

# LIFE TO EAGLE GUIDANCE FOR SCOUTS

## Updated January 3, 2019

### INSTRUCTIONS TO EAGLE CANDIDATES:

So you want to become an Eagle Scout? Congratulations! It is a worthwhile, challenging goal, and one that is achieved by only four Scouts out of every one hundred who start up the Eagle trail.

Be Prepared. The following suggestions and considerations will help you along the way:

1. Remember it is **YOUR** responsibility to become an Eagle Scout.
2. Twenty-one (21) *Merit Badges* are required for Eagle. Try to earn the thirteen (13) required ones at your first opportunity. Choose your eight (8) elective merit badges carefully. You should use this part of your Scout program to learn from experts in a variety of interesting subjects. You will grow from the challenge and it may help you to select a future career or hobby. Please retain all your blue merit badge cards! They are important to you. Primary evidence of completion of the 21 merit badges is required by the National Court of Honor of the Boy Scouts of America with your application (via blue card [applicant, counselor or troop copy] or Internet Advancement Report). Make sure you are working on the most current merit badge advancement requirements for Eagle.
3. Your *Eagle Service Project* is a very important part of the Eagle requirements. Choose and develop one that is truly worthwhile. The Scout Handbook states: “you must plan, develop, and give leadership to others in accomplishing this project.” It must be a significant benefit to your community, church, or school. Fundraising alone, projects for Scouting, or projects that benefit profit making organizations will not be approved. **The project must provide the Eagle Scout candidate a significant opportunity to demonstrate his leadership.** There is no minimum requirement for total project hours.
  - If you have questions regarding a project, it is best to resolve them as soon as possible. You should discuss your project informally with your Scoutmaster or Troop Eagle Advisor. If there are still questions on the merits of your idea, you should start by contacting your District Eagle Chairman. If you still have questions, you can contact the District Advancement Chairman.
  - The project must receive approval from the benefiting organization, your Scoutmaster, the Troop Committee, and the District Advancement Committee (last) before you may start work on the project. Planning the project is not considered starting actual work on the project.
  - Keep a record of your hours and of everyone who helped you in completing your project. Create a spreadsheet or log book to track everyone’s time. Keep track of your leadership activities, as you must include a written description of how you gave leadership in accomplishing your Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project. Do not forget the time you spent in planning and writing the report as part of the Service Project. The Workbook contains a place for these totals.
  - Use of the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook (**October 2015 printing, available at [Scouting.org](http://Scouting.org); older versions are not accepted**) is required to obtain the necessary approvals before you start actual work on the project. You must use this workbook form. **You cannot create your own version.** You may use a fillable PDF version or fill it in with blue or black pen. If your project has already been approved by the District, you do not need to use an updated version of the workbook.
  - Read all of the instructions in the entire workbook. They will help you succeed. Fill it out completely; all fields need to be populated, including “n/a” if appropriate. After signing the

workbook pledge and getting the approval of the benefiting organization, your Scoutmaster, and the Troop Committee, please contact the District Eagle Chairman for an appointment to review the project and receive approval to begin work. Remember, a Scout is prepared; your detailed plan will assist you and the sponsoring organization along with your team to better understand what you are going to accomplish. This will become an agreement between you and the benefiting organization. Good planning is an important leadership skill. **You may not begin actual work on your project until all approvals have been received.** Planning leading up to the actual work is not considered working on the project. **Remember, it's important to keep the original workbook with the original signatures and initials with your project paperwork since it must be included with your Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project final plan and report when you submit your application to the Eagle Board of Review.**

- Your project write-up (plan & report sections) is as important as the project itself. Prepare it neatly and in enough detail to show you planned and managed the efforts of others in completing the work. (Note: You should ask yourself: Could you give the plan to someone else and could they complete the project without you?) You will want to submit a good technical report that sells both you and the project.
  - Your approved project workbook signed by you, the representative of the benefiting organization, and your unit leader, along with a letter from an official of the benefiting (sponsoring) organization on their stationary or letterhead certifying completion of the project, must be included in the report. Make sure you get the final signatures in the workbook. The date of the acceptance of the project **must be before your 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.** You may wish to include before, during, and after photographs, as they will assist you in the write-up (photos are optional; however, they help to tell your story). List and include any references that will help explain your approach to the project.
4. You **MUST** use the **2017 printing** of the *Eagle Scout Rank Application* (ESRA) Form (prior editions are not acceptable), available via download from the NCAC web page ([ncacbsa.org](http://ncacbsa.org)) under the Advancement tab, click the Eagle Information link. An original signed color copy of the form is required. The application **MUST** be on a **SINGLE** (front/back) sheet of paper. It is your job to fill in **everything** by printing clearly in blue or black ink – no pencil, or typing the information using the interactive PDF from the web site (preferred) and printing it out. You must sign the final application indicating you have completed the all of the requirements. Please have a name, address, zip code, and phone number for each of the references provided. Include at least the three names from which you requested letters of recommendation. If you have not had an employer you may enter ‘not applicable’. **When you enter the dates for the merit badges, take them directly from your blue cards, and make sure they agree with the dates on your Internet Advancement Report.** Arrange your merit badges in the same order as they are listed in the rank application form, 1-21. This aids your board as they check your requirements. The optional merit badges should be listed on the form in chronological order beginning with the first one you earned. A handy way to organize them is by using a trading card pocket sheet protector sold at most office supply stores. **When you enter the dates for the ranks, take them directly from the Internet Advancement Report.** Also note the date you joined Scouting is NOT the same date you earned the Scout Rank Badge. Work with your Scoutmaster, your Unit Eagle Advisor or your Unit Advancement Chairperson.
5. It is important to make sure you address, in an essay and in list format, all four parts inside the box after Requirement 6 on the ESRA. They include: (1) *Statement of Ambitions*, (2) *Statement of Life Purpose*, (3) *Leadership*, both inside and outside of Scouting and (4) *Honors and Awards*, any received in and out of Scouting. Ambitions and Life Purpose are two different ways of looking at your life and should be

expressed in writing accordingly. This essay is an important part of your application. Think carefully about what you want to say.

