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## EAGLE SCOUT ADVANCEMENT GUIDE

Sources: *BSA Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures*, 2007 Printing; *The Boy Scout Handbook*, 1998, Eleventh Edition, Ninth Printing; *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook*, 2007 Printing; *Boy Scout Requirements 2008*.

### Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to provide policy and guidance regarding the advancement program of the Boy Scouts of America to the districts and local units of the Central New Jersey Council. Policies and procedures in this manual are subject to review and amendment at any time as necessary by the Central New Jersey Council Advancement Committee. These policies and procedures must be administered under the spirit and intent as set forth in the current official publications of the Boy Scouts of America.

Education and fun are functions of the Scouting movement, and they must be the basis of the advancement program. A fundamental principle of advancement in Cub Scouting and Boy Scouting is the growth a young person achieves as a result of his participation in his unit program. The rank requirements in both of these phases of the Scouting program, as set forth in the official publications, shall furnish the basis of the activities of the unit.

Advancement is the process by which youth members of the Boy Scouts of America progress from rank to rank in the Scouting program. Advancement is simply a means to a greater goal, not an end in itself. Everything done to advance and earn these ranks, from joining until leaving the program, should be designed to help the young person have an exciting and meaningful experience. In Scouting, recognition is gained through leadership in the unit: attending and participating in the activities, living the ideals of Scouting, and developing a proficiency in outdoor life and other useful skills.

Advancement is one of the methods used to achieve the aims of Scouting, which are: character building, citizenship training, and physical and mental fitness. Cub Scout advancement is based on the programs in the den and pack, and consists of preparation, qualification, and recognition. Rank requirements are the basis for Boy Scout advancement. There are four steps in Boy Scout advancement procedures: learning, testing, reviewing, and recognition.

Advancement encourages the Scouting spirit. Scouting teaches a young person how to care for himself and help others. Advancement should reflect the desire to live the Cub Scout, Boy Scout, or Venturing Oath in his daily life.

## General Policy

The Central New Jersey Council Advancement Committee's purpose is to implement throughout the council the national BSA advancement policies and procedures by training, promoting advancement, and supervising those involved in the advancement process. The council advancement committee is a supervisory group, made up of the various district advancement chairs and members-at-large, that guides the district advancement committees in their work with each unit. The council advancement committee will establish procedures within the framework of national policy.

The advancement procedures of the Central New Jersey Council comply with the policies and procedures published in the current edition of the Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures, Boy Scouts of America.

Standards for all advancement are the requirements listed in the latest *Boy Scout Requirements*, Cub Scout, Boy Scout, or Venturing handbooks, or special change-of-requirement notices as published by the Boy Scouts of America.

**Advancement standards must be fair and uniform. No council, district, unit, or individual has the authority to add or subtract from any advancement requirements, as published by the Boy Scouts of America.**

Applications for advancement must be submitted to the Central New Jersey Council registrar on a properly completed Unit Advancement Report, either paper or electronic. Electronic submittal is preferred via BSA Internet Advancement. Merit badge completions and advancement data for Tenderfoot through Life Scout may either be entered by the unit into BSA Internet Advancement or submitted on a paper report. Eagle Scout and Eagle Palm applications may not be entered into BSA Internet Advancement by the unit. These applications must be submitted to the council for approval with a Unit Advancement Report.

No certificates or awards will be issued without the proper and timely submission of an advancement report. A Unit Advancement Report or an Internet Advancement System printout (final, not draft) must be submitted. Appropriate board of review signatures are required for rank advancement. All Boy Scout advancement must be reported to the registrar on a paper report or printout for inclusion in the unit files.

Each unit of the Central New Jersey Council should designate an advancement chairman. Troops, posts, crews, and ships should also designate an Eagle advancement advisor from the unit's registered adult leaders. The same person may perform both duties. Each unit should report the name, address, and phone number of their designated members to the appropriate district advancement committee and to the council registrar.

All tenure requirements for Boy Scout advancement shall begin on the date of the successful Board of Review of the previous rank.

The Central New Jersey Council Advancement Committee supports the National Standard for Advancement as outlined in the Centennial Quality Unit Award.

### **Eagle Scout Advancement Policies**

All Eagle Scout rank advancement requirements must be completed prior to the Scout's eighteenth (18th) birthday, except for the board of review.

Youth members with special needs may work toward rank advancement after they are 18 years of age, under the following conditions: prior to the Scout's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, chartered organizations determine, with approval of appropriate medical authorities, whether a youth member is qualified to register beyond the normal registration age, based on the definitions and guidelines contained in the *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures, BSA manual*. Refer to the section: "*Advancement for Youth Members with Special Needs.*"

The *Boy Scout Requirements* book and the *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures, BSA manual* also contain information for alternate requirements for the Eagle Scout Rank.

The council advancement committee must approve these registrations and alternate requirements on an individual basis prior to the Scout's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Contact your district or council advancement committee for guidance.

Scouts and Venturers who have completed all requirements for the Eagle Scout rank award prior to their 18th birthday may be reviewed within three (3) months after that date with no explanation.

Boards of Review conducted between three and six months after the candidate's 18th birthday must be pre-approved by the local council. A statement by an adult explaining the reason for the delay must be attached to the Eagle Scout Rank Application when it is submitted. Contact the Council Registrar for further information.

