



**Approvals**

Scoutmaster:

**Gerber**

Parent Committee Chair:

**Perfect**

**Advancement Program**

EFFECTIVE

01/01/04

SUPERSEDES

1978

IT IS THE POLICY OF TROOP 834 TO:

Uphold the National Boy Scouts of America (BSA) rank advancement standards by encouraging each Scout to master a challenging series of skills that prepare the Scout to enjoy the outdoor activities that Scouting promises, ensure fairness and consistency, develop quality leadership, and enrich the environment of the Community, the Troop, the Patrol and the Scout.

**Procedures**

*“A Scout cannot master the skills of the outdoors without learning something of the skills of living and working with others – outdoors or in. The Scout cannot grow more adept at winter survival without growing in all-season self-confidence. The Scout cannot work so hard in the open without becoming more fit mentally or physically. In turn the Scout cannot avoid making new friends, exploring new hobbies, trying new sports, and developing a deeper love and concern for the health of our planet.”* (Scoutmaster Handbook, 1990)

In order to advance through the BSA ranks, each scout grows to understand and demonstrate his responsibilities in the following areas.

- Skill Requirement up to First Class
- Activities
- Merit Badges
- Service Hours
- Leadership
- Scout Spirit
- Scoutmaster Conference
- Board of Review

**8.1 Advancement Notes**

- Overview

The Boy Scout Advancement Program is a system of accomplishments and rewards. When a specific number of accomplishments have been completed, the Scout advances in rank. The Troop recognizes the accomplishments at the Court of Honor. The specific requirements, along with the detailed information on achieving the rewards, are all contained in the Scout Handbook. It is recommended that parents review the requirements for each rank so they will be familiar with their Scout's objectives. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002)

In general the Scout:

- Completes the requirements listed in the Scout Handbook
- Demonstrates Scout Spirit by his participation in the Troop and Patrol, his conduct, and wearing the uniform
- Completes a Scoutmaster Conference
- Completes a Board of Review

- Parent Encouragement

To the extent possible, Troop meetings and outings will be geared toward Scout rank requirements and Merit Badges (MB). **However**, a Scout cannot and should not, plan on meeting all the requirements simply by attending meetings and outings. Parents can help their Scouts by being familiar with the requirements, offering encouragement and suggesting resources. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002 and T834 Policies, 1978)

- First Class

*Advancement from Scout, to Tenderfoot, to Second Class, and to First Class in the first year is very desirable. This goal takes much parent encouragement, and usually provides a Scout with a strong desire to continue toward Eagle.* (T834 Policies, 1978)

- Advancement Procedure  
Article X, Clause 5 of the National BSA Policy states that the requirements for rank shall be the basis for a Scout's advancement. There shall be four steps in the Scout advancement procedure:
  - **The Boy Scout learns.** A Scout learns by independent participation with other scouts, reading the Scout Handbook, instruction at meetings, campouts, and summer camp, practicing skills (knots, first aid). Scouts can study and practice with parents. As he learns, he grows in ability to do his part as a member of the Patrol and the Troop. As he develops knowledge and skill and earns the First Class rank, he is asked to teach others; and in this way he begins to develop leadership.
  - **The Boy Scout is tested.** Once he feels comfortable that he has the knowledge and skill(s) needed for a requirement, a Scout must demonstrate his ability, independent of his peers and parents. The Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, a Troop Parent Committee member, designated leaders, or any combination thereof, may test a Scout on rank requirements. With regard to Merit Badges (MB), the Scout's Merit Badge Counselor (MBC) objectively teaches and tests on the requirements for MBs, much like a teacher does in school. The tests can be in the form of demonstration, tests, reports, or combination.
  - **The Boy Scout is reviewed.** After a Scout has completed all requirements for a rank, he has a board of review. For Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle Palms, members of the Troop Parent Committee conduct the review. For Eagle, the Scout appears before a Troop Eagle Board of Review and a District Board of Review. All reviews are conducted in accordance with local council procedures.
  - **The Boy Scout is recognized.** When the board of review has certified a boy's advancement, he deserves to receive recognition as soon as possible. This should be done at a ceremony at the next troop meeting. The certificate for his new rank may be presented later at a formal court of honor.

(Excerpts from BSA Policy and Scoutmaster Handbook, 1990 & 2002)

- Requirements  
No additional requirements may be added, or requirements taken away from the requirements listed in the current BSA Requirements. (Boy Scouts Requirements Book, 2003) All of the listed requirements are to be taken literally. None of the requirements are meant to be impossible. If a Scout feels a rank advancement Instructor or a Merit Badge Counselor (MBC) is being overly tough, is adding additional requirements, or wants to discuss the requirements with someone other than the Instructor or Counselor, he may talk to the Scoutmaster or Troop Parent Committee Chair. (T834 Policies, 1978)

The Troop will make appropriate accommodations for Scouts with disabilities, consistent with BSA policy and suggested guidance materials.

