

Alamo Area Council, BSA

**Eagle Scout**  
**Project Approval Review**  
**&**  
**Board of Review**  
**Training for Adult Leaders**

Updated July 7, 2010



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## Overview

The purpose of this training is to make Eagle boards of review consistent among our districts and compliant with national standards as stated in the latest revision of the Advancement Committee Guide Policies and Procedures, currently publication #33088E

An Eagle Scout candidate should be able to receive a review of the same quality standards in any one of our districts **throughout** our council.

**A Scout must never be delayed for advancement because of the failure of an adult.**

In the course of carrying out his Eagle service project, an Eagle Candidate will be asked many questions by his co-workers, advisers, and Scout leaders. How well he responded to these questions will help the Board of Review members determine his effectiveness as a leader.

### **Service Project requirement**

**REQUIREMENT 5.** While a Life Scout, **plan, develop, and give leadership to others** in a service project helpful to any religious institution, any school, or your community.

The project plan must be approved by your Scoutmaster and troop committee, by the council or district, and by the organization benefiting from the effort before you start.

**You must use the *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook, No. 512-927*, in meeting this requirement.**

*EAGLE SCOUT RANK APPLICATION, 2009 printing*

## **Board of Review Member Qualifications**

Each board member must:

1. Be age 21 or over and
2. Have an understanding of the purpose and importance of the board of review

## **Board of Review Makeup**

A review board must consist of at least three but no more than six members. (See item 8 of The 12 Steps From Life to Eagle)

At least one board member **must be registered** in the Boy Scouts of America

The person chairing the board should be **trained** in Eagle board of review procedures

Family members including guardians of the Candidate are **not** to be allowed to attend the review even as unit leader.

Those representing the benefactor of the Candidate's service project should not be allowed to serve on the Candidate's review board.

Unit Leaders and Assistant Leaders of the Candidate **cannot** serve on his review board. They may remain in the room but are not to participate in the review unless asked to clarify a point.

Members of a Candidate's unit committee **are** allowed to serve on the Candidate's review board.

## The Life to Eagle Packet

### Facts:

- Available at the council service center or online at [www.alamoarea-boyscouts.org](http://www.alamoarea-boyscouts.org) under the Advancement icon, then click on Life To Eagle
- One packet is given to the unit for each Life Scout listed on the Advancement Report
- Should be presented to the new Life Scout at an appropriate time
- Parents or guardian of the scout should be present when the packet is presented
- Encourage the scout **and** his parents to read through the packet thoroughly before starting

### Contents:

- Eagle Scout Rank Application
- Filling out the Eagle application
- Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook
- Eagle Scout Project Planning
- Guideline for obtaining reference letters
- Example of return envelope
- Eagle Scout Reference requests (six copies)
- District Eagle Board locations
- Addresses to request special recognition letters

The Life to Eagle Packet should be thoroughly reviewed by the Unit Leader **before** presenting it to the new Life Scout

Presentation of the packet should be done during a quiet period of time in the presence of the Scout and his parents or guardian so that the leader can **briefly** explain its use and offer strong encouragement to the Scout to review EVERYTHING in the packet before proceeding

This is also a good time to remind the Scout that everything must be **completed by his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.**

## The Service Project

### Basic Standards

1. **A project for the Eagle rank must benefit an organization outside of Scouting.** Work involving council property or other BSA activities is not acceptable for an Eagle Scout service project.
2. The project must not be for a business or be of a commercial nature
3. **Fund-raising** is permitted only for securing materials or supplies needed to carry out the project.
4. **Routine labor**, a job or service normally rendered, should not be considered.
5. The project must provide an **adequate opportunity** for the candidate to **demonstrate leadership**. There is **no minimum number of hours** that must be spent on carrying out the project. The amount of time spent must be sufficient for the Scout to clearly demonstrate leadership skills. (see Service Projects, Advancement Committee Guide, Policies and Procedures)
6. The project **must conform** to the **wishes and regulations** of those for whom the project is undertaken.

Any project is acceptable as long as it meets these basic standards. **See Exhibit C.** The Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook, currently No. 18-927D or a downloaded version from the BSA website must be used to meet this requirement.

After the Scout has decided upon an idea with his Unit Leader's advice, he should write up a **concept** of the project which he has selected. Using the Project Workbook, he states what he wants to do, where, how, and who will help him. This should then be presented to the Unit Leader for review and suggestions.

Present the concept to the representative of the organization for whom the project will be done, noting the representative's name, title, date, and phone number.