The council must contact the national Boy Scout Division for procedures to follow if a board of review is to be conducted more than six months after a candidate's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

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## The 12 Steps from Life to Eagle

**Step 1. In order to advance to the rank of Eagle Scout, while a Life Scout, a candidate must complete all of the requirements of active tenure; Scout spirit; any remaining merit badges; positions of responsibility; planning, developing, and providing leadership to others in a service project; and the Scoutmaster conference.**

**Be active in your troop, team, crew, or ship for a period of at least six months after you have achieved the rank of Life Scout.**

The BSA does not specify any particular level or percentage of activity required. The phrase “be active,” while not specifically defined in BSA advancement literature, suggests a Scout who participates in unit meetings and activities on a regular basis. It implies that a Scout’s participation is characterized by action rather than mere existence, engaged in regular and repeated activity.

Scouts who do not attend unit functions on at least a somewhat regular basis for a minimum of six months while a Life Scout should not expect to meet this part of the requirements. An informal Scoutmaster conference may be used at any time to allow the Scout to evaluate his performance and accomplishments and set new goals with his Scoutmaster.

**Demonstrate that you live by the principles of the Scout Oath and Law in your daily life.**

The Scout Oath and Law are the foundation of everything done in Scouting. The BSA expects Scouts to abide by these principles all the time, every day, and they are especially important for an Eagle Scout candidate. The best way that unit leaders can tell if a Scout does is by his usual behavior demonstrated during regular attendance at troop meetings and activities. If they see him infrequently they will have difficulty in determining whether he meets this requirement. If they observe a Scout participating on a regular basis, his leaders will have a solid basis upon which to determine that he qualifies.

**List the names of individuals who know you personally and would be willing to provide a recommendation on your behalf, including parents/guardians, religious, educational and employer references.**

Procedures for letters of reference are explained in Step 6.

**Earn a total of 21 merit badges (10 more than you have already used for previous ranks.)**

If a Scout has used multiple badges from a single group (i.e. Swimming, Hiking, Cycling) for previous rank advancement, choose only one badge to enter

in application requirement #3, items #6 and #9. Cross out the others in those items. If a crossed out badge has been earned for Star or Life, it should be entered in the elective section (items #13 to #21.)

Always enter any elective merit badges that are earned and used for Star and Life rank advancement on the Eagle application. Any other elective merit badges not specifically used for Star and Life advancement may be listed in the elective spaces or saved for Eagle Palm advancement, as long as the total listed for Eagle Scout is 21 merit badges.

Follow the format MM/DD/YY to enter the merit badges on the Eagle application. Use the date the badge requirements were completed as listed on the "Blue Card" when the counselor signed it. Do not use the date the badge was received in a court of honor. Double-check the dates with the unit Internet Advancement representative when completing the Eagle application. Enter the unit number where the badge was earned next to each badge.

**While a Life Scout, serve actively for a period of six months in one or more positions of responsibility.**

Refer to the current *Boy Scout Requirements* book and the Eagle Scout Rank Application for the most up-to-date list of permissible positions for troops, teams, crews, and ships.

The important part of this requirement is active service. Active service in a position of responsibility carries the same implied meaning as the requirement for active participation in the Scout's unit.

Unit leaders are obligated to continually counsel youth members in their positions of responsibility, and to not allow unsatisfactory performance to continue. A change in position or a break from service for a Scout's introspective reflection may be in order.

Although the BSA does not specify any particular level or percentage of activity, Scouts who do not provide active service in their position on a regular basis for at least six months while a Life Scout should not expect to meet this part of the requirements.

An informal Scoutmaster conference may be used at any time to assist the Scout to evaluate his performance and accomplishments and set new goals. Goal setting by the Scout makes it possible for the Scoutmaster to help the Scout with his weaknesses and encourage him to use his strengths.

A Scoutmaster conference should be a way of encouraging the individual Scout, to help him to see himself in the greater context of Scouting, and to encourage his personal growth, both in skills and in living up to the ideals of

Scouting. In these cases, he will be counseling the Scout, helping him form his own conclusions about the problem at hand and to explore possible solutions.

**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.**

Procedures for service projects are explained in Step 2.

**Take part in a Scoutmaster conference.**

All other requirements for Eagle Scout (except the board of review) should have been completed before the formal Eagle Scoutmaster conference. The unit leader should review all of the Scout's completed Eagle requirements and documents, including the project final report, prior to the conference. Upon successful completion of the conference, the unit leader should sign the candidate's Eagle Scout Rank Application signifying recommendation for advancement to the board of review.

This is certainly not the place to retest Scout skills. The conference should instead focus primarily of the three aims of Scouting: citizenship, growth in moral strength and character, and mental and physical development. The Scout Oath and Law can serve as an excellent basis for this discussion. The Scoutmaster should help the Scout review his entire history in Scouting up to this point, with special emphasis on his understanding of the deeper meaning of the morals and character described in the Scout Oath and Law.

This is not the time to shut the door on advancement, but rather to work with the Scout to create goals that will allow him to succeed.

The requirement for advancement is that a Scout participates in a formal Scoutmaster conference, not that he "passes" the conference. When advancement may be deferred, the Scout should not come to the Scoutmaster conference thinking that everything is OK and then be surprised that his advancement is deferred. He should have had plenty of warning and guidance prior to the Scoutmaster conference.

