

# Troop 420 Merit Badge Counselor Policies

[www.troop420.org](http://www.troop420.org)

It is important that a Scouting BSA Troop has trained, approved, and experienced Merit Badge Counselors (MBC) to facilitate a Scout's advancement in rank and also to provide personal growth to explore many topics and subject areas as in the Aims, Missions and Goals of Scouting BSA. These are the policies required to be an MBC with Troop 420.

- Any adult wanting to be a Merit Badge Counselor (MBC) must first discuss with Scoutmaster and Troop Committee Chair.
  - The perspective MBC must discuss qualifications such as job, hobby, education, or certifications.
  - Policies set forth by Scouting BSA National, Glacier's Edge Council, Mohawk District and Troop 420 must be clearly discussed.
  - Approval must be obtained by Scoutmaster.
  - Youth Protection Training must be completed as well as MBC on-line training, "The Essentials of Merit Badge Counseling" and *A Guide for Merit Badge Counseling* and must be read and understood.
- Non-Eagle required merit badges MBCs
  - The "Merit Badge Counselor Information" form must be filled out and approved by Scoutmaster.
  - Merit Badge Counselor form, YPT and adult application with code "42" must be turned into the Council Office.
  - All merit badge instruction must occur at Troop meetings, outings, or summer camp. Exceptions will be made for field trips as required.
  - Scoutmaster and Troop Committee Chair must be informed upon approval by District/Council.
  - A signed blue card is required for any Scout to start the merit badge.
- Expectations of Instruction in a group setting is clearly outlined in *Guide to Advancement* and *Merit Badge for Group Instruction*
  - "care must be taken to ensure that each Scout still receives personal counseling to support individual efforts. Simply taking notes, completing a workbook, or listening during a group instruction session does not constitute completing a requirement."
  - "Group instruction does not mean group testing. Each Scout must complete each requirement as written, without exception. For example, if the requirement says to discuss or demonstrate, then each Scout must individually discuss or demonstrate whatever is required. It is not acceptable for the Scout to listen to someone else discuss or demonstrate the subject."
  - "Group tasks do not fulfill requirements except in those cases where a group is needed to perform a specific task as stated in the requirement."

Policies set forth for Troop 420 and quotes from:

*Guide to Advancement, A Guide for Merit Badge Counseling, Merit Badge Group Instruction Guide*  
Glacier's Edge Council Merit Badge Counselor Registration and Approval Process

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- “Worksheets may be used by a Scout to refresh their memory while being tested for specific requirements. However, completing a worksheet does not constitute completing a requirement.”
- “The only persons authorized to sign off on a merit badge are adult members of the BSA who are registered as merit badge counselors, current in Youth Protection training, and approved for that specific merit badge. Additional experts or support volunteers may serve as instructors under the direction of the merit badge counselor.”
- Eagle-required merit badges MBCs
  - A current Eagle-required MBC will be assigned to act as mentor/coach/trainer.
  - The perspective MBC will observe the current MBC instruct at least 2 Scouts.
  - The current MBC will discuss what is meant by discuss, show, explain, demonstrate, plan, etc. in the requirements, i.e., “plan” does not mean a Scout just writes a couple of sentences or has a plan thought out. It means to have an outline, written directions or model and then practiced.
  - What can and cannot be done in group instruction as stated above is to be discussed.
  - The perspective MBC will then co-instruct with the current MBC at least 2 Scouts for most of the requirements.
  - Record keeping of Scouts’ work will be discussed as all records must be kept for a minimum of seven years and recommendation is that records to be kept at least one year after a Scout turns 18 years old.
  - A review will be conducted with the perspective MBC with the current MBC and Scoutmaster.
  - Upon approval, the perspective MBC:
    - In addition to other qualifications on the Merit Badge Counselor Information form, to add “trained/mentored/coached by current T420 MBC.”
    - Merit Badge Counselor form, YPT and adult application with code “42” must be turned into the Council Office.
    - All merit badge instruction must occur at Troop meetings, outings, or summer camp. Exceptions will be made for field trips as required.
    - Scoutmaster and Troop Committee Chair must be informed upon approval by District/Council.
- Serving as MBC for your own Scout should be avoided as per GEC Advancement Committee Recommendations
  - If needed to “serve as a MBC for your own Scout another Adult Leader should independently review their completed requirements.”
  - No more than one Eagle required merit badge for own Scout.

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