

Atlanta Area Council

Life to Eagle Guidebook

For Scouts, Adult Leaders, and Parents



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So You Want To Be an Eagle Scout

Congratulations on achieving the rank of Life Scout! You're only one step away from the highest rank Scouting has to offer, Eagle Scout. The requirements for Eagle Scout are easy enough to understand; they are the same kinds of requirements you met for all of your other ranks, but at a more challenging level.

The Atlanta Area Council has developed this guidebook to help explain the process of advancing from Life to Eagle. The main purpose of this document is to provide a single reference to the resources you will need to complete the trail to Eagle. You will also find Atlanta Area Council policies for those parts of the process that national policies leave to local councils for implementation. Checklists are provided so you can be sure that all the paperwork is done correctly and delivered to the right place. If you follow this guide carefully, you will find that the process is not difficult. If you do not follow this guide carefully, you are likely to waste time and cause headaches and frustration for yourself, your parents, and your adult leaders.

Please take the time necessary to read through this booklet. If you are unsure about anything you read, please check with your adult leaders or a member of the district advancement committee. It is especially important that you understand the procedures for developing your Eagle project before you start.

Achieving the Eagle rank is *your* responsibility. Many people will help you along the way, including your adult advisor, your parents, and your fellow Scouts. You will also get assistance from adults on your district advancement committee, many of whom you have probably not worked with before. None of these people can earn the rank for you. It is up to you to make sure that you understand the requirements, complete them in a timely manner, and submit the proper paperwork, so that your rank advancement can be completed.

Good luck!

The Atlanta Area Council Advancement Committee

Previously, the Atlanta Area Council published two documents, the *Life-to-Eagle Packet* and the *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook Guidelines*. This document replaces both of them.

What You Will Need

Besides your Scouting skills, Scout spirit, and leadership ability, you will need the following:

- ***The Boy Scout Handbook (33105)***: Your handbook contains requirements for all ranks including Eagle, and it should have a signed record of your advancements from Boy Scout badge through Life rank. Your own advancement pages, properly signed off in your Boy Scout Handbook, are your best record of your advancement. It is your responsibility to make sure those records are complete and up to date.
- **Your advancement records**: In addition to your Boy Scout Handbook, you may keep other personal records, such as signed merit badge cards. Your unit leaders may also have records of your advancements.
- ***The Atlanta Area Council Life to Eagle Guidebook (this document)***: This will serve as your overall guide, explaining the process and directing you to information sources you will need to use.
- ***The Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook (18-927)***: The paper version contains useful information, which is referred to in this document. There is also an electronic version, which many Scouts use to submit their projects. The electronic version does not contain all the reference information that the paper version provides, including “The 12 Steps from Life to Eagle,” which are referenced throughout this document. The paper version is available at the Atlanta Area Council Volunteer Service Center. A PDF version of the workbook, and the electronic version that you can use with a word processor, are available on the BSA National website, www.scouting.org.
- ***The Eagle Scout Rank Application (58-728)***: This is available in the Council Volunteer Service Center. It is also available in PDF format on the BSA National website, www.scouting.org.
- ***The Guide to Safe Scouting (34416)***: This document represents the official BSA policy about what kinds of activities are allowed and not allowed in Scouting, as well as safety procedures that must be followed. Your project must be conducted in accordance with the Guide to Safe Scouting.

For adult leaders:

- ***BSA Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures (33088)***: For use by district and council advancement committees, this document contains the official BSA advancement policies. Adults needing further information on BSA advancement policies should consult this book. It is an optional resource for unit adult leaders. The Life-to-Eagle process, in most cases, can be completed without using this reference at the unit level.
- ***Boy Scout Requirements (33215)***: Published annually, this is a reference containing all current requirements for advancement, including all ranks and all merit badges.

Eagle Scout Rank Requirements

In order to advance to the rank of Eagle, a candidate must complete all requirements of tenure; Scout spirit; merit badges; positions of responsibility; while a Life Scout, plan, develop, and provide leadership to others in a service project; and the Scoutmaster conference.

-The 12 Steps from Life to Eagle

The requirements for the Eagle rank are similar in many ways to the requirements for the previous ranks you earned in Scouting. You should have little trouble understanding most of the requirements as they are listed in *The Boy Scout Handbook* and on the Eagle Scout Rank Application.

The one requirement that gives many Eagle candidates some difficulty is the Eagle Scout leadership service project. In most of your previous rank advancements, you were required to participate in some type of service to the community. However, to achieve the Eagle rank you must do more than participate, you must plan and lead a project yourself. This will be one of the most challenging and time-consuming parts of your advancement to Eagle. The Eagle Scout leadership service project is discussed in more detail later in this document.

Age Requirements

It is imperative that all requirements for the Eagle Scout rank except the board of review be completed prior to the candidate's 18th birthday. When all requirements except the board of review for the rank of Eagle, including the leadership service project, have been completed, the Eagle Scout Rank Application must be completed and sent to the council service center promptly. (Youth members with disabilities should meet with their unit leader regarding time extensions.)

-The 12 Steps from Life to Eagle

The following must all be completed before your 18th birthday:

- All six requirements listed on the Eagle Scout Rank Application, which includes all work on your Eagle Scout leadership service project.
- All information on the Eagle Scout Rank Application, up to and including the “Certification by the Applicant” and “Unit Approval.”

The following may happen after your 18th birthday:

- Receipt of letters of recommendation, which are required at the Eagle Scout board of review.
- Delivery of the Eagle packet to the Volunteer Service Center (see page 17).
- Council certification of the Eagle Scout Rank Application.
- Eagle Scout board of review (must take place within 90 days of 18th birthday.)

Just because you have until your 18th birthday does not mean you should wait until the last minute before finishing your requirements for Eagle. Earning your Eagle rank will take longer than you think. This is especially true of your project. If you have turned 17, have not started your project, or have a significant number of merit badges left to earn, you are pushing it. You already know when your 18th birthday will be, so you should not be surprised when it arrives. The requirements will not be relaxed just because you're close to your 18th birthday.

