Troop 777
Advancement Policy

(effective 8/19/2013)

All Scouts, regardless of their age or grade, work through the same set of Rank badges.

Scout Badge. All Scouts when joining a troop must pass the joining requirements listed on page 17 of the Scout Handbook for the Scout Badge. Scouts who have just crossed over from Cub Scouts will recognize these requirements – they are very similar to the requirements for the Arrow of Light.

Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class. The first set of ranks - Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class - is designed to teach new Scouts the camping, first aid, and safety skills needed to go camping. Some Scouts can do all of the requirements in less than a year, some will take a bit longer.

Any of the requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class may be completed at any time, in any order. For example, a First Class requirement can be completed by a Second Class Scout. However, ranks must be <u>completed</u> in order – a rank cannot be presented until the previous rank has been earned.

The Path to Eagle. Once a Scout has reached First Class and learned the basic skills of Scouting, he is ready for the challenge of becoming an Eagle Scout. The Path to Eagle has three ranks, **Star Scout**, **Life Scout**, and **Eagle Scout**. Here the requirements for advancement consist of earning merit badges, doing service projects to help the community, showing leadership to other Scouts, and demonstrating to others that they have Scout spirit.

About requirement sign-offs.

Rank requirements can be signed off by any of the following individuals:

- The Scoutmaster or any registered Assistant Scoutmaster.
- A fellow Scout that has attended Troop Youth Leader Training (indicated by the "Trained" patch on their uniform) **and** is at least the rank being sought. For example, a <u>trained</u> First Class Scout (or above) can sign off on all First Class requirements (or below).
- Any other person designated by the Scoutmaster. This would include any adult providing a group teaching experience.

Signers should exercise judgment so as to not provide too many sign-offs for the same Scout. This should eliminate the appearance of any impropriety.

In all cases, the Scout must be prepared to <u>demonstrate</u> completion of the requirement. It is never appropriate to provide sign-off simply because the Scout *says* he knows how, or simply because he *attended* a class.

Note that each rank provides a requirement for Scout Spirit. Only the Scoutmaster is allowed to sign-off this requirement - no exceptions. The sign-off for Scout Spirit will typically be handled at the Scoutmaster Conference (see below).

Scoutmaster Conference. Each rank advancement includes a requirement for a Scoutmaster Conference. At this meeting the Scoutmaster will review the requirements with the Scout to make sure that they have been learned correctly, he will also discuss goals for the next advancement, and he will have the Scout share his ideas about the troop (how the Troop is functioning from their viewpoint, any areas for improvement, etc.)

When a Scout is ready for a Scoutmaster Conference, he should obtain the Scoutmaster Conference Worksheet from their Patrol Leader (copies are also available at the Troop website). The Scout must secure all the necessary signatures before scheduling an appointment for a conference.

When everything has been completed on the worksheet, the Scout will make an appointment with the Scoutmaster for a Conference at an agreeable time. Generally, appointments will be given for a Tuesday evening, either before the regular Troop meeting, or immediately after the regular Troop meeting.

Be aware that sometimes there may be a waiting list which necessitates that appointments be scheduled as much as 2-4 weeks in to the future.

Although it may be possible to accommodate time-critical demands, this should **not** be the expectation. The Scout should plan ahead so that critical dates do not become emergencies.

Please note that, in the interest of the BSA Youth Protection policies, the Scout must ensure that a parent is nearby during the Conference.

Board of Review. All rank advancements, except for the Scout badge, require a Board of Review. The members of a Board of Review are adult leaders in the troop, but not the Scoutmaster. The main purpose of the Board of Review is not to retest the skills a Scout has learned, but to ascertain the Scout's Spirit and to see how the troop is doing in helping him meet the Boy Scout objectives.

Boards of Rreview must be scheduled with the Troop Advancement Chair. Appointments will typically be given for a Tuesday night during a regular Troop meeting.

As is the case for Scoutmaster Conferences, although it may be possible to accommodate time-critical demands, this should **not** be the expectation. The Scout should plan ahead so that critical dates do not become emergencies.

Court of Honor. When a rank advancement is completed, the award will be presented to the Scout very soon thereafter. Four times each year, the troop will hold a special meeting called a Court of Honor. This is a formal ceremony to recognize all Scouts for rank advancement and other Scouting achievements.

This event is held with an audience of family, friends, chartered organization officials, and troop leaders.

Merit Badges. A merit badge is an invitation to explore an exciting subject. With more than a hundred to choose from, some merit badges encourage Scouts to increase their skill in various subjects. Some will challenge the Scout in new areas of knowledge. Many of the merit badges are designed to help increase the Scout's ability to be of service to others, to take part in outdoor adventures, to better understand the environment, and to play a valuable role in their family and community. Earning a merit badge can even lead toward a lifelong hobby or to a rewarding career.

Completion of a merit badge is determined by a registered merit badge counselor for that badge, and only until the Scout has demonstrated completion of each requirement.