6. *Unit Approvals:* Upon completion of your original Eagle application packet, your Scoutmaster will sign off and arrange for unit approval. It is important you make extra copies of your application packet, including the project report, in case something bad happens to the original. Minimum two copies will be needed to go with the original for the Board of Review.
7. You are required to have a minimum of three *Letters of Recommendation* for the Board of Review. These must be from individuals listed as references on the front side of the ESRA. These three may not be from family members or your troop leaders (the leader signatures on the application are the troop recommendation). If you wish to include family members or scout leaders, they can be in addition to the three required. You are encouraged to seek these from: teachers, coaches, employers, family friends, religious leaders, and neighbors. **These letters must be in sealed unopened envelopes addressed to your Eagle Board of Review in care of your Scoutmaster or Troop Committee Chairman. They must not be open or read by anyone except by the Board of Review and they will not be returned to you.**
8. *Application Package:* When you have completed all the requirements for your application and report, including signatures, assemble them in a package and format that reflects the significance of the Eagle Scout award. Remember first impressions are lasting. The first thing your Board of Review will see is your application package. You will need to make a minimum of two bound copies in addition to the original of everything, including your blue cards and photos, for use in the Board of Review. The copies need not be in color, but need to be legible. Many choose to use three-ring binders, but the manner of binding (other than paper or binder clips) is up to you.
9. The next step is to schedule a second *appointment with the District Eagle Chairman*, for review and final check & approval of the application package so arrangements can be made for an Eagle Review Board. When you meet with the District Eagle Chairman your application package should be ready to hand to the members of your Board of Review, including the minimum three letters of recommendation,
10. **After you meet with the Eagle Chairman, your Eagle Scout Rank Application must be certified by the National Capital Area Council AFTER it is initialed by the Eagle Chairman.** Instructions are available on the NCAC web site under Advancement and Eagle Information. You must return a copy of the back side the certified Eagle Scout Rank Application form to the District Eagle Chairman before your Board of Review will be scheduled.
11. **Remember, all the requirements for Eagle must be completed before your 18th birthday.** If you have not completed everything before 12:00AM on the day of your birthday then you are too late. This includes your Scoutmaster Conference which is usually the last requirement completed. Note however, a SM Conference for Eagle may occur any time while you are a Life Scout and is NOT required to be the last requirement completed.
  - Extensions: If you have applied for, through your unit, and received an official extension from National Capital Area Council (NCAC), you must follow the time period listed in that extension. Similar rules apply for age waivers for Scouts with disabilities.
  - The 18 year old requirement only applies to completing all 6 requirements (21 merit badges, 6 months of leadership in approved position of responsibility after earning Life, 6 months active

participation in the unit, 6 months of demonstrating scout spirit, an Eagle Scout service project that demonstrates significant leadership and a Scoutmaster conference); it does not include finishing and handing in the application packet (paperwork) and arranging for an Eagle Board of Review (EBOR) with the Eagle Chairman and completion of the EBOR. An EBOR will be scheduled only when everything is complete, has been approved by the Eagle Chairman and verified by NCAC. Bring your Scout Handbook to the Board so the chairman can sign it for you.

12. Your *Board of Review* must be completed within 90 days after your 18th birthday or sooner. As noted above, the completed and verified Eagle Scout Rank Application Form and the Eagle application package (including letters of recommendation) must be and submitted to the District Eagle Chairman no later than **7 days prior** to the date of the planned Board of Review to allow sufficient time for review and to make arrangements for the Board.
13. If, for extreme *Extenuating Circumstances*, you are not able to complete the Board of Review within 90 days of turning 18 years, a letter requesting an additional 90 day extension must be submitted by your parent, Scoutmaster or Committee Chairman to the District Advancement Chairman. The letter must contain details explaining the reason you were not able to complete your Board within the initial 90 days, and should contain a proposed date when you plan to complete the Board of Review. This letter must be submitted directly to the District Advancement Chairman **prior** to the end of the first 90 days. The District Advancement Chairman will either approve or disapprove your request. Late requests will not be considered for the extension of time. If approved, you will have an additional 90 days to complete your EBOR.
14. *Extensions beyond 180 days* from your 18<sup>th</sup> birthday will only be given for the most extreme situations. This request must be submitted in writing **before** the 180 days to the District Advancement Chairman who will consider approval. They will then submit it to the Council Advancement Committee for consideration. If the Council Advancement Committee approves the request, they submit it to the National Court of Honor in Texas for their concurrence. **A word of caution; extensions beyond the 180 days are normally not approved.**
15. A good reference in addition to this letter is the *NCAC Eagle Scout Procedures Guide* found on the NCAC website (ncacbsa.org) under the same section as the ESRA noted item #4 above.

Do your Best.

Yours in Scouting,

Lawrence (Larry) McNiece  
Potomac District Eagle Chairman  
18104 Hollingsworth Drive  
Derwood, MD 20855  
(301) 602-2389  
lcmcniece@gmail.com