Earning your Eagle rank before you are 18 means that you will get to wear the Eagle rank badge on your Scout uniform. Once you've turned 18, you are no longer permitted to wear youth rank badges on your uniform pocket. If it happens that any problems with your requirements are discovered during council certification and the board of review, you will still have time to correct the problems if you haven't yet turned 18. Another good reason to start early on your Eagle requirements is that it will mean a lot less nagging from your parents and adult leaders.

The Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project

While a Life Scout, plan, develop, and give leadership to others in a service project helpful to any religious institution, any school, or your community. (The project should benefit an organization other than Boy Scouting.) The project idea must be approved by the organization benefiting and the council or district before your start. You must use the Life to Eagle Packet, BSA publication No. 18-927, in meeting this requirement.

-Boy Scout Handbook p447

The Purpose of the Project

The Eagle Scout leadership service project differs from the service requirements of other ranks in an important way: *You* must plan, develop, and lead the entire project. In order to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout, you must demonstrate leadership, and your Eagle project is one of the important ways you do that. The project will also provide an opportunity for you to use many of the skills you have learned while earning merit badges, such as Communication, Citizenship in the Community and Personal Management.

The Steps of an Eagle Scout Project

1. Select a project idea.
2. Discuss the project idea with your unit leader.
3. Discuss the project with the representative of the benefiting organization.
4. Develop a detailed plan for your project, using the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook.
5. Have your plan approved by the representative of the benefiting organization, your unit leader and a unit committee representative.
6. Submit your plan to the district advancement committee. You may have to revise your plan and resubmit it if the advancement committee does not approve your project plan as submitted.
7. Only after the district advancement committee approves the project plan may you begin working on your project.
8. Carry out the project.
9. Complete the *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook* section entitled "Carrying Out the Project." Obtain signatures for approval of project completion, as listed in the workbook.
10. Submit your completed project workbook with your Eagle Scout Rank Application when you have finished all requirements for Eagle rank.

Selecting a Project

There are many organizations that would be happy for you to do an Eagle project for their benefit. Your church, or any school that you have attended, is a good place to start. Project opportunities can be found at public parks and community organizations. There are restrictions, however, on the type of organization for which you may do your project, so it is important that you make sure the organization that benefits from your project meets the BSA guidelines:

*Work involving council property or other BSA activities is not acceptable for an Eagle Scout service project. The service project also may not be performed for a business, or be of a commercial nature, or be a fund-raiser.
Routine labor, a job or service normally rendered, should not be considered.
- Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures*

Project Approval by the District Advancement Committee

You may not begin your project until it is signed by a member of your district advancement committee.

Before you submit your project plan to the district advancement committee for approval, it must be signed by a representative of the benefiting organization, your unit leader, and a member of your unit committee. Your unit leaders should make sure that your project meets the guidelines for approval by the district advancement committee before they sign it; otherwise, the advancement committee may return the project to you for revision.

It is important that you and your adult advisors understand the BSA requirements, which the district advancement committee will be looking for in considering your project plan for approval. A checklist to help you with this is provided in Appendix 2. Keep in mind that your project plan is the only information that the district advancement committee has about your project. Therefore, your plan must be as complete as possible, so that district advancement committee members will be able to understand exactly *what* you plan to do, and *how* you plan to do it. Approval of your project plan is entirely up to your district advancement committee.

The best way to determine whether you have included enough information in your proposal is the following: your proposal should be complete enough that another Scout would be able to use it to do your project from beginning to end, exactly as you would do it, without you being present.

Resources You Can Use

There are many resources you can use to help you create a successful Eagle Project proposal. Often, it is helpful to look at projects that have been done by other Scouts in the past. Your adult leaders may be able to provide examples for you. There are also several good websites that have very helpful information about how to choose your project and write your proposal. Two good ones are:

www.eaglescout.org

home.flash.net/~smithrc/eagleprj.htm

Tracking Your Hours

As you come up with a project idea and begin to develop your Eagle project, you should keep good notes of everything that happens and record the time you spend on any activity related to your project. When you have completed your project, and you complete your project workbook, you will need to include the hours you spent during the planning stage, along with the hours your workers spent in carrying out your project.

Changing Your Eagle Project

You are expected to carry out the project that was approved by the district advancement committee. You may need to make some changes when you carry out the project, due to unexpected circumstances. ***However, if you need to change the nature of the project (e.g., what you are doing, who you are doing it for) you must submit your new project proposal to the district advancement committee for approval.*** Completing a project that differs substantially from what you proposed puts you at risk of not passing your board of review. When in doubt, contact your district advancement chairman to determine whether you need to resubmit your changed project for approval.

The Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook

The *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook* is essential to completing your Eagle project. You must use the official workbook, 18-927, or its electronic equivalent. The official electronic form, which can be used with word processing software, is available on the BSA website, www.scouting.org. If you use the electronic version, make sure that you include all of the required information. If you delete information from the workbook, it could delay approval of your project.

The workbook is divided into two major sections. The first section is for writing your project plan, which must be approved by your district advancement committee before you begin work on your project. The second section, “Carrying Out Your Project,” is for reporting on the completed project.

The completed workbook is part of the Eagle packet that is submitted to the council service center (see page 17). It will be presented at your Eagle Scout board of review. It is an important document – without it you cannot earn your Eagle rank.

The information that follows will help you understand how to complete the first part of the workbook so that you can increase the likelihood that your project plan will be approved. Make sure you read this section very carefully, and that you include all the information necessary to completely describe your proposed project.

Project Description

This is the easy part of the workbook. The information is straightforward.

