

Merit Badge Counselor

Etowah District

What You Need to Know – Facts & FAQ's

What is a Merit Badge Counselor (MBC)?

MBC's are volunteers who are knowledgeable about the various merit badge subjects. A MBC works with, counsels and approves (signs off) requirements completed by a Scout.

If I have a hobby or an interest, how will I know if I'm qualified to be a MBC?

- Boy Scout Requirements book, published annually (item 33215B). This is the official BSA source, for all MB Requirements, and is updated annually. The book is updated annually, due to changes in requirements, and supersedes any other published materials.
- As a quick reference, you can look at requirements on www.meritbadge.org, but must refer back to the Boy Scout Requirements book.
- Individual *Merit Badge Booklets* which you can borrow from your troop, or purchase from any scout shop or scoutstuff.org. MB booklets are often times outdated.

How much time will I have to spend; will it be more than 1 hour per week?

That depends on you! Actually, a Merit Badge Counselor's job is among the most important, with the least amount of time commitment. Your name will be listed in a database so Scouts may contact you regarding their needs:

- Schedule a series of meetings based on the requirements of the Merit Badge, and or needs of the Scout(s).
- Meetings can be done face to face, conference calling, e-mail or phone calls. They can be done in a troop or camp setting.
- Many Merit Badges require a one time meeting to review the Scout(s)'s work and approve completion with your signature.

What about Merit Badge Clinics or Advance-A-Rama events?

Scheduled by a Troop, District or Council, as a registered MBC, you may be asked to volunteer at one of these events, but you are never obligated.

What does the term "incomplete or partial" mean when speaking about Merit Badges?

Many scouts return from summer camp or MB clinics with "incompletes or partials", meaning they were unable to complete all the requirements at that time. This is among the most greatest challenges facing our troops today. Many Scouts are never able to receive their Merit Badges due to the lack of qualified Merit Badge Counselors.

What steps are necessary to become a MBC?

There are three steps which are **required**, and must be completed prior to becoming a certified Merit Badge Counselor and working with any youth in BSA:

- Complete a the NE Georgia Council **Merit Badge Counselor Form** which can be found at If you select the availability option to work with other scouts, your information will be available to units within the Etowah District.
- Become a registered leader with BSA, by filling out the **Adult Leader Application Form** which can be obtained through your Troop, or at the following web link <http://www.scouting.org/forms/28-501.pdf>
 - Under Position Code on the Adult Leader Application, enter “42”.
 - Under Position Description, enter “Merit Badge Counselor”.
 - There is no cost associated with becoming a MBC.

What about Youth Protection Training (YPT)?

You must complete YPT **prior** to working with any youth. The training can be done at the Troop level, a District or Council training event, or on line at:

- <http://nega-bsa.org/training.htm> Follow the link to **Youth Protection Training**. You should be able to print a certificate of completion, and submit to your Troop Advancement or Committee Chairman.

Once I sign up to be a MBC, how long am I eligible?

Your application is good for one year, and should be asked annually whether or not you’d like to continue to be listed as a counselor. No additional paperwork necessary.

Are there other resources that offer help and answers?

Your Troop Advancement Chairman should be able to answer most of your questions about the Merit Badge process. Here are some other resources:

- The National office of Boy Scouts of America www.scouting.org
- NE GA Council BSA website www.nega-bsa.org
- Etowah District website www.etowah-bsa.org
- Greg Willis, Advancement Committee Chairman advancement@etowah-bsa.org
 - Beth Fasnacht, Co-Chair Merit Badge Counselors bethscouts@bellsouth.net
 - Kelley Bishop, Co-Chair Merit Badge Counselors kellybishop@hotmail.com

Now that the application process is complete, what do I do with it all?

All paperwork is submitted to your Troop Advancement or MBC Chairman., they will make 2 copies of your MBC application; one copy is kept with the Troop, one copy is forwarded to the District Advancement Committee (see below), and the original is sent along with the Adult Leader Application to the Northeast Georgia Council office for processing.

Copy the Merit Badge Counselor Form and submit to Beth Fasnacht.

- Scan & e-mail to: bethscouts@bellsouth.net
- Fax: 770-205-4140
- Mail: Beth Fasnacht, 3845 Tamiami Trail Cumming GA 30041
- Bring to Round Table