**Note:** BSA updates the Scout Handbook every seven (7) years, but may modify, add or delete requirements prior to the next publication of the handbook. To announce changes, every year BSA publishes a Boy Scouts Requirements Book (BSRB) that lists the updated Scout rank and MB Requirements. When completing requirements the Troop will use the most current requirements to track achievement. Scouts, Scouters, MBCs, and parents are encouraged to refer to the current BSRB for the latest requirements.

- **Guidance** Article X, Clause 7, of the National BSA Policy states that it shall be the responsibility of the Troop Parent Committee, under the leadership and guidance of the Council, to make sure that the Advancement Program of the Troop is conducted in such a way that Scouts have an opportunity to advance on the basis of the four steps outlined in Clause 5 (Advancement Procedure previously noted).
- **BSA Reference and Mentoring** One cannot just read the list of requirements in the Scout Handbook to completely understand the requirements. If that were the case, the Scout Handbook would just be a series of checklists. Instead the Scout Handbook provides hundreds of pages of information. But that is not the only source of information. BSA provides all kinds of training and reference materials for the Troop to create the Program that National BSA Policy requires. It takes time to digest what is written, practice what is suggested, and develop effective protocols before the program is put into practice. The following are just a few of the resources that contribute to creating the T834 Program: Scoutmaster Handbook, Scout Field Book, Advancement Policy and Procedures Committee Guide, Den Leader Handbook, Junior Leadership Training, Wood badge, Woods Wisdom, Troop Program Resources, etc.  
  
COMBINED, these create the PROGRAM for Scouting. Because not everyone can keep the volumes of knowledge in his or her head, mentoring from experienced ASMs and Scouts is imperative. ***Asking questions, seeking information, and open communication, not just written policies and procedures, are an integral part of the Scouting program.***

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## **8.2 Skill Requirement Up to First Class**

- **Objective** The fun and adventure of Scouting comes in great part to the movement through the ranks. Upon entering the program, *Scouts are encouraged to master a series of progressive skills starting with the Scout rank, moving onto Tenderfoot, to Second Class, and to First Class.* The building blocks set in these lower ranks will help build the skills needed in completing MBs and achieving the higher ranks of Star, Life and Eagle. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 1990)
- **Scout Handbook** In order to advance through each rank, the Scout is responsible for maintaining a copy of the Scout Handbook. The specific skill requirements for each rank are located in the back of the book, and the information on how to master the skill is described in the text throughout the book.  
  
Starting with the Scout rank through First Class, the Scout works closely with other Scouts in the Patrol. The Scout is to review the material as presented in the Scout Handbook and practice the skill with other Scouts in the Patrol. Once the Scout demonstrates proficiency and passes a test that demonstrates competency, the requirement may be "signed off". The approval that the Scout has completed the requirement is recorded in the Scout Handbook. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002)  
  
A Scout **must** have his book signed to receive credit for achievements. No book; no credit. (T834 Policies, 1978)
- **Skill Proficiency** In T834 (1978), a Scout may work on requirements in more than one rank at the same time. In other words, while learning first aid skills a Scout may learn about and demonstrate knowledge that is described in the Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class ranks. As long as the Scout demonstrates proficiency in the skills described in each rank, the Scout may earn the credit for mastering the skill.
- **Sign off** The SM may designate who approves rank requirement completion. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 1990 & 2002) In T834 a First Class or higher-ranking Scout may "sign off" the requirements up to First Class. In the event the Scout attends Camporee or other Scout program, designated camp staff may sign off the requirement.  
  
While parents are encouraged to participate, parents of a Scout are not to sign off

requirements. (T834 Policies, 1978) While parental sign off was acceptable in Cub Scouts, it is not acceptable in Boy Scouts. ***A parent is not to interfere with the instruction, the review of the skill, or the "sign off" of a requirement. Requirement sign off is between the Scout, the Instructor, or other Scout authorized to sign off requirements.*** (T834 Policies, 2003)

- Advancement Tracking

The Scout is responsible for presenting the Scout Handbook to the Troop Advancement Recorder (TAR), who in turn will track the Scout's accomplishments by recording them in a computer database. The frequency of how often to turn in the Scout Handbook depends on how quickly the Scout is completing requirements, but once a month is recommended until the rank of First Class is completed. Presenting the Scout Handbook to the TAR ***is a critical step*** for which the Scout is responsible. (T834 Policies, 1978)

This process benefits the Troop, because it provides an opportunity to see how the Scout is progressing. The process benefits the Scout, because if the Scout Handbook is missing, a record of achievement is available.

