

# Winnebago Council, BSA

## Understanding Alternative Requirements for Scouts with Special Needs

This document only describes the general policy, conditions and procedures for alternative requirements as outlined by the BSA. For more information please see the BSA guide on Special Needs Scouting or contact our council office.

### **Statement of Belief:**

**Every boy in Scouting is a candidate for the Eagle Award. The only limitations upon achievement of that award should be that boy's individual desire, focus, and perseverance.**

***Q: Is there an age limit for special needs scouts?***

**A:** Basically there is no age limit for Scouts with a permanent developmental, mental, or physical disability.

Clause 19 in short:

Youth members with permanent developmental, mental, or physical disabilities may be registered with units outside the normal age range. In other words a Cub Scout may be older than 11 years of age and a Boy Scout can be older than 18 years of age.

***Q: My son has ADHD or a behavioral disorder, is this considered a disability?***

**A:** Although these behaviors can be challenging they are not typically considered as permanent disabilities and do not typically qualify for alternative requirements. The leaders may need to adjust their style of leadership and learn new skills to help their Scouts succeed. Some adjustments or accommodations may be required to help a Scout complete a merit badge understanding that individuals may accomplish task differently from one another, however the requirements may not be changed without prior approval from the advancement committee.

***Q: What resources are available for my Scout with special needs?***

**A:** The council has resources and training available on line and in available in training sessions around the council which are offered through out the year. For more information go to <http://www.winnebagobsa.org/> or call Phone: 319-234-2867 | Toll-Free: 877-754-4079.

The council also formed the Inclusion Committee in 2009, the committee's goals are to:

- ❖ Foster an environment where people feel welcome and valued.
- ❖ Working with all council and district committees to eliminate barriers for boys (youth) wishing to participate in Scouting.
- ❖ Facilitate a program focused on Abilities (rather than disability), which creates a seamless, unobtrusive experience for youth and leaders.
- ❖ Promotion of Scouting for Everyone and supporting the mission and values of Scouting and the Winnebago Council.
- ❖ Provide training to leaders, staff, volunteers, Scouts and parents through:
  - One-on-one and group training at camps, roundtables, and other council endorsed events.
  - Provide training resource material on council website or for checkout.
  - Provide "Ability Awareness" training for youth and adults.
  - Provide One-On-One council or guidance to the council, leaders, Scouts and their parents.

## *Alternate Requirements for Special Needs Scouts*

### **CUB SCOUTS**

Cub Scouts: The Cubmaster and or pack committee may make suitable substitutes for electives which are outside the capabilities of the Cub Scout when determining his advancement.

The Cubmaster should include the parents and other relevant individuals such as teachers or physicians, (only with the parents permission or direction) who can help the pack with any modifications to help the scout succeed.

The Scout may require regular monitoring and modifications to his program to assure his success.

**The Only Standard should be "HAS HE DONE HIS BEST?"**

### **BOY SCOUTS**

A Scout who is unable to complete any of the requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class, or First Class rank because he has a physical, mental or developmental disability may complete alternative requirements with the following criteria.

1. The physical, mental or developmental disability must be of a **permanent nature** and the scout must be registered with the council as a special needs scout.
2. The Scout is required to have a written **Medical Statement or evaluation** from a licensed physician or an educational administrator.
3. The Scout must **complete as many of the regular requirements as his ability permits** before applying for alternate requirements.
4. The Scout, his parents, or leaders must **submit a written request to the advancement committee**, that the Scout be allowed to complete alternative requirement along with the proposed alternative in sufficient detail so as to allow the advancement committee to make their decision.
5. The alternative must be of such a nature that it is similar **to or as demanding of the Scout's effort** and talents as the original requirement.
6. The candidate is expected **to do his best** utilizing his resources and talents.
7. Alternative requirements **may require a physician's written approval** if the requirement involves strenuous physical activity.

*(Special Note: The substitution of "trip" for "hike" in the footnote to Second Class requirement (1b) does Not require the procedure listed above. That substitution may be permitted by the unit leaders based on their understanding of the Scout's physical condition. )*

### **EAGLE AWARD**

The candidate must have earned as many of the required merit badges as his ability permits before applying for an alternate merit badges.

The unit leader and the board of review must explain that to attain the Eagle Scout rank a candidate is expected to do his best in developing himself to the limit of his resources.

The application must be approved by the council committee responsible for advancement, utilizing the expertise of professional persons involved in Scouting for the disabled.