After the Unit Leader and benefiting organization have approved the concept, the Scout then prepares a **detailed plan** by describing the present condition, the method, materials to be used, project helpers, time schedule, and safety hazards. "Before" photographs are very useful. (See item 2 of The 12 Steps From Life to Eagle)

Present the detailed report to the following individuals for their signature and date: The representative of the benefiting organization, the Unit Leader, and Unit Committee member. The District Eagle Board must then grant approval, sign and date the Project Workbook before work can begin

Upon completion of the project, the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook is filled out and submitted with the Scout's Eagle application. **See Exhibit B.**

The Eagle Scout service project is an *individual* matter; therefore, two Eagle Scout candidates may not receive credit for working on the same project.

## Service Project Approval Review

This review must be completed and approved before the Scout can begin work on his service project. The candidate appears before the review board in full uniform, including his merit badge sash. An adult leader from the unit who will formally present the candidate to the board accompanies him. This adult is encouraged to remain and observe the review.

*Before allowing the candidate and his adult leader into the room, the board will review the service project write-up to see that the basic standards for Eagle projects have been met. Along with the signature of the Benefiting Organization Representative, the Unit Leader and Unit Committee representative must also sign the workbook to show they have reviewed the Concept and Detail write-up.*

*To avoid any misunderstanding between the benefiting organization and the Candidate, it is strongly suggested that the Candidate obtain a letter from the benefiting organization specifically stating what is to be done before any work is started.*

The candidate explains his project plan and answers any questions asked of him by the board. The candidate and his Leader will then be asked to wait outside. If a private conference between the Leader and the board is desired, it can be done at this time.

Sample questions to the Candidate:

How will Leadership be shown?	What tools will you use?	How will your project be financed?
How will you recruit helpers?	What is your time schedule?	What about safety measures?
What materials will you use?	Do you have a budget?	Food and facilities for your helpers?

The board will deliberate its findings and render a decision. The appropriate person will sign the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook, if approved.

The candidate and his adult leader will then be called in and the board will announce its decision. If the project is approved, the candidate will be told he can begin work on his project.

In the event that the project is not approved, the board will explain to the candidate why and what must be done to gain approval. In most cases, the candidate will have to appear before another review board before approval can be granted.

It should be made abundantly clear to the Candidate that **he** is the one **in charge** of this project. This is how he needs to appear in front of his co-workers as well as the benefactor's representative and his unit leader.

**It must be emphasized to the Candidate that a clear understanding must be established with the Benefactor exactly what is to be included in the project and to what extent that work is to proceed. This must be clearly stated in the Project Workbook before it is signed by the Benefactor. A copy should then be given to the Benefactor.**

The goal of the interview with the candidate is to ascertain his project meets the stated standards for Eagle Scout service projects (See Basic Standards, above) and that reasonably sufficient planning has been done. (See item 2 of The 12 Steps From Life to Eagle)

## The Eagle Scout Board of Review

The candidate appears before the review board (minimum 3 maximum 6 members) in full uniform with merit badge sash, accompanied by his adult leader, who will formally present the candidate to the board for final review. This adult will be permitted to observe the review only if not related to the Candidate in any way. (See items 8 and 9 of The 12 Steps From Life to Eagle)

*Before allowing the candidate and his adult leader into the room, the board will review the application and final write-up of the project. The reference letters will be reviewed and checked to make sure they match the references listed on the Eagle application. These reference letters are confidential and are to be seen **only** by the board members of the Scout's Eagle board.*

*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. Failure of the unit leader or unit committee to sign the application may be considered by the board in determining the qualification of the Eagle candidate (See item 4 of The 12 Steps From Life to Eagle)*

*Signatures needed for Approval of the Completed Project include the applicant, the Unit Leader, and the representative of the benefiting organization. A letter from the benefiting organization expressing their satisfaction with the project may also be included as an optional item.*

*The adult leader should advise the board prior to the review of any extraordinary circumstances.*

The candidate will be asked about the results of his service project, how he demonstrated leadership, and what he learned from doing the project. He will also be asked about his scouting experience and his plans for the future. The board must ascertain whether or not the Candidate applied his skills and experience in carrying out his project. Also, attempt to determine the Scout's attitude and his acceptance of Scouting's ideals.

At the end of the questioning, the candidate and his adult leader will be asked to wait outside while the board deliberates and reaches a decision, which must be **unanimous**. If approved, the application will be signed at this time.

