - b) Have contributed to the Scouting program in a unit, a district, or the council; and
    - c) Clearly exceeds that which is normally required or expected, considering the individual's registered position in the council.

**Examples:**

The Scouter has served in a significant leadership position at the troop, district, or council level for several years (at least three) and meets all the criteria [leadership positions such as scoutmaster, troop committee chair, district committee chair, council committee chair, or officer of the council].

The Scouter has consistently served in a position at the troop, district, or council level for an extended period of time (at least five years) and meets all the criteria.

- 3) Certificate of Merit for achievement. Specific achievement which merits the award must:
  - a) Be a noteworthy achievement;
  - b) Clearly exceeds that which is normally required or expected, considering the individual's registered position in the council; and
  - c) Be an important contribution of benefit to the Scouting program and of such merit as to earn singular recognition.

**Example:**

The Scouter has served as the leader of the planning and execution of a district or council-level event and meets all the criteria [events such as camporees, Klondike, day or twilight camp, university of Scouting, significant training event].

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- c. The Council Meritorious Action Awards Committee shall consider and have authority for the council's final approval or denial of a recommendation for a Council Certificate of Merit. See Section 6.1.
- d. A certificate from the council will be awarded to the individual for an approved award.

{Approved by CAC, 9/8/25}

6.3.2. Procedure or practice.

- a. Recommendation for award.
  - 1) A recommendation for the award is made by completion of the council's award recommendation form. The form is available on the council's advancement website on the "Adult Awards and Recognition" page.
  - 2) An award recommendation form is available for each type of award. The recommendation must be submitted on the applicable form.
  - 3) The recommending individual must complete all the information requested on the form.
- b. Submission of recommendation. Upon completion of the recommendation, the recommending individual will submit the recommendation to the Registrar at the Council Service Center.
- c. Review of recommendation.
  - 1) The Registrar will provide the recommendation to the chair of the Council advancement committee.
  - 2) Council Meritorious Action Awards Committee will conduct the review of a recommendation for a Council Certificate of Merit.
  - 3) Upon completion of the review, the committee will submit the completed recommendation to the Registrar. If an award for achievement is approved, the committee will provide the description for the certificate.
  - 4) If the committee approves the award, the Registrar will coordinate:
    - a) The preparation of a certificate.
    - b) With the unit leader and/or district executive for delivery of the completed certificate for future presentation.
  - 5) If the committee disapproves the award, the chair of the council advancement committee will notify the recommending individual.

{Approved by CAC, 9/8/25}

## **6.4. STEM Nova and Supernova awards.**

### **6.4.1. Policy.**

- a. National of Scouting America is no longer supporting the award program for STEM Nova and Supernova awards.
- b. The Susquehanna Council will continue to support the award program for STEM Nova and Supernova awards to encourage Scouts to explore and learn about STEM topics.
- c. The award program will be available in the Susquehanna Council for Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, and Venturing Scouts<sup>4</sup>.
- d. Nova awards.
  - 1) The unit is responsible for determining the Nova awards it wants to support.
  - 2) The unit must establish its own:
    - a) Criteria and means to approve Nova counselors.
    - b) Means to track progress of the completion of requirements for individual Scouts, such as checklist or centrally managed tracking record (spreadsheet).
    - c) Means to maintain records of completion.
  - 3) The council will not provide any type of award for completion of a NOVA award, such as a certificate, patches, devices, or medal. However, the unit may purchase these items from private vendors, such as Class B (for patches) or Crown awards (pins).
- e. Supernova awards.
  - 1) The unit is responsible for determining the Supernova awards it wants to support.
  - 2) Approval authority for counselor (mentor): Council Advancement Committee (CAC). The approval is valid for one year from the date of approval.
  - 3) Approval authority for award: CAC.
  - 4) Record of completion. The mentor must complete the award application for each Scout that completes all the requirements.
  - 5) Forms
    - a) Approval authority for mentor. Available through the Council advancement website.
    - b) Record of completion. Available through the Council advancement website.
  - 6) The unit must establish its own means to maintain records of completion.
  - 7) The council will provide a certificate for completion of a Supernova award, but not any other award items such as a patch, device, or medal. However, the unit may purchase those items from private vendors, such as such as Crown awards (medals and bars).

{Approved by CAC, 9/8/25}

6.4.2. Procedure or practice.

- a. The council will provide resources for the award program on the council's advancement website on the "Youth Awards" page.
- b. Supernova awards.
  - 1) Approval as a mentor.
    - a) To serve as a mentor for this award, an adult leader must:  
Submit to the CSC, an adult leader application for this position (may be a duplicate registration).  
Submit to the CSC, in advance, the separate application to serve as a mentor for a Supernova award.
    - b) If the CAC approves the mentor, the mentor will be provided a copy of the approved application.
  - 2) Approval of award.
    - a) The mentor or unit must turn in to the CSC the application for the award and a copy of the final record of completion.
    - b) The CAC will establish a sub-committee to review the award application.
    - c) The sub-committee will review the application for approval or disapproval.
    - d) If the sub-committee approves the award, the unit will be provided a copy of the approved application.
  - 3) Record of completion.
    - a) The unit keeps the approved application and completion record on file. Note: A record of completion cannot be entered into Scoutbook.

{Approved by CAC, 9/8/25}