



Merit Badge Counselor Registration and Approval Process

The process to become a registered approved merit badge counselor is as follows:

1. An adult that wishes to become a merit badge counselor and is not currently registered as a merit badge counselor must fill out a BSA adult application (code 42 in the position code box) (fee not required) and a merit badge counselor information form (may be downloaded from the council web site and also available in the service centers).
2. These forms, once completed, should be turned into one of the council service centers.
3. When the forms are received at the Jefferson Service Center the adult applications are reviewed for signatures and other needed information by the registrar. Once reviewed the information from the adult application is entered into Scoutnet which will cause a Criminal Records Background Check (CBC) to be initiated if required. At this time the badges the counselor wishes to teach are also entered into Scoutnet.
4. The merit badge counselor information sheet is held in a folder until the CBC is completed. Once the CBC has come back the merit badge counselor information sheet is placed in a folder for pick up by the council advancement committee.
5. The council advancement committee picks up the forms weekly from the Jefferson Service Center, reviews the counselor's qualifications, approves and signs the merit badge counselor form and enters the counselor and their information into the program maintained by the advancement committee. The approved and signed forms are returned to the Jefferson Service Center the following week for filing when the forms for the next week are picked up.
6. Once the counselor is approved the council advancement committee will contact the counselor either by email or phone to let them know they have been approved and may start working with the scouts.
7. If a counselor is not approved the advancement committee will contact the counselor by mail and let them know what additional information is needed so a decision can be reached. (common reasons for not being approved are the lack of a signature on the form or qualifications not listed as required)
8. To obtain a list of approved, registered counselors a unit should contact their district advancement committee. Each district advancement committee has a program that lists all approved, registered counselors for their district along with the merit badges they are approved to teach. This program is updated every six weeks at the council advancement committee meeting from the master program. Units can request a list of all the counselors that have signed up to teach their unit's scouts and may also obtain a list of all counselors that have agreed to teach any scout (this is indicated by checking the appropriate box on the merit badge counselor information sheet). If a merit badge counselor information sheet is turned in without either of these boxes checked it is assumed that they are only willing to teach scouts in their own unit and will not be included on the "teach any scout list".
9. The service centers should refer leaders that request a merit badge counselor list to their respective district advancement committee or to the council advancement committee (email links are available on the council web site) to obtain these lists. The list that is available through Scoutnet should not be considered the official approved list since the information in Scoutnet was entered when the adult



application was entered and before the counselor has been approved by the council advancement committee. The CBC also may not have yet come back on this person. The counselors in the advancement committees program are not entered into the program until the counselor has been approved by the committee and the CBC has come back.

10. To add or delete a merit badge, change an address or other information a registered counselor only needs to fill out and submit a new merit badge counselor information sheet. The counselor's information will be updated in Scoutnet and the form will be put in the folder for the advancement committee to review and approve. Once approved the new information will be entered into the advancement committee's program and the district's program will be updated. The form will be returned to the Jefferson Service Center to be filed.

11. Rechartering of merit badge counselors will be handled through the district advancement committees. The district advancement committees will furnish a list of counselors to each unit in their district that will list each merit badge counselor that is associated with their unit. The unit will be asked to contact each counselor to verify they want to recharter as a merit badge counselor for the next year. Units will be asked to indicate on the list counselors that wish to recharter by placing a black "X" next to the counselor's name just as they do with their unit recharter. These lists will be returned to the district advancement committees who will turn them into the council advancement committee. The council committee will update its list from this information and forward it on to the Council Registrar by December 15th of each year. (Merit badge counselors are "non unit" positions and their registration expires on December 31st each year) The registrar has until then end of January to recharter the counselors before they are automatically purged from Scoutnet. Merit Badge Counselors that are not associated with a unit will be contacted by the council advancement committee and asked if they wish to recharter.

12. A BSA adult application only needs to be filled out the first time a person registers as a merit badge counselor. As long as they recharter as a counselor each year a new adult application as a counselor is not required. If they let their registration expire as a merit badge counselor they will have to fill out a new adult application and merit badge counselor information form to become a counselor again.

13. Merit Badge Counselor applications should not be held to be turned in with a unit's recharter. Merit Badge Counselors are "non unit" positions and do not show up on a unit's recharter, they are on the council's recharter since they are registered with the council as a merit badge counselor not with the unit. The adult application for a counselor does not require the committee chairman's or Charter Representative's signature since a counselor is not a unit position.

14. A person currently registered in an adult position (Scoutmaster, Den Leader etc) still must fill out an adult application and merit badge counselor information form to become a counselor. BSA requires a new adult application every time a leader changes or adds a position.