

4.0.0.0 Section 4.

The Mechanics of Advancement

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

4.0.0.1 Changes to Requirements

Advancement requirements change from time to time. For each program's requirements, consult the following web pages, which are expected to be updated annually:

Cub Scouting: www.scouting.org/programs/cub-scouts/what-cub-scouts-earn/the-advancement-trail

Scouts BSA: www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/advancement-and-awards

Venturing: www.scouting.org/programs/venturing/venturing-awards-and-advancement/rank-advancement

Sea Scouts: www.seascout.org/advancement-central

Please note that web addresses appearing in the *Guide to Advancement* are confirmed prior to publication, but they are subject to change.

Once a new or revised requirement appears on one of those web pages, any Scouts BSA member, Venturer, or Sea Scout beginning work on the next rank (or Eagle Palm) must use the new or revised requirement as stated there. In Cub Scouting, Cub Scouts work on the badge of rank and associated Adventures that are specific to their grade. Changes in Cub Scout badges of rank or Adventure requirements take effect at the start of the next program year unless otherwise stated.

Changes may also be introduced in youth handbooks or various official Scouting America publications or releases before appearing on one of the above web pages. In this case, unless official communications set forth a different

procedure or establish a date by when use of the old requirements must cease, youth members have through December 31 of that year to decide what to do. They may continue—or begin work—using the old requirements, or may switch to—or begin work—using the new requirements. Scouts who choose to use the old requirements may continue using them until the rank has been completed. Those who have not begun work on a rank by December 31 of the year a change in its requirements is announced must use the new requirements.

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

Former members who rejoin a Scouting America program, still as youth members, may carry on in the advancement program and pick up where they left off, but they will not receive credit for activities while not registered. If the member rejoining is a Cub Scout, they may continue on their rank only if rejoining while in the same grade, otherwise they must work on the rank appropriate for their current grade. A former member who is no longer eligible to participate in a program as a youth member due to age, for example, can neither receive credit for completing advancement requirements nor be awarded any advancement-oriented recognition such as ranks or merit badges, etc., that the individual was ineligible to earn as a youth member under the rules in effect at that time.

4.0.0.2 Reporting Advancement

All Cub Scout, Scouts BSA, Venturing, and Sea Scouts ranks must be reported to local councils. The best and most accurate method is through Scoutbook Plus (see “Electronic Advancement Reporting,” 6.0.0.0, for more detail on reporting). At the council's discretion, the paper form, Advancement Report, may also be submitted.

All badges of rank, merit badges, and Eagle Palms are restricted items. Unit leadership may not purchase these insignia for presentation without having filed a report of the youth's advancement. An advancement report is not



required to purchase Adventure loops or pins. However, to ensure that each Cub Scout's record is complete and accurate, all Adventures—required and elective—should be posted in Scoutbook Plus in a timely manner.

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

Units should report advancement at least monthly. This assures member records are complete. Missing reports are a serious issue, for example, accurate documentation is critical for rank advancement, membership transfers, or membership reinstatements.

4.0.0.3 Age Exception for Youth With Special Needs

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

4.1.0.0 Mechanics of Advancement in Cub Scouting

4.1.0.1 Delivering the Cub Scout Program

Den leaders, Cubmasters, and their assistants conduct meetings implementing the three steps in Cub Scout advancement: preparation, qualification, and recognition. Den meetings follow the local traditional school year and are designed to result in advancement for all youth by the end of the school year. The Cub Scout program year officially begins and ends June 1 to coincide with the automatic grade rollover that happens in membership records when Scouts are advanced one grade level. For areas where school does not end by June 1, Cub Scouts may still work on advancement needed for their badge of rank until their school year ends. The frequency and length of den meetings, however, is determined by the den to best meet the needs of its members. Advancement activities are called Adventures. They are most often completed during den activities, though some may be completed in a home or family setting. Elective Adventures provide flexibility for differing interests or school schedules and can facilitate summertime programming.

Den leader resources are at www.scouting.org. The requirements for all the required and elective Cub Scout Adventures also are available. Each Cub Scout Adventure has a list of requirements along with suggested activities that can be conducted to complete the requirement.

Scoutbook Plus is the official record of the den and pack. A den leader may schedule out the program year, share

the information with the families in the den and set a path to completing advancement within a set time frame.

4.1.0.2 The Role of the Pack Committee

Den leaders, Cubmasters, and their assistants stimulate interest in advancement and deliver the program. The responsibility for Cub Scout advancement *administration*, however, belongs to a pack committee ("Unit Advancement Responsibilities," 3.0.0.3).

The pack committee records advancement using Scoutbook Plus or may do so manually by collecting den advancement reports, maintaining them in pack records, and submitting them to the council (see "Electronic Advancement Reporting," 6.0.0.0). The committee also purchases Cub Scout Adventure loops and pins and badges of rank and helps plan and facilitate various ceremonies. The committee may also recommend special pack activities that assist Cub Scouts in earning Adventures.

4.1.0.3 Who Approves Cub Scout Advancement?

A key responsibility for den leaders is to guide each Cub Scout toward completing their badge of rank by organizing meetings, activities, and working with the family of the Cub Scout to complete the requirements for the six required Adventures and at least two elective Adventures each year. For Lion through Webelos ranks, if activities take place outside the den meeting, a parent, guardian, or another trusted adult may verify that Cub Scouts have done their best to meet the requirements completed at the activity. The den leader then records the requirements.

