



# GUIDE TO ADVANCEMENT 2017



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®





## 9.0.0.0 Section 9.

# The Eagle Scout Rank

### 9.0.1.0 The Eagle Scout Rank Application Process

Since Arthur Eldred became the first Eagle Scout in 1912, the rank has represented a milestone of accomplishment—perhaps without equal—that is recognized across the country and even the world. Men who have earned the Eagle Scout rank count it among their most treasured possessions. “Eagle Scout” is not just an award; it is a state of being. Those who earned it as boys continue to earn it every day as men. That is why an Eagle Scout *IS* an Eagle Scout—not was.

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. Topics 9.0.1.1 through 9.0.1.10, below, are 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 he is completing requirements but need not be registered thereafter or when his board of review is conducted.

#### 9.0.1.2 Prepare the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*

The most current workbook must be used. It can be found at [www.scouting.org/advancement](http://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 official Eagle Scout Rank Application, No. 512-728. No other form or application method is permitted. The application can be found at [www.scouting.org/advancement](http://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 all six (five if not employed). If not affiliated with an organized religion, then the parent or guardian provides this reference. There are no restrictions on who the Scout may list for his two other references. He can list anyone he chooses, including parents or guardians not previously listed, other relatives, Scout leaders including those from his unit, or other Scouts and friends. There is no requirement that any of the references be 21 years of age or older.
- 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 with their application. If



a discrepancy is discovered, the blue card 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 was, or is, also registered in a troop. For a Scout who has transferred from a troop or team to a Venturing crew or Sea Scout ship, any qualifying position(s) held after the Life rank board of review in the troop or team shall count, and the six-month element of the requirement may be met through a combination of nonconcurrent positions served in the troop, team, crew, or ship. See also "Boy Scout Advancement in Venturing and Sea Scouts," 4.3.1.4.
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, shall not be required to process the application unless a discrepancy is discovered.

Once a Scout has been advanced in rank, advancement errors subsequently discovered must not be held against him for any future advancement, even if the requirements were not properly completed. As an example, if after a Scout was advanced to Life rank it was discovered he had less than the required six months between Star and Life, that would not be cause to deny his advancement to Eagle.

*Scouts must submit the official Eagle Scout Rank Application, No. 512-728, found at [www.scouting.org/advancement](http://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 BSA 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 either of the approvals from the unit leader or the committee chair is withheld, the Scout, if he desires it, must still be granted a board of review. For details, see "Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances," 8.0.3.2.*

#### 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. The candidate should not be delayed. Timeliness is especially critical if he is approaching, or has already turned, 18. 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 or as instructed by the local council. There is no requirement that the application must be completed or 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. This has the potential for cost savings in sending it out for the board of review. 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 council records. If information in the BSA system or council files is incomplete, 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 the BSA internet portal 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 and other items (such as reference letters received) 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

Council advancement committee members—or others designated—have the responsibility to secure recommendations from the references appearing under requirement 2 on the Eagle Scout Rank Application. This may be done by letter, form, or phone call. For reasons of privacy and confidentiality, electronic submissions are discouraged. It is acceptable to send or deliver to the references an addressed envelope with instructions, and perhaps a form to complete. The Scout may assist with this, but that is the limit of his participation. He is not to be responsible for follow-through or any other aspect of the process.

It is up to the council's designated representatives to collect the responses. If after a reasonably diligent effort no response can be obtained from any references, the board of review must go on without them. It must not be postponed or denied for this reason, and the Scout shall not be asked to submit additional references or to provide replacements.

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. The responses are not to be viewed by or returned to the Scout. Doing so could discourage the submission of negative information. For the same reason, those providing references do not have the option of giving the reference directly to the Scout and shall not be given the option of waiving confidentiality. Once a review has been held, or an appeal process conducted, responses shall be returned to the council, where they will be destroyed after the Eagle Scout credentials are released or the appeal is concluded.

**In Boy Scouting, 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 approval is denied, *all* materials are returned to the council.

