



GUIDE TO ADVANCEMENT 2019

 BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Important Notice

Please note that the following excerpt from the Guide to Advancement 2019 (sections 9.0.4.0 and 9.0.4.1) contains the normal policy for requesting and granting the Eagle Scout rank requirements before age 18.

The temporary policy change now in effect until September 30, 2020 allows local councils to grant time extensions to Life Scouts for reasons resulting from the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It allows extensions of up to three months beyond the Scout's 18th birthday. Request forms for such requests are available from the local council. This is a special policy exception for such cases.

Requests for time extensions for any other reason must be submitted using the process described in sections 9.0.4.0 and 9.0.4.1 of the Guide to Advancement 2019. In those cases, the request must begin with a letter and proceed through the normal steps as described in the *Guide*. The decision to grant or deny those applications is made by the National Advancement Program Team, after consideration of local council recommendations.

The Request for Extension of Time to Earn Eagle Scout Rank (512-077) must be completed by the council advancement committee. It is not intended for submission by Scouts or units.

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/health-and-safety/gss/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.

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 *Scouts BSA 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 Scouts BSA member may be used. Palms are not considered ranks, but rather degrees of the Eagle Scout rank.

9.0.4.0 Time Extensions

A Scout who foresees that, due to no fault or choice of their own, it will not be possible to complete the Eagle Scout rank requirements before age 18, 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, and 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 Scouts BSA ranks has a *Scouts BSA 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 has coped with in the past, should not suddenly become an issue shortly before the Scout's 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, the Scout's parent or guardian, the 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 to 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 the Scout’s 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 *Scouts BSA 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, the Scout’s parent or guardian, the unit leader, and the unit committee chair. **The council, however, does not grant or deny the extension. Only the National Advancement Program Team has that authority.**

5. The Scout then decides whether to pursue the extension with the National Advancement Program Team. If affirmative 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.