If the requirement is completed in a den meeting, Scoutbook Plus can be used to automatically record the advancement to the Cub Scout's official record. If not using digital assets, the den leader signs the handbook and records the requirement. Den leaders may delegate an assistant or parent who helps at meetings to assist with the approvals. For Arrow of Light Adventures and rank, the den leader signs for approval of all requirements, unless they delegate this responsibility.

4.1.0.4 "Do Your Best"

Cub Scouts—even those of the same age, grade, and gender—may have very different developmental timetables. For this reason, advancement performance in Cub Scouting is centered on its motto: "Do Your Best." When Cub Scouts have done this—their best effort possible—then regardless of the requirements for any rank or award, it is enough; accomplishment is noted. This is why den leaders, assistants, and parents or guardians are involved in approvals. Generally they know if the effort put forth is really the Cub Scout's best.



A Cub Scout who has completed advancement should be congratulated immediately and publicly. And though badges of rank should be reserved for the next pack meeting, it is best to present items such as Adventure loops and pins soon after they have been earned. If it is possible for the pack to report and purchase these awards quickly, they could be presented at the next den meeting, rather than waiting for a pack meeting. If presented at den meetings, the accompanying pocket certificates can be used in a ceremony at a subsequent pack meeting—or vice versa with the pocket certificates at a den meeting. However this is done, it is important to note that advancement is an individual process, not dependent on the work or progress of others. Awards should never be withheld for group recognition. Likewise, a youth should not be presented with recognition that was not earned simply to avoid anyone “feeling left out.”

In the same spirit as “Do Your Best,” if a Cub Scout is close to earning a badge of rank when it is time to transition to a new den, the pack committee, in consultation with the den leader and the Cub Scout’s parent or guardian, may allow a few weeks to complete the badge before going on to the next rank. Earning it will give the youth added incentive to continue in Scouting and carry on and tackle the next rank.

What about a youth who must repeat a grade in school? Generally, repeating a grade does not mean being kept back in Cub Scouting, but it depends on the circumstances and what is best for the youth. The decision is up to the parent or guardian.

4.1.1.0 Cub Scout Ranks

The Cub Scout program is centered primarily in the den, the home, and the neighborhood. It leads to advancement through six ranks, which are grade-based. Cub Scout dens are named for the rank that their members are working to achieve. Cub Scouts are eligible to earn ranks as follows:

- Lion.** For youth who are kindergarten age.
- Tiger.** For youth who have completed kindergarten or are 6 years old.
- Wolf.** For youth who have completed first grade or are 7 years old.
- Bear.** For youth who have completed second grade or are 8 years old.
- Webelos.** For youth who have completed third grade or are 9 years old.
- Arrow of Light.** For youth who have completed fourth grade or are 10 years old.

In situations like those found in home-schooling or non-traditional education, where youth are working at grade levels that may not correspond to their ages, Cub Scouts must work on the rank that relates to their age, rather than their grade. When doing so, take the joining requirements for Scouts BSA into consideration to avoid completing the Arrow of Light before meeting the minimum age requirement for Scouts BSA.

Cub Scouts do not “go back” and work on ranks designed for earlier grade levels, even if missed due to their time of joining. Likewise, Cub Scouts do not “move ahead” to work on the next rank until the completion of the current school year (or until their next birthday if they are transitioning by age).

4.1.1.1 Lion, Tiger, Wolf, and Bear

For Lion, Tiger, Wolf, and Bear ranks Cub Scouts complete six required Adventures and two elective Adventures. Cub Scout Adventures are collections of themed, multidisciplinary activities of engaging content. Required and elective Adventures may be earned in any order, with the exception that the Bobcat Adventure is designed to be earned as the first required adventure. As youth finish an Adventure, they are awarded a belt loop that is worn on the official Cub Scout belt. Belt loops should be presented as soon as possible. When the requirements for each rank are fulfilled, the rank badge is presented at the next pack meeting.



Note that although participation with a parent or other caring adult is required for all Lion and Tiger Adventures, recognition items are for the Cub Scouts only.

Lion, Tiger, Wolf, and Bear Adventure Belt Loops



Lion Adventure:
Fun on the Run



Tiger Adventure:
Games Tigers Play



Wolf Adventure:
Adventure in Coins



Bear Adventure:
Let's Camp

4.1.1.2 Webelos and Arrow of Light

Just as with the previous ranks, Cub Scouts complete required and elective Adventures for each rank in any order, with the exception that the Bobcat Adventure is designed to be the first required Adventure earned.



An Adventure pin is awarded for each completed Adventure. The pins may be worn on the Adventures colors or on the front of the Webelos cap. Arrow of Light Scouts may wear their Adventure pins on a Scout hat of their choosing. Cub Scouts may work on required and elective Adventure pins at the same time. Adventure pins should be presented as soon as possible. When the requirements for the Webelos or Arrow of Light ranks are fulfilled, the rank badge is presented at the next pack meeting.

Arrow of Light is Cub Scouting's final rank before joining Scouts BSA. Much of the experience gives a youth the chance to practice skills in preparation for becoming a Scout in Scouts BSA. Once completed, the rank should be presented during an impressive ceremony involving Scouts from a local Scout troop. Their involvement may encourage the eventual crossing over of recipients into the troop.

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

Webelos and Arrow of Light Adventure Pins



Webelos Adventure:
Cast Iron Chef
(Required)



Arrow of Light
Adventure: Building a
Better World
(Required)

Webelos, an acronym for "WE'll BE LOyal Scouts," is the rank for youth who have completed third grade or are 9 years old.