The candidate and his adult leader will then be called in and the board will announce its decision. If the decision is favorable, the candidate will be told his application will be forwarded to council and then on to national for final approval. Within two to four weeks, national will notify the council of the approval and council will notify the candidate's Unit Leader and the Candidate. The date on his Eagle Certificate will be the date of his board of review. In the event the board's decision is unfavorable, the board will explain to the candidate why and what can be done to gain approval. (See items 9 and 12 of The 12 Steps From Life to Eagle)

In the event the board is unable to reach a unanimous decision, the board is discharged and a new board is appointed to review the Applicant.

A Scout may continue to work on any rank, merit badge or service project for any period of time up to his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

For all boards of review, **the Candidate** or the Unit Leader must contact the District Eagle Board Chairman for date, time and place of the Eagle board of review and to arrange for the delivery of written reports within sufficient time prior to the review date.

## Letters of Reference

It is necessary to obtain reference letters for the Eagle Board of Review to read. These are to be requested by the candidate and mailed by the references to the candidate's Unit Leader who will take them to the Eagle Board of Review **unopened**.

HERE IS WHAT SHOULD BE DONE BY THE CANDIDATE:

1. Fill out the top part of each reference letterform so it is addressed to "Dear Mr./Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_", and has the candidate's name, unit number, and telephone number filled out.
2. Personally call on each of your references. Be sure this includes your parents, religious leader, principal or counselor or teacher, your employer (if you are working), and two other persons of your choosing. (See item 5 of The 12 Steps From Life to Eagle)
3. Leave the confidential reference letter request form with each person, along with a stamped addressed envelope to your **Unit Leader**. Ask that the letter be written in the next day or so and mailed.
4. Thank them!

IMPORTANT (for the candidate):

WHEN YOU ARE NOTIFIED THAT YOU HAVE BEEN APPROVED BY THE NATIONAL COURT OF HONOR, LET YOUR REFERENCES KNOW.

As an added precaution, the Candidate should mark each return envelope with the words "**CONFIDENTIAL REFERENCE**", and include the return address of the person providing the reference in the upper left-hand corner and place the **candidate's name** in the lower left-hand corner of the envelope. This will help remind the Unit Leader to leave the envelope **unopened**. Please see Exhibit A.

It is very important to note that the person being requested to write a reference letter is told that the letter will be held **confidential** and that only the Eagle Review Board will read it.

To preserve this confidentiality, reference letters will be destroyed after the National Council has confirmed the Candidate as an Eagle Scout unless the author of the letter gives permission to release it to the Candidate. The Scout may also request another copy of the letter from the person who wrote it.

If the initial reference letter or form is not returned to the council in a timely manner, the council advancement committee must make direct contact with the reference(s) listed on the Eagle Scout Rank Application on its own, by follow-up letter, phone contact, or other methods as it chooses. The candidate shall not be required to make a follow-up contact with the reference or submit other reference names. A Scout cannot have a board of review denied or postponed because the council office or council advancement committee does not receive the reference letter forms he delivered.

## **Time Limit**

With the exception of the board of review, all requirements including the Scoutmasters Conference must be completed prior to the Candidate's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## **Time Extensions**

All work toward Boy Scout awards must cease when a scout reaches his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Under certain extenuating circumstances, time can be allowed for completion of requirements. (See Time Extensions, [Advancement Committee Guide](#))

## **Working on Requirements**

If a Scout or Venturer foresees that he will be unable to complete the requirements for the Eagle rank prior to his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, he may file a petition in writing with the National Boy Scout Committee through the local council for special permission to continue work toward the award after reaching age 18. The unit leader or unit committee may also file the petition. The petition must show good and sufficient evidence and detail the extenuating circumstances.

## **Attending a Board of Review**

**Within three months** after his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, a Scout who has completed all requirements for the Eagle rank submits his application and is reviewed and recognized. (See Boards of Review, [Advancement Committee Guide](#))

**After three months** and up to six months after his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, a Candidate must be pre-approved by the local council before a board of review can be conducted. A statement by an adult explaining the reason for the delay must be attached to the Eagle Scout Rank Application when it is submitted to the Eagle Scout Service.

**Beyond six months** requires a petition to the national Boy Scout Committee for an extension of time to hold the board of review. The petition must be processed through the local council and detail the extenuating circumstances that prevented the board of review from being held within the six-month period following the candidate's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Extenuating circumstances are defined as conditions or situations that are totally beyond the control of the Scout or Venturer.

## Appeals

Two situations may lead to the appeal of a decision. (See Appealing a Decision, Advancement Committee Guide)

First, if the unit leader or unit committee does not recommend the Scout for a board of review, or the unit leader or unit committee does not sign the Eagle Scout application, the Scout or other interested party may appeal the decision at the next level.

