**Guide to Advancement**

**Time Available**

10 minutes.

**Learning Objectives**

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Increase awareness of the Guide to Advancement.
- Understand the purpose of the Guide to Advancement.
- Understand the Guide to Advancement contents.

**Suggested Presenter(s)**

Have one or more of the following people present this topic:

- District Advancement Chair
- A member of the Council Advancement Committee
- Another person knowledgeable about the Guide to Advancement.

**Presentation Method**

Discussion about the purpose and contents of the Guide to Advancement, and where to find it.

**BSA Reference Materials**

- [Guide to Advancement](#)

**Presentation Content**

**What is the Guide to Advancement?**

- The Guide to Advancement was created by the BSA to provide a uniform advancement process for Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA and Venturing Crews. The Guide covers all of them.
- The Guide does not include requirements for ranks, merit badges or other awards. Consult the relevant Cub Scout handbook for requirements, and the Scouts BSA Requirements book for Scouts BSA.

**How to Use the Guide to Advancement.**

- The word "Guide" sometimes causes confusion about whether it is mandatory to follow the Guide to Advancement, or if it just recommended best practices.
- First, we must distinguish between advancement requirements and advance procedures or processes.
- No council, committee, district, unit, or individual has the authority to add to, or subtract from, advancement requirements. There are limited exceptions relating only to members with special needs. For details see [section 10](#) of the Guide.
- The Guide uses the words "must", "shall", "may", "should" and "can" when describing the advancement process.

- The Guide clearly identifies mandated procedures with words such as “must” and “shall.” Where such language is used, no council, committee, district, unit, or individual has the authority to deviate from the procedures covered, without the written permission of the National Advancement Program Team.
- Recommended best practices are offered using words like "should," while other options and guidelines are indicated with terms such as "may" or "can." Refer questions on these to your local district or council advancement chairs or staff advisors. They, in turn, may request interpretations and assistance from the National Advancement Program Team.

**Why Use the Guide to Advancement?**

- Being familiar with the Guide to Advancement will save units much effort trying to determine how the advancement process should be implemented, because the Guide provides answers to almost every advancement question.
- Tricky questions like “Do Your Best” for Cub Scouts, and “Scout Spirit” and “Active Participation” for Scouts BSA are covered.
- The Eagle Scout, Venturing Summit, and Sea Scout Quartermaster rank processes are discussed in detail to avoid errors.
- Not complying with advancement requirements or mandatory procedures for Scouts BSA, Venturers, or Sea Scouts often results in denial of Eagle, Summit, Quartermaster awards.
- Not complying with a mandatory procedure will result in adverse consequences for the unit or the Scout.
- If the unit does not apply the advancement procedures correctly, the Scout and his or her family may appeal to the district, council or national advancement committee to overturn the unit's action. If the Scout is successful, it usually is embarrassing for the unit leadership, and will result in retraining of the unit leaders, at a minimum.

**Who to Ask for Help with the Guide to Advancement.**

- If unit leaders have questions about the advancement process, they should contact their district advancement chair. That person may in turn seek information or guidance from the council advancement committee.
- The presenter should identify the district advancement chair so unit leaders know who they are.