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**Step 2. Using the *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook*, the candidate must select his Eagle service project and have the project concept approved by his unit leader, his unit committee, and the benefactor of the project. It must also be reviewed and approved by the district or council advancement committee. The workbook must be used in meeting the requirement.**

Use the printed version (BSA form 18-927), which is available at the council service center in the council's Life-to-Eagle package. This package will be supplied through the CNJC Scout Shop when a Life Scout rank advancement report is submitted. In addition, a candidate may complete the form on a computer if he has access to an electronic version. The National Eagle Scout Association (NESA) website has the form available in PDF, DOC, and RTF formats at [<http://www.nesa.org/trail/manual.html>].

Add as many pages as necessary in completing the workbook to thoroughly describe the project plans and execution. If the preprinted or PDF workbook is used, additional pages should be attached as necessary to completely describe the project, with the phrase "see attached pages" entered into the appropriate spaces in the workbook. All required original signatures must be recorded in the workbook.

We always want to prepare our Eagle candidates to succeed, not fail. Final approval for the Eagle service project execution and completion occurs during the candidate's board of review. That is obviously not the time to determine that the project plan was faulty or insufficient, especially if the candidate has passed his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The approval of the project proposal does not mean that the Eagle Scout Board of Review will approve the way the project was completed. However, if a project proposal is carefully prepared, and the candidate completes the project as planned, then the final approval of the project during the board of review becomes more likely.

The key requirement of the Eagle Scout service project is to demonstrate leadership. The Eagle service project proposal should be prepared in such a manner as to thoroughly describe the plan in complete detail. It should leave absolutely no uncertainty about whether the Scout will have the opportunity to sufficiently demonstrate his leadership skills.

As a demonstration of leadership, the Scout must plan the work, organize the personnel, materials, and tools needed, and direct the project to its completion. The Eagle service project is an individual matter, therefore two candidates may not receive credit for the same project.

Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project proposals must be typewritten, computer generated, or printed neatly in ink, using the workbook. Computer word processing is recommended. Use the *BSA Language of Scouting* located at [<http://www.scouting.org/Media/LOS.aspx>] as guidance for your writing. (NOTE: Grammar, spelling, and neatness are an integral part of the overall impression of an Eagle candidate's best effort.)

The proposal should contain the following information, at a minimum:

- A description of the group or organization that will benefit from the project and an explanation of how that benefit will occur.
- The name, title, telephone, address, and signature of a representative of the organization that will benefit from the project.
- Sufficient detail so that it clearly spells out a step-by-step description of exactly what the candidate will do, and specifically how he will carry out each part of the project.
- Plan your work by thoroughly by describing:
  - The present condition
  - The step-by-step detailed methods and procedures to be used
  - A specific and detailed list of materials, equipment and tools to be used
  - Number of project helpers, including a detailed estimate of manpower necessary during each phase of the project
  - A time schedule for carrying out the project
  - A detailed estimated cost of the project
  - How funds will be obtained and from what sources
  - Safety hazards you could face
  - The safety procedures you will follow to ensure a safe work environment for your volunteers
- If appropriate, include photographs of the area before you begin your project. Before and after photographs of your project area can give a clear example of your effort and success.
- Remember youth protection guidelines and plan two-deep adult leadership at all times.
- Include a letter from the beneficiary organization, on letterhead if possible, approving your proposed project.

There are no specific requirements for the size of the project. There is no minimum number of hours that must be spent on an Eagle Project. The amount of time spent by the candidate in planning the project and the actual working time spent carrying out the project should be as much as necessary for the Scout to clearly demonstrate leadership skills. Total time involvement should be considerable and should represent the candidate's best effort.

The project does not have to be original, something a Scout dreams up that has never been done before, but it could be. A Scout may pick a project that has been done before, but he must take responsibility for planning, directing, and following through to its successful completion.

Service to others is a key principle. Routine labor (a job or service normally rendered) should not be considered. Work involving council property or other BSA activity is not permitted. The project may not be performed for a business or an individual, be of a commercial nature, or be a fund-raiser.

Fund raising is permitted only for securing materials or supplies needed to carry out your project. However, there are no regulations restricting the funding of a project. There is no requirement for a Scout to include a fund-raiser as an integral part of his project. All projects should stand on their own in terms of quality and leadership, regardless of the source of funding.

### **Project approval:**

The project proposal must be approved before a Scout begins work on his project execution. This does not preclude him from thoroughly planning the project and securing a source of funding, but the candidate should definitely not begin any work on the project's execution phases without all four approval signatures in his possession.

The proposal must be reviewed and approved by the beneficiary of the project, the unit leader, the unit committee, and the council or district advancement committee, to make sure that it meets the standards for Eagle Scout leadership service projects **before** the project is started.

Projects will not be approved when project work (other than planning) is accomplished prior to the approval process. The unit committee may review and approve the proposal as a group or authorize the unit's Eagle Scout advisor to act on the committee's behalf.

The variety of projects performed throughout the nation by Eagle Scout candidates is staggering. Only those living in a council area can determine the greatest value and need for that area. Determine, therefore, whether the project is big enough, appropriate, and worth doing. For ideas and opportunities the

Scout can consult people such as school personnel, religious leaders, local government officials and department directors, or United Way agency personnel.

Each district advancement committee will establish a primary and alternate contact person to be responsible for receiving and initial processing of Eagle Scout Service Project proposals. This information will be made widely available among district Scouters and at the council service center.

