

Five Rivers Council, B.S.A.
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INDIVIDUAL MERIT BADGE COUNSELOR REGISTRATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Approved by the Council Advancement Committee – March 2004 – Updated 7/2010

National BSA policy changed as of 1 April 2003, stating that all adult leaders in any **NEW OR CHANGING** position, **MUST** file an official BSA Adult Application whereby a Criminal Background Check, CBC, will be initiated.

The **BSA REQUIRES** a **CBC** to be conducted regardless of anyone's professional or other volunteer association, in which a criminal background check may have already been conducted.

In addition, as of 06-01-2010, all Merit Badge Counselors **MUST COMPLETE YOUTH PROTECTION TRAINING (YPT) PRIOR TO BEGINNING ANY MERIT BADGE WORK**, and every two years following. This training can be completed on-line at <http://www.scouting.org/Training/YouthProtection.aspx>. For additional information please contact those individuals listed below.

REGISTRATION LEVEL

A Merit Badge Counselor (MBC) is registered at the District level **REGARDLESS** of whether or not the individual counsels for Scouts in a Troop only. No publishing of names and phone numbers for Merit Badge Counselors who counsel at the Troop level only, will occur unless prior permission is given. **However, they must still be officially registered in the Boy Scouts of America.**

A Chartered Organization Representative, Institutional Head or Troop Committee Chair **DOES NOT** have authority to approve individuals as Merit Badge Counselors for counseling at the Troop level.

REGISTERING AS A MERIT BADGE COUNSELOR

An official BSA adult application **AND** merit badge counselor form **IS REQUIRED**. **THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS!**

Through the annual District renewal process, **EVERY MBC** must verify their personal data as well as those merit badges they counsel. They may remove or add merit badges at this time as well as anytime throughout the charter year which is, **JANUARY 1 THROUGH December 31.**

Once approved, it is the responsibility of each District to inform the individual of their approval for the remaining calendar year and that renewal of their status will occur annually before the end of the year. The form of communication, i.e. letter, postcard, etc. is at the discretion of each district.

NEW MERIT BADGE COUNSELORS MAY NOT BEGIN WORKING WITH SCOUTS UNTIL APPROVAL IS RECEIVED FROM THE DISTRICT ADVANCEMENT CHAIR OR DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE.

Once an Adult Application AND Merit Badge Counselor Form are 100% complete and submitted to the Council Service Center, approval to begin working as a MBC will typically take 30 days.

DISTRICT APPROVAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Andaste District	Gary Neiley	570-746-1865	E-mail: Gary.Neiley@cmicompany.com
Indian Waters District	Harold Bossard	607-732-8804	E-mail: hbossard@stny.rr.com
Williamson Road District	Reni Southard	607-962-8085	E-mail: rsouthar@stny.rr.com
Thunderbird District	Peter Baker	607-280-0060	E-mail: thunderbird@fiverivers.org

Five Rivers Council Merit Badge Counselor

General Guidelines and Recommendations

Revised 7-2010

In order to meet the basic requirements to serve as a Merit Badge Counselor you must be at least 18 years of age; be of good moral character; have some education, background, expertise or experience in the subject or subjects you choose to counsel; and have the ability and desire to work with boys of Scouting age.

As a merit badge counselor, your mission is to join fun with learning. You are both a teacher and mentor to the Scout as he works on a merit badge and learns by doing.

1. To act as a Merit Badge Counselor, *you must be registered with the Boy Scouts of America as a Merit Badge Counselor (MBC)*. If you are already registered specifically as a MBC, you need only file a Merit Badge Counselor Application (found at the back of this list). If you are not currently registered as a MBC, you must include an Adult Application with your Merit Badge Counselor Application, using the number 42 as the Position Code. (A MBC is registered as a DISTRICT position.) Counselors who desire to counsel Merit Badges such as Rifle, Shotgun, First Aid, Swimming, etc., should attach copies of their licenses or certifications to support their knowledge in the subject.
2. You are welcome to act as a Merit Badge Counselor for one Merit Badge or several, as you wish. However, the Five Rivers Council (FRC) strongly recommends a person select no more than eight (8) to ten (10) Merit Badge subjects. While there is no specific limit, the FRC/District Advancement Committees reserve the right to limit the number of Merit Badges a specific counselor is approved for. You have the option of counseling boys in a specific troop or boys from any troop. The FRC desires and encourages you to counsel Scouts from various troops, as the best experience for a Scout is exposure to a variety of merit badge counselors for diversity in adult contacts. Again, the spirit of the program is to expose the Scout to a wide circle of adults to help broaden his perspective.
3. As a Merit Badge Counselor, each counselor's name, address, phone number(s) and e-mail will appear in the Merit Badge Counselor List. This is a confidential list and is used only for the purpose of assisting Scouts in locating Merit Badge Counselors. *Counselors are free to work with as many Scouts as they feel they can handle, and may turn down any request they receive.*
4. The requirements for all Merit Badges are very clear and specific. Merit Badge Counselors must adhere to those requirements as written. Specifically, if the requirement says, "*write, make, show, describe, demonstrate, etc.*" than each Scout must do just that. Note each requirement has an action - i.e. *demonstrate*. Counselors

may not add or subtract for any requirement - nothing more, nothing less. (Note, the only exception would be Scouts with disabilities or special needs. Ask your Advancement Chairman for details.) Specific Merit Badge requirements can be downloaded or viewed from:

http://meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Merit_Badges

or

<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsourc/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/MeritBadges.aspx>

Once at this site, you just click on the desired merit badge to review the requirements; this is an excellent tool for you to determine if you're proficient enough in the Merit Badge subject area to become a counselor. We would expect and encourage counselors (once approved) to acquire a merit badge pamphlet on each subject area that they will be counseling.

5. The Five Rivers Council #375 expects all Merit Badge Counselors to be trained in the purpose of Scouting and in the advancement procedures. This syllabus for this training can be found at

<http://scouting.org/scoutsourc/BoyScouts/TrainingModules/MeritBadgeCounselorInstructorsGuide.aspx>

Paper copies of this information can be obtained by contacting the District Advancement Chairman.

6. All adult volunteers are required to complete BSA Youth Protection training before registering as an adult leader. Youth protection training must be renewed every two years. This training can be done through the BSA's Online Learning Center at <http://www.olc.scouting.org/>. BSA Youth Protection training helps preserve a safe environment for young people and adult leaders so that they can all enjoy the Scouting program.
7. Whenever a merit badge counselor meets with a Scout, there must always be a third person present. This third person may be any other adult familiar to the Scout such as his parent or guardian, or the Scout's "buddy" (friend, sibling, or other relative).