### 9.0.1.9 Council Sends Application to National Advancement Program Team

At the council the Scout executive signs the application, certifying proper procedures were followed. The application is then entered into the BSA system, filed locally, and then extracted from the BSA system by the National Advancement Program Team. In special cases, such as those for Lone Scouts or Scouts more than six months past their 18th birthday, councils must submit applications via mail, email, or fax for manual processing.

### 9.0.1.10 National Advancement Program Team Returns Credentials

The National Advancement Program Team 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 go to the National Advancement Program Team and take 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 the Boy Scouts of 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, BSA 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 his understanding of the project, the proposal, and what must be done, shall be conducted in a *helpful, friendly, courteous*, and

*kind*-hearted manner. We will respect the Scout's dignity. He will be allowed, if he chooses, to have a parent, unit leader, or other adult present as an observer at any time he is discussing his proposal or project 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 his 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. If the candidate believes he has been mistreated or his proposal wrongfully rejected, he will be provided a method of redress. 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 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 he's met this goal.

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 a Scout who has not yet established himself as a leader. 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 shall not establish requirements for the number of people led, or their makeup, or for time worked on a project. Nor shall they 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.

**Councils, districts, and units shall not establish requirements for the number of people led, or their makeup, or for time worked on a project.**

### 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 a Scout wants to take his oath “to help other people” more expansively and put his project to work for the “community of the world,” he is allowed to do so. A council may emphasize more local efforts but should not deny worthy projects of a wider scope.

If a Scout wants to take his oath “to help other people” more expansively and put his project to work for the “community of the world,” he is allowed to do so.

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 the Boy Scouts of 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 the Boy Scouts of America or its councils, districts, units, camps, and so forth. The unit’s chartered organization, however, is certainly a good candidate, as are other youth organizations such as the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, the Girl Scouts of the USA, or other international Scouting organizations.

*To help project beneficiaries understand the Eagle Scout service project requirement along with the responsibilities and the rights that come with the benefit, the National Advancement Program Team has prepared an information sheet for project beneficiaries, called “Navigating the Eagle Scout Service Project,” which appears in the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook.*

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

**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 young man 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, team, 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 shall 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 to be of ours. He is probably just as busy. Every attempt should be made to complete the approval process in one meeting. Then he should be challenged to work on his planning action steps and to consider scheduling time with his 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 done his planning and is ready to begin actual work on his 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 his parent or guardian, or unit leader and, as appropriate, a representative of the beneficiary. 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 his 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 his project coach or unit leader for advice. It is appropriate to strongly suggest he 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. If the young man decides to strike out on his own, this is his 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 BSA 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, his parent or guardian, and his 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 of, 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 or 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 official document as produced by the Boy Scouts of 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. He or she is 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 his proposal has been approved but before work begins on the project plan.
- Ask the Scout to describe how he will plan the project, then offer him 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 his plan with the project beneficiary; the beneficiary should be fully aware of what will be done. Note that 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 should he have questions about the planning process.
- Meet with the Scout to review his 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 his board of review.

Remember that any 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 young men 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. If a young man suggests he doesn't need one, he 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 BSA 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 the BSA (in any adult position) and be current in BSA 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. He must not simply follow others' directions to the point where his own input becomes insignificant. On the other hand, adult leaders must bear in mind he is yet a youth. Expectations must be reasonable and fitting.

#### 9.0.2.10 Fundraising Issues

Projects may not be fundraisers. In other words, the candidate may 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. And unless it involves contributions *only* from the beneficiary; or from the candidate, his parents, guardians, or relatives, his unit or its chartered organization; or from parents or members in his unit, it must be approved by the local council.