District advancement committees may review each service project proposal in the entire committee, or by one to three members. A specific committee member should be designated for each Scout's proposal, to communicate directly with the particular Eagle Scout candidate regarding proposal modifications and approval.

There is no requirement that the same person in a district advancement committee approve all proposals. However, there is significant benefit to be gained by involving more than one person in the review / approval process, in order to gain multiple perspectives regarding the value of the project. In addition, having more than one or two district committee members qualified to review and approve project proposals will add flexibility and provide a greater number of available district advisors for Eagle Scout candidates.

Districts should consider the option of having the same member who approved the service project proposal serve on the candidate's Eagle Scout board of review, whenever possible, for reasons of continuity.

Each district advancement committee will make every effort to return Eagle Scout service project proposals to candidates within 10 to 14 calendar days of receipt (maximum 21 days.) When returned, each proposal will be approved and signed, or the candidate will be provided with specific written guidance with regard to changes necessary for approval. Additional follow-up on revisions will be dependent on Scout actions, with the district representative taking no more than 7 calendar days for each subsequent review.

No proposal approvals may be granted verbally under any circumstance. All Eagle Scout service project proposals must use a form of the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook (No. 18-927), including any additional sheets necessary to thoroughly describe the intended project. All approvals must be signed in the workbook. Scouts may not begin actual service project work until all required written approvals have been obtained.

Eagle candidates must comply with the following project approval process:

- Discuss, plan, and write a project proposal with the guidance of the unit Eagle Scout Advisor.
- Discuss the written plan with the beneficiary group contact person. Have this person sign the project workbook and provide a letter approving the proposal on behalf of the sponsoring organization.
- Discuss the written plan with the unit leader. Have the unit leader approve the proposal and sign the workbook.
- Discuss the written plan with the unit committee. Have the unit committee representative approve and sign the proposal. (The unit Eagle Scout advisor may act on behalf of the unit committee.)
- Contact the appropriate district advancement committee (NOT the council office.) Make arrangements for a review of the proposal for final approval. Allow sufficient time for district approval (with possible revisions) before planning for project work to begin. Eagle Scout service projects are the sole responsibility of Eagle Scout candidates. Therefore, candidates must communicate directly with the district advancement committee regarding their project proposals. Parents and Scouters may play a supporting role only. Direct communication on project proposal modifications and approvals should only occur between the Eagle Scout candidate and the district advancement committee representative.
- Actual work on the project must not begin until after the project workbook has been approved and signed by the district advancement committee and returned to the Scout.
- Should the candidate think that approval has been unfairly withheld or requirements arbitrarily added, he may appeal directly to the district advancement committee and subsequently to the council advancement committee.

#### **Completion of the Eagle Scout Service Project:**

- A major portion of the project work should be accomplished by Scouts (Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Venture, or Varsity) if possible, in keeping with the Scouting tradition and principles of community service.
- Adults, family, friends, and others may also be involved in the project work.
- The Eagle Scout candidate must clearly demonstrate leadership throughout all of the project work sessions.

- A candidate should notify his unit leaders and his district advancement committee representative of any and all scheduled work sessions in advance of the scheduled date, so that these key leaders may attend and observe the project if they desire.
- Any significant changes in the planned scope or details of the project must be pre-approved in writing or email by the district advancement committee representative.
- Record the progress of the project. All candidates should keep a day-to-day logbook with the dates, names, work performed, and total hours expended by each person involved on the project. List who worked on the project, the days they worked, the number of hours they worked each day, and the total length of time others assisted on the project. The time to be included should begin with your first planning activity and end with the completion of the project report.
- The Eagle candidate must direct the project to a successful completion in an orderly and responsible manner. He must demonstrate his **BEST EFFORT** in planning and completing his the Eagle Project.

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**Step 3. It is imperative that all requirements for the Eagle Scout rank, except the board of review, be completed prior to the candidate's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. When all requirements including the leadership service project and Scoutmaster conference have been completed, except the Eagle Scout board of review, the Eagle Scout Rank application must be completed promptly. (Youth members with special needs should meet with their unit leader regarding time extensions.)**

The Eagle Scout Rank application is submitted to the council registrar twice. The first is when the application is certified and the second time is after the board of review is completed.

Certification of the Eagle application by the council registrar should occur as soon as possible after the Scout has completed his Life Scout board of review and after all necessary merit badges for Eagle Scout advancement have been earned and reported.

Make sure all of the merit badges have been reported and entered into the BSA Internet Advancement System before the candidate submits his application to the council for certification. An Eagle Scout candidate should coordinate with his unit advancement representative about the accuracy of the dates recorded for him in the BSA Internet Advancement System prior to submitting the application.

Early verification by the council registrar is desirable in order to resolve any discrepancies in BSA records well in advance of the candidate's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. The council service center staff will confirm:

- The applicant is a registered member of his unit.
- All listed ranks and merit badges have been recorded in ScoutNET, and the dates indicated on the application are correct.
- At least four months passed between First Class and Star rank board of review dates.
- At least six months passed between Star and Life rank board of review dates.
- 21 merit badges have been earned, MM/DD/YY and unit number listed, 12 Eagle required, 9 elective. The date used is date the counselor signed the Blue Card, not the date the badge was awarded.
- Four Eagle required merit badges were earned before the Star rank award (6 total merit badges).
- Three more Eagle required merit badges were earned before the Life rank award (7 Eagle required merit badges, 11 total merit badges).