The first item, “Describe the project you plan to do,” deserves some explanation. Here, you should give a simple description of your project. It should only take a couple of sentences to describe your project. Be specific about what you are doing. Be sure to give quantities of whatever product your project will produce, for example, the number of benches, the number of trees, or the length of a trail section. In order to approve your project, your district advancement committee needs to know *exactly* what you plan to do. This is not the place to tell how you are going to build something, how long it is going to take, what materials you are going to use, or any details of that nature. Those things will come later in the workbook.

This section includes a number of blanks that must be filled in. Provide accurate information identifying the group that will benefit from the project, including the name, address and phone number of the group, explain how the group will benefit from your project, when you discussed the project with your unit leader, what representative of the benefiting organization you met with, and when you met with that person. This section only requires names of individuals, not signatures. Those come later.

Project Details

The instructions for this section of the *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook* are very broad:

“Plan your work by describing the present condition, the method, materials to be used, project helpers, and a time schedule for carrying out the project. Describe any safety hazards you might face, and explain how you will ensure the safety of those carrying out the project.

If appropriate, include photographs of the area before you begin your project. Providing before-and-after photographs of your project area can give a clear example of your effort.”

These instructions are deceptively brief. The “Project Details” section should include **complete** details on how your project will be done. Here are some suggestions on how to write this section:

Present Condition

Describe what the existing situation is in the area where you will be doing your project. If your project involves building something, explain what the current condition of the building site is. If it does not involve building something, describe the current situation within the benefiting organization that your project will change. This section should help the advancement committee understand why the project is needed and what the circumstances are prior to beginning your project.

If appropriate, “before” photographs can be very helpful in describing the present condition of the project site.

Method

Several things should be included in order to completely describe the method you will use to complete your project:

1. **Plans and/or Drawings:** If your project involves building something, you should have complete plans for what you are going to build. This includes drawings of the area where the construction will take place (floor plan or map of the site), as well as plans for the items being built. These plans should include complete, accurate dimensions of what you will be building. Floor plans and maps should indicate exactly how the elements of the project will be situated, with as precise measurements as possible.
2. **Instructions:** Divide your project into logical tasks, and include complete, specific instructions on how to accomplish each task. These should be the instructions you would give your workers, and they must be written in such a way that your workers will know exactly what they are to do. (You probably won’t actually give your workers written instructions, but by writing them in your proposal, you demonstrate that you have planned the project thoroughly and that you clearly understand how the work is to be done.) The instructions should be

- complete enough that someone could use them to do your project exactly as you will do it, with no additional direction from you.
3. **Organization and Leadership:** How will you organize your workers to do the work of the project? Will they be organized into teams? Will you assign jobs to individuals? Remember, you are the leader of the project, and it is up to you to decide how the workers will be directed to accomplish the work. It is OK to demonstrate what you need your workers to do, but the bulk of the work should be done by them, under your direction.
 4. **Funding:** Most projects require funding. Describe how you will obtain the funds for the project. You should have a definite plan for obtaining funding, and you should know who will be providing the funds. Often, the benefiting organization will provide some or all of the funds. You can seek donations from individuals or organizations that are interested in your project. Having your family provide funding is discouraged. Organizing the funding is one important aspect of leadership.

Materials

“Materials” is actually a broad category including materials that will become part of your project, supplies that will be used up or discarded, but are necessary to do the work, and tools. You should list all materials, supplies and tools in a chart or table, including where you are going to obtain them, and how much each will cost. Your list should be complete, including everything that will be needed to complete the project.

Project Helpers

You do not have to list individuals by name, but you should have an idea of how many helpers you will need for the project and where you will recruit them. The most common source of helpers is your own troop, crew or team. You may also be able to recruit school friends, or people you know from other organizations to which you belong. Most of your helpers will be Scouts and other young people.

Adults are required to be present, but their work should be minimal. Family members are permitted to help, but their involvement should be relatively small, in relation to that of other peers. A project done primarily by your family does not qualify as an Eagle project.

It is helpful to list in a chart or table the number of workers you will need, keeping youth and adults separate, for each part of your project. The chart should be broken down by task, and should show the number of workers and the amount of time each task should take. These times should be multiplied and totaled, to show your estimate of the number of man-hours your project will take. This estimate should help you develop a realistic schedule for completing the project. There is no specific requirement for the number of hours that must be in your

project, but this estimate is necessary to help you understand how many workers you will need, and for how long you will need them.

Your discussion of workers should also address the presence of adults. The *Guide to Safe Scouting* discusses BSA policies for two-deep leadership and other youth protection issues. Your project proposal should demonstrate that you understand the requirements for adult participation. You should discuss what adults will be present and what their roles in the project will be. Adults should not be a major part of your work force. Their role is to advise, when needed, and there are some things that Scouts are not permitted to do (such as the use of chain saws – see *Guide to Safe Scouting*). If much of the work is done by adults, you are not fulfilling your leadership role.

Time schedule

Your time schedule should indicate how many workdays you expect your project to require, as well as how the time will be spent on each of those days. It should also show, tentatively, when the workdays will take place. In planning dates, you should allow time for your project to be approved by your district advancement committee. You may need to change the dates if the advancement committee requests changes to your plan before they will approve it. The benefiting organization will be interested to know when the project will be finished, and you should commit to a deadline. Again, a table or chart is the most effective way of showing all of your schedule information. The schedule estimates that you give should be consistent with the time estimates discussed in the “Project helpers” section above. Most projects consist of multiple workdays. Projects that are completed in just a few hours are generally not adequate to demonstrate the degree of leadership expected of an Eagle Scout. This estimate will also help the district advancement committee determine the scope of your project, which is an indication of the leadership opportunity it will provide.