The candidate's application for Eagle must be made on the Eagle Scout Rank Application, with the Application for Alternate Eagle Scout Award Merit Badges attached

# C. Application for Alternate Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges, No. 58-730

## APPLICATION FOR ALTERNATE EAGLE SCOUT RANK MERIT BADGES

To: The District Advancement Committee

\_\_\_\_\_ District  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Council

**Gentlemen:**

We are submitting this application in behalf of \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of candidate) of Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_,  
 chartered to \_\_\_\_\_  
 and located in \_\_\_\_\_  
Community State

Because of the disability (see the medical or administrative statement below), we believe that he is physically or mentally unable to complete the requirements for the following merit badge or badges required for the Eagle Scout rank:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Because of his excellent performance, perseverance, and Scouting spirit, and following a personal conference with him and his family, we recommend that the following alternate merit badge or badges be assigned to him, feeling that they will be equally challenging and useful, but within his capability:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Unit leader

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Unit committee chair

**Parent Statement**

In view of the medical or administrative statement (below), and following a conference with \_\_\_\_\_'s Scouting leaders, we approve the alternate method of application for Eagle Scout rank merit badges and the merit badges recommended as alternates.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or guardian

**Medical or Administrative Statement**

As a result of a thorough examination or testing of \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of candidate) on \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I find that he has a physical or mental disability that would prevent him from completing the requirements for the merit badge or badges as shown above.

REASONS FOR INABILITY:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_



## D. Sample Application for Approval of Modification of Requirements

To: The District Advancement Committee

\_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_ Council

We are submitting this application on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ of (unit)

Chartered to \_\_\_\_\_

Located in \_\_\_\_\_

For modification of the requirements for the \_\_\_\_\_ Tenderfoot, \_\_\_\_\_ Second Class, \_\_\_\_\_ First Class rank.

This is required due to his physical or mental disability; he is unable to complete the specified requirements for the rank indicated. After conferring with him and his family, we would like to adapt the following requirements:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please specify which rank(s) and requirement number(s) you are proposing for adapted requirement(s). Put "T" for Tenderfoot, "S" for Second Class, or "F" for First Class before each requirement needing adaptation.

We feel that the following requirements are equally challenging for him, and are within his ability: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Put "T" for Tenderfoot, "S" for Second Class, and "F" for First Class for each requirement adaptation. Enter in same order as above.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_, Unit Leader

Signed \_\_\_\_\_, Unit Committee Chair

Parent's Statement:

In view of the medical or administrative statement below, and following a conference with \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 's Scout leaders, we approve this application for adapted requirements for the rank(s) specified above, and the recommended adapted requirements.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian

### **Individual Scout Advancement Plan (ISAP)**

The approval of alternate requirements should be discussed with the Scout, parents, and Scout Leader. An agreement is reached and forwarded for council advancement committee approval BEFORE starting to work on the requirement. This is a sample of an "agreement" that can be reached and then forwarded for approval. This is an individualized achievement plan that is non-threatening and non-judgmental. It begins as a basic "contract" which can be used for all Scouts, and is modified by addendum. The idea is that every Scout sees the "contract" as personal so that no segment is singled out.

Although not required it is one tool available to Scout leaders and parents which can be used successfully especially when accuracy of communication due to the Scouts diagnosis is critical to the Scout's success.

## E. Individual Scout Advancement Plan SAMPLE

(This sample form should ONLY BE USED if it has been approved by your council for use with Scouts with disabilities. The council may have its own form for approval.)

### Contract and Addendums

- ISAP—A written plan developed by the Scout, his parents, and his Scout leader with the approval of the professional providing the documentation of the Scout's disabilities. This plan provides a list of each rank advancement being modified, replaced, or eliminated. Changes or substitutions to the rank are explained. This letter (the sample form below) needs to be approved by the district and council advancement committees before the Scout begins working on the modified requirements.

This ISAP is designed:

- to be a non-threatening, non-judgmental, individual advancement plan.
- to be a basic "contract" which can be used for all Scouts, and is modified by addendum.
- so every Scout sees the "contract" as personal so no segment is singled out.
- Addendums are required if it is determined that a Boy Scout has specific, permanent disabilities which create an impediment toward rank achievement and advancement.
  - The safety of each Scout is part of this consideration.
  - Requirements may be redefined to maintain the challenge but provide an alternative path toward achievement.
  - This Addendum may be amended, in the future, by mutual consent.

### INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ADVANCEMENT PLAN AND CONTRACT (SAMPLE)

Scout Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Troop/Team/Crew/Ship \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

Council \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of Belief:** Every boy in Scouting is a candidate for the Eagle Scout Award. The only limitations upon achievement of that award should be that boy's individual desire, focus, and perseverance.

**Objective:** To provide a safe haven for personal growth free from adversity such as hazing, disrespectful or threatening behaviors by others, but filled with opportunities and challenges.

**Methodology:** To encourage and, within reasonable guidelines, provide each Scout with the opportunity and avenue to achieve his personal goals and chosen level of success. To remove unreasonable and unnecessary barriers, through creative thinking and actions, which may impede a Scout in achieving his personal goals. At the same time the Scouting experience will not lessen the challenges necessary to actual personal growth. Addendums to the contract may be made to define requirements.