The candidate should type (or print neatly in ink – pencil is not acceptable) all required information on the form. Typing is strongly recommended. Complete only the information on the front of the application at this time, leaving requirement #2 blank. Be careful with spelling, especially the Scout's name. The Eagle credentials will use this spelling. The unit city/state/zip is the location of the unit's chartered organization, not necessarily where the unit has meetings.

Enter the exact dates for all rank advancements and merit badge completions on the application. If more than 21 merit badges have been earned, be sure to include those that were earned for the Star and Life ranks. Save any excess badges for Eagle Palms. These merit badge dates will be confirmed by the council service center. Draw a line through the non-applicable merit badges for #6 and #9. If these badges have been earned, they may be entered as elective badges.

Submit the application to the council service center for certification, and allow sufficient time (7-14 days) for confirmation prior to the Eagle Scout Board of Review. Do not submit any other materials at this time. The council registrar or staff will make every effort to complete the certification process for Eagle Scout Rank Applications within 7 calendar days (maximum 14 days.) In order to be fair to every Scout, Eagle Scout Rank Applications will be processed in the order in which they are received at the council office. Don't wait until the last minute.

If the application requires correction, simply line out the incorrect information, write in the correct information, and initial each change. If the application is already signed and certified, it should not be resubmitted until after the board of review is completed.

Eagle Scout candidates are directly responsible for delivering Eagle Scout Rank Applications to/from the service center for certification, not Scouters or parents. U.S. Mail or express delivery services may be used, but allow for appropriate transit time. Please include the name and daytime phone number for a unit leader in case of unresolved issues with the application. The council registrar or staff will sign the reverse side of the application to certify that all dates of merit badges and rank are correct. If a direct pickup is planned, include a note with a name and daytime phone number to call once the application is certified

The second time the Eagle Scout Rank Application is submitted to the council is after all requirements are completed including the Eagle Scout board of review. The completed application is combined with other documents prior to the board of review and reviewed by all members of the board. It is then submitted to the council registrar by the unit along with all other original documents (in an appropriately sized binder) after the board of review is successfully completed.

List the positions of responsibility held in the unit after the Life Scout board of review. The combined tenure in multiple positions must be at least six months. These positions may not be served concurrently. Do not enter the word "present" in the dates for positions. If a candidate is serving in a position at the time of his Eagle board of review or his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, whichever is earlier, the end date will be the day before the board of review or the 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Check to be sure that the date of the Life Scout board of review matches in requirements #1 and #4.

Eagle Scout Rank Application requirement #6 is a three-part requirement.

- The candidate shall prepare a statement of his ambitions and life purpose. The statement should be sufficient so as to allow the board of review the opportunity to assess the candidate's approach to his life and future.
- The candidate shall prepare a listing of positions of responsibility held in his religious institution, school, sports, community, camp, and other organizations during which he demonstrated responsibility and leadership skills. The list shall include honors, awards, and recognition received during this service.
- The candidate must take part in a Scoutmaster conference with his unit leader prior to his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. The unit leader will review all of the completed Eagle requirements and documents at that time, including the

project final report. The unit leader's signature signifies approval to the unit committee and to the board of review.

All members of the Eagle Scout Board of Review should sign the application upon successful completion of the review.

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**Step 4. The application should be signed by the unit leader at the proper place. The unit committee reviews and approves the record of the Eagle candidate before the application is submitted. If a unit leader or unit committee fails to sign or otherwise approve an application, the Eagle candidate may still be granted a board of review. The failure of a unit leader or unit committee to sign an application may be considered by the board of review in determining the qualification of the Eagle candidate.**

The unit leader and the unit committee chairperson (or registered designees) must sign the application indicating to the Eagle Scout board of review that the Scout has successfully completed all requirements for the Eagle award prior to the candidate's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, and that the unit committee approves of the application.

Relatives of the Scout are not prohibited from signing the application, but this action is not recommended due to the appearance of a possible conflict of interest. A more desirable procedure is to ask another registered unit leader (Assistant Scoutmaster or Committee Member) to sign in place of, or in addition to, the relative.

When a unit leader or unit committee does not recommend a candidate for a board of review, they may refuse to sign the Eagle Scout application. In this situation, the candidate or his parent(s) or guardian(s) may appeal the decision. The committee hearing the appeal shall decide to grant or not to grant a board of review.

All appeals, under any circumstances, shall be directed to the next highest level. If the decision leading to the appeal occurred at the unit level, the appeal shall be directed to the district advancement committee. If the decision leading to the appeal occurred at the district level, the appeal shall be directed to the council advancement committee.

A decision at either level finding in favor of the Scout shall be final. Units have no right of appeal of a decision. If the council advancement committee upheld the unfavorable finding of the district advancement committee, the Scout and his parent(s) may appeal to the National Boy Scout Committee, processed through the local council. All decisions of the National Boy Scout Committee in reference to appeals shall be final.

All requests for appeal shall be made in writing, signed by the Scout and/or his parent(s), and shall set forth in detail the reasons for requesting the appeal. Contact the appropriate district or council advancement committee for further information prior to initiating an appeal.

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**Step 5. The *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*, properly filled out, must be submitted with the application.**

The unit leader, the unit committee, and the Eagle Scout board of review should thoroughly review the project workbook and final report to determine if the Scout successfully completed his project in accordance with his plan. A primary focus of the review should be on whether the Scout sufficiently demonstrated leadership during his project.

