

The Trail to Eagle

2010

A Guide to Help You Through
The Steps to Eagle



Pacifica District

Los Angeles Area Council

Boy Scouts of America



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Boy Scouts of America

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Dear Life Scout:

You are moving toward a very great thing in your life. Becoming an Eagle Scout is one of the most rewarding, yet challenging things that you can do. You can excel at sports or shine in the arts. Hobbies that grab your attention at one age don't always remain interesting. But working through the requirements to become an Eagle Scout gives you invaluable experience in such a wide variety of fields of study and most of them allow for a hands-on interaction, not just a lesson from a book. It will become an important part of your life that will remain so forever.

Within the Pacifica District of the Los Angeles Area Council we have established procedures, which help us follow the policies and guidelines as prescribed by the Boy Scouts of America. These procedures were put in place to assist you in understanding and meeting National's requirements. It is our goal to better accommodate Life Scouts in their quest for Eagle.

The intent of this guide is to give guidance to both the Life Scout and the Scout leaders as they prepare to travel down the path toward the attainment of the Eagle Scout rank. We want to share some of the "words of wisdom" that we have learned and that will help you on your journey. While working through these steps, a scout should share this information with his unit leader to fully understand the procedure and ensure a smooth process. We want to give you all the greatest help possible for your success.

Let us know if we can help in any other way.

Best Wishes,

Pacifica District Advancement Committee
& The Eagle Scout Character Boards

This Guide breaks down the information about completing requirements for becoming an Eagle Scout in the following manner:

- The Biggest Issue -TIME
- Eagle Scout Rank Requirements
- Merit Badge Basics
- A Guide to the Leadership Project
- Letters of Recommendation
- Creation of Your Eagle Book
- District / Council Approval Your Eagle Book / Application
- Your Eagle Scout Character Board of Review

THE BIGGEST ISSUE - TIME

Let's start up front with a quick discussion about the biggest issue that seems to cause the biggest problem in the whole Eagle Scout process. Whenever there appears to be a problem with a Scout working towards Eagle, it usually seems to come down to the issue of time. Over and over again we get Scouts who are pressured into trying to finish the process "at the last minute".

There is one almost totally unbendable rule in the process - **all** the requirements must be completed **before** the Scout's 18th birthday. Book review, clearing Pacifica District, clearing LAAC, and Pacifica District Eagle Character Board of Review, 3 month window. There are exceptions made for handicapped Scouts and circumstances that are beyond your control, but those are rare.

Scouts have come to us at a point about a month away from their 18th birthday wondering how they can get an extension on time. They have made decisions to be involved in other school activities and now, as the deadline loomed ahead, they were trying to get past the time restrictions. We were unable to justify getting an extension of the deadline from National. Scouts who were so close, lost the opportunity to become Eagle Scouts.



Take this as a warning plain and simple.

Look at how much time is left before your 18th birthday and work with your Scout leaders to determine what needs to be done and plan on how it can be accomplished in the time remaining. Do whatever you need to do to work out your schedule to make it work. Look ahead and take steps now to get to where you want to be.

EAGLE SCOUT RANK REQUIREMENTS

In order to advance to the rank of Eagle, a candidate must complete all the following requirements. Your unit leader will need to sign your book as you complete each one.

1. Be active in your troop and patrol for at least 6 months as a Life Scout.

This is simply a time requirement. A full six months must be completed as a life scout and not one day less. Your board of review date must be at least six months and one day after your Life board of review date.

2. Demonstrate Scout spirit by living the Scout Oath (Promise) and Scout Law in your everyday life.

Scouts are tested in this strength every day of their lives.

A GUIDE TO THE LEADERSHIP SERVICE PROJECT

The Requirement

While a Life Scout, plan, develop, and give leadership to others in a service project helpful to your religious institution, school, or your community. (The project should benefit an organization other than the BSA.) The project idea must be approved by the organization benefiting from the effort, your unit leader (Scoutmaster, Varsity Scout Coach, Venturing crew Advisor), unit committee, and by the district advancement committee, and by the council or district advancement committee before you start. You must use the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook, # 512-927 pdf, in meeting this requirement. **No other form will be accepted.** The form may be downloaded at www.nesa.org.

