



9.0.0.0 Section 9.

The Eagle Scout Rank

9.0.1.0 The Eagle Scout Rank Application Process

Since 1912, the Eagle Scout rank has represented a milestone of accomplishment—perhaps without equal—that is recognized across the country and even the world. Those who have earned the Eagle Scout rank count it among their most treasured achievements. “Eagle Scout” is not just an award; it is a state of being. Those who earned it as youth continue to earn it every day as adults. That is why an Eagle Scout *IS* an Eagle Scout—never *WAS* an Eagle Scout.

Over the more than 100 years since the first Eagle, a formal application process has evolved that is important in maintaining the award’s well-recognized prestige. The information in this section is intended to aid in reviewing and submitting the application and accompanying materials. It is hoped this will help Scouts, parents or guardians, or any adult leader or advancement administrator from the unit, district, or council to prevent delays in securing National Council approval and verification.

9.0.1.1 Complete All the Requirements

Confirm that the following requirements have been completed before the 18th birthday: active participation, Scout spirit, merit badges, position of responsibility, service project, and unit leader conference. Note that the unit leader (Scoutmaster) conference need not be the last item accomplished. The board of review may be conducted after the 18th birthday. For details, see “Boards of Review,” 8.0.0.0. A candidate must be registered through the time the requirements are being completed but need not be registered thereafter or when the Eagle Scout board of review is conducted. However, it is to the Scout’s advantage to resolve any potential issues as early as possible.

9.0.1.2 Prepare the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook

The most current workbook available at the time the Scout starts planning the project must be used. It can be found at www.scouting.org/advancement. The workbook shows the project proposal was approved ahead of time, and then properly accepted by all parties when finished. Ideally, it will be a proud reminder of a significant accomplishment. See “Use the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*,” 9.0.2.8.

9.0.1.3 Complete the Application

The Scout must complete the current and official Eagle Scout Rank Application. No other form or application method is permitted. The application can be found at www.scouting.org/advancement. It can also be printed and completed by hand. Careful review and thorough proofreading will help prevent delays. Remember, everything is verified by the local council; discrepancies and errors will lead to a form’s return. Unnecessary delays can be avoided by working with the unit advancement coordinator and obtaining the Scout’s personal history profile from the council office. Pay special attention to the following *red-flag* items.



- 1. Dates:** All applicable date fields will be verified by the council. Missing or incorrect dates will lead to unwanted delays and the application being returned for correction. The best way to avoid these delays is to use the date information from the Scout’s personal profile, which the unit advancement coordinator can obtain from the council office.
- 2. Signatures:** Applicant, unit leader, and unit committee chair. (Remaining signatures come later.) Note that signatures need not be dated before the Scout’s 18th birthday.
- 3. References:** Must list names and contact information for four people who are willing to serve as references for the Eagle candidate. These may be Scout leaders, teachers, employers, coaches, other Scouts, etc. References do not need to be 21 or older. Parents and other relatives are strongly discouraged from serving as references. The current unit leader and committee chair are not eligible to serve as references; their signature on the application is their endorsement. See also Section 9.0.1.7.
- 4. Merit badges:** Dates as mentioned above; check the unit number in which each badge was earned. Attach the Application for Alternative Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges, if applicable. Scouts must not be required to attach blue cards or other proof of merit badge completion with their application. If a discrepancy is discovered, a blue card or other suitable proof may be requested to confirm the completion date.

5. **Position of responsibility:** Must be one of those listed in Eagle Scout rank requirement 4, and must relate to the unit where the Scout was registered and active at the time service was rendered. For example, "SPL" would not be used by a crew member unless he or she was, or is, also registered in a troop. For a Scout who has transferred from a troop to a Venturing crew or Sea Scout ship, any qualifying position(s) held after the Life rank board of review in the troop must count, and the six-month element of the requirement may be met through a combination of nonconcurrent positions served in the troop, crew, or ship. See also "Scouts BSA Advancement in Venturing," 4.3.1.4., and "Scouts BSA Advancement in Sea Scouts," 4.4.0.1.
6. **Attachments:** Service project workbook, statement of ambitions and life purpose, and listing of positions, honors, and awards. Other attachments, such as unit records or individual history reports, must not be required to process the application unless a discrepancy is discovered.

Any advancement errors discovered after a board of review must not be held against a Scout in considering any future advancement, even if requirements were not properly completed. As an example, if after a Scout was advanced to Life rank it was discovered the Scout had not completed the required six months between Star and Life, that would not be cause to deny advancement to Eagle.

Scouts must submit the current official Eagle Scout Rank Application, found at www.scouting.org/advancement. No other form or application is permitted. Special worksheets or spreadsheets have been created in some councils that when filled out electronically produce a completed application. Because the official application changes from time to time, and because submitting out-of-date applications can cause confusion and delays, Scouts must not be required to use these tools. If they do use them, they still must complete and submit the official Eagle Scout Rank Application.

9.0.1.4 Obtain Required Signatures

The unit leader and committee chair signatures represent approval for the candidate to move on to a board of review. In providing them, the signers carefully check the application. It may be helpful to compare the application to the Scout's current advancement profile obtained through the Scouting America system or to a printout obtained from the local council service center. If there are "red-flag" issues (see 9.0.1.3), such as time spans

between ranks that don't meet the requirements, then the dates should be confirmed. If they are correct but do not fit the requirement, then the Scout, parent or guardian, or unit leader should contact the district advancement chair for guidance. Usually, as with unavoidable discrepancies, a letter of explanation will be helpful in addressing the issue. Note there is no requirement that the signatures of the Scout, unit leader, and committee chair must be dated before the Scout's 18th birthday. If the unit leader or committee chair is also the Scout's parent, it is recommended they delegate signing the Eagle Scout Rank Application to an assistant unit leader or committee member for additional adult-interaction opportunities for the Scout. The person signing is verifying that all proper procedures have been followed, so it should be someone who has knowledge of the Scout's history, and has a

If either of the approvals from the unit leader or the committee chair is withheld, a board of review must still be granted if requested by the Scout. For details, see "Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances," 8.0.3.2.

discussion with the Scout about their advancement journey.