The workbook and all other required materials will be submitted to the council registrar by the unit following the successful completion of the Eagle Scout board of review. See step 10.

**The project report**

A detailed final report (in narrative form) shall be prepared to describe the entire Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project. The report should be typed or neatly printed in ink. Computer word processing is recommended. Use the *BSA Language of Scouting* located at [<http://www.scouting.org/Media/LOS.aspx>] as guidance for writing the report. (NOTE: Grammar, spelling, and neatness are an integral part of the overall impression of an Eagle candidate's best effort.)

Add as many pages as necessary in completing the workbook to thoroughly describe the project execution. If the preprinted or PDF workbook is used, additional pages should be attached as necessary to completely describe the project, with the phrase "see attached pages" entered into the appropriate spaces in the workbook. All required signatures must be recorded in the workbook.

The report should include:

- A complete detailed description of the project and the manner in which it was completed.
- A description of how the project was of benefit to others.
- A detailed list of the people who worked on project, the dates, times, and hours they worked, and an analysis of the man-hours necessary to

complete the project. (NOTE: The man-hour analysis must agree with the hours recorded in the project workbook.)

- A statement as to who provided the candidate with guidance during the project.
- A detailed list of the type of materials that were used in the project, their costs, and how they were acquired.
- Details about the acquisition and disposition of funds and materials, including those acquired but not used in the project.
- A complete description of how leadership was demonstrated by the candidate during the planning, development, and execution of the project.
- A comprehensive description of lessons learned by the Eagle candidate, including any error correction or modifications to the plan necessary to bring the project to completion and the reason for the change.
- The report should include all supplementary materials related to the project such as: before and after photographs, diagrams, maps, equipment lists, and work schedules as necessary to provide a clear picture of the work done.
- A letter of completion (on letterhead stationery if possible) must be included from the beneficiary group contact person, confirming the satisfactory completion of the project, and the value of the project to the group or organization.

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**Step 6. The Scout shall have listed six references (five if no employer, and parent if no organized religious association). The council advancement committee or its designee contacts the references on the Eagle Scout Rank Application, either by letter, form, or telephone checklist. (The council determines the method to be used.)**

The Central New Jersey Council advancement committee has determined that a combined form/letter method will be used for Eagle Scout candidate reference checks. A form is available at the end of this guide that Scouts may use to request these letters.

An Eagle Scout candidate should contact six individuals who know him well and who would be willing to write a favorable letter of recommendation for his Eagle Scout advancement. Each reference should be asked to write a personal

recommendation on the candidate's behalf, providing information about how the candidate lives by the principles of the Scout Oath and Law in his daily life.

The candidate shall provide each individual with a copy of the form in this guide, and a stamped envelope addressed to the unit. (Note: The Scout should request letters only from people who are readily available, in case follow-up questions are necessary.)

All completed reference letters should be mailed directly to the Scout's Eagle advancement advisor or unit committee chair. The Scout should not be involved personally in transmitting any correspondence between references and the unit, the board of review, or the council office

The unit representative should telephone or write (email is acceptable) each person who writes a letter, thanking them for taking the time to support the Eagle Scout candidate. This step also serves as verification that the writer actually sent the letter. Unit representatives are responsible for verifying the authenticity of any letter that appears questionable, prior to the Eagle Scout Board of Review.

If a Scout is not employed at the time of his Eagle Scout board of review, then only five reference letters are required. Letters of reference from the parent(s) or guardian(s), religious reference, educational reference, and two others are mandatory.

If a candidate is not associated with an organized religious institution, a parent or guardian should provide the religious reference. A parent's religious reference may be written either in a separate letter addressing the Scout's religious beliefs, or separately addressed in the parent reference letter (thus only four separate letters in that case.) In either case, the parent or guardian should be listed as the religious reference on the Eagle Scout Rank Application.

Provide the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the personal references in the spaces indicated on the Eagle Scout Rank Application. Wait until each letter is received by the unit before entering the reference information on the application. At times, a reference may not be able to write a timely letter and a new reference person may be asked. The Scout should provide a list of the requested references to his unit leader for tracking purposes.

An Eagle Scout board of review should not normally be scheduled until all of these letters are received and verified at the unit. If an initial reference letter is not returned to the unit in a timely manner, the unit must make direct contact with the reference(s) on its own by follow-up letter, telephone contact or other methods it chooses. The candidate shall not be required to make follow up contact with the reference.

An Eagle Scout candidate cannot have a board of review denied or postponed indefinitely because the unit does not receive the reference forms or letters he requested. Request the reference letters early enough in the Eagle advancement process so that any necessary follow-up will not unnecessarily delay the Scout's board of review. All letters must be requested prior to the Scout's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. There is no requirement that the reference letters be written prior to the Scout's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

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**Step 7. After the contents of the application have been completed and verified, the Eagle Scout board of review should be scheduled. A board of review may not be scheduled until all other Eagle Scout requirements have been satisfactorily completed.**

Reference checks that are part of the application are confidential and their contents are not to be disclosed to any person who is not a member of the board of review, other than the unit leader who received the letters. However, only with specific permission from each individual letter writer, the unit may give the letter(s) to the candidate during his Eagle Scout court of honor. If desired, that request should be made during the follow up contact after each letter is received at the unit. Otherwise the letter(s) must be destroyed after they are returned to the unit with the new Eagle Scout's credentials.