Originality

Does the leadership service project for Eagle have to be original, perhaps something you dream up that has never been done before? The answer: No, but it certainly could be. You may pick a project that has been done before, but you must accept responsibility for planning, directing, and following through to its successful completion. If you are not sure a project qualifies, call Margaret Wallace at (310) 371-0403 and she will put you in touch with a project reviewer to answer your questions.

Limitations

The project selected cannot be for an individual or for a business. It must benefit a community organization other than the Boy Scouts, for example a church, school, or other community organization. Routine labor (a job or service normally rendered) should not be considered. The only other restriction is that the project cannot be a fund raiser. You may have to do some fund raising to obtain money to do the project but fund raising cannot be the focus of your project.

Size

We advise that your project should be approximately 100 – 150 hours or more. This is not a firm rule, but to give you a guideline of what kind of project to look for. The amount of time spent by you in planning your project and the actual working time spent in carrying out the project should be as much as necessary for you to demonstrate your leadership to others. Remember that two eagle applicants cannot work together to get credit for the same project. Be sure to get a Tour Permit for the project date, may also include alternate dates and prep dates.

Be sure to understand that as you are selecting a project, you are admonished to **go beyond** projects that are primarily maintenance in nature. Painting walls for an organization is not normally acceptable, but must be added to. Cutting the grass or weeding a garden may be part of your project, but the scope of your project should go beyond these types of maintenance and normally make some significant impact on the organization.

Getting Your Project Approved

Once you have selected what you would like to do as a service project, you must follow the guidelines to get it approved **before** you can start work on it. You must use the hard copy of the Eagle Project Workbook (Form #512-927.pdf). **No other forms will be accepted.** This workbook is available online at www.nesa.org/ National Eagle Scout Association. Normal MS word file.

Fill out pages #5 and #6 of the Project Workbook. It is highly recommended that you type information but hand writing is permissible as long as it is neat and legible. Use blue ink as copies must be made. The information may be computer typed and cut and pasted into the book. If more room is needed, write "see attached" and add sheets where appropriate. The key elements of approval are your unit

leader, unit committee and the organization which will benefit from the project. Subsequent to their approvals is the approval you must obtain from the district. It is at this point you will need to call Margaret Wallace at (310) 371-0403 to be assigned a district project approval person.

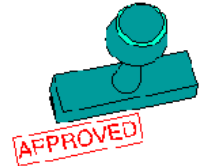
At the appointed time you will meet with your approval person. Have your Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook already completed and signed by those identified above. Bring this along with any photos, drawings, plans, expectations, and frustrations for discussion. Bring a parent or other adult to this meeting not only to comply with youth protection but also to listen to possible suggestions about the project. It goes without saying that you should be in full uniform for this meeting and any time you are conducting yourself with any organization regarding your project.

Get started

Once your project is approved, you may proceed in working with your unit in getting the project done. Notice: If you find it necessary to make substantial changes in your project or change your project, you must get them **re-approved** at all levels before continuing.

Two Warnings to Consider:

1. Don't start your project until **after** you have attained Life Scout rank.
2. All Eagle Service Projects **must, without exception**, be approved by an authorized member of the District Advancement Committee **prior** to their start.



After Completion

Once finished you must have your project signed off. Be sure page #8 has the approvals signed to show that the project was completed.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

The letters of recommendation need to be obtained from those people listed on your Eagle Scout Application. Minimum of 4 letters. Parents, Religious, Educational, and two other Adult Acquaintances (preferably not scout leaders in your troop. We would like to see that you are a well-rounded person). The letters must be signed and dated. The date needs to be within six months of the date of your application. Please note that Employer is optional and Religious line must be filled in, at least with parent's name.

Step 1. To fulfill Requirement #2 for your Eagle Scout application, personally contact all individuals whom you wish to include as references on your Eagle Scout Award application. Speak to or call or email or write to these persons yourself. Do not allow your parents, relative, unit leaders or anyone else to handle this important responsibility on your behalf. Explain your status as an Eagle candidate and specifically request that they serve as a reference for you. Ask them if they will be willing to fill out the recommendation form. Inform them of any deadlines that are approaching, if applicable.