Only after the TAR is assured that all the skill, rank or MB requirements are complete, may a Scout proceed to the final three requirements of each rank. If there are any question or concern, the TAR consults the TPC Advancement Coordinator, SM or TPC Chair. In order, the final evaluations are: Scout Spirit, SM Conference, and a Board of Review. These are described in Procedure 8.7, 8.8 and 8.9, respectively. (T834 Policies, 2003)

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### 8.3 Activities

One of the Second Class requirements states that a Scout must attend five Patrol or Troop Activities. One of the First Class requirements states that a Scout must attend ten Patrol or Troop Activities. Since Spring 2003 T834 has defined an "activity" as a planned event that includes all of the following criteria:

- Scheduled on the Approved Troop Calendar or pre-approved by the SM;
- Organized as a boy led activity with an SPL;
- Includes SM approved, qualified, adult supervision, current in Youth Protection Training; and
- Is open to the Troop, is Patrol or Troop oriented, and is Scouting appropriate.

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### 8.4 Merit Badges

The ranks of Star, Life and Eagle require a Scout to complete a certain number of Merit Badges (MB), some of which are required, and others that are elective. Merit Badges are awarded to Scouts (of any rank) for fulfilling requirements in specific fields of interest. There are more than a hundred MBs (120 as of January 1, 2003) in areas that include careers, sports, hobbies and Scouting skills. Many professionals who were former Scouts acknowledge how Scouting introduced them to their career. (Scout Handbook, 1998)

The following procedures apply when an individual Scout is obtaining a MB while at "home". When attending a summer or MB camp, the process and MB Counselor requirements may be modified.

- Merit Badge Counselors (MBC)

Qualified Merit Badge Counselors (MBC) must:

1. Be at least 18 years old and of good character (a camp MBC may be an assigned camp Instructor, younger than 18)
2. Be proficient in the MB subject by vocation or avocation
3. Be able to work with Scout-age boys
4. Be registered as an adult volunteer and as a MBC with BSA
5. Be current with and practice the Youth Protection Training  
(BSA MB Counselor Orientation)

- **MBC Approved List**

Since 1978, the Troop has maintained and displayed a list of approved Troop MBCs at the Troop Scout Shack in the SM Office. The Troop Parent Committee (TPC) Advancement Coordinator updates it annually. Parents are recruited to serve as MBCs, especially for the highly desired MBs, such as Eagle Required MBs. The Troop MBC list is displayed with the list from the Meridian District Advancement Committee. Any parent or adult interested in providing counseling for MBs may elect to become a counselor for the Troop only, the Meridian District, or both. Interested persons should contact the Troop TPC Advancement Coordinator. (T834 Policies, 1978). Unless approved by the TPC Chair, Scoutmaster and Advancement Coordinator, a MBC can sign up for a maximum of ten badges. (T834 Policies, 2003). (BSA MBC form 33405 allows a MBC to sign up for seven.) The MBC **must complete Youth Protection Training and submit appropriate documentation each year.**
  
- **MB Process**

Except with minor modifications in 2003 (noted in parentheses), since 1978 the Troop has applied the following five step process when an individual Scout is obtaining a MB while at "home". Please note that when the Troop offers the MB to a large group of scouts, Step 1 will be considered complete. These are also outlined in the Boy Scouts Requirements Book, 2003.

To earn a MB, a Scout needs to:

  1. Pick a subject and request a MBC via the SM
  2. Contact the MBC and Use the Buddy System
  3. Attend Sessions
  4. Fulfill the requirements of the MB & have the counselor sign the MB Application
  5. Turn in the MB Application to the Troop Advancement Recorder (TAR)
  
- **Step 1: Pick a Subject and request a MBC via the SM**
  - The Scout reviews the list of MBs and identifies one of interest. The Scout reviews the requirements. The requirements for each badge appear in the current *Boy Scout Requirements Book* and in the current BSA MB pamphlet for the award. (2003)
  - The Scout contacts the SMs or an ASM designated by the SM. (T834 Policies, 1978)
  - The SM (BSA Requirement) or an ASM designated by the SM, identifies a Troop or District MBC for the Scout to contact from the lists that hang in the SM Office. (See Note below about MBC selection.)
  - The Scout requests a blue card from the SM.
  - With new Scouts, the SM explains how the MB card is filled out and reviews the MB process. (2003)
  - The SM or an ASM designated by the SM signs the front of the blue card so the Scout can initiate contact with the MBC.
  - The Scout completes his personal information and title of the MB in the appropriate places on the blue card. (2003)

**Notes:** To support the BSA method of *Association with Adults*, since 1978, the SM, or an ASM designated by the SM, has assigned the MBC for the Scout. Depending on the subject, the MBC may be an adult associated with the Troop or Meridian District. In many cases the MBC is an adult with whom the Scout is not familiar.