All Eagle Scout boards of review will be held at a location that is mutually convenient for the Scout, the troop, and the district representatives. District representatives will make every reasonable effort to accommodate troop requests for location and timing, based on district advancement committee member availability.

Eagle Scout boards of review should be scheduled as needed by units, within two weeks of the initial request to the district advancement point of contact, if possible (maximum four weeks.) Districts may conduct a regularly scheduled monthly date for Eagle Scout reviews if they meet the above requirements.

Only unit Eagle advancement advisors should contact the district advancement committee for scheduling an Eagle Scout board of review, and only after all other portions of the Eagle Scout advancement requirements have been completed. District advancement committee representatives should not discuss Eagle Scout board of review scheduling requirements with the candidate directly.

Troop representatives shall forward a photocopy of all documents associated with the candidate's application (excluding letters of recommendation) to the designated district advancement representative at least seven calendar days prior to the scheduled date of the board of review.

The set of Eagle document copies shall include the following six items:

- Eagle Scout Rank Application
- Statement of ambitions and life purpose
- List of positions held in religious institution, school, camp, community, and other organizations during which leadership positions were demonstrated (include honors and awards received during this service)
- Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook
- Eagle Scout service project proposal with approval letter
- Eagle Scout service project report with approval letter

Reviews may not proceed until this requirement is met. (Note: Do not mail original documents. Do not make additional copies of reference letters. The unit should preserve all original documents for the Board of Review.)

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### **Step 8. Composition of the Eagle Scout board of review.**

The BSA has placed the Eagle Scout board of review in the hands of either the troop, team, crew, or ship committee or the district or council advancement committee. The Central NJ Council has decided that normal Eagle Scout boards of review will be conducted at the unit level.

The board of review for an Eagle candidate is composed of at least three, but not more than six members 21 years of age or older. One member serves as chairman. Unit leaders, assistant unit leaders, relatives, or guardians may NOT serve as members of a Scout's board of review.

The board members do not have to be registered in Scouting, but they must have a thorough understanding of the importance and purpose of the Eagle board of review.

The board of review members should convene at least 30 minutes before the candidate appears in order to review the application, reference letters, and service project report.

At least one district or council representative shall be a member of the Eagle board of review when the board of review is conducted at the unit level, and may serve as chairman if requested by the unit. A council or district may designate more than one person to serve as a member of Eagle Boards of review when requested to do so by the unit. It is not required that these persons are members of the advancement committee; however, they must have an understanding of the importance of the Eagle board of review.

All CNJC Eagle Scout boards of review will normally be scheduled with two district/council representatives (minimum one) and four troop committee representatives (minimum two.) This provides more than the minimum coverage in case a scheduled board member is unable to attend on short notice due to personal obligations, thereby preserving the board of review if at all possible.

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### **Step 9. Conduct of the Eagle Scout board of review.**

The candidate's parent(s), guardian(s), and/or unit leader may make a statement or ask questions of the board members (prior to the Scout Interview) if they desire. This totally voluntary activity is intended to allow parents to be a part of the process and to resolve any questions they may have. However, the Eagle Scout candidate is the only person required to appear before the board of review. Whether or not the parents or unit leader choose to appear will have no bearing on the ultimate success or failure of the candidate.

The Scout should be neat in his appearance and his uniform should be as complete and correct as possible, with all insignia worn properly. If he is past his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, he should not wear his Life Scout rank emblem, his patrol emblem, his Arrow of Light, or any other "boy only" insignia. All other insignia are permissible and should be worn. He should bring his merit badge sash and his Order of the Arrow sash if applicable. The candidate should bring his *Boy Scout Handbook* with all Eagle Scout requirements completed and signed except his board of review.

The candidate's unit leader introduces him to the members of the board of review. The unit leader may remain in the room, but does not participate in the board of review. The unit leader may be called on to clarify a point in question. In no case should a relative or guardian of the candidate attend the review, even as a unit leader.

The interview portion of the Eagle Scout Board of Review should take from 30 to 60 minutes, with additional time taken as necessary to clarify any points of concern, so as to provide the greatest possible opportunity for the Scout to advance.

There is no set of questions that an Eagle Candidate should be asked. However, the board should be assured of the candidate's participation in the program. This is the highest award that a boy may achieve and, consequently, a thorough discussion of his successes and experiences in Scouting should be considered. The goal of the board should be to encourage the Scout to talk so that the review can be a learning experience for the candidate and the board members.

The review is not an examination. The Scout has learned his skills and has been examined. This is a review. The board should attempt to determine the Scout's acceptance of Scouting's ideals and goals. A discussion of the Boy Scout Oath and Law is essential in keeping with the purpose of the review, to make sure the candidate recognizes and understands the value of Scouting in his home, unit, school, and community.

The Eagle Scout board of review must review and provide final approval of the way the Eagle Scout service project was completed in an appropriate manner. Questions that must be addressed include:

- Did the candidate demonstrate significant leadership to others?
- Did he indeed direct others during the project, rather than do all the work himself?
- Was the project of real value to a religious institution, school or community group?
- Did the project follow the approved plan, or were modifications needed to bring it to completion? Why were those changes necessary? How did he resolve the issues?

Discuss the Scout's demonstrated leadership: (a) in his Eagle Scout service project, (b) within the Scout's unit, and (c) outside of Scouting. Use the list of leadership positions, honors, and awards from application requirement #6, and the unit leadership positions listed in application requirement #4, as a starting point for this discussion.

