

Special Needs Scouting

There are Units designed specifically for Scouts with special needs but experience shows that Scouting works best when special needs Scouts are mainstreamed with their peers in packs, patrols and troops.

Using common sense and the guidance of parents and medical professionals will be key in maximizing each youths Scouting experience. Keep in mind that not all Scouts with special needs or disabilities “look” disabled. It’s important that every family be made aware of the accommodations available for Scouts in the event that they need to utilize them. **Early identification is key!** Even if a Scout’s family or leaders don’t think they will require modifications to requirements or an extension or time, it’s never too early to make contact with the District Advancement Committee, Special Needs Scouting Specialist or Assistant Commissioner for Special Needs Scouting.

ISAP - Individual Scout Achievement Plan. An ISAP is a great place to start the conversation about what your Scouts greatest strengths are and what you feel the Unit Leader should be most aware of. Much like an IEP or 504 plan, the ISAP is a special needs Scouts own plan for success. Created with the Scout, Unit Leader and family, this is his “roadmap for success”.

Cub Scouts - The Cub Scout motto is “do your best”, so it’s fitting that this holds true for all Cub Scouts including those with special needs.

Cub Scouts with special needs may need modifications, such as requirements explained differently, or if he has physical limitations, physically modified advancements. But again, “do your best” is the standard for Cub Scout advancement.

Boy Scout Requirement Modifications & Eagle Merit Badge Modifications – Due to the nature of their disabilities, some Scouts apply for modifications to their requirements for the Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class ranks. The requirements for Star, Life and Eagle Scout must be completed as written. To apply for modifications, the Scout must have appropriate documentation from either a physician or educational evaluator that their disability is permanent in nature. Additionally, they must try the regular requirements before applying for modifications. The Scout leader should submit a written request to the Council Advancement Committee stating what the Scout has done, the requirements that need to be modified and suggestions for new requirements.

To request alternates to Eagle Required Merit Badges due to inability to complete the required badges, submit completed BSA form 58-730 to the Council Advancement Committee. Before a Scout begins working on either modification to rank requirements or modifications to Eagle Merit Badges the Council Advancement Committee must approve the request. Please note that a request for requirement modifications and

request for Alternative Eagle Badges must be submitted as two separate requests.

Registration Beyond the Age of Eligibility- If a Scout has a documented permanent disability that has caused them delay in advancing as defined by section 10.1.0.2 in the Guide to Advancement and they require additional time to complete their Scouting journey, they can request to register beyond the age of eligibility (18). To make this request the Scout or their parents may submit form 512-935 and all components to the Council Advancement Committee for approval. Submitting this form does not qualify a Scout for advancement or MB modifications, those requests need to be submitted separately.

Resources

The 2015 Guide to Advancement, Section 10.
<http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/33088.pdf>

Guide to Working with Scouts with Special Needs and DisAbilities –
<http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/510-071.pdf>

Contact -

PTC Advancement Committee Chair -
Melissa Medina – melissamedina@ptcbsa.org

Special Needs Scouting Chair - Karen Norton -
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Assistant Commissioner of Special Needs Scouting –
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Your District Director at Pine Tree Council Service Center
– 797-5252 OR pinetreecbsa.org