To encourage *Association with Adults* (a BSA Scouting method), parents cannot sign off MB requirements for their son (T834 Bylaws, 1978), without prior SM approval. Much like a student is assigned a teacher, other than a parent, the assigned MBC ought to be someone other than the Scout's parent. (T834 Policies, 1978). Instead, parents can help their sons by being familiar with the requirements, offering encouragement and suggesting resources. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002) Beginning in fall 2003, the Troop accepted that an exception might occur when no other counselor is available or qualified in the Troop or Meridian District MBC list. In that rare case, the Troop can (in order) recruit a MBC for a particular MB(s), identify

a registered adult MBC from outside the District, or the parent would assist as many boys as possible by offering to teach several boys, and may include his/her own son in that group of other Scouts. The SM makes the approval prior to the Scout initiating action on the MB.

Finally, when assigning a particular MBC, the SM or ASM should ask which MBC the Scout has already met with in the past. Together the Scout and SM should consider the use of a different MBCs, if possible, rather than using the same MBC. To encourage *Association with Adults* (BSA Scouting method), beginning in fall 2003, the same MBC should not be used for more than three badges. Interacting with multiple MBCs for different badges will help develop the Scout's communication skills with a variety of adults. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002)

- Step 2: MBC Contact and Buddy System

Over the years MB Counseling has developed into two fairly distinct processes. The traditional approach calls for the Scout to complete requirements outside the MB session, and meet with the MBC as a mentor. The second is where the MBC "teaches" the badge. The latter one requires more sessions and perhaps the attendance of more than one Scout for efficiencies.

- The Scout contacts the MBC to determine how the MBC would like to proceed with the "sessions".
- If the MBC requires other Scouts, the interested Scout solicits other Scouts who also want the MB. (2003) (See Note 1 below.)
- The Scout contacts the MBC to arrange for a date and time to review the requirements and begin completion of the badge. (See Note 2 below.)
- The Scout notifies the other interested Scouts of the first meeting.

**Note 1:** The MBC must abide by the "Two Deep Rule" when counseling Scouts. A minimum of three people must be present at all times. This may be the MBC and two Scouts, or the MBC, another adult, and the Scout. If the MBC is between 18 and 21 years, Council policy states that a second adult over 21 years old be present during instruction. Individual, one on one counseling is NOT permitted. If a Scout needs to get support from a Counselor at a meeting, the Scout and Counselor are to remain in eyesight of the Troop activities. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002)

**Note 2:** There are cases when a Scout and the designated MBC cannot make schedules work, or a need arises that another MBC is needed. The Scout is to contact the SM or ASM with whom they talked in Step 1, state the problem or reason for change, and request a new MBC.

- Step 3: Scout(s) Attends Sessions

- Scout attends the scheduled session.
- MBC must follow two-deep leadership as outlined in Note 1 above.
- The MBC meets with the Scout(s) to review and begin instruction for the badge.
- Upon approval of the MBC, the Scout may begin to complete the requirements.
- During the course of instruction, the MBC determines if the Scout satisfactorily completes the requirements.

Prior to the first session, according to the BSA MBC Orientation, the MBC is to:

- Review the requirements prior to meeting with the Scouts to ensure MBC knowledge of the requirements and to prepare for the Scouts
- Prepare a "course of instruction" to understand when and how a Scout completes the requirements, which must follow the four steps of advancement:
  - The boy must learn (material review, experience, etc),
  - The boy is tested (by writing a paper, a test, demonstration of skill, or a combination thereof),
  - The skill is reviewed (by the MBC and meets satisfactory completion), and
  - The boy is recognized (by blue card sign off).

- Step 4: Fulfill the Requirements
  - If the MB requires multiple sessions, the Scout maintains possession of the Blue Card between sessions (2003).
  - At the end of each session the MBC signs off the requirements that are completed and tracks the achievement of each Scout (2003).
  - The Scout maintains contact with the MBC regarding completion of requirements.
  - The Scout should complete the requirements in a timely fashion, to avoid holding onto a partial (which may never be completed), or to avoid the chance that the MBC moves, the MBC becomes inactive, etc.
  - Up until his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, a Scout may return to working on a partial any time after he started; there is no time limit of how long the completed requirements last, except that it must be complete before the scout is 18 years of age; the Scout can bring a partial to another counselor (as long as it is approved by the same SM or ASM in Step 1) (2003).
- Step 5: Records Advancement
  - Upon completion of the requirements, the MBC signs the completion portion of the blue card and returns two-thirds of the card to the Scout.
  - The Scout turns in the blue card to the Troop Advancement Recorder.
  - The Troop Advancement Recorder inputs completion of the blue card.
  - The blue card is returned to the Scout with the MB at the following Court of Honor.
  - The Scout **must keep the blue card** as a record of having met the requirement for advancement to Eagle.
- Merit Badge Sessions and Troop Meetings
  - In planning a Troop meeting, the PLC may include MB instruction. If MB requirements are not completed, the Scout may meet with the MBC outside the regular Troop Meeting.
  - Unscheduled (by the PLC) MB Counseling is not to take place at the same time as a Troop Meeting. This distracts participation and focus from the meeting (Troop 834 Policy 5).