The minimum age for a Cub Scout who has earned the Arrow of Light Award to join Scouts BSA is 10 years old. The requirements for joining Scouts BSA, as stated in the *Scouts BSA Handbook*, include the following: Be at least 10 years old, currently in the fifth grade, and register on or after March 1 OR at least 10 years old and have earned the Arrow of Light rank OR at least 11 years old (but not yet 18).

4.2.0.0 Mechanics of Advancement in Scouts BSA

Both adult leaders and youth leaders approve advancement in Scouts BSA. This permits greater emphasis on standards and more consistency in measurement, but it also places another level of importance on teaching and testing. As Scouts work with one another, learning takes place on both sides of the equation as they play teacher and student in turn. Parents or guardians are involved at home encouraging, mentoring, and supporting, but do not sign for rank advancement requirements unless they are registered leaders and have been authorized by the unit leader to approve advancement or are Lone Scout friends and counselors (see "Lone Scouting," 5.0.3.0). Even then, it is preferable for an authorized person other than the Scout's own parent to certify their accomplishments.

Advancement at this level presents a Scout with a series of challenges in a fun and educational manner. As the youth completes the requirements, the aims of Scouting are being achieved: to develop character, to train in the

All the requirements for all the required and elective Cub Scout Adventures are shown in the respective handbooks.



responsibilities of participating citizenship, to develop leadership skills, and to develop physical and mental fitness. It is important to remember that in the end, badges recognize that Scouts have gone through experiences of learning things they did not previously know. Through increased confidence, Scouts discover or realize they are able to learn a variety of skills and disciplines. Advancement is thus about what Scouts are now able to learn and to do, and how they have grown. Retention of skills and knowledge is then developed later by using what has been learned through the natural course of unit programming; for example, instructing others and using skills in games and on outings.

Throughout this publication the term “Scout” generically refers to any youth member of a troop or a Lone Scout, regardless of rank. The phrase “Scout rank” refers to the first rank every Scout earns.

Advancement, thus, is not so much a reward for what has been done. It is, instead, more about the journey: As a Scout advances, the Scout is measured, grows in confidence and self-reliance, and builds upon skills and abilities learned.

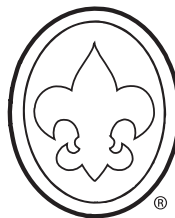
The badge signifies that a young person—through participation in a series of educational activities—has provided service to others, practiced personal responsibility, and set the examples critical to the development of leadership; all the while working to live by the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

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4.2.0.1 Scouting Ranks and Advancement Age Requirements

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

There are seven ranks in Scouts BSA that are to be earned sequentially no matter what age a youth joins the program.



Scout

The Scout rank is oriented toward learning the basic information every youth needs to know to be a good Scout. It starts with demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the Scout Oath, Scout Law, Scout motto, and Scout slogan and then introduces the Scout to basic troop operations and safety concerns.



Tenderfoot



Second Class



First Class

Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class ranks are oriented toward learning and practicing skills that will help Scouts develop confidence and fitness, challenge their thought processes, introduce them to their responsibilities as citizens, and prepare them for exciting and successful Scouting experiences. Requirements for the Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class ranks may be worked on simultaneously; however, these ranks must be earned in sequence. For information on boards of review for these ranks, see “Particulars for Tenderfoot Through Life Ranks” 8.0.2.0, especially point No. 7.



Star



Life



Eagle

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

In Scouts BSA, advancement requirements must be passed as written. If, for example, a requirement uses words like "show," "demonstrate," or "discuss," then that is what Scouts must do. Filling out a worksheet, for example, would not suffice.

4.2.1.0 Four Steps in Advancement

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

4.2.1.1 The Scout Learns

With learning, a Scout grows in the ability to contribute to the patrol and troop. As Scouts develop knowledge and skills, they are asked to teach others and, in this way, they learn and develop leadership.

4.2.1.2 The Scout Is Tested

The Scout's unit leader authorizes those who may test and pass the Scout on rank requirements (primary unit leader if the Scout is registered in multiple units). They might include the patrol leader, the senior patrol leader, the unit leader, an assistant unit leader, or another Scout. Other non-direct-contact Leaders, such as committee members, committee chairs, unit scouter reserves, and college scouter reserves, may not test or pass Scouts on rank requirements. Merit badge counselors guide Scouts and verify requirements for merit badges. Authorized testers must verify that requirements have actually and personally completed by the Scout, exactly as written.

Once a Scout has been tested and signed off by someone approved to do so, the requirement has been met and cannot be rescinded. The unit leader is accountable for ensuring proper advancement procedures are followed. This includes the careful selection and training of those who approve advancement. If a unit leader believes a Scout has not learned the subject matter for a requirement that has been signed off, the unit leader should have the Scout practice or teach the requirement. Thus Scouts may complete their learning and further develop the related skills without being retested.

4.2.1.3 The Scout Is Reviewed

After completing all the requirements for a rank, except Scout rank, a Scout meets with a board of review. It should happen promptly and not be delayed for reasons unrelated to rank requirements. For Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, and Life ranks, members of the unit committee conduct it. See "Particulars for Tenderfoot Through Life Ranks," 8.0.2.0. The Eagle Scout board of review is held in accordance with National Council and local council procedures.

4.2.1.4 The Scout Is Recognized

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

4.2.1.5 After the Scout Is Tested and Recognized

After the Scout is tested and recognized, a well-organized unit program will help the Scout practice newly learned skills in different settings and methods: at unit meetings, through various activities and outings, by teaching other Scouts, while enjoying games and leading projects, and so forth. These activities reinforce the learning, show how Scout skills and knowledge are applied, and build confidence. Repetition is the key; this is how retention is achieved. The Scout fulfills a requirement and then is placed in a situation to put the skills to work. Scouts who have forgotten any skills or information might seek out a friend, leader, or other resource to help refresh their memory. In so doing, these Scouts will continue to grow.

