

Boy Scout Advancement Policy Statement 09-15

1. The Council will follow the policies and procedures set forth by the Boy Scouts of America.
2. Standards for Advancement shall be based upon the requirements listed in the Official Boy Scout Handbook and the most recent version of the Guide to Advancement.
3. Advancement within the Troop must be in conformity with the policies and procedures of the Boy Scouts of America. Each boy must be approved by a Troop Board of Review in order to advance in rank.
4. All applications for Boy Scout Advancement submitted to the Council must have the proper name of the Scout, the designation of the award earned and the required signatures of the Board of Review members. Advancement Report forms are available from the Council Service Center.
5. At some point after the Boy Scout has reached the rank of Life, a responsible adult from the unit (i.e. the Scoutmaster, Advancement Chairman, etc.) should contact the Service Center to obtain a copy of the Scout's official advancement records printed from ScoutNet, to insure all records are complete and accurate. This will facilitate correction of issues discovered during the Eagle application process.
6. The District Advancement Committee must:
 - A. Maintain an accurate list of approved Merit Badge Counselors in the District.
 - B. Review and Approve all Eagle Scout Service project plans prior to the Scout starting work on the project. The project must first be approved by the Scoutmaster, Troop Committee and the Beneficiary.
 - C. Be present and serve as a voting member for the Eagle Scout Board of Review. The Scout or Troop representative needs to request to schedule the Eagle Board of Review according to the requirements and standards established by each District.
7. A Scout must first obtain the Scoutmaster's signature of approval on his blue card prior to the starting any merit badge.
8. It is the Scoutmaster's responsibility to insure that the selected Merit Badge Counselor is properly registered prior to signing the blue card and the start of the Merit Badge.
9. It is the policy of the Council that **without prior written consent** of the Council Advancement Chairman or designee, the following policies (A-I) must be followed:
 - A. All Merit Badge Counselors must complete and submit a Merit Badge Counselor application, insuring that they meet the requirements established by the Boy Scouts of America.
 - B. Each Merit Badge Counselor must complete Youth Protection Training **prior** to the final approval to counsel Scouts.

- C. No person may be approved to counsel more than eight merit badges.
- D. No boy may receive more than five merit badges from a single counselor.
- E. Scouts are discouraged but not forbidden, in using a member of his immediate family as a Merit Badge Counselor.
- F. Council Camps or District sponsored programs, and outside agencies seeking to support the Merit Badge program by sponsoring advancement events, must adhere to the policies and procedures of the Heart of Virginia Council and the Boy Scouts of America.
- G. Signed blue cards are the only official document to verify the completion of a Merit Badge other than at Camp or District events, where alternate registrations are used with **prior approval** of the Council Advancement Committee, in accordance to the policies of the Boy Scouts of America.
- H. A Merit Badge or advancement related event may not be held by an individual, District, Council or outside agency where money is charged for participation, without **prior** approval.
- I. No other Merit Badge Counselor registration vehicles will be recognized by the Heart of Virginia Council, unless all BSA and Heart of Virginia Advancement policies are met by the counselor(s) in question, specified on the official Merit Badge Counselor application form, required by the Boy Scouts of America.

Please Note:

It is recommended that each unit designate one Committee Member from each Troop to be assigned the responsibility for Unit Advancement to insure accuracy and consistency.

District Advancement Committees should provide training as needed on a regular basis, at District Training events, Roundtables, etc.