9.0.1.5 Submit to Council Service Center

A copy should be made of the application; service project workbook; the Scout's statement of ambitions and life purpose; and listing of positions, honors, and awards. Once copies are in safekeeping, the originals should be delivered *promptly* to the council service center by the council's preferred method (hand-delivered, registered or certified mail, or electronically). The candidate should not be delayed. Timeliness is especially critical if the candidate is approaching, or has already turned, 18. Sending materials late can imply the work continued afterward, but there is no requirement that signatures must be obtained and the applications submitted before the 18th birthday. Councils do not have the authority to reject applications submitted on or after that date.

Councils may suggest service project workbooks (only) be sent or taken to a different person or location, such as a district advancement committee member. An Eagle Scout candidate, however, should confirm that any related instructions are correct and up to date. If there is any concern the workbook will go to the wrong place, it should accompany the Eagle application to the council service center.

9.0.1.6 Council Verifies Application and Board of Review Scheduled

Everything is checked against Scouting America records. If information in the Scouting America system or council files is incomplete or differs from the application, the Scout or the unit will be asked to provide certificates, blue cards, or other suitable proof that merit badges and ranks were earned and that dates are accurate. The regular use of Scoutbook Plus for reporting advancement as described in Section 6 will help expedite this process. If everything is correct, the council provides a verification signature, files a copy of the application, and sends the original with the service project workbook along with any attachments to the board of review chair or other designated volunteer. The board should be scheduled only after the council-verified application is received.

9.0.1.7 References Contacted

The Scout is responsible for requesting references from the four people listed on the application—this is a valuable life skill. Councils choose the method (letter, email, online form, etc.) and where submitted. Electronic submissions are allowed only if confidentiality at all stages is guaranteed. Requested references may be returned to the Scout in a sealed envelope, or sent to a designated unit, district, or council adult for safekeeping until the Eagle Board of Review. If after diligent effort four recommendations are not received, the board of review can go forward without them. If the Scout chooses to go forward, the board may ask about their efforts, but may not deny advancement based only on lack of references.

Completed reference responses of any kind are the property of the council and are confidential, and only review-board members and those officials with a specific need may see them after the board. The responses are not to be viewed by or returned to the Scout. Doing so could discourage the submission of negative information. Those providing references do not have the option of waiving confidentiality. Once a review has been held, or an appeal process conducted, responses must be returned to the council, where they will be destroyed after the Eagle Scout credentials are released or the appeal is concluded.

In Scouts BSA, advancement references are required only for Eagle Scout rank. The council determines methods of contact.

9.0.1.8 Application Returned to Council Service Center

If a board of review approves a candidate, the signed application, reference letters, and any information that might be considered confidential are returned to the local council. Unless otherwise directed, the service project workbook and statement of ambitions and life purpose can be returned to the Scout.

If advancement is denied, the procedure outlined in section 8.0.3.0 item 12 must be followed.

9.0.1.9 Council Processes the Application

At the council, the Scout executive signs the application, certifying proper procedures were followed. The application is then entered into the Scouting America system and filed locally. In special cases, such as Lone Scouts or Scouts who have an alternative Eagle merit badge, councils must submit applications via email to advancement.team@scouting.org. The application must have the Scout executive's signature.

9.0.1.10 National Advancement Program Team Returns Credentials

National validates all applications received. Then the National Distribution Center generates the credentials and prints, packages, and mails the certificate, pocket card, and congratulatory letter to the council. Applications sent for manual processing require several weeks to complete. Upon receipt of the Eagle credentials, council service center personnel should alert unit leadership immediately.

9.0.2.0 The Eagle Scout Service Project

While a Life Scout, plan, develop, and give leadership to others in a service project helpful to any religious institution, any school, or your community. (The project must benefit an organization other than Scouting America.) A project proposal must be approved by the organization benefiting from the effort, your unit leader and unit committee, and the council or district before you start. You must use the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, publication No. 512-927, in meeting this requirement.

—Eagle Scout requirement 5

9.0.2.1 What an Eagle Scout Candidate Should Expect

While working toward completion of the Eagle Scout service project, especially during the proposal approval process, a candidate has the right to expect the following:

1. Questioning and probing for the candidate's understanding of the project, the proposal, and what must be done, which must be conducted in a *helpful, friendly, courteous, and kind-hearted* manner. We will respect the Scout's dignity. The Scout will be allowed, if desired, to have a unit leader or other adult present

as an observer at any time the proposal or project is being discussed with someone who is reviewing it.

2. Project expectations will match Eagle Scout requirement 5, and we will not require proposals to include more than described in the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*.
3. If requested by the Scout or the Scout's parent or guardian, an explanation of a proposal rejection will be provided in writing, with a copy sent to the council advancement chair and staff advisor. It will indicate reasons for rejection and suggestions concerning what can be done to achieve approval.
4. Guidance that maximizes the opportunity for completion of a worthwhile project will be readily available and strongly recommended. Ultimately, however, the responsibility for success belongs to the Scout, and final evaluation is left to the board of review.
5. A method of redress will be provided to a candidate who believes there has been mistreatment or that the proposal was wrongly rejected. This will include the opportunity for a second opinion and approval, either through another volunteer or professional advancement administrator, or the Scout executive, as determined by the council advancement committee or executive board.

An advancement administrator is a member or chair of a council or district advancement committee, or a volunteer or professional designated according to local practices, to assist in advancement administration.

9.0.2.2 “While a Life Scout ...”