Safety Hazards

Almost every Eagle project has some potential safety hazards. Anticipating the hazards your workers will face, and developing ways to make sure your workers are safe, are important aspects of leadership. The *Guide to Safe Scouting* represents BSA policy on what kinds of activities Scouts are permitted to participate in, as well as safety requirements for activities. You should consult the *Guide to Safe Scouting* to make sure that your project plan conforms. One common misconception is the belief that Scouts are not permitted to use power tools. The *Guide to Safe Scouting* specifies that older Scouts are permitted to use most power tools (chain saws and log splitters are specific exceptions). Make sure that Scouts, rather than adults, do all of the work they are permitted to do, but make sure that you have taken steps to assure safety, and that they have adequate instruction and supervision.

Safety considerations should also include your workers' health. Dehydration, hypothermia, and heat-induced illnesses are hazards you should take into account. You should tell what precautions you will take against them, and what provisions you will make for first aid and emergency medical treatment should they be needed.

About Leadership

Your Eagle project is called an Eagle Scout *leadership* service project, and one of the major goals of your project is to demonstrate the leadership skills you have learned in Scouting. There is not a specific section in the workbook on leadership, but your proposal should show that you understand leadership. Here are some of the factors that show your understanding of leadership:

- Initiative and effective communication with the benefiting organization.
- Thorough planning.
- Understanding how the Scouts will be organized and instructed – *by you* – to complete the work of the project.
- Leading the work yourself, and assigning tasks to Scouts and other peers, rather than relying on adults to provide leadership or to do tasks that can be performed by youth.
- Inspecting the work to assure that it was done properly.
- Dealing with change and unexpected obstacles.
- Developing a financial plan and securing funding for the project, rather than asking your family to pay for it.

For other ideas on what leadership means, review the leadership principles you learned in leader training you received as a Scout (Junior Leader Training, Greenbar, National Youth Leadership Training, etc.). Incorporate these principles into your project plan.

Helpful hints for developing your project proposal

1. Make it easy for your advancement committee to approve your project. Give them all the information they need. The more detail the better, as long as the detail is relevant. Remember that your project proposal is the only information the advancement committee has about your project. If there are details you don't include, the committee will not know them. A good rule of thumb is that your project proposal should be complete enough that someone else would be able to complete the project without you, using only the information and instructions in your project workbook.
2. Write clearly and format your project neatly, so that it is easy to read. Write the project proposal so that it reflects the standard of excellence expected of an Eagle Scout.
3. Number the pages.
4. **Do not** put your project workbook into any kind of binder. Do not staple the pages. Use a paper clip or binder clip to hold the pages together.

Tips for Adult Leaders Who Sign Eagle projects

- Hold the Eagle candidate to a high standard. Your signature indicates that you have reviewed the project and that it conforms to the instructions in this document, as well as any additional guidance given by your district. You should encourage the scout to do his best in developing his project proposal.
- Make sure that the project proposal is complete, and that it includes all of the information discussed above. Make sure that materials lists and instructions are complete and accurate. If you don't identify important information that the scout left out, the district advancement committee will, and your lack of thoroughness may cost the scout time.
- Don't accept sloppy work, including poor grammar and spelling. The Eagle Scout project workbook is an important document, and the care taken in developing it is an indication of the scout's leadership ability and scout spirit.
- If you find any problem with the project, don't sign it until the problem is corrected. Never let a scout submit a project that you know will not be approved. Don't put the district advancement committee in a position of disapproving a project proposal that you should not have passed along in the first place.
- It is helpful to sign using blue ink, rather than black, to make it easier to distinguish originals from copies.

Submitting Your Project Proposal for District Approval

After the original copy of your project plan is completed and signed, you should make two copies, one for yourself and one for the district. Each district has its own process for the submission and approval of Eagle Scout project proposals. Check with your district advancement committee for instructions on where and how to submit your project. You should submit the original plus one copy, which the district will keep for its records.

Carrying Out Your Project

As you carry out your Eagle project, you should keep good notes of everything that happens and record the time spent by every individual who works on your project. The section entitled "Carrying Out Your Project" is where you should report on what actually happened during the project. In this section, the more detail you include about how your project was done, the better. The Eagle Scout board of review must approve your completed project. If you do a good job of reporting on the project in your workbook, it will be easier for board members to understand what happened during your project, and you'll have to spend less time during your board of review answering questions about information you may have left out.

There are specific pieces of information required in this section of the workbook. You must list your own hours separately from others. List the hours you spent planning the project, the hours you spent carrying out the project, and the total hours you spent on the project. List every person who worked on your project, and the number of hours they worked. In this listing, you should keep adults and family members separate from Scouts and other youth. Most of the hours spent on the project should be done by Scouts and other youth, under your leadership. Hours spent by adults and family members are generally not considered leadership hours for you. (If you have a sibling who is a member of your unit, they may be considered to be youth working under your leadership when they are part of a team of workers other than your family.)

In this section of the workbook you should discuss any changes from your original plan and include “after” photographs, if appropriate.

The Completed Workbook

After you have completed the final section of the workbook, you should sign the workbook and get approval signatures from your unit leader and the representative of the benefiting organization who originally authorized the project.

*The Eagle Scout Leadership
Service Project Workbook,
properly filled out, must be
submitted with the application.
-The 12 Steps from Life to Eagle*

The completed workbook will be submitted to the Atlanta Area Council, along with your completed Eagle Scout Rank Application.

The Eagle Scout Rank Application

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 the local council. If a unit leader or unit committee fails to sign or otherwise approve an application, the Eagle candidate may still be granted a board of review. The failure of a unit leader or unit committee to sign an application may be considered by the board of review in determining the qualification of the Eagle candidate.

-The 12 Steps from Life to Eagle

The Eagle Scout Rank Application can be obtained from the Atlanta Area Council Program Office or downloaded from the BSA website, www.scouting.org. The paper form is a one-page, two-sided document.

Read through the application carefully so you know what information is required. No changes can be made to the application, so it's a good idea to make a copy and use it as a worksheet. On the original application, print legibly and in black ink.

