

MERIT BADGE DAY CERTIFICATION PROCESS

TRAINING OUTLINE

MERIT BADGE DAY TRAINING OVERVIEW

- Policy Statement
- Merit Badge Counselors
- Merit Badge Day Merit Badges
- Merit Badge Day Registration Procedures
- Merit Badge Day Specifics
- Merit Badge Day Feedback

POLICY STATEMENT

The question arises as to whether it is permissible to have Scouts earn Merit Badges in groups. Many subjects may be presented to groups of Scouts without defeating one of the purposes of the Merit Badge plan—working closely with a qualified adult.

The National Executive Board has approved this policy statement on Merit Badge counseling:

“To the fullest extent possible, the Merit Badge counseling relationship is a counselor– Scout arrangement in which the boy is not only judged on his performance of the requirements, but receives maximum benefit from the knowledge, skill, character, and personal interest of his counselor. Group instruction and orientation are encouraged where special facilities and expert personnel make this most practical, or when Scouts are dependent on only a few counselors for assistance. However, this group experience should be followed by attention to each individual candidate’s projects and his ability to fulfill all requirements.”

In the end, the Scout must be reviewed individually by the counselor to ensure completion of the badge’s requirements.

The OCBSA released the following statement on Merit Badge Days:

Merit badges have long been a cornerstone of the Boy Scout program, allowing boys to try different hobbies, explore career opportunities, and even learn skills that could save their lives, or that of someone else. Group merit badge instruction, or “Merit Badge Days,” which have been widely practiced in the Orange County Council and elsewhere, can be a very effective way for Scouts to learn and earn badges. In order to maintain the quality of group merit badge

instruction, the National Council of the Boy Scouts has prescribed certain rules for this type of learning environment in its Guide to Advancement.

Because of concerns raised by leaders and parents, Orange County Council's Executive Board recently affirmed the importance of these national policies and agreed that all merit badge instruction for groups of Scouts from more than a single unit conducted in the Orange County Council would comply with them. In many cases, this will entail no structural change to the way a Merit Badge Day is conducted. After all, many of these events are of very high quality, adhering rigorously to the standards of advancement that any leader or parent would desire. In others, it may require some changes.

MERIT BADGE DAY COUNSELORS

All Merit Badge Counselors must be:

- **Qualified:** *"Before working with Scouts, counselors must have completed Youth Protection Training within the last two years. They must be men or women of good character, age 18 or older, and recognized to as having the skills and education, in the subjects they cover"* Guide to Advancement 2015 #7.0.1.1 Qualifications of Counselors p.44
- **Registered:** *"People serving as merit badge counselors must maintain registration with the Boy Scouts of America as merit badge counselors"* Guide to Advancement 2015 #7.0.1.5 Registration and Reregistration of Counselors p.44
- **Approved:** *"Counselors are to be approved by their local council advancement committee for each of their badges"*. Guide to Advancement 2015 #7.0.1.4 Counselor approval and limitations p.47
- **Trained:** *"Counselors are to be trained in the aims of Scouting and in advancement procedures."* Guide to Advancement 2015 #7.0.1.6 Training for Counselors p.48

- All Merit Badge Day Coordinators must verify the qualifications of each Merit Badge Counselor participating in their Merit Badge Day event.

Each Scout is individually tested

- *"There must be attention to each individual's projects and his fulfillment of all requirements. We must know that every Scout - actually and personally - completed them."* Guide to Advancement 2015, #7.0.3.2
- *"You are expected to meet the requirements as they are stated -- no more and no less. You are expected to do exactly what is stated in the requirements."* Boy Scout Requirements 2015 p.26

MERIT BADGE DAY MERIT BADGES

- What Merit Badges can be taught?
- What Merit Badge's take ½ day? What Merit Badge's take a full day?
- Required Pre-Requisites
- How many Merit Badges can be earned by a Scout at each Merit Badge Day? Max 2 per day per Scout!
- Only 1 EAGLE Badge may be earned per Scout, per day!

MERIT BADGE REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

- Application procedures for applying to host an Merit Badge Day (Applications, Timelines, Approvals, Only 2 per Council/per day)
- Cover CampMaster registrations for Scouts
- CampMaster Training
- No Waiting List Policy for MB's
- 100% Online Pay/ No Refunds
- Scholarships for Scouts in Need
- Walk-Ins are not allowed
- Schedule Changes, Merit Badge classes cannot be changed on day of event for participants. Roster of attendees of a Merit Badge Day cannot be changed on day of event.

MERIT BADGE DAY SPECIFICS

- National Council Policies. *Guide to Advancement 2015* Section 7, p. 43-54
- Schedule – Same for each Merit Badge Day (3 hour classes , 1 hour Lunch , 3 hour classes)
- Approved Merit Badge Day events will be will entered into the Council Website and CampMaster. If flyers are to be used to advertise at District roundtables, they must be brought to the council office for distribution one week prior to District roundtables.
- Budgeting for a Merit Badge Day – How to
- Merit Badge Counselor List is kept by the District Advancement Chairman
- Class Size, Ratio , 8 students to 1 Merit Badge Counselor
- 2 Deep Leadership in every class
- Policy on Merit Badge Helpers, Section 7 Guide to Advancement 2015
- Unit sponsored Merit Badge Days may not be held on Orange County Council properties
- Available Council/District Support
- Certificates of Insurance
- Blue Cards are the only record keeping system approved by National and by OCBSA

- Blue Cards – Signature Policies - Signed by Scoutmaster & registered counselor, returned to Scout *Guide to Advancement 2015* #7.0.0.2 and #7.0.0.3
- Merit Badge Partial Completions *Guide to Advancement 2015* #7.0.3.3
- Unofficial Worksheets and Learning Aids *Guide to Advancement 2015* #7.0.4.8
- Money Policies and Procedures *Guide to Advancement 2015* #7.0.4.10
- *“Any fees collected should cover only those costs directly related to presenting the opportunity”* *Guide to Advancement 2015* #7.0.4.10
- After Merit Badge Day, funds will be available in the unit account at the Volunteer Service Desk. Prior to that, funds needed to cover supplies are available via a check request from the council office.
- Cost cannot *exceed* \$20 Per Scout per day and \$5 for Lunch. Reasonable material may be charged for Merit Badge Day classes required materials, over and above participation fees, with the approval of the Council Advancement Committee.
- Conflict Resolution; Limited recourse for Unearned Merit Badges *Guide to Advancement 2015* #7.0.4.7

MERIT BADGE DAY FEEDBACK

- Two council wide surveys (One for youth, one for adults)
- Visitation from council advancement team
- Penalties for breaking policies –*The reason for Policy & Procedures of the Orange County Council Merit Badge Days is to ensure the quality of our Merit Badge program, and to have a standard between each MB Day that is offered throughout Orange County Council. Failure to follow the Policy & Procedures could prevent future opportunity to host a MB Day event.*

“Because of the importance of Individual attention and personal learning in the merit badge program, group instruction should be focused on those scenarios where the benefits are compelling” *Guide to Advancement 2015* #7.0.3.2

[Click here to download the Guide to Advancement 2015.](#)