Note: These recommendations need to be written *no more than six (6) months* before your District Board of Review.

Step 2. Print out or make copies of the cover letter, Scout Oath and Law page, and the 2 recommendation pages. *These pages can be found at the end of this document.* Fill out candidate's name, phone and Troop number on recommendation pages.

Step 3. Prepare a stamped return envelope that has been pre-addressed to the Pacifica District Advancement Chairman at the address listed below:

**Mr. Bob Harada
Pacifica District Advancement Chair
1424 W. 172nd Street
Gardena, CA 90247-5712**

This envelope will allow the person who is writing the recommendation to send the letter confidentially.

Step 4. Hand deliver or mail: (1) the cover letter, (2) the Scout Oath and Law Page, (3) recommendation pages, and (4) the stamped return envelope to the person who is writing the recommendation. The two recommendation pages are the only ones that are to be returned

Step 5. Do this for each of the references that you have requested.

Note: If your Eagle Board of Review is to be scheduled during the summer months, you must arrange for the “Educator” recommendation to be sent before summer vacation begins (school personnel most likely cannot be contacted during summer vacation).

Step 6. Your Board of Review cannot be scheduled until the Pacifica District Advancement Chairman, has received at least three (3) of the candidate’s recommendations (parent, educator, and one other). You are permitted to follow up with the individuals and you may call **Bob Harada at (310) 532-6947** to check if they have been received.

CREATION OF YOUR EAGLE BOOK



We recommend that you submit your materials in a book, like a 3-ring notebook, preferably with the pages in individual sheet protectors to safeguard them. You can place tab dividers in the Eagle Book to make it easier for the reviewer to make sure all the information is there. The information contained in this book will need to be in the same order as it is listed on the eagle Rank Application form. All dates must be in the following format: Month/Day/Year (i.e. 01/01/05). Signatures must be obtained from all those requested on your Eagle Scout Application. Documents with missing signatures and/or dates will be returned to the Eagle Scout candidate.

The four parts to your book should be:

1. Eagle Scout Application
2. Requirement #3 - Merit Badges and Rank Advancement
3. Requirement #5 - Eagle Project Workbook, with pictures
4. Requirement #6 – Your Ambitions and Life Purpose statement, leadership positions held outside of scouting, honors, and awards.

[Part 1 - Application and Rank Advancement form](#)

You must use the application form # 512-728. It is available online at www.nesa.org/. This form maybe saved with changes. It is highly recommended that the Eagle Scout Rank Application be typed however if you choose to print them, it must be neat and legible. Please use blue ink as the original needs to be distinguished from copies. Special adobe file may be downloaded and filled out, also printed, and changes saved.

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 to district. You must have your scoutmaster's signature and your unit committee chair's signature on the eagle application before your 18th birthday (not on - MUST be before). This certifies that all the merit badges and eagle project were complete before your 18th birthday.

Use the **exact** date from the blue card and / or advancement report for the date on the Eagle Application, summer camps merit badge sheets are acceptable. All merit badges must correspond with the proper time frame per rank. On lines #6 and #9 cross out the merit badges not earned. If a crossed out badge was earned, it must be entered on lines #12 thru #21. If a previously required badge was earned (Sports and Safety) it must be listed in the non-required section. Double and triple check this form as any missing signatures or incorrect dates will cause it to be returned to you, which will delay the process. White MB cards must reflect the same date as the blue cards.

Make a copy of the application only, as the original will be forwarded on to National when your book is returned to you. You will also need to include an advancement report form with all of your SM's and scout information filled in and the signature area left blank. This form is for the District Eagle Character Board to finish and sign.

Part 2 – Merit Badges and Rank Advancements

You are asked to provide proof of your merit badges. The original blue cards are preferred. However, copies of the Advancement Reports are acceptable as long as they are accurate and legible. Please highlight 'your' advancement on the form. You may use baseball card collector style pages for your cards. Please place the merit badge cards in the order they appear on the Eagle Scout Application.

You are also asked to provide proof of all your rank changes. This can be the individual advancement cards, and Advancement Report, or a photocopy or your signed scout book. Signatures and dates must be legible on any form you submit.