References / Verification of the Application by the Council

When the completed application is received at the council service center, its contents will be verified and the references contacted. The council advancement committee or its designee contacts the person listed as a reference on the Eagle Scout Rank Application either by letter, form, or telephone checklist. The council determines the method or methods to be used. The candidate should have contacted those individuals listed as references before including their names on the application. The candidates should not be involved personally in transmitting any correspondence between persons listed as references and the council service center.

-The 12 Steps from Life to Eagle

In the Atlanta Area Council, your listed references are requested to send letters on behalf of the candidate. The letters should be sent to the Chairman of the Eagle Board of Review, in care of your troop committee chairman. Following the board of review, the letters are kept by the district advancement committee, to be destroyed after the national Eagle Scout Service awards the Eagle rank to the scout. The letters are never given to the candidate.

You must provide the names of your references on the Eagle Scout Rank Application, but the letters are not required when you submit your application to the council. The letters must be received prior to your board of review. Make sure that you get agreement from each of your references that they will write a letter on your behalf. The board of review will expect to see a letter from each person whose name is listed on your application. Be sure to include each person's complete address. The space on the application is small, which causes some Scouts to forget the city, state and ZIP code.

Who Should be Used as References

Five references are required: (1) your parents/guardians, (2) a religious reference, (3) an educational reference, and (4-5) two other references. If the candidate has a current or former employer, the employer may be used as an optional sixth reference. An employer is always a sixth reference, not a substitute for one of the two “other references.” The requirement is to “Demonstrate that you live by the principles of the Scout Oath and Law in your daily life.” Therefore, you should choose references other than people who only know you through your Scouting unit. While five references are required, you may submit more if you desire.

Since your references may not have an understanding of the ideals of Scouting, it may be helpful to provide them with some background on the Scout Oath and Law, so that they can write their letter in that context. A document that can be given to references for this purpose can be found in the advancement section of the Atlanta Area Council website, www.atlantabsa.org.

For Adult Leaders: Signing the Eagle Scout Rank Application

Your signature on the Eagle Scout Rank Application signifies that you approve the Scout’s completion of the requirements, and that you recommend him for advancement to the rank of Eagle. If you have reason to withhold your approval of his advancement, you should not sign the application. The board of review considers your signature to be your endorsement of the Scout’s advancement.

What to Submit to the Council Service Center

The **Eagle packet** that is submitted to the council service center must include the following:

- Eagle Scout Rank Application completed and signed. (Make sure you get the most recent printing. The application is modified periodically. You can get the latest version from the Atlanta Area Council Volunteer Service Center or download it from the BSA national website, www.scouting.org.)
- Your statement of ambition and life purpose, your leadership positions, honors and awards, as stated in Requirement 6 of the Eagle Scout Rank Application.
- The original copy of your completed *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook*.

Make three copies of the entire packet. Keep one copy for yourself. An adult leader should deliver the original packet plus two copies to the council service center. The council program office will review your application and certify that it is completed correctly. The length of time it takes for review by the council office will vary,

depending upon the number of applications that have been received. Generally, it takes about one week.

If there are problems with your application, it will be returned to you for correction. Depending upon the nature of the problem, you may have to resubmit the packet before it can be certified. If the problem is minor, the application will be certified, but you must correct the application prior to your Eagle Scout board of review. If it is certified, the original copy of your packet will be returned to the adult leader whose name is listed at the bottom of the front page of your Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook, along with instructions on whom to contact to arrange for your board of review.

The council will retain one copy of your packet, and the other copy will be forwarded to the district advancement committee, pending arrangement of your board of review. You cannot schedule your board of review until the district advancement committee has received your certified Eagle packet from the council service center.

The Eagle Scout Board of Review

The Eagle Scout board of review is the final requirement for earning your Eagle rank. The board of review is scheduled through your district advancement committee. Practices vary among districts, so it is important that your adult leaders coordinate the board of review with your district. Follow the instructions on the letter that is returned with your certified application from the council office.

After the contents of an application have been verified and appropriately signed, the application, Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook, and references will be returned from the council service center to the chairman of the Eagle board of review so that a board of review may be scheduled. Under no circumstances should a board of review be scheduled until the application is returned to the chairman of the Eagle board of review. Reference checks that are forwarded with the application are confidential, and their contents are not to be disclosed to any person who is not a member of the board of review.

-The 12 Steps from Life to Eagle

Selecting Members of the Board of Review

The board of review for an Eagle candidate is composed of at least three but not more than six members. One member serves as chairman. Unit leaders, assistant unit leaders, relatives, or guardians may not serve as members of a Scout's board of review. The board of review members should convene at least 30 minutes before the candidate appears in order to review the application, reference checks, and leadership service project report. At least one district or council advancement representative must be a member of the Eagle board of review if the board of review is conducted on a unit level. A council or district may designate more than one person to serve as a member of Eagle boards of review when requested to do so by the unit. It is not required that these persons be members of the advancement committee; however, they must have an understanding of the importance of the Eagle board of review.

-The 12 Steps from Life to Eagle

In the Atlanta Area Council, Eagle boards of review are organized and conducted by the district advancement committees. At least one board member must be from the district advancement committee. Neither the Scoutmaster nor Assistant Scoutmasters are allowed to participate as board members. Relatives and guardians of the candidate are also prohibited from being board members. Board of review members must be 21 years of age or older. They are not required to be registered in Scouting, but they must have an understanding of the importance and purpose of the Eagle board of review.

What to Bring and What to Wear

In preparation for your board of review, you should make sufficient additional copies of your entire packet to ensure that all board members have copies. You might also want to bring your *Boy Scout Handbook*, so it can be signed by the board of review members.

You should be dressed in your complete, proper uniform. All appropriate badges should be sewn on properly. You should wear your merit badge sash properly. The OA sash should not be worn at a board of review. An Eagle candidate who has turned 18, and is no longer a registered youth member of Scouting, may optionally wear dress clothes (i.e., a coat and tie).