Work on a project, including planning, begins after the Life Scout board of review. But this is not meant to preclude an enthusiastic Star Scout from talking with his or her Scoutmaster, religious leader, or principal about what a good project might be.

9.0.2.3 “Plan, Develop ...”

Planning and development require forethought, effort, and time—sometimes more than for execution. Thus, for the most part, they are considered part of the project and are detailed further once a proposal is approved. It is inappropriate to expect a Scout to invest the time required for *detailed* planning, only to face the prospect of rejection. See “Proposal Must Be Approved ... Before You Start,” 9.0.2.7.

It is important not to categorically reject projects that, on the surface, may not seem to require enough planning and development. Consider, for example, a blood drive. Often rejected out of hand, this project, if done properly, could

be acceptable. Few would question the beneficiary. Blood banks save lives—thousands of them: maybe yours, maybe that of a loved one. If the candidate proposes to use a set of “canned” instructions from the bank, implemented with no further planning, the planning effort would not meet the test.

On the other hand, there are councils in which Scouts and advancement committees have met with blood bank officials and worked out approaches that *can* comply. Typically these involve developing marketing plans and considering logistics. People successful in business know how important these skills are. Some blood banks will also set a minimum for blood collected as a measure of a successful plan. To provide another valuable lesson, they may require the candidate to keep at it until the goal has been met.

A good test of any project is to evaluate its complexity. In the case of a blood drive, for example, elements of challenge and complexity can be added so there is a clear demonstration of planning, development, and leadership.

9.0.2.4 “Give Leadership to Others ...”

“Others” means at least two people besides the Scout. Helpers may be involved in Scouting or not, and of any age appropriate for the work. In cases where just three people are not able to conduct a project to the satisfaction of a beneficiary, then more would be advisable. It may be, however, that a well-chosen project conducted by only three provides an impact not achievable with those involving more.

One of the purposes for the project is to demonstrate leadership, but this could be considered a more important element, perhaps, for Scouts who have not yet established themselves as leaders. It is for reasons like these that every project must be evaluated, case-by-case, on its merits, and on lessons that will *advance* the candidate's growth. Councils, districts, and units must not establish requirements for the number of people led, or their makeup, or for time worked on a project. They must not expect Scouts from different backgrounds, with different experiences and different needs, all to work toward a particular standard. The Eagle Scout service project is an individualized experience.

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9.0.2.5 “Helpful to Any Religious Institution, Any School, or Your Community”

“Any religious institution” and “any school” are self-

explanatory. But what does “your community” mean? In today’s world of instant communications and speedy travel, we are affected more and more by what goes on all over the world. Prices for goods and services, investment values, our very safety, and how we feel about those less fortunate in other countries, all are involved. Thus, if Scouts want to take their oath “to help other people” more expansively and put their projects to work for the “community of the world,” they are allowed to do so. A council may emphasize more local efforts but should not deny worthy projects of a wider scope.

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Normally “your community” would not refer to individuals, although a council or district advancement committee may consider scenarios where an individual in need can affect a community. An example might involve elderly persons able to live at home but unable to maintain their property, with the result being an “attractive nuisance” or related dangerous situations, or even an eyesore—something that raises concern to more than that of just an individual. If it can be determined the *community* benefits, then it is a matter of identifying who will provide approvals. They must come from a source representing the “community,” such as a neighborhood association, watch group, homeowners association, or perhaps a division of a town or county.

The project beneficiary need not be a registered nonprofit. Projects may not be of a commercial nature or for a business, but this is not meant to disallow community institutions that would otherwise be acceptable to the council or district advancement committee. These might include museums and various service agencies, or some homes for the elderly, for example. Some aspect of a business’s operation provided as a community service may also be considered; for example, a park open to the public that happens to be owned by a business. In cases such as these, the test is whether the project primarily benefits the community, as opposed to the profits of the business.

9.0.2.6 “Benefit an Organization Other Than Scouting America”

“To help other people at all times” is a basic tenet. The Eagle Scout service project is an important and meaningful opportunity to practice what we teach. Projects must not be performed for Scouting America or its councils, districts, units, camps, and so forth. The unit’s chartered organization, however, is certainly a good candidate, as

are other, international Scouting organizations or other youth organizations such as the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

9.0.2.7 “Proposal Must Be Approved ... Before You Start”

To help project beneficiaries understand the Eagle Scout service project requirement along with the responsibilities and the rights that come with the benefit, see “Navigating the Eagle Scout Service Project,” which appears in the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook.

The Five Tests of an Acceptable Eagle Scout Service Project.

The proposal is an overview, but also the *beginnings* of planning. It shows the unit leader and any representatives of a unit committee, council, or district, that the following tests can be met.

1. The project provides sufficient opportunity to meet the requirement.
2. The project appears to be feasible.
3. Safety issues will be addressed.
4. Action steps for further detailed planning are included.
5. The Scout is on the right track with a reasonable chance for a positive experience.

The detail required for a proposal depends on project complexity. It must be enough to provide a level of confidence for a council or district reviewer that the above tests can be met, but not so much that—based on the possibility a proposal can be rejected—it does not respect the time it takes to prepare.

The unit committee is responsible for an approval of the proposal. It is acceptable for a troop, crew, or ship committee to designate representative(s) to act on its behalf. This is a unit decision. Neither the district nor the council may institute restrictions, such as how many committee members are to be involved.

The form for preparing a proposal appears in the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*, No. 512-927.

Completing it will represent a reasonable time investment and an introductory learning experience, and also provide the information needed for approval. The candidate must not be required to submit more than is described there, or more than is necessary to establish that a project can meet the above tests.

Space is provided in the workbook for the candidate to record comments made during discussions with the district or council volunteer going over the proposal. A thorough review should generate numerous suggestions, cautions, and perhaps concerns (see “What an Eagle Scout Candidate Should Expect,” 9.0.2.1). The Scout should be encouraged to write these down and take them seriously. When the reviewer is satisfied the five tests above can be met, then approval is granted.