Part 3 – Eagle Project Workbook

You must use the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook (Form # 512-927 pdf). You may download the booklet and put the pages in individual sheet protectors. Remember include any pages you added to complete the booklet as well as any photographs. Be sure page #8 has the approvals signed to show that the project was completed.

Part 4 – Ambitions and Life Statement, Leadership, Honors and Awards

Requirement #6 of the Eagle Rank Application form asks you to write a statement concerning your ambitions and life purpose. You are also asked to provide a resume listing your involvement in your religious institution, school, camp, and other community organizations where you have demonstrated leadership skills.

This requirement gives you an opportunity to share about your life. You can tell us what you want to do next and what your plans in life might be. Your values and ambitions indicate who you are and the impact Scouting has had on your life. Sharing your achievements helps the Board of Review see you outside Scouting and how well you are involved in other organizations. The board will look to your references and to this requirement to learn about the real you so take this seriously. Sign and date your life purpose statement. Next, create a list of your leadership positions you have held outside of scouting as well as any honors and awards you have received to show you are a well-rounded person who will be of benefit to the community.

DISTRICT / COUNCIL APPROVAL OF YOUR BOOK / APPLICATION

After completing your Eagle Book, call Margaret Wallace, the Pacifica District Eagle Coordinator, at (310) 371-0403 for your next contact for verification and review. You will need to make an appointment with the first person who will go over your book and check its correctness and completeness, clearing the Pacifica District. They will also pick up your copies. These steps for approval take a lot of time so get everything done as early as possible.

THE EAGLE SCOUT CHARACTER BOARD OF REVIEW

Once it is verified as correct, your paper work will be forwarded to the LA Area Council representative's. You will receive a phone call verifying you have cleared LAAC. You will need to call Margaret Wallace at (310) 371-0403 again to be set up on an eagle board. Please do not procrastinate, especially those boys approaching their 18th birthday. This is one part of the Eagle Scout process that can take place after your 18th birthday.

The board of review for an Eagle candidate is composed of at least three but not more than five members. Unit leaders, assistant unit leaders, relatives, or guardians may not serve as members of a Scout's board of review. Take special note of how you are dressed when you come for your Board of Review. If you don't have a proper Scout uniform, you might want to invest in one - you will want one for your Court of Honor anyway. Wear your merit badges and all your awards. Make sure your badges are current, and have the Scout belt on.

At the scheduled time the Scout shall come to meet with the review board. Bring your parents and your Scout leader. The candidate's unit leader introduces him to the members of the Eagle Scout Character Board of Review and is then excused. If your parent happens to also be your Scout leader, they may introduce you but then they will be excused to wait outside.

The board members have already read your application, your references, and your personal resume. There is no 'set' of questions that an Eagle candidate will be asked. They may ask questions about your scouting experiences. You need to be prepared to share with the board all about your service project. They will ask you questions about what you did and how it went. They will also want to know what you learned through the experience. Bring pictures and anything else that tells the story of how well your project went.

This is the highest award that a Scout may achieve and the board needs to get to know you. They will ask you questions about your overall Scouting experience. They also may ask about your future involvement with Scouting.

The board's decision must be unanimous. 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. If the candidate does not meet the requirements, he is asked to return and told the reasons for his failure to qualify. A discussion should follow as to how he may meet the requirements within a given period of time.

After you Eagle board, your book will be returned. The Eagle application and advancement report will be sent to Council/National Boy Scouts for review. This process will take about two to four weeks to get the Eagle certificate from National. Margaret Wallace will notify you when the certificate arrives.



While the application process and Board of Review take place at district, council, and national levels, the award is presented to the new Eagle Scout by the Scout's unit. When the unit receives the award they should work with the family to conduct a Court of Honor. Work with the unit and others to make this a great celebration. Enjoy the event and make it a memorable one. You worked hard to get there and everyone is proud of your accomplishment. This is a great reason to celebrate!

For questions regarding Eagle Rank Processing, contact Pacifica District Eagle Coordinator:
Mrs. Margaret Wallace at (310) 371-0403 or eaglescout@pacificabsa.org