Reminder for Adults

Make sure that you bring all of the scout's letters of recommendation and a blank Advancement Report (34403) to the board of review.

Preparing for Your Board of Review

Before coming to your Eagle Scout board of review, remember the Scout Motto – “Be Prepared.” You should prepare for your board of review by thinking back over your Scouting career. No two boards of review are exactly alike, so it is impossible to anticipate the exact questions you'll be asked. If you spend some time thinking about your Scouting experiences, including your advancements, outdoor activities, ways you demonstrated leadership, patrol and troop positions you held and what you accomplished, service to the community, religious activities, and anything else you have learned, you should be able to handle any question that you will be asked. The board wants to hear about you and your Scouting career; they are not there to ask you questions that will put you on the spot or trick you.

You should also review your completed project workbook carefully. The board of review is when your completed project gets its final approval. You should be familiar with every aspect of your project and be prepared to answer questions about it.

Some units help their Eagle candidates prepare for the board of review by holding a practice board of review prior to the actual board. This can be useful in helping you anticipate what it will be like to sit for the board of review and to get advice and feedback on how to conduct yourself during the board. This is entirely optional, but some units have found it to be very helpful to the Eagle candidate.

The candidate's unit leader introduces him to the members of the board of review. The unit leader may remain in the room, but does not participate in the board of review. The unit leader may be called on to clarify a point in question. In no case should a relative or guardian of the candidate attend the review, even as a unit leader. There is no set of questions that an Eagle candidate should be asked. However, the board should be assured of the candidate's participation in the program. This is the highest award that a Scout may achieve and, consequently, a thorough discussion of his successes and experiences in Scouting should be considered. After the review, the candidate and his unit leader leave the room while the board members discuss the acceptability of the candidate as an Eagle Scout.

The 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 be held with him as to how he may meet the requirements within a given period.

Should the applicant disagree with the decision, the appeal procedures should be explained to him. A follow-up letter must be sent to the Scout confirming the agreements reached on the action(s) necessary for the advancement. If the Scout chooses to appeal, the board should provide the name and address of the person he is to contact. (See "Appealing a Decision" in the National BSA Policies and Procedures, No. 33088.)

-The 12 Steps from Life to Eagle

For Adults: Conducting the Board of Review

The purpose of the board of review is to verify that the Scout has completed the requirements for the rank of Eagle Scout and to approve his application. It is an opportunity for the Scout to talk about what he has accomplished and what he has learned in Scouting. It should be a pleasant experience for the Scout, as well as for the members of the board. It is not intended to be confrontational, nor is it an opportunity to "grill" the Scout.

A suggested outline for the Eagle Scout board of review is available on the Atlanta Area Council website (www.atlantabsa.org).

When you, as a board of review member, sign your name to the Eagle Scout Rank Application, you are certifying that the Eagle candidate has fulfilled the highest ideals of the Boy Scouts of America. In this context, it is helpful to keep in mind the vision and mission of BSA.

BSA Vision Statement

The Boy Scouts of America is the nation's foremost youth program of character development and values-based leadership training.

In the future, Scouting will continue to

- Offer young people responsible fun and adventure;
- Instill in young people lifetime values and develop in them ethical character as expressed in the Scout Oath and Law;
- Train young people in citizenship, service, and leadership;
- Serve America's communities and families with its quality, values-based program.

BSA Mission Statement

The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

After the Board of Review

For Adults: Signing and Processing the Eagle Scout Rank Application

When the board of review has voted unanimously to approve the Scout's application for Eagle rank, the application is signed by the board members. They also sign an Advancement Report, which is provided by the unit. The signed application should be taken promptly to the Atlanta Area Council Volunteer Service Center. (Local policy varies slightly from "The 12 Steps from Life to Eagle." The project workbook is retained by the unit. Letters of recommendation are kept by the district, to be destroyed after the scout receives the Eagle award. Only the completed, signed application is delivered to the council service center.)

The completed Advancement Report is retained by the unit until the award package is returned to the council office by the national Eagle Scout Service.

Council Certification of the Board of Review

When the application arrives at the council service center, the Scout Executive signs it to certify that the proper procedure has been followed and that the board of review has recommended the candidate for the Eagle Scout rank. The Eagle Scout Rank Application is forwarded to the national Eagle Scout Service.

Processing by National Council

The Eagle Scout Service screens the application to ascertain information such as proper signature, positions of responsibility, tenure between ranks, and age of the candidate. Any item not meeting national standards will cause the application to be returned for more information. If the application is in order, the Scout is then certified as an Eagle Scout by the Eagle Scout Service on behalf of the National Council. Notice of approval is given by sending the Eagle Scout certificate to the local council. The date used on the certificate will be the date of the board of review. The Eagle Award must not be sold or given to any unit until after the certificate is received by the council service center. The Eagle Scout court of honor should not be scheduled until the local council receives the Eagle Scout rank credentials.

-The 12 Steps from Life to Eagle

Obtaining the Eagle Scout Award

The national Eagle Scout Service returns the official Eagle Scout materials to the council service center, which notifies the Scout's unit leader that the packet has been received. It is the responsibility of the unit to pick up the packet from the council service center. The Advancement Report must be turned in at this time. This packet includes the Eagle award and accompanying paperwork.

The Eagle Court of Honor

The Eagle court of honor should be a special occasion. The Scout and his family will remember it for the rest of their lives. The Eagle court of honor should be held separately from a troop court of honor. You should plan the Eagle court of honor as you would any other event that celebrates a major milestone in life. Make it a ceremony worthy of the young man who has achieved Scouting's highest award.

A full discussion of the Eagle court of honor is beyond the scope of this document. There are many resources available to help you plan your Eagle court of honor. At least one book has been published about Eagle courts of honor, and many websites have information, including sample ceremonies. Your unit may also have traditions it follows for Eagle courts of honor.