In such cases, the decision may be appealed to the committee responsible for advancement at the next level. The committee hearing the appeal shall then grant the Scout a board of review and appoint its members. In such cases, the committee hearing the appeal shall decide to grant or not to grant a board of review.

The second situation occurs when a board of review does not recommend a candidate for rank advancement. In such a situation, the Scout or his parent(s) or guardian(s) may appeal the decision.

All appeals, under any circumstances, shall initially be directed to the next highest level in this order: Unit, district committee, council committee, national Boy Scout Committee. A decision at either the district or council level finding in favor of the Scout shall be final. Units have no right of appeal of a decision.

All requests for appeal shall be made in writing, signed by the Scout and/or his parent(s), or guardian(s), and shall set forth in detail the reasons for requesting an appeal.

Upon initial receipt of an appeal, the district and the council advancement committee charged with hearing the initial appeal shall provide for a prompt review to determine the facts. All parties must be interviewed or written statements obtained. Confrontations between opposing parties must be avoided. **The appeal review is not a second board of review and thus a unanimous decision is not required.** A decision may be reached by majority vote.

Appeals to the national Boy Scout Committee shall be processed through the local council and all decisions in reference to appeals shall be final.

## Miscellaneous Items

### UNIFORMS

A full Official Scout Uniform or as much of a uniform as the Scout owns with properly placed insignia should be worn to a Board of Review. This includes the merit badge sash worn over the right shoulder. If a Scout chooses not to wear his merit badge sash, he may hand-carry it to the Board of Review.

An Order of the Arrow sash is meant for OA activity only and would not be appropriate at a Board of Review. The Insignia Guide of the Boy Scouts of America, currently No. 33066E, prohibits the wearing of the OA sash with the merit badge sash. If a Scout wishes to display his OA sash at his Board of Review, he may hand-carry it.

Under no circumstances should a Scout be reviewed wearing both his Merit Badge and OA sash together or his Merit Badge or OA Sash hanging from his belt. Insignia must be placed according to the current Boy Scout Handbook. **Wear it right or don't wear it at all.**

Venturers may wear the uniform approved by their crew, ship, or squadron as long as it meets reasonable standards of formality. In the absence of any established uniform, reasonable formal attire is to be worn.

### VENTURING

A Scout transferring to the Venturing program may continue working towards his Eagle Rank as a Venturer provided he has obtained at least the First Class Rank in a Boy Scout Troop or Varsity Scout Team. (See Venturing Advancement, Advancement Committee Guide)

Position of responsibility requirements may be met by the Venturer serving as president, secretary, or treasurer in his crew, or as boatswain, boatswain's mate, yeoman, purser, or storekeeper in his ship.

### ALTERNATE REQUIREMENTS AND MERIT BADGES

Scouts who are unable to complete certain Eagle-required Merit Badges because of a disability may apply for an alternate merit badge by completing the Application for Alternate Eagle Scout Award Merit Badges form and submitting it to the Council Advancement Committee

The Council Advancement Committee must then secure approval from the council executive board

The Scout executive must attach a letter to the application indicating that the executive board has approved the application

### PARTIAL COMPLETION OF MERIT BADGES (Alamo Area Council policy)


If a registered and qualified Merit Badge Counselor is not available to approve partials received by youth at a long-term camp (summer camp) or merit badge seminar, then the Unit Committee has the authority to assign the responsibility for the review and approval of requirements not completed.

### OTHER

Topics covering Extended Absence from Scouting, Lone Scouting, Youth of Other Nationalities, and Religious Principles are discussed in detail in the latest revision of the Advancement Committee Guide Policies and Procedures, currently No. 33088E.

## EXHIBIT A

### Return envelope for reference letters

Name and Address of person providing the reference	
Unit Leaders Name Address City, State, Zip	
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b> reference for <i>(Candidate's Name)</i>	

**(Letters must arrive at the Eagle Review Board unopened and in their original seal)**

It will also help if the Unit Leader is aware of the reference letters in advance in order to avoid accidental opening of the envelope.

The reference letters are to be brought to the board of review site by the Unit Leader **unopened!**

Reference letters can also be included with the Candidate's paperwork when the Unit Leader turns it in at the council service center. The letters should be banded together and in their original seal.

The reference letters are to be read by the Eagle Board only!

To preserve confidentiality, all letters will be destroyed after the Scout has been confirmed an Eagle Scout by national unless the author of a letter grants permission for the letter to be released to the Scout.

If a reference letter is not returned to the council in a timely manner, the Council Advancement Committee must make direct contact with the reference listed on the Eagle Scout Rank Application. An Eagle Board of Review cannot be denied or postponed because the requested reference letters have not been received.