Fundraising for an Eagle Scout service project shall *not be required* of any candidate. Whether or not fundraising takes place is the Scout's decision based on the needs of his project. The BSA 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, from the Scout and his parent or guardian to 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 shall not be penalized. His 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 the Boy Scouts of 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 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 shall place any requirement or other standard on the number of hours spent on a project. The Boy Scouts of America collects data about time worked on Eagle Scout service projects only because it points to a level of excellence in achieving the BSA 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](http://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. He may choose to meet these requests, or he may decide—if he believes his completed project worthy and in compliance—to complete his Eagle Scout Rank Application and submit his project workbook without final approval. He must be granted a board of review, should he request it.

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 he 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 shall project approval at any point in the process be withheld for reasons that have nothing to do with the project.

*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.*

### 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 Boy Scouts of 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* applies. The “Sweet 16 of BSA Safety” must also be consulted as an appropriate planning tool. It can be found online at “Scouting Safely,” [www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/Sweet16](http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/Sweet16).

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

### 9.0.2.15 Insurance and Eagle Scout Service Projects

The Boy Scouts of 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 BSA Accident and Sickness insurance program. It provides some insurance for medical and dental bills arising from Scouting activities. If councils do not purchase this, then 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, Quartermaster, and Venturing Summit Award 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. Thus, when reporting project hours through the Journey to Excellence service hours website, “Messengers of Peace” should be selected as one of the categories for the project description.

For more information about Messengers of Peace, please visit [www.scouting.org/messengersofpeace](http://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 in the *Boy Scout Requirements* book. All of the requirements must be completed before age 18, and time extensions are not available. Merit badges earned at any time since becoming a registered Boy 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 youth foresees that, due to no fault or choice of his own, he will be unable to complete the Eagle Scout rank requirements before age 18, he may apply for a limited time extension. See “Process for Submitting and Evaluating an Extension Request,” 9.0.4.1, item No. 1. These are rarely granted and reserved only for work on Eagle. **When a time extension is requested, the Scout should continue working on the requirements as processing occurs.** In most cases, for a request to be considered the following five tests must be met.

1. The member joined or rejoined—or became active again after a period of inactivity—in time to complete all requirements before turning 18. That is, the time remaining between joining, or rejoining, and when the Scout turns 18 is more than the total of the active-time requirements for the ranks left to achieve.

*The Boy Scouts of America will welcome Scouts back after periods of inactivity. However, all time-oriented requirements must still be met. Scouts reactivating too late to complete time-related requirements will not be granted extensions, nor will those who remained active but simply did not focus on advancement.*



2. A circumstance came to exist that now precludes completion before the deadline. Examples might include a health-related incident requiring a hospital stay, a disabling injury, a *significant* employment conflict, a family relocation, a family emergency, a natural disaster, severe unseasonable weather that could not have been anticipated, or unforeseen actions of others affecting the youth's ability to complete the requirements. It is extremely unlikely an extension will be granted if resolution of the circumstance—such as recovery from an injury, for example—still allows enough time for an adequate service project, or for completing the position of responsibility, active participation, or merit badge requirements if they have not already been met.
3. The circumstance is totally beyond the control of the youth member. Injuries, unanticipated family incidents, or various mistakes or omissions by adults, for example, *could* be legitimate causes. The Boy Scouts of America assumes anyone working on Boy Scout ranks has a *Boy Scout Handbook* and has read the requirements. Despite this, misinformation from unit leadership is often cited as grounds for extensions. These cases will be considered, but they should be very rare and would point to a need for basic training and assistance.
4. The circumstance is severe and not the norm of the Scout's life. In most cases, Scouts are expected to overcome life's ordinary trials. Cause for an extension normally requires an extraordinary circumstance uncommon to the youth. For example, known circumstances such as moderate learning disabilities or ADD/ADHD that the Scout has faced over many years and which he has coped with in the past, should not suddenly become an issue shortly before his 18th birthday.

It is important for council and district advancement committees to keep unit leadership informed of this so it does not become a surprise. An exception might be considered for Scouts with significant disabilities that do not meet the level of severity or permanence required for registration beyond the age of eligibility, but are such that they essentially preclude advancement within the timeframe allowed.