4.2.3.0 Rank Requirements Overview

When people are asked what they did in Scouting, or what it is they think Scouts do or learn, they most often mention the outdoor activities, such as camping and hiking. A First Class Scout would surely add first aid or fire building or swimming or cooking or knot tying. And those who made at least Star or Life would doubtless talk about the merit badges they earned to achieve those ranks—especially those required for Eagle. But these hands-on experiences, as memorable as they are, make up only a portion of what must be done to advance. And the remaining requirements—those beyond the merit badges and skills activities—are generally the most difficult to administer and judge. This section concentrates on those. Consult Volume 1 of the *Troop Leader Guidebook* for guidance on implementing the others.

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

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

Since we are preparing young people to make a positive difference in our American society, we determine a member is “active” when the member’s level of activity in Scouting, whether high or minimal, has had a sufficiently positive influence toward this end.

4.2.3.1 Active Participation

The purpose of Star, Life, and Eagle Scout requirements calling for Scouts to be active for a period of months involves *impact*. Since we are preparing young people to make a positive difference in our American society, we

determine a member is “active” when the member’s level of activity in Scouting, whether high or minimal, has had a sufficiently positive influence toward this end.

Scouting is a year-round program administered by the adult leaders. Units should not be taking time off during the summer or at other times of the year. Regardless of a unit’s expectations or policy, if a unit takes time off, then that time must count toward the Scout’s active participation requirement. The Scout must not be penalized because the unit has chosen not to meet or conduct other activities for a period of time.

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

- 1. The Scout is registered.** The youth is registered in the unit for at least the time period indicated in the requirement. It should also be indicated by the youth in some way, through word or action, that the youth considers himself or herself a member. If a youth was supposed to have been registered, but for whatever reason was not, discuss with the local council registrar the possibility of back-registering the youth.
- 2. The Scout is in good standing.** Scouts are considered in “good standing” with a unit as long as they have not been dismissed or suspended for disciplinary reasons. Scouts must also be in good standing with the local council and Scouting America. (In the rare case a youth is not in good standing, communications will have been delivered.)
- 3. The Scout meets the unit’s reasonable expectations; or, if not, a lesser level of activity is explained.** If, for the time period required, a Scout or qualifying Venturer or Sea Scout meets those aspects of the unit’s pre-established documented expectations that refer to a level of activity, then he or she is considered active and the requirement is met. Time counted as “active” need not be consecutive. Scouts may piece together any times they *have* been active and still qualify. If a Scout does not meet the unit’s reasonable documented expectations, which were communicated in advance, the alternative that follows must be offered.

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

Alternative to the third test if expectations are not met:

If a Scout has fallen below the unit's activity-oriented expectations, the reason must be other positive endeavors—in or out of Scouting—or noteworthy circumstances that have prevented a higher level of participation.

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

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

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

It is reasonable to accept that competition for a Scout's time will become intense, especially as the Scout grows older and wants to take advantage of positive "outside" opportunities. This can make full-time dedication to the unit difficult to balance. A fair leader, therefore, will seek ways to empower the Scout to plan personal growth opportunities both inside and outside Scouting, and consider them part of the overall positive life experience for which Scouting America is a driving force.

The board can grant the rank regardless of the Scout's current or most recent level of activity in Scouting, as long as they were active for the required length of time (or combination of times) during their tenure at that rank.

4.2.3.2 Demonstrate Scout Spirit

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

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

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

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

4.2.3.3 Service Projects

Basic to the lessons in Scouting, especially regarding citizenship, service projects are a key element in council, district and unit programs. They should be a regular and critical part of the program in every pack, troop, crew, and ship.

Service projects required for ranks other than Eagle must be approved according to what is written in the requirements and may be conducted individually or through participation in patrol or troop efforts. Service project work for ranks other than Eagle clearly calls for participation only. Planning, development, or leadership must not be required.

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

The National Safe Scouting Support Committee has issued two documents that work together to assist youth and adult leaders in planning and safely conducting service projects: [SAFE Service Project Planning Checklist](#), and its companion, [SAFE Project Tool Use](#). Unit leadership should be familiar with both documents.

4.2.3.4 Positions of Responsibility

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

4.2.3.4.1 Positions Must Be Chosen From Among Those Listed.

The position must be listed in the position of responsibility requirement shown on the Advancement and Awards web page found at www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/advancement-and-awards/.

Since more than one member may hold some positions—"instructor," for example—it is expected that even very large units are able to provide sufficient opportunities within the list. The only exception involves Lone Scouts, who may use positions in school, in a religious organization, in a club, or elsewhere in the community. Units do not have authority to require specific positions of responsibility for a rank. For example, they must not require a Scout to be senior patrol leader to obtain the Eagle rank.

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

For Star and Life ranks only, a unit leader may assign, as a substitute for the position of responsibility, a leadership project that helps the unit. If this is done, the unit leader

should consult the unit committee and unit advancement coordinator to arrive at suitable standards. The experience should provide lessons similar to those of the listed positions, but it must not be confused with, or compared to, the scope of an Eagle Scout service project. It may be productive in many cases for the Scout to propose a leadership project that is discussed with the unit leader and then "assigned."