It is important to be as considerate of an Eagle Scout candidate’s time as we expect him or her to be of ours. The Scout is probably just as busy. Every attempt should be made to complete the approval process in one meeting. Then the Scout should be challenged to work on planning action steps and to consider scheduling time with the assigned Eagle Scout service project coach for progress reports and further guidance (see “Eagle Scout Service Project Coach,” 9.0.2.9). It is advisable that one of these meetings with the coach be held after the Scout has prepared the project plan and is ready to begin actual work on the project.

It is acceptable for the coach or the advancement administrator responsible for approval—if he or she becomes concerned the project will not meet the requirements or it will not be completed to the satisfaction of the benefiting organization—to contact the Scout and the Scout’s parent or guardian, or unit leader. However, even though the project coach may provide guidance critical to success, final design issues are ultimately between the Scout and the beneficiary. For limitations on the coach’s role, see “Eagle Scout Service Project Coach,” 9.0.2.9.

From time to time Scouts will “jump the gun” and begin fundraising efforts—or even work on the project itself—before a proposal is approved. This is counter to the requirements and well covered in multiple documents, but still it happens. Normally then, a Scout should select a different project. If circumstances are compelling, however—indicating leniency can be extended and a lesson learned without significant detriment to fulfilling the project’s purpose—the Scout may be allowed to carry on and have the proposal or project approved after the fact.

Because it is virtually impossible to forecast every contingency, candidates must be allowed a level of flexibility in carrying out proposals and planning action steps. But essential elements of a proposal should not be changed without good reason. If this must occur, the Scout should consult the project coach or unit leader for advice. It is appropriate to strongly suggest the Scout share substantive changes with the project beneficiary, and also with those involved in preapprovals.

If it appears changes will cause results to fall below what is required, then cautionary advice is in order. Except under extreme circumstances, it is not acceptable for unit, or council or district, approval to be withdrawn, for example, if the project has been changed substantially. If Scouts decides to strike out on their own, that is their prerogative. At some point, responsibility must take over. The board of review decides whether planning was sufficient and if the requirement was met.

The project beneficiary can stop work on an approved project at any time. If enough has been done—such that the requirement’s intent has been met—then the project should still be given final approval. In extreme cases where changes could involve such issues as violations of law or Scouting America policy, or if they bring about unacceptable levels of risk, then district or council advancement administrators may bring this to the attention of the Scout, the Scout’s parent or guardian, the unit leader, and call for work to be suspended until compliance is achieved.

9.0.2.8 “Use the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook”

Using the workbook, No. 512-927, helps candidates avoid pitfalls. If properly used, it very nearly assures success. It shows approvals have been secured, lists important limitations, suggests questions for those approving the project, and includes outlines for the proposal and the more detailed project plan that should come next.

The workbook should not, however, become a basis for rejecting candidates based on “technicalities” that have nothing to do with requirement intent. While the use of the workbook is required, this does not mean that every line or even every form must be completed. In most cases Scouts should fully complete the proposal and project report, and be strongly encouraged to complete the project plan. However, at times it may not be feasible or just not necessary for establishing that the requirement was met.

If it is clear the project was completed and approved, and meets Eagle Scout requirement 5 as it is written, then the project should be considered. If it will be a hardship, or a poor use of time to fill in missing information or obtain a signature of a party who is unavailable but by some other means known to have approved it, then it is appropriate to accept it. There is something to be said for “object lessons,” but keep in mind that write-ups and signatures, though important, are simply supportive. Note that project report signatures need not be dated before the Scout’s 18th birthday. It is a *project* that we require. Boards of review should use common sense: Did the project meet the

requirements or not? Was there planning and development? Was there leadership of others?

The workbook should not become a basis for rejecting candidates based on “technicalities” that have nothing to do with the intent of the requirement.

The requirement that Scouts use the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook means they must use the current, official document as produced by Scouting America. Although it is acceptable to copy and distribute it, and even to transfer it to a different software platform or operating system, it must maintain the same appearance. No council, district, unit, or individual has the authority to require additional forms, or to add or change requirements, or to make any additions, deletions, or changes in the text, outlines, graphics, or other layout or informational elements of the workbook.

9.0.2.9 Eagle Scout Service Project Coach

The Eagle Scout service project coach is the subject matter expert on the processes and standards of the service project. They are the key to success in council or district efforts to provide guidance as Scouts work to fulfill requirement 5. The following are important examples of ways in which the coach can influence a Scout’s project:

- Meet with a Scout after the proposal has been approved but before work begins on the project plan.
- Ask how the Scout will plan the project, then offer advice accordingly.
- Emphasize those elements of a plan that, if ignored, could stop work or create health and safety issues.
- Remind the Scout to share the project plan with the project beneficiary; the beneficiary should be fully aware of what will be done. Note that project plans for an Eagle Scout service project are between the Scout and the beneficiary. *Coaches do not approve project plans.*
- Be available to the Scout as a consultant to answer any questions about the planning process.
- Meet with the Scout to review the project plan; discuss its strengths, weaknesses, and risks; and suggest critical improvements.
- Discuss the project report with the Scout and offer advice on how to make a strong presentation at the Scout’s board of review.

Remember that all contact with the Scout must be conducted according to Youth Protection procedures.

Experience has taught us the most effective approach to providing coaches is for the *council or district* to organize a pool of volunteers willing to serve in that capacity, and then designate them to individual Eagle Scout candidates. Many units have used service project “mentors” or “advisors” through the decades since the Eagle Scout service project came to be. This practice has provided consistent positive contributions and should continue.

Their efforts, however, should serve to provide ongoing support throughout project planning and execution and to prepare a Scout to work with the council or district *designated* project coach.

