



TFC Advancement Information and Guidance during COVID-19

The following information regarding advancement is being provided as we deal with closures, cancellations, or other issues caused by the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19). Although there are difficulties and constraints, advancement can continue. Youth, parents, and leaders should work together to implement creative, common sense ways to facilitate advancement while adhering to the Guide to Safe Scouting and following the rules of Youth Protection Training.

Remember that during this time, Scouting is very much alive. TFC is providing a safe environment to continue Scouting activities and has launched a digital Scouting page with activities for your family to embark on while at home, updates for council and district activities, and advancement guidance. Be sure to check out ALL the resources available to you.

<https://threefirescouncil.org/digital-scouting-resources/>

The BSA National Advancement has provided information and guidance for advancement during COVID-19 [COVID-19 FAQ] at <https://www.scouting.org/coronavirus/covid-19-faq/> and will be updated periodically. Recent changes include:

- Time extensions to complete all work toward Eagle Scout beyond the age of eligibility can be granted by TFC through December 31, 2020 (see below). Time extensions may be granted for three months and may be extended for an additional 3 months.
- Swimming requirements. Swimming rank requirements for Second and First Class may be deferred until the next rank up to Life, but not Eagle.
- Merit badges. The Scout is expected to meet the requirements as stated; however, in some cases, virtual “visits” may fulfill the intent of a requirement. When the requirement’s intent cannot be reached virtually, the requirements cannot be completed, and the Scout must wait to complete that badge/requirement. Merit badge counselors signing off on requirements must determine to the best of their ability if the Scout has demonstrated the intended outcome.
- Camping merit badge. Requirement 9(b), on any of these (Scouting) camping experiences, you must do TWO of the listed activities. This requirement is temporarily suspended as a requirement to earn this merit badge.

See the COVID -19 FAQ for additional details and temporary changes for Cub Scouts and Scouts BSA.

Remember, all existing youth protection policies and digital safety guidelines must be followed.

Guidance specific to Three Fires Council to implement advancement during COVID is provided below.

Please follow this link to the Guide to Advancement (GTA) at <https://www.scouting.org/resources/guide-to-advancement/> which remains the primary source for information related to BSA advancement. It is referenced throughout the information provided here and in the BSA National guidance.

If you have questions please contact your district advancement committee representative or Bob Charles, TFC Advancement Chair at rpc_nu70@yahoo.com.

A. Extensions of time to complete rank requirements beyond the 18th birthday for the Eagle or 21st birthday for Summit or Quartermaster

Normally extensions are rarely granted and cannot be granted by the local council. However, due to the current COVID situation, TFC Advancement Committee may grant extensions through December 31, 2020¹ under the following limitations:

1. It can be established that COVID-19 disruptions were the only circumstances that delayed work on Eagle Scout/Summit/Quartermaster advancement requirements, such as the service project or merit badges.
2. Extensions shall only be granted to youth in Scouts BSA who have already achieved Life rank. If, once a Scout achieves Life rank, it turns out that COVID-19 disruptions along the way have left them with insufficient time to complete Eagle requirements, then this may be cited when the time comes to submit an extension request. Note: this is also applicable for Pathfinder for the Summit rank and Able Sea Scout for the Quartermaster rank.
3. Extensions are for 3 months beyond the Scout's 18th (or 21st for Summit or Quartermaster) birthday. An additional time extension of three months can be granted to those who received an extension and whose birthday is before October 2020. A third extension is possible for those who received an extension before July 2020 but will need to be carefully evaluated. If a youth has previously received an extension for cause from National, they can apply for an extension.

A Scout may apply for a time extension by using the procedures outlined on the ***TFC Request for Time Extension to Earn the Eagle Scout Rank Due to COVID-19***.

B. Boards of Review for Eagle, Summit and Quartermaster Ranks

Board of Reviews for Eagle, Summit and Quartermaster, which are meant to be face-to-face personal experiences, can be postponed during the COVID-19 crisis. Boards of Review can be conducted up to 3 months after the Scout's 18th birthday (or Venturer's 21st birthday) and 3-6 months with approval from the council.

Virtual Eagle boards of review may be conducted. The video conference must adhere to the requirements specified in the Guide to Advancement Topic '8.0.1.6 Boards of Review Through Videoconferencing'. See TFC digital website.

C. Eagle Project Plan Approval

This is best done with a face-to-face meeting, but during this time, phone, email, virtual meetings are acceptable.

D. Electronic or digital signatures

Electronic or digital signatures are acceptable for rank advancement or for the Eagle/Summit/Quartermaster packets/applications.

¹ This does not mean that all extensions end on Dec 31, only that they may not be granted after that date.