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### 8.5 Service Hours

Service to the community is one of the cornerstones of the Boy Scouting program. Since 1978, the Troop's intent has been to provide opportunities for the Scouts to participate in various Community Service activities. While the Second Class, Star, and Life rank requirements include a specific number of service hours, each Scout is encouraged to do more.

As stated in the Scout Handbook, Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002 and BSA Requirements Book (2003), for Star and Life the requirement reads:

“... Take part in service projects totaling at least six hours of work. These projects must be approved by your SM.”

- Scout Benefit
  - Community Service has many benefits to Scouts. First it provides them an opportunity to assume meaningful roles. Second, it teaches them to respond to real needs in their community. Third, it fulfills their own need to be needed. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002)
- Opportunity
  - Community service can increase the Scout's self-esteem and give him a sense of accomplishment. In addition, it provides opportunities for career exploration and for learning about the world of work. It challenges him to work cooperatively with others, to learn to compromise, and to communicate clearly. It encourages skill development. It represents opportunities to use decision-making skills. It provides realistic education for responsible citizenship. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002)
- Troop Service
  - When the Troop selects community service projects, the objective is to be sure the Scouts will have the opportunity to make a valuable contribution, not merely be given “busy work” or tasks others want to avoid. Both short term and long term

projects can make a contribution to the community. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002)

- **Rank Requirement** For the Second Class rank, the objective is to prepare the Scout for the more involved service project to be performed at the Star, Life and Eagle ranks. Service projects are to be meaningful service, not normally expected of a Scout as part of his school, religious, or community activities. The Star and Life projects may be done as an individual or as a member of the Patrol or Troop. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002) While helping with Eagle Projects is a reasonable method of achieving this requirement, Scouts are encouraged to reach out and participate in service in other ways as well. (T834 Policies, 2003)
- **Scoutmaster Approval** The SM and the beneficiary of the project must approve the project prior to beginning the project. No service hour credit will be given for projects performed without prior approval. (T834 Policies, 2003)

The SM responds to project requests as soon as possible. An ASM designated by the SM may approve a service project in the SM's absence.

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### **8.6 Leadership**

Scouting differentiates itself from all other group programs by providing training, experience and opportunities for the Scouts to become leaders. As a Scout progresses to the Star, Life and Eagle ranks, he must demonstrate leadership in specific Troop or Patrol positions. As he progresses in rank, so should his leadership skills and levels of responsibility within the Troop. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002)

- **Positions** As stated in the Scout Handbook, Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002 and Boy Scouts Requirements Book (2003), for Star, Life and Eagle, the BSA requirement for Troop Leadership reads:  
  
“...Serve actively in one or more of the following positions of responsibility:  
Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Senior Patrol Leader, Troop Guide, Order of the Arrow Troop Representative, Den Chief, Scribe, Librarian, Historian, Quartermaster, Bugler, Junior Assistant Scoutmaster, Chaplain Aid, or Instructor.”  
  
(Note: Bugler is accepted for the rank of Star and Life, not Eagle.)
- **Leadership Service Time**
  - For Star advancement the 2003 BSA requirement reads:  
While a First Class Scout, serve actively for four months in one or more of the following positions of responsibility (or carry out a SM-assigned leadership project to help the Troop). (Positions were listed above.)
  - For Life advancement the 2003 BSA requirement reads:  
While a Star Scout, serve actively for six months in one or more of the following positions of responsibility (or carry out a SM-assigned leadership project to help the Troop). (Positions were listed above.)
  - For Eagle advancement the 2003 BSA requirement reads:  
While a Life Scout, serve actively for six months in one or more of the following positions of responsibility. (Positions were listed above.)