4.2.3.4.2 Meeting the Time Test May Involve Any Number of Positions.

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

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

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

Regardless of a unit's expectations or policy, if a unit takes time off, such as during the summer months, that time must count toward service in a position of responsibility. (See "Active Participation," 4.2.3.1.)

4.2.3.4.4 Meeting the Requirement in the Absence of Unit Expectations.

It is best when a Scout's leaders provide position descriptions, and then direction, coaching, and support. Where this occurs and is done well, the young person will likely succeed. When this support, for whatever reason, is unavailable or otherwise not provided—or when there are no clearly established documented expectations—then an adult leader or the Scout, or both, should work out the responsibilities to fulfill. In doing so, neither the position's purpose nor degree of difficulty may be altered significantly or diminished. Consult the current Scouting America literature published for leaders in Scouts BSA, Venturing, or Sea Scouts for guidelines on the responsibilities that might be fulfilled in the various positions of responsibility.

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

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

If it becomes clear that performance will not improve, then it is important to remove the Scout from the position immediately. It is the unit leader's responsibility to address these situations promptly. Every effort should have been made while the Scout was in the position to ensure the Scout understood expectations and was regularly supported toward reasonably acceptable performance. It is unfair and inappropriate—after six months, for example—to surprise someone who thinks his or her performance has been fine with news that it is now considered unsatisfactory. In this case, the Scout must be given credit for the time.

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

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

4.2.3.4.6 "Responsibility" and "Leadership." Many suggest this requirement should call for a position of "leadership" rather than simply of "responsibility." Taking

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

4.2.3.5 Unit Leader (Scoutmaster) Conference

The unit leader (Scoutmaster) conference, regardless of the rank or program, is conducted according to the guidelines in the *Troop Leader Guidebook* (volume 1). Note that a Scout must participate or take part in one; it is not a "test." Requirements do *not* say the Scout must "pass" a conference. While it makes sense to hold one after other requirements for a rank are met, and in fact part of the unit leader (Scoutmaster) conference can be to confirm that all requirements were met, it is not required that it be the last step before the board of review. This is an important consideration for Scouts on a tight schedule to meet requirements before age 18. Last-minute work can sometimes make it impossible to fit the conference in before that time. Scheduling it earlier can allow time for the individualized, personal conversation that is required.

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

Scoutmaster conferences should be held with a level of privacy acceptable under Scouting America's rules regarding Youth Protection. Parents or guardians and other Scouts within hearing range of the conversation may influence the Scout's participation. Since conferences relate not only to the Scouting method of advancement, but also to that of adult association, they are meant to be face-to-face, personal, and individual experiences. Though virtual conferences are allowed, they should only be held when circumstances preclude a more personal approach.

While it is intended that the conference be conducted between the unit leader and the Scout, it may sometimes be necessary for the unit leader to designate an assistant unit leader to conduct the conference. For example, if the Scoutmaster is unavailable for an extended period of time or in larger troops where a Scout's advancement would be delayed unnecessarily, then it would be appropriate for an

assistant Scoutmaster (21 years old or older) to be designated to conduct the conference. Furthermore, while Scoutmasters may conduct conferences with any member, including their own children, wards, or relatives, delegation to an assistant unit leader over the age of 21 in these cases is highly recommended for additional adult association.

Unit leaders do not have the authority to deny a Scout a timely conference when one is required for a rank. Unit leaders must not require the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, the Eagle Scout Rank Application, statement of ambitions and life purpose, or list of positions, honors, and awards as a prerequisite to holding a unit leader conference for the Eagle Scout rank. If a unit leader conference is denied, a Scout who believes all the other requirements have been completed may still request a board of review. See “Boards of Review Must Be Granted When Requirements Are Met,” 8.0.0.2. If an Eagle Scout candidate is denied a conference, it may become grounds for a board of review under disputed circumstances. See “Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances,” 8.0.3.2.

4.2.3.6 Fulfilling More Than One Requirement With a Single Activity

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

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

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

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

Counting service hours for school or elsewhere in the community and also for advancement is not considered double counting since the hours are counted only once for advancement purposes.

4.3.0.0 Mechanics of Advancement in Venturing

Venturing is for young men and women who are 14 through 20, or who are 13 and have completed the eighth grade. It offers them adventure that serves to build character, promote citizenship, enhance leadership, and develop mental and physical fitness. The experience helps participants mature into responsible, caring, and dependable leaders. Each Venturing crew is responsible for achieving these aims by designing a program that appeals to its members. Venturing is a catalyst: It brings together adults and young people and incredible things happen. It is all about asking what is possible, and then setting out to plan and execute toward fulfillment.

4.3.0.1 Venturing Areas of Emphasis

The four areas of emphasis are called the ALPS model:

Adventure. Mentoring, leading, and participating in crew-led activities.

Leadership. Ongoing development through training, mentoring, and hands-on experience in leading others.

Personal Growth. Goal setting to help youth develop skills and character.

Service. Leading and participating in community service.

Each of the requirements for the Venturing ranks falls under one of these areas of emphasis.

4.3.1.0 Advancement in Venturing

The purpose of the Venturing advancement program is to provide a pathway for accomplishment in the ALPS model. Advancement is accomplished when an active program emphasizes and pays attention to the four steps in the process: preparation, learning, qualification, and recognition. Four ranks make up the Venturing advancement track: Venturing, Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit. Venturers have until the 21st birthday to complete their ranks.

For detailed rank requirements see the webpage link in “Changes to Requirements,” 4.0.0.1. For additional information on Venturing advancement or recognition, see the Venturing program handbooks, leader guides, or other official publications or web pages. Venturing ranks and other recognition are available only to registered Venturers.