The role of the designated project coach is not intended to require so close an association with a Scout that it becomes impossible for a council or district to recruit enough of them to work with candidates whose proposals have been approved. The more ongoing and close association should come from unit volunteers or parents assisting in support roles. It is recognized, however, that some councils or districts may not have the volunteer capacity to provide *designated* coaches. For this reason, the council advancement committee may decide to designate the project coach from among unit volunteers. But they should do so with the understanding that a coach who is designated within a unit should represent the perspective of the council or district.

Regardless the source of project coaches, they must adhere to the Eagle Scout service project process as described in this section of the *Guide to Advancement*. Coaches do not have approval authority. Instead they serve to *encourage*—not direct—the Scouts to make the kinds of decisions that will lead to successful outcomes.

It is true a Scout need not accept the assistance of the service project coach. Regardless, it is considered best for the council or district to designate one for every Scout who submits a project proposal for approval. The coach should then contact the Scout and suggest a first meeting, or telephone or video conference. Scouts have already promised when they submit a proposal that they have read the service project workbook, and thus they should already understand a coach is optional. Scouts who suggest they don’t need one should be counseled on the value a coach can add. Ultimately, however, working with a designated Eagle Scout service project coach is the Scout’s decision.

It is important to note that Eagle service project coaches do not have the authority to dictate changes; withdraw approval that was previously granted, such as by the

council or district; or take any other such directive action. Instead, coaches must use the Scouting America method of positive adult association, logic, and common sense to help the candidate make wise decisions.

It is up to the council to determine who may serve as project coaches and how they might be assigned or otherwise provided to candidates. Coaches must be registered with Scouting America (in any adult position) and be current in Youth Protection training.

In many cases, candidates will not have undertaken something like an Eagle service project. Thus, we want them to obtain guidance from others, share ideas, seek plan reviews, and go through other processes professional project planners might use. But like a professional, *the Scout* makes the decisions. They must not simply follow others' directions to the point where their own input becomes insignificant. On the other hand, adult leaders must bear in mind these are youth. Expectations must be reasonable and fitting.

9.0.2.10 Fundraising Issues

Projects may not be fundraisers. In other words, the candidate must not stage an effort that primarily collects money, even if it is for a worthy charity. Fundraising is permitted only for securing materials and otherwise facilitating a project. Fundraising must be approved by the local council except for contributions from the beneficiary, the candidate, the chartered organization, and the candidate's parents, guardians, or relatives, as well as the unit or individuals in the unit.

Fundraising for an Eagle Scout service project must *not be required* of any candidate. Whether or not fundraising takes place is the Scout's decision based on project needs and sources of income, including the benefitting organization and self-funding. Scouting America prefers, in fact, that Scouts choose projects that can be done at little or no cost. Fundraising—especially on a larger scale—has tax, accounting, and other legal implications, in which minors should not be involved. Thus, if fundraising is to take place, it is best that it be kept simple. Typical unit fundraisers with which unit leadership is familiar, such as car washes, are the best options. Another alternative, contingent on local council approval, is the use of "crowdfunding" via the internet. If this method is used, however, then all concerned, including the Scout, the Scout's parent or guardian, the unit leader and those approving fundraising at the local council, should be aware that fees may be involved and that fundraising for something like an Eagle project may or may not comply with the website's terms of service. There can be other issues as well, such as what to do if more—or less—than what is needed is raised. It is important that someone in a

position of responsibility reads and understands the website's "fine print."

If fundraising takes place, Eagle candidates must also be allowed the choice not to be involved in it. If Scouts *do* give leadership to fundraising efforts, then this can be considered in fulfilling that part of requirement 5 to "give leadership to others." If Scouts are not involved, or if all of the contributions come from relatives, for example, the Scout must not be penalized. The Scout's leadership in the project itself should be the primary basis for determining whether requirement 5 has been met.

The Scout must make it clear to all donors or event participants that the money is being raised on behalf of the project beneficiary, which will retain leftover funds. Should any donors want documentation of a gift, this must be provided through the project beneficiary, not Scouting America. Once collected, money raised must be turned over to the beneficiary or the candidate's unit until needed for the project. If the unit receives the funds, it must release any excess to the beneficiary once expenses have been paid.

If the beneficiary is not allowed, for whatever reason, to retain any excess funds, supplies, or materials, the beneficiary should be asked to designate a suitable charity to receive them or allow the unit to retain the funds. The unit must not influence this decision.

For additional detail see "Procedures and Limitations on Eagle Scout Service Project Fundraising," found in the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*, No. 512-927, on the reverse of the Eagle Scout Service Project Fundraising Application.

The Eagle Scout Service Project Fundraising Application, found in the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*, is used to obtain approval when required. Note that local councils may add further definition to the standards established here or on the application form. For example, they could state that fundraisers such as bake sales and car washes do not require a fundraising application and are, in essence, preapproved. They could also establish dollar thresholds; for example, "Any effort expected to raise less than \$500 does not require an application." Completed forms are sent to the local council service center where they are routed to those responsible for approval. This may be a district executive or another staff member, the council or district advancement committee, a finance committee, etc., as determined appropriate by the local council.

The Eagle Scout Service Project Fundraising Application must not be required to accompany the project proposal. At that point in the process, the Scout may not have enough information to complete the application.

9.0.2.11 Routine Labor

Routine labor is not normally considered appropriate for a project. This might be defined as a job or service that a Scout may provide as part of his or her daily life, or a routine maintenance job normally done by the beneficiary (for example, picking the weeds on the football field at a school). But the real test has to do with scale and impact. If “routine labor” is conducted on so large a scale it requires planning, development, and leadership, it may have sufficient impact.