- **Position Assignments** As a Scout progresses through the ranks, the Scout is expected to demonstrate the skills of leadership espoused in the Junior Leader Training (JLT), including demonstrating positive interaction and proper display of the uniform. A Scout who is working toward the rank of Life and Eagle is encouraged to provide direct leadership in support of the Troop. Scouts are encouraged to accept different leadership assignments, rather than serving three terms of leadership in the same role. Diversification of skill and experience in multiple levels of leadership are critical to

the development of leadership. With this in mind, since 1978 (with minor adjustments in 2003), the Troop has adopted the following:

- **Leadership Term**
  - The Troop Leadership Service term begins and ends with the election and transition of the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), every six months (Mar 1 to Sept 1 and Sept 1 to Mar 1).
  - With the induction of each SPL, the Patrols elect new leaders. The SM gathers a list of Scouts who need leadership as part of their requirements. The SM shares the list with the SPL. The Scouts have an opportunity to let the SPL know their desire to participate in leadership. Then the SPL determines the Scouts that will assist him with the Troop Leadership, with input from the SM. It is the SPL's decision about who serves on leadership with him and the elected Patrol Leaders. The SM provides counsel to ensure the selection is based on more merit than friendship. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002)
  
- **Appointment Approval**
  - All leadership appointments must meet the approval of the SM prior to start of term. This will be documented by the SM and signed by the SM and SPL. The form will be given to the Troop Advancement Recorder for entry.
  - When a Scout accepts a leadership position for his rank advancement, he accepts the responsibility for completing the leadership term.
  - For a Scout wishing to earn credit as a Cub Scout Den Chief, the Scout must first meet the qualifications, and then complete the Den Chief requirements, according to the BSA Requirements listed in the Den Chief Handbook. To meet the requirement of serving actively in a position of responsibility, the Den Chief agrees to meet the Troop leadership requirements outlined below.
  
- **Serve *Actively***

For all positions of responsibility, to serve **actively** means (T834 Policies, March 1999) participate productively in the following:

  - Be present at 4 of 6 Patrol Leader Council (PLC) meetings,
  - Attend Troop Meetings and outings according to the guidelines set forth in Procedure 8.7,
  - Attend a Troop JLT during the leadership term, within 6 months prior to the leadership period, or other leadership program approved by the SM, and
  - Meet the responsibilities of the position, as evaluated by the SPL and SM.
  
- **Sign off**

The **Leadership requirement cannot be signed off until the SPL and SM confirm the Scout has met the obligations of the assigned leadership position.** These obligations are based on the Junior Leadership Training (JLT) list of responsibilities (T834 Policies, March 1999), as noted in Troop 834 Policy 3, and objectives set by the SPL.

  - At the mid point of the SPL Leadership Term, the SPL and SM will meet to review how the leaders are performing. Together they will inform the individual Scout of his progress. If improvements are recommended, the SPL and SM will identify those improvements, notify the Scout and allow the rest of the term for improvement.
  - At the end of the term, the SPL and SM will meet to review how the leaders performed. Together they will inform the individual Scout of their evaluation. If the scout accomplished some, but not all the elements of serving "actively", the SPL and SM will determine the level of service "credit".
  - The SPL and SM sign a form that indicates leadership credit.
  - The SM will provide the signed leadership approval form to the Troop Advancement Recorder.
  - If a Scout served as Den Chief, the Den Leader and Cub Master must provide a letter describing how the Scout provided leadership, and the Scout must show proof of attending the required Den Chief training.
  
- **Leadership Progression**
  - At the end of the SPL term, Scouts may earn credit for serving a specific leadership position. A Scout is encouraged to serve in more than one

- leadership position over his tenure and serve different positions as they advance in rank.
- Scouts seeking the rank of Life and Eagle are encouraged to accept significant leadership responsibilities within the Troop, including: Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Quartermaster, or Junior Assistant Scoutmaster.
- Leadership Project  
For the rank of Star and Life, a Scout may carry out a SM-assigned leadership project to help the Troop. (Boy Scouts Requirements Book, 2003) The SM may apply this where special circumstances prevail. The SM may work with a Scout to craft a leadership project. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002) Guidelines for the project may include one or more of the following:
  - Several months of focused service to the Troop;
  - Serving as SPL on summer camp and other leadership programs; and
  - Serving on staff for District trainings and a summer camp.

### 8.7 Scout Spirit

The status of a Scout does not depend so much on the skills of his hands, or the badges on his MB sash, or the rank he achieved. It is the spirit in his heart – on what he is willing to do for others, on whether he does his best to live the Scout Oath and Law. (Scout Handbook, 1997)

*"The Scout Promise (or Oath) to carry out, on his honour, as far as in him lies, and the Scout Law is our binding disciplinary force, and with ninety-nine out of a hundred it pays. The boy is not governed by DON'T, but is led on by DO. The Scout Law is devised as a guide to his actions rather than as repressive of his faults. It merely states what is good form and expected of a Scout."* (Baden Powell)

- Considerations  
Scout Spirit is one of the last requirements for each rank, and evaluated by the SM or ASM at the time of the SM Conference. Scout Spirit refers to the effort a Scout makes to live up to the ideals of Scouting: The Oath, Law, Motto and Slogan. Each serves as everyday guidelines. When evaluating a Scout's Spirit, *first the Scout's level of participation is considered. Secondly his impact is considered.* (T834 Policies, 1978)
- Level of Participation  
Since 1978, the TPC and SM have set participation **guidelines** as a quantifiable part of Scout Spirit. The **guidelines** are used when considering one aspect of a Scout's Spirit. In fulfilling the Scout Spirit, how the Scout productively participates is to be considered.
  - Troop Meeting Attendance: 5 (five) meetings per quarter;
  - Outing Attendance: 1 (one) Troop outing (hikes, campouts, service projects, fundraisers, etc.) per quarter; and
  - Court of Honor Attendance: at least 1 (one) of the last two Courts of Honor.