Note that boards of review are involved with only the Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit ranks. See “Venturing Boards of Review,” 8.0.5.0.

4.3.1.1 The Venturing Ranks

Venturing. This is the beginning of the Venturing experience. The new member learns about the program, what a crew does, what to expect from the experience and the adventures, and makes a commitment to the principles of Venturing. No board of review is involved.



Discovery. Participation and preparing for leadership are the key elements here. The Discovery rank encourages members to design and lead an active program of continuous adventure and service. Venturers who achieve the Discovery rank will have taken part in two crew activities, and as they become more active, they discover talents and learn skills that will help them lead and serve others. In doing so, personal growth will result, and they will gradually recognize the wide variety of opportunities awaiting them.



Pathfinder. In earning Pathfinder, a Venturer should begin to establish a reputation as a skilled leader. The rank seeks to engage Venturers more deeply in the program by delivering further on the ALPS model. One of the key requirements involves leading a crew adventure. The type of adventure—whether an extended bicycle or canoe trip, or even 10 days visiting the museums of Washington, D.C.—is up to the Pathfinder candidate and the crew. The value in the adventure comes from learning how to lead and demonstrate skills through action. Pathfinder candidates will also continue to deliver service to others and to their own crews, ensuring it remains a strong and viable team. Goals set and achieved will continue to help the Venturer grow as an individual.



Summit. While Pathfinder requires a member to lead an adventure, the Summit rank—Venturing’s highest—moves a young person into the role of servant leader. The Venturer will serve the crew as a leader—both formally and informally—and become a mentor to others. Additionally, Summit candidates are challenged to carry out a significant and valuable service project, where they will apply many of the lessons they have learned along the way. A crew’s program should be built upon a program of continuous, youth-led adventure, leadership, service, and personal growth. Each rank level challenges Venturers to dig deeper into the question of who they are in order to truly develop and enhance their skills and confidence to complete the requirements. To the Summit rank recipient, servant leadership and community service are the cornerstones.



4.3.1.2 [Currently Not Used]

4.3.1.3 Multiple Credit for Venturers

Venturers may receive multiple credit for requirements. Those completed toward ranks and merit badges while registered in Scouts BSA or Sea Scouts may be considered toward Venturing rank and award requirements. For example, if the Backpacking merit badge was earned, the effort may also count toward the backpacking Ranger award elective. Further, experiences such as the Red Cross Emergency Response course may fulfill the Ranger first aid requirement and the first aid and lifesaving electives. Venturers may not receive multiple credit for something like a review, discussion, or a presentation relating to the specific requirement and topic.

Some requirements may call for certification such as Scuba Open-Water Diver or American Red Cross Standard First Aid. Current certifications such as these may be used regardless of when they were earned. For additional information see “Fulfilling More than One Requirement with a Single Activity” 4.2.3.6.

4.3.1.4 Scouts BSA Advancement in Venturing

Venturers who earned First Class when registered in Scouts BSA are qualified until the 18th birthday to continue with Scouts BSA advancement. Registration in a troop is not required to do so. However, if desired, Venturers may maintain multiple (dual) registration in both a troop and a crew, but advancement should be tracked through one unit.

Wherever the youth member is registered, the Scoutmaster and crew Advisor decide, with the youth, who will oversee the Scouts BSA advancement. If the Advisor does so but is unfamiliar with Scouts BSA, they should they should seek guidance from the district advancement committee, and together identify an experienced Scouter to assist. It is important for Venturing leaders to understand that Scouts BSA advancement procedures must be followed.

With the exception of the Eagle, Quartermaster, and Summit service projects, any work done while a Venturer may count toward Scouts BSA, Sea Scouts, and Venturing advancement at the same time. The Eagle, Quartermaster, and Summit service projects must be separate and distinct from each other. Position of responsibility requirements for Scouts BSA ranks may be met by the Venturer serving in crew positions as outlined on the Advancement and Awards web page found at www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/advancement-and-awards/.

If the crew Advisor is overseeing the Scout’s advancement, then the crew committee conducts Star and Life boards of review. Otherwise the troop committee conducts those boards of review. Eagle Scout boards follow the local council’s established procedure.

4.3.2.0 The Venturing Summit Service Project

A Summit service project must provide a valuable service that meets a need, and it must represent a significant personal growth experience through some combination of its scope and complexity, leadership of others, or a connection to a personal future life-goal related to the Venturer's education, career, or other interest. The impact of a project—the extent to which it makes a meaningful difference—is the most important consideration.

4.3.2.1 Service Project Focus Areas

To determine if a Summit service project is acceptable, the following four focus areas are considered:

Service—A valuable action, deed, or effort carried out to meet a need.

Scope and complexity—The scale of the project; the level of effort and planning involved.

Leadership—Leading others toward a shared vision.

Personal goal connection—Making the most of the experience, including what is important to you.

All four focus areas are considered together. Every Summit project must provide a service, but no particular level of scope or complexity is required. Your crew Advisor and a designated crew member must agree that a project fulfills what is required. The other two focus areas, leadership and personal goal connection, are not absolutely required, but will add great value and depth to the project. While they are optional, one or the other, or both, may help to compensate for a project that requires little in terms of planning and execution. Leadership of others and a personal goal connection may also be important to Venturers who wish to provide a project report to a prospective employer or college admissions board.

Councils and districts do not play a role in reviewing or approving Summit service projects.