**Expectations of Performance:** Each Scout is expected to do his best.

### CONTRACT:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, Scoutmaster, promise to do my best to deliver upon the statement of Belief, Objective, and Methodology expressed above.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, Boy Scout, and Eagle Award candidate, promise that on my honor I will do my best in working toward my personal goals.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

### INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ADVANCEMENT PLAN AND CONTRACT—Addendums

- Disabilities of a permanent, not temporary, nature allow the development of alternative requirements.
- Alternative requirements shall be supported by a physician's statement, or certification by an educational administrator.

MEDICAL STATEMENT: As a result of a thorough examination of \_\_\_\_\_  
on \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_, I find that he has a permanent mental or physical disability, which is accurately described  
above, and which will inhibit him from completing the requirements as generally stated. However, I find that  
he can safely complete the requirements as stated as modified below.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature) \_\_\_\_\_(date)

(Physician licensed to practice medicine)

Physician's Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician's Office Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Attach additional documents if applicable.

#### ADDENDUM TO INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ADVANCEMENT PLAN

Scout Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

#### SCOUT'S STATEMENT:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, Boy Scout, and Eagle Scout Award candidate, promise that on my  
honor I will do my best in working toward my personal goals. The following requirements are meant to strengthen  
me so that I can improve my abilities. I will do my best in completing them as written or as modified.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature) \_\_\_\_\_(date)

#### PARENTAL STATEMENT:

In view of my son's expressed desire to advance in Scouting, his personal commitment to do his best, and  
the Scout leaders' commitment to encourage him along that pathway consistent with his abilities, I agree to  
the requirements as written or modified. If any further modification is deemed warranted, I understand that  
such can be negotiated.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature) \_\_\_\_\_(date)

#### SCOUT LEADER'S STATEMENT:

I agree with, and support, the desire of \_\_\_\_\_ to progress in the paths of Scouting. Any program  
modifications agreed to are viewed to be as challenging as those expected of any other Scout. My objective will  
be to provide opportunities for success consistent with health and safety considerations.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature) \_\_\_\_\_(date)

#### APPROVAL OF THE COUNCIL COMMITTEE

The council advancement committee approves the above modifications for advancement because of the  
Scout's permanent physical or mental disabilities.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature) \_\_\_\_\_(date)

Notification sent to the Scout/parents and Scout leader on \_\_\_\_\_(date)

- The Scout shall attempt to complete the regular requirements before modifications are sought.
- Alternative requirements shall be as demanding of effort by the Scout as the regular requirements.
- Modifications and alternative requirements must receive PRIOR approval by the council advancement committee.
- Alternate requirements involving physical activity shall have a physician's approval.
- The unit leader and any board of review must explain to the Scout that he is expected to do his best based on his abilities.

What About Merit Badges?

- Eagle Scout–required required merit badges that the Scout is unable to physically or mentally complete
- Alternative merit badge(s) must be “as challenging” to the Scout
- Alternative merit badge(s) identified by Scoutmaster, with help from family, professionals, and other Scouters
- Use form No. 58-730 to document and get approval by the council advancement committee

Alternate Merit Badges for the Eagle Scout Rank

- The Eagle Scout rank may be achieved by a Scout who has a disability by qualifying for alternate merit badges. Merit badges are awarded only when all requirements are met as stated.
- A clear and concise statement concerning the Scout's disabilities must be made by a licensed physician, or an educational administrator.
- Earn as many of the required merit badges as you can BEFORE applying for an alternate Eagle Scout rank merit badge.
- Complete as many of the requirements of the required merit badges as you can.
- Complete the Application for Alternate Eagle Scout Award Merit Badges BEFORE qualifying for alternate merit badges.
- Choose alternates that are as demanding of effort as the required merit badges.
- When alternates chosen involve physical activity, they must be approved by a physician.
- The unit leader and the board of review must explain that to attain the Eagle Scout rank, a candidate is expected to do his best in developing himself to the limit of his resources.
- The application must be approved by the council committee responsible for advancement, utilizing the expertise of professional people involved in Scouting for people with special needs.
- The candidate's application for Eagle Scout must be made on the Eagle Scout Rank Application, with the following attached:
  - Possible Alternatives for Required Merit Badges
  - Application for Alternate Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges, No. 58-730

ADDENDUM TO INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ADVANCEMENT PLAN

Scout Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

THE STANDARD REQUIREMENT (State the ranks and the requirement number \_\_\_\_\_ )

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MODIFICATIONS AND ALTERNATIVE REQUIREMENT(S) (Describe in detail the modified alternative requirement)

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NARRATIVE SUMMARY (Why this Scout's circumstances make him unable to complete, in the way normally described, the “standard” requirements)

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