## EXHIBIT B

### Service Project Write-up Suggestions

Here are some ideas that can help to enhance the appearance of your project proposal and final report

- Always start with the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook and expand your report from there. You may remove the staples and cut apart the pages to insert additional pages as necessary.
- When listing items together such as materials and costs, always use a **column** rather than showing everything in a paragraph. Show a total at the bottom for any numerical amounts. *Example:*

<u>Materials</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Lumber	\$30.00
Paint	10.00
Nails	<u>5.00</u>
 TOTAL	 \$45.00

- When preparing your final report, show the actual cost of each item along side of what it would have cost if it had not been donated. *Example:*

<u>Materials</u>	<u>Cost if Purchased</u>	<u>Actual Cost</u>
Lumber	\$ 31.41	Donated
Paint	\$ 18.97	Donated
Nails	<u>\$ 4.79</u>	Donated
Total Materials	\$ 55.17	0.00
<b>Labor</b>		
50 hours at \$5.00 per hour	\$ 250.00	Donated
<u>25 hours at \$15.00 per hour</u>	<u>\$ 375.00</u>	Donated
75 hours Total Labor	\$ 625.00	0.00
<b>Overhead</b>		
Rental of Tools	\$ 45.00	Donated
Sandpaper	\$ 2.14	Donated
Refreshments	<u>\$ 20.00</u>	Donated
Total Overhead	<u>\$ 67.14</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 747.31</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

Although the Actual Cost was zero in the example above, the **Value** of the project would be reported as **\$747.31**

## EXHIBIT B (continued)

- Organize your report in the same order as the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook:

### Project Description

Description of your project  
What group will benefit from the project?  
Benefits of the project  
Date that the concepts was discussed with your Unit Leader  
Signatures and dates of person representing the benefactor

### Project Details

Describe present condition, the method, materials to be used,  
Project helpers and time schedule  
Photographs of present condition, if appropriate  
Approval signatures and dates

### Carrying Out the Project

Record the progress of your project—**Keep a journal!**  
Record time you spent planning and carrying out the project  
List names of those who helped you, including hours & days  
each person worked  
List any changes made to the original plan and explain why  
those changes were made  
Provide photographs of your completed project  
Approvals and dates of your completed project

Try to include a picture of you and the benefactor's representative to conclude your report

- To further organize your report, consider using dividers with tabs
- From your original final report make copies in the event that your original report is lost.
- When writing up your report, use plenty of spacing for easier reading. Use a lot of paragraphs or consider double-spacing
- Take several pictures to chronicle the work on your project. Be sure to include yourself along with those helping you and include captions with each picture.
- When finished, make copies of your report and keep in a separate place in case your original report is lost.

## EXHIBIT C

### Notes on Service Projects

Any project is **acceptable** as long as it meets the basic standards for an Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project. Some examples are:

- Organized a landscaping project for a public building or area
- Organized the collecting of used books
- Organized a blood drive
- Led a group to construct a foot bridge on a trail at a state park
- Organized and operated a bicycle safety campaign

Examples of **unacceptable** service projects:

- Wheelchair ramp for a private residence — project must be for an **organization**
- Human-discarded trash pick up along a highway — **routine labor** is not allowed
- Organize a fund-raiser for Juvenile Diabetes — **fund raising** is not allowed
- Painted a church all by himself — **no leadership opportunity**
- Built several picnic tables for a Boy Scout camp—project must be **outside** of Scouting
- Installed computers for an electronics store — cannot be for a **business**

A service project must involve enough time and people to enable the Candidate to clearly **demonstrate leadership** and be of **sufficient value** to the benefactor. Value can be intangible as well as tangible.

**Construction projects** should mostly involve work that can be done by scout-age youth

In most any **drive project**, public response is critical to success and good advertising is an absolute must. Flyer distribution is one method but generally there are only five to ten responses for every one hundred flyers distributed so plans should be made to distribute a sufficient number of flyers. An announcement made by the Candidate at public gatherings is a good method and demonstrates leadership. Obtaining free public service announcements on radio, television, and in the newspapers is another good method.

**Professionally assisted projects** such as blood drives or CPR classes conducted by professional technicians can leave the Candidate and his helpers with little to do unless plans are made to keep everyone sufficiently busy and involved.

**Data gathering projects** such as researching grave markers must involve coordinating the efforts of several helpers to gather and compile the information.

Avoid letting any service project turn into a “*one man show*”. The main objective is to **demonstrate leadership**