4.3.2.2 Restrictions and Other Considerations

There are no required minimum hours for a project. Leadership of others is not required for the Summit service project, though projects that include leadership may compensate in cases where scope and complexity are relatively simple.

Routine labor is not normally appropriate for a project. This might be defined as work or service provided as part of daily life, or a routine maintenance job normally done by the beneficiary (for example, picking up trash on the school football field).

Any limitations on projects for a business are not meant to disallow work for community institutions, such as museums and service agencies (like homes for the elderly, for

example), that by their very nature, exist to provide a valuable service to the community.

Projects must not be of a commercial nature, and they must not be efforts that primarily raise money, even for a worthy charity. Fundraising is permitted only for securing materials and facilitating a project, and it may need to be approved by the local council. See the "Summit Service Project Fundraising Application" in the *Summit Service Project Workbook*.

No more than one Summit candidate may receive credit for working on the same Summit service project. It is permissible, however, to have projects that are related, as long as each project can be conducted and evaluated independently.

Summit projects must not include service to Scouting America or its councils, districts, units, or properties.

This project must be different from one that a Venturer used to fulfill requirements for the Eagle Scout rank or the Sea Scout Quartermaster rank.

Guide to Advancement topics 9.0.2.10 - 9.0.2.16, that apply to Eagle Scout service projects, also apply to Summit service projects.

4.3.2.3 Evaluating the Summit Service Project After Completion

After completing the project, the Summit candidate completes the project report found in the service project workbook. The project beneficiary should be the first to provide an approval. This approval is simply agreement that the project was carried out to the beneficiary's satisfaction.

The crew Advisor must then determine if the project meets "What Is Required," found in the project proposal form in the workbook. A thorough review of the four focus areas described in the proposal will provide helpful information, as will a careful review of topic 4.3.2.1, "Service Project Focus Areas," above.

The Summit board of review will have the opportunity to review the service project as well. It should be rare, however, that a project acceptable to a beneficiary and the crew Advisor would be rejected by a board of review.

4.3.3.0 Time Extensions for Earning the Summit Rank

If a Venturer foresees that, due to no fault or choice of his or her own, it will be impossible to complete the Summit rank requirements before age 21, he or she may apply to the local council for a limited time extension. These should be granted only when necessary and are reserved only for work on Summit. **When a time extension is requested, the Venturer should continue working on the requirements until a final decision is delivered.** The tests that apply and the procedures to follow are the same as those outlined for an extension of time to earn the Eagle Scout rank. See “Time Extensions,” 9.0.4.0, and “Process for Requesting and Reviewing a Time Extension,” 9.0.4.1. Note that references to age 18 in the Eagle Scout procedure would relate to age 21 in Venturing.

4.3.4.0 Submitting the Summit Rank Application

The Summit Rank Application can be found at filestore.scouting.org/filestore/venturing/pdf/512-941.pdf. A copy should be made of the application and the service project workbook. Once copies are in safekeeping, the originals should be delivered *promptly* to the council service center. The candidate’s application should not be delayed. Timeliness is especially critical if the Venturer is approaching, or has already turned, 21. Sending materials late can imply the work continued afterward. If possible, everything should be hand-delivered. Otherwise it should be sent by registered or certified mail. There is no requirement that the application must be completed or submitted before the 21st birthday. Councils do not have the authority to reject applications submitted on or after that date.

At the council service center the application is checked against council records. This can be done more efficiently if the crew’s records in the Scouting America system have been kept up to date. If everything is correct, the council provides a verification signature, files a copy of the application, and sends the original with the workbook to the board of review chair or other designated volunteer. The board is scheduled only after the council-verified application is received.

After the board of review, an approved application is returned to the council service center, and the workbook is returned to the Venturer. If the board of review denies approval, both the application and the workbook are returned to the council service center.

The Scout executive signs the board of review-approved application. The Summit application is sent via email to the National Service Center at advancement.team@scouting.org where the certificate is produced and returned to the local council service center. The Summit rank is then reported through the Scouting America system

by the local council. The Summit rank medal may be purchased from the local Scout shop.

4.4.0.0 Mechanics of Advancement in Sea Scouts

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

4.4.0.1 Scouts BSA Advancement in Sea Scouts

Sea Scouts who earned First Class rank when registered in Scouts BSA are qualified until the 18th birthday to continue with Scouts BSA advancement. Registration in a troop is not required to do so. However, if desired, Sea Scouts may maintain multiple (dual) registration in both a troop and a ship, but advancement should be tracked through one unit.

Wherever the youth member is registered, the Scoutmaster and ship’s Skipper decide, with the member, who will oversee the Scouts BSA advancement. If the Skipper does so but is unfamiliar with Scouts BSA, they should they should seek guidance from the district advancement committee, and together identify an experienced Scouter to assist. It is important for Sea Scout leaders to understand that Scouts BSA advancement procedures must be followed.

If the Skipper is overseeing the Scout’s advancement, then the ship committee conducts Star and Life boards of review. Otherwise the troop committee conducts them. Eagle Scout boards follow the local council’s established procedure.

With the exception of the Eagle, Quartermaster, and Summit service projects, any work done while a Sea Scout may count toward Scouts BSA, Sea Scouts, and Venturing advancement at the same time. The Eagle, Quartermaster, and Summit service projects must be separate and distinct from each other. Position of responsibility requirements for Scouts BSA ranks may be met by the Sea Scout serving in ship positions as outlined on the Advancement and Awards web page found at www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/advancement-and-awards/.