For each of the following ranks, the Scout is encouraged to demonstrate his participation for a period of time immediately prior to advancement:

Star: Four months prior  
Life: Six months prior  
Eagle: Six months prior

- Level of Impact  
While most requirements for Scouting can be quantified, Scout Spirit is also measured by how the Scout affects others. Scout Spirit is more than reciting the words in the Oath, Law or Motto. The Spirit of Scouting shows in the home, school and community. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002)

As a Scout advances in rank, the Scouting Spirit should be more evident, recognized by others, and include an answer to the following:

- How does the Scout interact with others inside and outside the Troop?
- How does the Scout support the Troop, the Patrols, and the individuals?

- How does the Scout display the uniform?
- How does the Scout represent the Troop?
- How does the Scout demonstrate the Scout Oath in and outside the Troop?
- How does the Scout demonstrate the Scout Laws in and outside the Troop?

The SM or ASM conducting the SM Conference should be able to ask these questions to the Scout's parents, to him/herself, and to other ASMs, and immediately receive a positive remark. Then the Scout Spirit requirement can be considered complete when combined with the participation guidelines. (T834 Policies, 2003) Any questions regarding a Scout's Spirit ought be directed to the SM.

- Spirit Program Recognizing that a Scout may have difficulty reaching the level of participation, the SM and the Scout together, may create a program that will demonstrate Scout Spirit to the other Troop members. This option is available in the same spirit as the Leadership requirement allows a SM approved project. (T834 Policies, 2003)

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### 8.8 Scoutmaster Conference

- Purpose

The purpose of the conference is to develop, over a period of time, an increasing level of understanding and trust between the SM, ASMs and each Scout. Once this relationship is established and begins to grow, the SM can be increasingly effective in helping a Scout get the most out of the Scouting program. With each rank, the SM Conference has an opportunity to review the achievements the Scout has made, discuss interests, identify goals and solicit feedback on improvements for the Troop and Patrol. It is an opportunity for the SM to evaluate how the Troop is functioning for the benefit of each Scout. It is also the opportunity for the SM to evaluate how well the Scout has retained the knowledge gained for the rank. An ASM can conduct the SM Conference. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002)

- Conference Preparation Responsibilities

Since 1978 in T834 Policies, upon approval of the Troop Advancement Recorder that the Scout has completed all the necessary requirements, the Troop Advancement Recorder will provide the Scout with:

- A print out of the completed requirements, and
- A confirmation the Scout has met the level of participation for rank.

A Scout is to:

- Complete a SM Conference by the third Troop Meeting of the month;
- Present himself in complete Class A uniform to the SM;
- Bring his Scout Handbook, requirement print out, participation confirmation, and blue cards (for Star, Life and Eagle) to the SM Conference; and
- Upon completion of the SM Conference, present his Scout Handbook and Advancement Report printout to the Troop Advancement Recorder for update into advancement record system.

- SM Assignments

A Scout requesting a SM Conference will be assigned, by the SM, one of the following ASMs for the Conference (T834 Policies, March 1999):

Scout, Tenderfoot, and Second Class: Assistant Scoutmaster (ASM)  
First Class and Star: Assigned Assistant Scoutmaster (ASM)  
Life: ASM Eagle Advisors  
Eagle: Scoutmaster

- Conference Questions

The SM (or ASM designated by the SM) is to: (T834 Policies, March 1999)

- Review the list of rank requirements for which the Scout seeks;
- Ensure the completeness of any print out and the Scout's Handbook (complete with signatures or approval marks);
- Before conducting the conference, review the level of participation;
- Contact the Troop Advancement Recorder for any discrepancies; and

- Notify the BoR Coordinator that the SM Conference was complete.

The SM has access to SM Guidance 8.1, Scoutmaster Conference to give more suggestions on the process and suggested questions to ask. As a minimum, the SM or ASM (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002) should be prepared to ask a series of questions that:

- Challenge the skills learned for the rank;
  - Discuss interests the Scout gained in achieving the rank;
  - Review the upcoming requirements for the next rank;
  - Identify goals for achieving the next rank;
  - Review the participation, leadership and Scout Spirit expectations of the Troop; and
  - Help evaluate the function of the Troop;
- **Sign Off** Once the Scout has satisfactorily participated in the Conference the SM or ASM signs the Scout's Handbook and the requirement list.