*Scouts with permanent and severe disabilities such as those described in section 10, "Advancement for Members With Special Needs," have the opportunity to be registered beyond the age of eligibility. (See "Registering Qualified Members Beyond Age of Eligibility," 10.1.0.0.) They do not need to request an extension.*

5. The circumstance could not have been planned for or anticipated. If it is health-related, it should have been unforeseen and of recent onset, or a complication or intensification of an ongoing issue.

The list above is meant to give volunteers an idea of how requests for time extensions are evaluated. They are not precise tests. Each case is considered individually.

#### 9.0.4.1 Process for Submitting and Evaluating an Extension Request

The council advancement committee's role is to select at least two committee members to research the request, collect and evaluate evidence, recommend action to the Scout, and if requested, provide the evidence with a position statement to the National Advancement Program Team. Throughout the process, it must be remembered that time is of the essence.

*If a Sea Scout or Venturer foresees that, due to no fault or choice of his or her own, he or she will be unable to complete the Quartermaster rank or Summit Award requirements before age 21, the same tests, process, and form described here in topics 9.0.4.0 and 9.0.4.1 apply, and must be followed to request an extension of time to earn the Quartermaster rank or Summit Award.*

*See "Request for Extension of Time to Earn Eagle Scout Rank," 11.2.0.0, in the appendix, and check one of the boxes at the top of the page indicating the Quartermaster rank or the Summit Award is involved.*

The local council does not grant or deny time extensions. These are granted only through the National Advancement Program Team after consideration of local council recommendations.

1. The Scout, his parent or guardian, his unit leader, or a member of the unit committee may file the request. It is preferred that the request be made in the form of a letter that is signed and dated by the author. It is sent to the council service center to the attention of the council's designated appeals coordinator. It is preferred that requests be submitted before the 18th birthday or, if not, the reason for the delay is stated.

The request must indicate the number of months after the 18th birthday that will be necessary to complete the requirements. The Request for Extension form (Appendix 11.2.0.0) is prepared by the council after it has completed their review; see item No. 5.

## See “Filing and Processing an Appeal,” 8.0.4.1, for information about the designated appeals coordinator.

2. The request must document the circumstances. For example, if the cause is health related, then a statement from a health professional must be provided. If the cause relates to adult error or misinformation, then the adult(s) involved, if available, must provide a statement. It is not sufficient simply to provide a summary of occurrences without the support of information from those with personal knowledge of what happened.
3. The council advancement chair and staff advisor select at least two council advancement committee members who will research the request and prepare a summary report for the council advancement committee. The council-designated appeals coordinator should brief them on the procedures outlined herein. They should obtain statements from those with knowledge of the case, or interview them and then prepare written summaries. The candidate must be included in the process in order to ascertain circumstances were beyond his control, as must any adults available who committed errors or provided misinformation. In some cases, it is a good idea to hold face-to-face interviews—for example, those where the lack of a *Boy Scout Handbook* or ignorance of requirements is cited.
4. The council advancement committee must review the evidence and prepare a position statement. This is shared with the Scout, his parent or guardian, his unit leader and his unit committee chair. The council, however, does not grant or deny the extension. Only the National Advancement Program Team has that authority.

5. The Request for Extension of Time to Earn Eagle Scout Rank form (see 11.2.0.0) must be fully completed by the council advancement committee or designee and then signed by the Scout executive. It must provide a recommendation for acceptance or denial, and indicate the length of the desired extension. A packet with the supporting documentation, the position statement, and the extension request form is then forwarded to the National Advancement Program Team. The position statement must be more than a cover letter; it must address the evidence gathered and include an explanation of how the requested amount of time was calculated. All requests, letters, and position statements must include the date and signature of the author. A decision can usually be delivered within two to four weeks. Packets without complete information will be returned to the council without further review.

*Prior to submitting a request for an extension to the National Advancement Program Team, it is important to confirm that the Scout's advancement records in the BSA system are up to date. If records are not current, it takes longer to consider extension requests.*