Appendix 1: Atlanta Area Council Policies

Background: BSA Policy concerning advancement is contained in publication 33088, *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures*. This publication authorizes the local councils to determine specific processes for administering advancement within the jurisdiction of the council.

Processes: This appendix identifies the areas in the *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures* where councils are given authority to establish processes for administering the advancement program and what those policies are. The Atlanta Area Council has delegated authority to the districts for most of the steps in the Life to Eagle process. The council certifies Eagle Scout applications and submits the final application, after the board of review is completed, to the national office. The district advancement committee serves as the council designee for all other parts of the process.

- **The 12 steps from Life to Eagle (step 2):** *Using the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook, the candidate must select his Eagle service project and have the project concept approved by his unit leader, his unit committee, and the benefactor of the project, and reviewed and approved by the council or district advancement committee. The workbook must be used in meeting this requirement.*

Atlanta Area Council Policy

The council has delegated the responsibility to review and approve the candidate's Eagle Scout leadership service project to the district advancement committee.

- **The 12 steps from Life to Eagle (step 5):** *When the completed application is received at the council service center, its contents will be verified and the references contacted. The council advancement committee or its designee contacts the person listed as a reference on the Eagle Scout Rank Application either by letter, form, or telephone checklist. The council determines the method or methods to be used. The candidate should have contacted those individuals listed as references before including their names on the application. The candidates should not be involved personally in transmitting any correspondence between persons listed as references and the council service center.*

Atlanta Area Council Policy

The council has delegated the responsibility to contact the references, listed on the Eagle Scout Rank Application, to the district advancement committee. The method used by the district advancement committee shall be letters of recommendation.

- **The 12 steps from Life to Eagle (step 8):** *The board of review for an Eagle candidate is composed of at least three but not more than six members. One member serves as chairman. Unit leaders, assistant unit leaders, relatives, or*

*guardians may not serve as members of a Scout's board of review. The board of review members should convene at least 30 minutes before the candidate appears in order to review the application, reference checks, and leadership service project report. **At least one district or council advancement representative must be a member of the Eagle board of review if the board of review is conducted on a unit level. A council or district may designate more than one person to serve as a member of Eagle boards of review when requested to do so by the unit. It is not required that these persons be members of the advancement committee; however, they must have an understanding of the importance of the Eagle board of review.***

Atlanta Area Council Policy

The council has delegated the responsibility of determining the makeup of Eagle board of review to the district advancement committee, consistent with national policy as to numbers and representation. That is, no fewer than three board members or greater than six are allowed. In the case of a unit board of review, a member of the district advancement committee will represent the council.

- **The 12 steps from Life to Eagle (step 10):** *Immediately after the board of review and after the application has been appropriately signed, **the application, the service project report, references, and a properly completed advancement report are returned to the council service center.***

Atlanta Area Council Policy

Our council's policy differs slightly. In the Atlanta Area Council only the completed and signed Eagle Scout Rank Application is returned to the council service center after the board of review. The project report is returned to the unit. Reference letters are retained by the district and destroyed. The completed advancement report is retained by the unit, to be turned in when the Eagle award packet is picked up at the council service center.

- **The 12 steps from Life to Eagle (step 11):** *When the application arrives at the council service center, the Scout executive signs it to certify that the proper procedure has been followed and that the board of review has recommended the candidate for the Eagle Scout rank. **This workbook and references are retained by the council.** The workbook may be returned to the Scout after council approval.*

Atlanta Area Council Policy

The workbook is retained by the unit. Letters of recommendation are collected by the district advancement committee after the board of review. After the award package returns from the national Eagle Scout Service, the letters of reference are destroyed. Letters of reference are confidential; the unit and district may not share them with the candidate. The unit should return the workbook to the Scout.

- **The 12 steps from Life to Eagle (step 12):** *The Eagle Scout Service screens the application to ascertain information such as proper signature, positions of responsibility, tenure between ranks, and age of the candidate. Any item not meeting national standards will cause the application to be returned for more information. If the application is in order, the Scout is then certified as an Eagle Scout by the Eagle Scout Service on behalf of the National Council. Notice of approval is given by sending the Eagle Scout certificate to the local council. The date used on the certificate will be the date of the board of review. The Eagle award must not be sold or given to any unit until after the certificate is received by the council service center. The Eagle Scout court of honor should not be scheduled until the local council receives the Eagle Scout rank credentials.*

Atlanta Area Council Policy

The council service center screens the application when the Eagle Packet is first delivered to the council (see steps 3-6) to ascertain information such as proper signatures, positions of responsibility, tenure between ranks, and age of the candidate. Because of this pre-screening, by the time the application reaches the Eagle Scout Service, it should already meet their criteria.

Appendix 2: Checklists

This section contains checklists that are helpful in making sure that certain parts of the Life-to-Eagle process are completed properly. The checklists are not part of the required paperwork; they are tools for you to use in making sure you haven't missed any steps.

The following checklists are in this Appendix:

1. *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook* Project **Approval** Checklist:
Use this checklist to make sure that you have included all the information needed by the district advancement committee in approving your project proposal. Your district advancement committee should use a checklist like this one in their review of your project.
2. *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook* Project **Completion** Checklist:
Use this checklist to help you complete your workbook, after your project is completed. The completed workbook will be submitted along with your Eagle Scout Rank Application.
3. Eagle Scout Rank Application Checklist: For use by Scouts and unit leaders, this checklist is to make sure the application is filled out completely and correctly prior to submission to the council service center.

Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook Project Approval Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure the Eagle project proposal contains sufficient information to facilitate approval by the district advancement committee. The workbook must be approved by the district advancement committee **prior to the start of the project.**

- All information is legible.
- Cover page: Names, addresses and phone numbers of Scout, unit leader and advancement person are complete and correct. (Note: The council will return your certified Eagle Scout Rank Application to the person listed as the advancement contact, prior to your board of review.)
- Project description is brief, specific and accurate.
- Name of group, telephone number and address that will benefit from the project is shown. Project will benefit a school, church or community, not a business or an individual.
- Detail on how the project will be of benefit to the group is included.
- Date concept was discussed with unit leader is shown.
- Representative's name/title/phone number of the benefiting group and date of the meeting is shown.
- The present condition is clearly described.
- "Before" photographs are attached if appropriate.
- Drawings, maps, and plans are included, legible, and comprehensive.
- Project scope requires substantial leadership of other youth by the Life Scout.
 - o Youth and adult hours are clearly itemized and totaled.
 - o Adults are invited for supervision and logistics.
 - o Hours are estimated reasonably for the work described.
- Materials, supplies and tools are listed, with cost and source, and are sufficient for the project.
- A specific plan for funding is included.
- Plan is sufficiently complete that another person could use it to complete the project, in the Eagle candidate's absence.
- Signatures are included.
 - o Original approval signature/date for benefiting organization is shown.
 - o Signature of the Scoutmaster.
 - o Signature of the unit committee member.
- Two copies of signed original project workbook have been made.
- Original and one copy of the project workbook sent to the district advancement committee chairman for review and approval. (If your district requires it, include a self-addressed stamped envelope with sufficient postage to cover the costs of mailing the report back to you.)

Eagle Scout Service Leadership Project Workbook Project Completion Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure that you have completed your project workbook properly, after your project is completed. **The completed *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook* must accompany the Eagle Scout Rank application submitted to the council office.** (This checklist should **not** be submitted with your application.)

- All information is legible.
- Total time spent by the Eagle candidate on planning the project is included.
- Total time spent by the Eagle candidate on carrying out the project is included.
- Total time spent by the Eagle candidate working on the project is included (Planning Hours + Carrying Out Hours.)
- Detail list of names, dates, and hours of those who worked on the project is included in the workbook and/or attached.
- Total number of youth/peer hours spent working on the project is included.
- Total number of hours spent by the Eagle Candidate and youth working on the project is included.
- List of materials used in the project and their costs is included in the workbook and/or attached.
- Changes to the project, after approval, which occurred before or during the completion of the project, have been identified.
- “After” photographs are attached if appropriate.
- Date shown when the project was started.
- Date shown when the project was completed.
- Signature/date of the Eagle candidate acknowledging that the project was started and completed after the Life rank was earned is shown.
- Signature/date of the unit leader attesting that the project was planned, developed, and carried out by the Eagle candidate is shown.
- Signature/date of the representative of the benefiting group is shown.
- All signatures on the original workbook are original signatures (no copies).

Eagle Scout Rank Application Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure that your Eagle Scout Rank Application is filled out properly. *Do not submit this checklist with the Eagle Scout Rank Application.*

- Current official BSA Eagle Scout Rank Application form is used.
- All information is legible.
- Applicant's full name and address are correct. No nicknames or abbreviations.
- Applicant's Social Security number is entered.
- Unit type, local number, and location are entered. No abbreviations.
- Date joined Boy Scout troop is entered (if applicable).
- Date became a Varsity Scout is entered (if applicable).
- Date became a Venturer is entered (if applicable).
- Date of First Class Scout board of review entered.
- Date of Star Scout board of review entered.
- Cub Scout, Webelos Scout, Arrow of Light, and fifth grade questions answered.
- Date of birth entered and age criterion met.
- Life Scout board of review date entered.
- At least 6 months has passed between Life Scout board of review and Eagle application date and before applicant's 18th birthday.
- At least 5 references are listed on the application.
- The troop committee chairperson has received a letter of reference from or checked to ensure that one is forthcoming from with each of the individuals listed on the application. (Do not turn in the letters with the application.)
- 21 merit badges are listed with date and unit number on each.
- On merit badge line 6 and 9, merit badges that do not apply have a line drawn through them. If any of the marked off merit badges are to be counted as part of the 21 total merit badges, the badges must be put in one of the other boxes (13 through 21).
- 4 Eagle required merit badges have a date prior to the Star Scout board of review date. Credit may be given if the Scout earned both Emergency Preparedness and Lifesaving or any combination of Swimming, Hiking, and Cycling.
- 2 additional merit badges must have a date prior to the Star Scout board of review date.

(Continued on next page)

Eagle Scout Rank Application Checklist

(continued)

- 3 Eagle required merit badges have a date prior to the Life Scout board of review. These Eagle required merit badges are in addition to the ones earned for Star Scout rank. Credit may be given if the Scout earned both Emergency Preparedness and Lifesaving or any combination of Swimming, Hiking, and Cycling, as long as they are not used for credit for Star Scout rank.
- 2 additional merit badges have a completion date prior to the Life Scout board of review. These merit badges are in addition to those earned for Star Scout rank.
- Date of Life Scout board of review entered on second page of the application and matches the Life Scout board of review date on the front page.
- Has served in a qualified position of leadership for at least 6 months between the Life Scout board of review and the Eagle Scout Rank Application date and before the candidate's 18th birthday.
- Project completion date entered is the same as the date in the project workbook. Date must be between Life Scout board of review and Eagle Scout Rank Application dates and before applicant's 18th birthday.
- Scoutmaster conference date entered and before applicant's 18th birthday.
- Applicant's signature, applicant's telephone number, and date signed entered.
- Unit leader's signature, unit leader's telephone number, and date signed entered.
- Unit committee chair's signature, unit committee chair's telephone number, and date signed entered.
- Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook* was signed/dated by unit leader and unit committee after project was completed.
- Completed *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook* and statement of ambitions/life purpose/list of leadership positions/ honors and awards are attached to the Eagle Scout Rank application.

Appendix 3: Life to Eagle Process Flowchart