9.0.2.12 Addressing Common Misconceptions

1. No unit, district, council, or individual is allowed to place any requirement or other standard on the number of hours spent on a project. Scouting America collects data about time worked on Eagle Scout service projects only because it points to a level of excellence in achieving the Scouting America aim related to citizenship.
2. Eagle Scout service projects are individual matters. No more than one candidate may receive credit for working on the same project.
3. There is no requirement a project must have lasting value.
4. Any plans completed after the project proposal has been approved by the council or district are between the Scout and the beneficiary. The role of beneficiaries in reviewing plans is explained in the service project beneficiary information sheet, “Navigating the Eagle Scout Service Project,” that is posted on the Advancement Resources page at www.scouting.org/advancement, and is included in the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*.

9.0.2.13 Evaluating the Project After Completion

Eagle Scout service projects must be evaluated primarily on impact—the extent of benefit to the religious institution, school, or community, and on the leadership provided by the candidate. There must also be evidence of planning and development. This is not only part of the requirement, but relates to practicing our motto to “Be Prepared.” *However*, in determining if a project meets requirement 5, reviewers must not require more planning and development than necessary to execute the project. These elements must not overshadow the project itself, as long as the effort was well led, and resulted in an otherwise worthy outcome acceptable to the beneficiary.

There may be instances where, upon its completion, the unit leader or project beneficiary chooses not to approve a project. One or the other may determine, for example, that modifications were so significant that the extent of service or the impact of the project were insufficient to warrant approval. The candidate may be requested to do more work or even start over with another project. The

candidate may or may not choose to meet these requests. If the candidate believes the project, as completed, meets the intent of requirement 5, then it is appropriate to complete and submit the Eagle Scout Rank Application along with the project workbook without final approval. If requested, the Scout must be granted a board of review.

If it is thought a unit board may not provide a fair hearing, a board of review under disputed circumstances may be initiated. (See “Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances,” 8.0.3.2.) The risk in this approach—that the board may decide negatively—should be discussed with the Scout. But at the same time, the fact the Scout is so convinced may point to a need to reevaluate what was done. Perhaps, despite the lack of final approval, the project did indeed meet the requirement.

From time to time, beneficiaries unfamiliar with the Eagle Scout service project process may decline to approve a completed project even though it was helpful and had a positive impact. For example, there have been situations in which beneficiaries sought to require last-minute additions before signing off, and others where new management had different ideas about what should have been done. In these cases it is appropriate for the Scout to move forward without the final approval, and for the board of review to understand that the requirement has been met, regardless.

At the board of review, if an approved proposal and any subsequent effort represents planning and development that was adequate to the project, and the project was well led and carried out to the satisfaction of the unit leader and project beneficiary, only in a very rare case would rejection result. It would have to be clearly established that Eagle Scout requirement 5—*as written*—was not completed. Under no circumstances will project approval be withheld for reasons that have nothing to do with the project.

9.0.2.14 Risk Management and Eagle Scout Service Projects

All Eagle Scout service projects constitute official Scouting activity and thus are subject to Scouting America policies and procedures. Projects are considered part of a unit’s program and are treated as such with regard to policies, procedures, and requirements regarding Youth Protection, two-deep leadership, etc.

Unit leadership should be aware of project plans and schedules. The health and safety of those working on Eagle projects must be integrated into project execution. Since an Eagle Scout service project is a unit activity, unit adult leadership has the same responsibility to assure safety in conducting a project as with any other unit activity. The unit leader or unit committee should reject proposals for inherently unsafe projects. The candidate should plan for safe execution, but it must be understood that minors cannot and must not be held responsible for

safety concerns. As with any Scouting activity, the *Guide to Safe Scouting* and all current Scouting America safety policies apply. See www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/guidelines-policies for current resources.

See “Service Projects,” 4.2.3.3, for general guidelines on service project safety requirements and for information about related documents from the national Safe Scouting Support Committee.

9.0.2.15 Insurance and Eagle Scout Service Projects

Scouting America’s General Liability Policy provides general liability insurance coverage for official Scouting activities. Registered adult leaders are provided primary coverage. Unregistered adults participating in a Scouting activity are provided coverage in excess of their personal insurance.

Every council has the opportunity to participate in the Scouting America Accident and Sickness insurance program. It provides some insurance for medical and dental bills arising from Scouting activities. If councils do not purchase this, units may contract for it. In some cases chartered organizations might provide insurance, but this must not be assumed. Most of these programs provide only secondary coverage and are limited to registered youth and adults and those interested in becoming members.

9.0.2.16 Eagle Scout Service Projects and Messengers of Peace

Any Scout or Scouter who participates in a service project—Eagle Scout, Summit, and Quartermaster service projects included—that has a significant impact on the community in any one of the following three dimensions may qualify as a “Messengers of Peace” and wear the Messengers of Peace ring patch available from Scout shops.

1. The personal dimension: harmony, justice, and equality
2. The community dimension: peace as opposed to hostility or violent conflict
3. Relationships between humankind and its environment: security, social and economic welfare, and relationship with the environment

Since Eagle Scout service projects are conducted for religious institutions, schools, or the community—and would thus directly or indirectly impact one of the three dimensions—almost all Eagle projects would certainly qualify as Messengers of Peace projects.

For more information about Messengers of Peace, please visit www.scouting.org/messengersofpeace.

9.0.3.0 About Eagle Palms

Scouts or qualified Venturers and Sea Scouts may earn Palms after they have achieved the Eagle Scout rank. The requirements can be found at www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/advancement-and-awards/. All of the requirements, other than the Eagle Board of Review, must be completed before age 18 unless a Scout has been granted an extension to work on Eagle Scout rank. See topics 9.0.4.0, 9.0.4.1 and 9.0.4.2. Merit badges earned at any time since becoming a registered Scouts BSA member, or qualified Venturer, or Sea Scout, may be used. Palms are not considered ranks, but rather degrees of the Eagle Scout rank.