Discuss the Scout's statement of his ambitions and life purpose from application requirement #6. Determine his future goals and whether his plans include a future involvement in Scouting. Encourage continued involvement in Scouting.

After the review, the candidate and his unit leader shall leave the room while the board members discuss the acceptability of the candidate as an Eagle Scout. All discussions about the candidate during the deliberation are confidential and based on the principle of non-attribution. Their contents may not be released to the candidate.

**The decision must be unanimous.** Because of the importance of the Eagle Scout Award, a unanimous decision must be reached as to the Scout's qualifications.

If the candidate meets the requirements, he is asked to return and is informed that he will receive the board's recommendation for the Eagle Scout rank. After

the unanimous approval decision is reached, the Board members will sign the Eagle Scout Rank Application and Boy Scout Handbook, invite the candidate back in the room and formally announce the results to him. Parents, guardians, and unit leaders should be invited in for the results.

The district advancement representative should explain the process of paperwork through the Central New Jersey Council and the National BSA offices for official confirmation of the Eagle Award.

If the candidate does not meet the requirements, he (and his parents if available) is asked to return and told the reasons for his failure to qualify. A discussion should be held with him as to how he may meet the requirements within a given period. A follow-up letter must be sent to the Scout confirming the agreements reached on the action(s) necessary for the advancement.

Should the applicant disagree with the decision, the appeal procedures should be explained to him. If the Scout chooses to appeal, provide the name and contact information of the person he is to contact. See Step 4, page 15.

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**Step 10. Return the completed Eagle Scout Rank Application package to the CNJC service center for council approval.**

The Scout's unit must forward all of the original documents reviewed by the Board to the council service center for certification by the Scout Executive or his designee. A properly completed unit advancement report (BSA Form 34403) must accompany the successful Eagle Scout application package to the council service center. The candidate shall not transmit the package to the council because it contains the letters of reference.

The Eagle Scout Rank Application is submitted to the council after all requirements are completed, including the Eagle Scout board of review. The completed application is submitted to the council registrar by the unit along with all other original documents (in an appropriately sized binder – not loosely gathered) after the board of review is successfully completed.

The original package of Eagle documents shall include these eight items:

- Unit Advancement Report
- Eagle Scout Rank Application
- Letters of reference
- Statement of ambitions and life purpose
- List of positions held in religious institution, school, camp, community, and other organizations during which leadership positions were demonstrated
- Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook

- Eagle Scout service project proposal with approval letter
- Eagle Scout service project report with approval letter

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### **Step 11. Council Service Center processing.**

When the application package arrives at the council service center, the Scout executive or his designee reviews it to certify that the proper procedure has been followed and that the board of review has recommended the candidate for the Eagle Scout rank. He then signs it to indicate council approval.

The council reviews the application to ascertain information such as proper signatures, positions of responsibility, tenure between ranks, and age of the candidate. Any item not meeting national standards will cause the application to be returned for more information.

The council registrar will enter the completed Eagle Scout advancement into ScoutNET and then submit the application to the National Council for approval.

The Eagle Scout application package shall be retained by the council while awaiting National BSA Council approval.

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### **Step 12. National BSA Eagle Scout Service processing.**

If the application is in order, the Scout is certified as an Eagle Scout by the Eagle Scout Service on behalf of the National Council. Notice of approval is given by sending the Eagle Scout credentials to the local council. The date used will be the date of the board of review.

The Eagle Scout presentation kit may not be purchased and the Eagle Scout Court of Honor may not be scheduled until the approved Eagle Scout credentials are received at the Central New Jersey Council Service Center from the National Eagle Scout Service. The council office staff will notify the unit leader by mail when the credentials are received.

Once all materials have been received, reviewed, and approved at council level, and submitted to the National Council, it may take as long as six to eight weeks until the credentials are returned to the local council. All of the original materials submitted as part of Step 10 will be returned to the unit along with the new Eagle Scout's credentials.

Expedited service by the National Council is available. Contact the council registrar for further information.

**LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION GUIDELINES**

Life Scout \_\_\_\_\_ has indicated that you are willing to attest to his character, morals, and personal code of conduct in a letter of recommendation for attaining the Eagle Scout Award, Scouting's highest honor.

Below you will find the Scout Oath or Promise and the Scout Law. Please review these and indicate in your letter your personal opinion as to his lifestyle in following the Scout Oath or Promise and the Scout Law in his daily life.

**THE SCOUT OATH OR PROMISE**

On my honor I will do my best  
to do my duty to God and my country  
and to obey the Scout Law;  
To help other people at all times;  
To keep myself physically strong,  
mentally awake, and morally straight.

**THE SCOUT LAW**

A Scout is:  
Trustworthy, Loyal,  
Helpful, Friendly,  
Courteous, Kind,  
Obedient, Cheerful,  
Thrifty, Brave,  
Clean, and Reverent

Some points you may wish to consider in your letter are:

The Scout's fidelity to the three major points of the Scout Oath or Promise:

- a. Duty to God and Country
- b. Helping others at all times
- c. Duty to self

Please mail your completed letter, at your earliest convenience, to:

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(Troop Committee Chair, Scoutmaster, or Eagle Scout Advisor)

A stamped envelope has been provided for your convenience. Your letter should not be returned directly to the Scout. Thank you for your cooperation and support in this matter of great importance to this young man and to the Scouting program.