4.4.1.0 Sea Scout Ranks and Awards

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

4.4.1.1 Apprentice Rank

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



4.4.1.2 Ordinary Rank

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



4.4.1.3 Able Rank

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



maritime environmental issues. The Sea Scout Long Cruise badge is required for Able, as is completion of additional electives.

4.4.1.4 Quartermaster Rank

The highest award for Sea Scouts presents a challenge that, when met, has lifelong benefits. The Quartermaster candidate must think analytically about how the program is delivered and supported, while developing a deeper understanding of Scouting ideals. Most requirements represent intensification of what was learned for previous ranks, but with significant additions in the Quartermaster service project, study of weather and forecasting, and completion of additional electives.



Note: Sea Scouts must use the *Quartermaster Leadership Service Project Workbook*, No. 420-011, available at www.seascout.org, and secure approval from the Skipper, ship committee, project beneficiary, and the council or district advancement committee. A youth's Quartermaster, Eagle, or Summit service project must be separate and distinct from each other.

4.4.1.4.1 Time Extensions for Earning Quartermaster Rank.

If a Sea Scout foresees that, due to no fault or choice of his or her own, it will be impossible to complete the Quartermaster rank requirements before age 21, he or she may apply to the local council for a limited time extension. These should be granted only when necessary and are reserved only for work on Quartermaster. **When a time extension is requested, the Sea Scout should continue working on the requirements until a final decision is delivered.** The tests that apply and the procedures to follow are the same as those outlined for an extension to earn the Eagle Scout rank (see "Time Extensions," 9.0.4.0, and "Process for Requesting and Reviewing a Time Extension," 9.0.4.1). Note that references to age 18 in the Eagle Scout procedure would relate to age 21 in Sea Scouts.

4.4.1.4.2 Submitting the Quartermaster Application.

Once approved by the Skipper, the ship committee, and the board of review, the Quartermaster Application must be approved by the district or council advancement committee. The Scout executive signs the board of review-approved application. The Quartermaster Application is submitted via email to the National Service Center at advancement.team@scouting.org where the certificate is produced and returned to the local council service center. The Quartermaster rank is then reported through the Scouting America system by the local council. The Quartermaster medal may be purchased from the local Scout shop.

4.4.1.5 The Skipper Conference

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

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

4.4.1.6 Other Sea Scout Awards

Other awards Sea Scouts may earn include the Small-Boat Handler bar, the Qualified Seaman bar, Sea Scout Marksmanship Awards, and the Long Cruise badge and arcs. The requirements are detailed in the *Sea Scout Manual*. Also available are any Scouting America recognitions that are not limited to Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, or Venturers. Examples that may interest Sea Scouts include Boardsailing, Snorkeling, Paddlecraft Safety, Kayaking, Mile Swim, and many more.

4.4.1.7 Bridges of Honor

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

4.4.2.0 The Sea Scout Board of Review

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

4.4.2.1 Purpose and Timeliness of Boards of Review

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

4.4.2.2 Composition of the Board of Review

A board of review must consist of no fewer than three members and no more than six. For further specifications, see "Particulars for Apprentice Through Able Ranks,"

4.4.2.4, and "Particulars for the Quartermaster Rank," 4.4.2.5. Skippers and mates must not serve on a board of review for a Sea Scout in their own ship. Parents or guardians may not serve on a board of review for their son or daughter. The candidate or his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) must have no part in selecting any board of review members.

4.4.2.3 Conducting the Board of Review

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

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

4.4.2.4 Particulars for Apprentice Through Able Ranks

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

1. After a Skipper conference, the youth advancing meets with a board of review made up of three to six members of the quarterdeck (ship youth officers). The boatswain chairs the board and selects the other members. Two adults, age 21 or older who are registered with the ship (preferably from the ship committee) must be present as advisors, though the Skipper and mates may also fulfill this responsibility.
2. The boatswain serves as board of review chair,

conducts the review according to procedures, and reports results to the ship advancement coordinator.

3. The location should be comfortable, such as the unit meeting place or another familiar location.
4. The review should take approximately 15 minutes, but no longer than 30 minutes.
5. Ranks must not be presented until the advancement is reported to the local council through Scoutbook Plus for reporting advancement or on the official Advancement Report form.

4.4.2.5 Particulars for the Quartermaster Rank

With the few exceptions listed below, the particulars for handling boards of review for Quartermaster rank are identical to those for Eagle Scout boards of review. Every effort should be made to include at least one board member who is familiar with Sea Scouts advancement. See "Particulars for the Eagle Scout Rank," 8.0.3.0.

4.4.2.6 Quartermaster Board of Review Beyond the 21st Birthday

For information about a Quartermaster board of review after a Sea Scout's 21st birthday, see "Eagle Scout Board of Review Beyond the 18th Birthday," 8.0.3.1. The procedures are the same, with the following exceptions:

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

4.4.2.7 Initiating Quartermaster Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances

A Quartermaster board of review under disputed circumstances may be requested if:

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

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

4.4.2.8 Appealing a Quartermaster Board of Review Decision

If a board of review does not recommend a candidate for Quartermaster rank, only the Sea Scout or his or her parent or guardian may appeal the decision to the local council. The procedures are the same as those for advancement in Scouts BSA (see "Appealing a Decision," 8.0.4.0, "Filing and Processing an Appeal," 8.0.4.1, and "Appeal Board Must Research the Case," 8.0.4.2); simply replace the Scouts BSA references with those relating to Sea Scouts. Note that only Quartermaster rank may be appealed beyond the ship, and appeals are sent to the National Program Committee or their designee at advancement.team@scouting.org.