9.0.4.0 Time Extensions

If a Scout foresees that due to no fault or choice of his or her own, it will be impossible to complete the Eagle Scout rank requirements before age 18, they may apply for a limited time extension. See “Process for Requesting and Reviewing a Time Extension,” 9.0.4.1. The application must be sufficiently detailed that it can be reviewed without any other information. These should be granted very rarely and are reserved only for Life Scouts working on Eagle. Under no circumstances are time extensions available to Scouts who have not earned the rank of Life Scout, thus only Life Scouts are eligible to apply. All time extensions expire on the date of the Scout’s Eagle board of review or the approved extension expiration date, whichever comes first. No further youth advancement or awards may be earned thereafter. **When a time extension is requested, the Scout should continue working on the requirements until a final decision is delivered.** In most cases, unless the National Council has issued other direction, a request must meet the three tests listed below to be approved.

Sea Scouts or Venturers who foresee that due to no fault or choice of their own, it will be impossible to complete the Quartermaster or Summit requirements before age 21, must use the same tests, process, and form described in topics 9.0.4.0, 9.0.4.1, and 9.0.4.2 to request a limited time extension. In these topics, for Quartermaster or Summit extensions, age 21 or 21st birthday are used in place of age 18 or 18th birthday, and references to Eagle are to be substituted with Quartermaster or Summit.

Test 1 The member joined or rejoined (or became active again after a period of inactivity or became refocused on advancement after a period of inattention) in time to complete all requirements before turning 18.

Test 2 Through no fault or choice of the Scout, an unforeseen circumstance or life-changing event with severe consequences has come to exist that now precludes completion of the requirements before the deadline. Examples might include, but are not limited to, a hospital stay, disabling injury, significant personal or family incident or issue, natural disaster, severe unseasonable weather, or the actions of others (see below, “Misinformation from adults in positions of authority”). If the circumstance is health-related, it should have been unforeseen and of recent onset, or a complication or intensification of an ongoing issue.

One consideration is whether the situation or condition prevented the Scout from attending school for a substantial amount of time. For example, an accumulation of hospital stays or quarantine periods for cancer treatment could qualify, even though any one short-term stay would not.

Test 3 The circumstance is beyond the control of the Scout, could not have been anticipated or planned for, and was not or cannot be resolved in time to complete the requirements.

A time extension is rarely the best remedy for a Scout with a special need or disability. Nearly all barriers to advancement can be overcome by applying routine accommodations, or obtaining permission for modifications of rank requirements and alternative merit badges as explained in Section 10. For disabilities that significantly slow progress in general, registration beyond the age of eligibility (RBAE) is the better solution, as it allows work to continue on any rank and not just Eagle Scout rank.

Misinformation from adults in positions of authority. Since we teach obedience as one of the Scout Laws, it follows that guidance and direction from an adult leader carries significant weight. Adults who are misinformed about advancement requirements and timing have, at times, created circumstances that necessitated extensions. Councils must consider the circumstances of each case. If it can be established that a Scout followed

incorrect guidance and direction in good faith, then Test 2—as it relates to the actions of others—may be considered fulfilled, even though the Scout has a handbook and should have read it.

Applying the three tests. Whether a request for extension meets the three tests above requires the exercise of carefully considered and debated judgement. If the council advancement committee is unsure, the National Council encourages local councils to find in favor of the Scout, or reach out to the National Program Committee or its designee at Advancement.Team@scouting.org for advice.

Scouts with disabilities—extension or registration beyond the age of eligibility. In most cases, Scouts are expected to overcome life’s ordinary trials. To justify an extension, an extraordinary and unexpected circumstance is required. Known special needs or disabilities that the Scout has coped with for many years should not suddenly become an issue shortly before the Scout’s 18th birthday. However, if the Scout’s disabilities are not severe enough or permanent enough to qualify for registration beyond the age of eligibility (described in Section 10, “Advancement for Members With Special Needs”), council advancement committees might grant extensions to Scouts with significant disabilities that essentially preclude advancement within the time frame allowed. There is no restriction on the type, nature, or combination of disabilities that the council advancement committee may consider. Scouts registered beyond the age of eligibility do not need to request an extension.

9.0.4.1 Process for Requesting and Reviewing a Time Extension

Local councils have the authority to grant limited extensions of time to complete Eagle requirements. These are available only to youth who qualify according to the three tests listed in “Time Extensions,” 9.0.4.0. A Scout, his or her parent or guardian, unit leader, or members of the unit committee may file such requests. The council advancement committee must research and evaluate requests and recommend decisions to the Scout executive.

Councils have the authority to grant Scouts only enough time to complete the requirements, but not more than a total of six months after the 18th birthday. Under most circumstances, however, three to four months has proven sufficient. If a council denies a request or the Scout needs more than six months, an appeal process is discussed in “Appealing a Time Extension Denial,” 9.0.4.2.

1. **Requesting an extension.** Requests for time extensions must be submitted to a council’s service center in person, electronically, or by mail to the attention of the staff advisor for advancement or other council designated advancement administrator. The form, “Request for Extension of Time” (see Appendix, 11.2.0.0) may be used for this purpose. Since

Definition of a month: As stated on page 2 of the Guide to Advancement, a month is a month regardless how many days it has. It is not defined as 30 days or four weeks. For example, the maximum extension of six months means the time period beginning on the Scout's 18th birthday up to the corresponding day six months later, for example, February 2 up to and including August 1, or August 31 up to and including February 28 (or 29 if leap year) are examples of six-month periods. In essence, the extension expiration date acts like a pseudo 18th birthday, prior to which all requirements must be fulfilled. Six months does not mean 180 days.

council-granted extensions expire no more than six months after the Scout's 18th birthday, it is wise to submit requests before a Scout turns 18. For the same reason, Scouts should be encouraged to continue work on advancement throughout the extension request process.

