

Merit Badge Counselor Application Process

QUALIFICATIONS – All merit badge counselors must be:

1. At least 18 years old.
2. Of good character.
3. Recognized as having the skills required for each of the badges requested.
4. Recognized as having the ability to work with Scout-age boys.
5. Registered with the Boy Scouts of America as a Merit Badge Counselor (no fee required).
6. Youth Protection Trained within last 2 years.

APPLICATION PROCESS – Persons who are not currently registered as a Merit Badge Counselor must do the following to register. This includes applicants already registered in another Scouting position.

1. Complete a **BSA Adult Application** form. In the space for Position Code, enter “42.” In the space for Scouting Position Description, enter “Merit Badge Counselor.” Be sure to read and sign the “Disclosure/Authorization page as well as signing the application itself.
 - a. Signatures of the unit committee chairman and chartered organization representative **are not required** for merit badge counselors.
 - b. There is no fee to register as a merit badge counselor.
2. Complete the **Application for a Merit Badge Counselor Information** form.
 - a. If applying for any merit badge listed below under “Special Qualifications,” include a copy of the certification or other documentation as required for that merit badge.
 - b. Check whether you wish to serve all units or only a specific unit(s).
3. Complete Youth Protection Training (YPT), if you have not done so within the past two years. Be sure to obtain a copy of the completion certificate. Information for completing this online is available at www.scouting.org/Training/YouthProtection.aspx
4. Submit both forms, the YPT certificate, and documentation of special qualifications (if applicable) to Great Southwest Council, 5841 Office Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, NM. 87109. If already registered in another Scouting position and Youth Protection Training was previously completed, you may submit your BSA Membership ID number on the MBC Information Form in lieu of the YPT certificate.
5. Please review the BSA *Guide for Merit Badge Counselors* available at www.scouting.org/sitecore/content/Home/BoyScouts/GuideforMeritBadgeCounselors/MBCounselorGuide.aspx

ADDING & DROPPING MERIT BADGES – If you are already registered as a Merit Badge Counselor and you wish to add or delete merit badges, submit only an updated Merit Badge Counselor Information form. If special qualifications apply to any added merit badge, also submit the required certification or documentation.

SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS – Counselors for the following merit badges must meet the specific requirements stated below and must submit **proof of qualification** with their application.

Canoeing – Must be (a) BSA Aquatics Instructor, (b) American Canoe Association Canoeing Instructor, (c) American Red Cross Canoeing Instructor, or (d) trained by an instructor so qualified. Must have *BSA Safety A Float* and *BSA Safe Swim Defense* Training.

Climbing – Must be (a) a qualified rock climbing instructor, (b) trained in *BSA Climb on Safely*, and (c) must be at least 21 years of age.

Lifesaving – Must be (a) certified in Red Cross First Aid/CPR/AED or equivalent, (b) certified as BSA Lifeguard or Aquatics Instructor or equivalent, and (c) at least 21 years of age. Must have *BSA Safety A Float* and *BSA Safe Swim Defense* Training.

Rifle Shooting – Must be (a) a certified BSA National Camping School shooting sports director or (b) an NRA Rifle Shooting Instructor or Coach, and must be at least 21 years of age.

For activity with muzzle-loading rifles (Option C), must also be (a) a certified BSA National Camping School shooting sports director or (b) a NRA or National Muzzleloader Rifle Association certified muzzle-loading firearms instructor.

Rowing - Must be (a) BSA Aquatics Instructor or equivalent, or (b) trained by an instructor so qualified. Must have *BSA Safety Afloat* and *BSA Safe Swim Defense* training.

Scuba Diving – Must be trained and sanctioned by one of the following agencies:

- Professional Association of Diving Instructors
- National Association of Underwater Instructors
- Scuba Schools International
- International Diving Educators Association
- Professional Diving Instructors Corporation
- Scuba Diving International
- World Recreational Scuba Training Council

Shotgun Shooting - Must be (a) a certified BSA National Camping School shooting sports director or (b) an NRA Shotgun Shooting Instructor or Coach, and must be at least 21 years of age.

For activity with muzzle-loading rifles (Option C), must also be (a) a certified BSA National Camping School shooting sports director or (b) a NRA or National Muzzleloader Rifle Association certified muzzle-loading shotgun instructor.

Snow Sports – Must be at least 21 years of age.

Swimming – Must have *BSA Safe Swim Defense* and *BSA Safety Afloat* training.

Whitewater - Must be (a) certified as whitewater canoeing or kayaking instructor by American Canoe Association, or equivalent, and (b) approved by the council.