Only after the SM Conference, can the Scout contact the Board of Review Coordinator to schedule a meeting with the Board. (T834 Policies, 2003)

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### **8.9 Board of Review**

When a Scout has completed all the requirements, Scout Spirit and SM Conference for a rank, he appears before a Board of Review (BoR) composed of members of the TPC. The purpose is not to retest a Scout, but to make sure he has met all requirements for the rank, to chat with him for a while, and to learn about how he feels he is doing with the Troop and with Scouting. (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002)

- **Opportunity**

The Scout is given the opportunity to bring up any questions or problems he may have. The BoR provides a chance for the Board to talk with him about such important matters as goals, Scout Spirit, personal growth, and of course to congratulate him on this progress and urge him to keep going. Or, if necessary, the BoR may frankly discuss his lack of progress, and try to help him get back "on track". (Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002)

Finally the BoR gives the Scout an opportunity to talk face to face with adults he may barely know, and gain confidence in his ability to communicate.

- **Sign up Process**

Boards of Review are conducted on the first meeting of each month, and the process for setting up the BoR follows:

- The Scout completes all requirements up through the SM conference.
- The Scout presents his Scout Handbook to the Troop Advancement Recorder to update the Troop advancement record system.
- The Scout phones the BoR Coordinator by the third Monday of each month to request a BoR. (The BoR Coordinator needs time to recruit the BoR team.)
- The BoR Coordinator will confirm with the Scout that a BoR has been scheduled.
- The Scout attends the Troop Meeting and BoR in full Class A uniform described in Troop 834 Policy 6.
- An ASM designated by the SM will contact the Scout at the Troop Meeting and escort the scout to the rooms where the BoR is being held.

For the rank of Eagle a special BoR is arranged to prepare the Scout for the District Board of Review.

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### **8.10 Court of Honor**

The Troop holds a Court of Honor (CoH) to recognize the achievements in the Troop. Like the Troop Meetings, the CoH is organized and conducted by the Scouts, assisted by a designated SM. The CoH is typically held the last Tuesday in

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September, January and May. Dates may need to change, so check the Troop published calendar.

***All parents and Scouts are requested to attend these ceremonies.*** Scouts attend the CoH in full Class A uniform. It is the opportunity for the Troop to relish in the Scouts' accomplishments and as a group recognize the good work each Scout has earned. Rank achievements, MB accomplishments and special awards are presented.

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**Reference**

BSA Policy  
BSA Scout Handbook, 1998  
BSA Scoutmaster Handbook, 2002 and 1990  
BSA Advancement Policy and Procedures Committee Guide  
Troop 834 Policies, 1978 thru  
Policy 1 – Troop Parent Committee  
Policy 2 - Uniformed Adult Leadership  
Policy 3 – Scout Leadership  
Policy 4 – Finances  
Policy 5 – Participation  
Policy 6 – Uniforms and Equipment  
Policy 7 – Outdoor Program  
Policy 9 – Records Management

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**Troop Requirements**

To ensure the practice of this Policy and associated Procedures, the Troop provides the following:

1. The Troop orients new Scouts and Parents on the Troop Program and Advancement Program.
  2. The PLC organizes Troop meetings, outings and activities that provide for the Patrol Method and the Rank Advancement Program for Scout Skills and MBs.
  3. The Troop updates lists of MBCs, including annual recruitment
  4. The Troop conducts an orientation for the MBCs at least annually to review the updated requirements and methods for ensuring sessions are planned according to the BSA Policy of learning, testing, reviewing and recognition.
  5. The Troop Advancement Recorder tracks which MBC signed the Blue Card.
  6. Merit Badge sessions are conducted outside the Troop meeting, unless identified as part of the meeting by the PLC.
  7. The Troop conducts Semi-annual Troop and Patrol Elections.
  8. The Troop provides Junior Leadership Training at least semi-annually.
  9. The Troop conducts regular Patrol Leadership Council meetings.
  10. The Troop provides on-going SM Training on issues related to this policy and associated procedures.
  11. The Troop maintains a process to hold Monthly Boards of Review.
  12. The Troop organizes a Court of Honor Ceremonies at least three times per year.
  13. The Troop provides semi-annual training for First Class and higher rank Scouts, on how to sign off requirements using the four step BSA process.
  14. The Troop identifies which registered adults are Life Advisors and Eagle Advisors.
  15. The Troop identifies which ASM will back up the SM if unavailable for questions on advancement.
  16. The Troop annually reviews this policy and associated procedures, and updates them as needed.
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