Requests must (a) explain why or how the circumstances necessitate an extension, (b) indicate the number of months believed to be necessary to complete the requirements, (c) explain how that period of time was determined, and (d) include documentation of the circumstances. (See "Time Extensions," 9.0.4.0.) If a cause is health related, a statement from a health professional must be provided. All documentation and supporting evidence submitted must be dated and include the name of the author.

2. **The council's role in evaluating extension requests.** Time is of the essence. Members of the council advancement committee are expected to thoroughly review and discuss the case, vote on it, and provide a recommendation to the Scout executive as quickly as possible. Since Scouts should not be required to wait more than four weeks for a decision, it may be necessary to give extension requests special attention outside a council's regular meeting schedule.

A request for extension must be investigated by selected adults who are registered and familiar with the advancement program. These investigators should interview as many people with knowledge of the case as possible and obtain detailed written statements from them or prepare written summaries of what was said. A thorough review would suggest the Scout must be included in this process. This effort must also include any adults who committed errors or provided misinformation and who are reasonably available. The results of the investigation are then reported to the council advancement committee to deliberate and vote

on a recommendation to the Scout executive. All documentation, statements, notes, and any other information collected should be retained in the event of a denial and subsequent appeal. See item #5 below, "In the event of denial."

3. **The Scout executive's role.** If after receiving the recommendation of the council advancement committee, the Scout executive approves an extension, a letter is sent to the Scout, his or her parent or guardian, the unit leader, and the petitioner who initially submitted the request. A copy of the letter is placed in the council's unit file.

The letter must include the following: (a) the date the extension expires—no later than six months after the 18th birthday (see above, "Definition of a month"), (b) a statement that the expiration date becomes the Scout's pseudo 18th birthday where the time constraints regarding boards of review apply, (c) a statement explaining that the time extension expires on the date of the Scout's Eagle board of review or the approved expiration date, whichever comes first, (d) a statement that the Scout must complete the requirements prior to that expiration date, and (e) a requirement that a copy of this letter must be attached to the Eagle Scout application when it is submitted to the council.

The board of review and submission of the Eagle Scout application and other paperwork may take place after the expiration date. The rank application is entered into the Scouting America system according to the registrar's manual.

In the event the Scout executive disagrees with the council advancement committee's recommendation—whether about approval, the length of an extension, or denial—the Scout executive is encouraged to consult with the committee chair or designee. It may be that the disagreement stems from a misunderstanding of advancement policies and procedures or that the recommendation requires more supporting evidence. If agreement is not reached, the Scout executive's decision stands.

4. **Extensions of more than six months.** A six-month extension allows for completion of time-oriented requirements such as position of responsibility, active participation, and those found in some required merit badges. Historically, less than five percent of Scouts have needed more than six months. In the unlikely event a Scout requires more than six months, the council is not permitted to approve the request. The Scout can then appeal to the National Council, as described in Section 9.0.4.2.
5. **In the event of denial.** If a Scout is denied an extension, a letter is prepared and sent to the Scout,

his or her parent or guardian, the unit leader, and the petitioner who initially submitted the request. The letter must explain the reason for the decision and how to appeal it to the National Council. See “Appealing a Time Extension Denial,” 9.0.4.2. A copy of the letter is placed in the council’s unit file. Only the Scout or their parent or guardian may initiate extension denial appeals. Appeals are only available to Life Scouts working on Eagle requirements. **Scouts who do not earn the rank of Life prior to their 18th birthday are not eligible for time extensions. There are no exceptions to this policy.**

The three tests a council is to apply in evaluating a request for an extension are covered in the Guide to Advancement, 9.0.4.0. The process for investigating and approving or denying them are discussed in 9.0.4.1.

9.0.4.2 Appealing a Time Extension Denial

Only the Scout or his or her parent or guardian may appeal the denial of a request for an extension of time to earn the Eagle, Quartermaster, or Summit rank. An appeal may be initiated by notifying the local council staff advisor for advancement or other council designated advancement administrator via letter or email. The council advancement committee is then obligated to assist and coordinate the appeal effort.

There are two reasons for a council to deny an extension request: (1) if it cannot be established that an extension is warranted according to the three tests covered in 9.0.4.0, or (2) if a Scout who meets the three tests requires more than six months. Note that council authority is limited to six months because it has been established that only rarely do circumstances warrant a longer extension.

The council’s role. Members of the council advancement committee, in conjunction with the Scout executive, complete the form, “Appeal of Extension Request Denial” (see Appendix, 11.2.1.0). The form calls for the following:

- A statement from the Scout or their parent or guardian explaining why the council’s decision should be reversed and the extension granted.
- Copy of fully completed form “Request for Extension of Time.” See *Guide to Advancement*, Appendix, 11.2.0.0 (the nationally recommended form for initiating an extension request). A council’s own extension request form may be submitted instead, as long as it includes the same information.
- An update on any requirements yet to be completed if additional work on advancement is not reflected on the above form.
- Copies of all statements, interview notes, and any other information collected throughout the extension request and review process, either from the Scout or from others who have knowledge of the case.
- Statement explaining the council’s reason for denial.
- Copy of denial letter sent to Scout.
- Printout of the current Scouting America Person Listing for the Scout.

Timing. Timing is critical. Councils should submit appeals to the National Council within two weeks of receiving notification of the appeal. Scouts should not be expected to wait for long periods of time while council advancement administrators support the appeal effort.

Signing, formatting and submitting appeal to the National Council. The Scout executive or designee must review the Scout’s case along with the form, “Appeal of Extension Request Denial,” and any accompanying documentation. The Scout executive then signs the form, either on paper or digitally, certifying it is complete and correct according to what is known about the case. This certification may be provided electronically as long as it can be verified that it is the Scout executive who is sending it.

The entire appeal packet must be combined into one PDF document and emailed to advancement.team@scouting.org.