



Website:

<https://hnescouting.org/able-scouts-resources/>

Scouting  America™



Scouting helps by giving Scouts with disabilities "...and opportunity to prove to themselves and to others that they can do things - and difficult things, too - for themselves."

- Lord Baden Powell

The council is committed to making Scouting accessible and enjoyable to all Scouts, regardless of their abilities. Since its founding in 1910, the Scouting America has included fully participating members with physical, mental and emotional disabilities. The BSA's policy is to treat members with disabilities as much like other members as possible. It has been traditional, however, to make some accommodations in advancements if absolutely necessary. By adapting the environment and/or our instruction methods, most Scouts with disabilities can be successful in Scouting.

The basic premise of Scouting for youth with disabilities is full participation. Youth with disabilities can be treated and respected like every other member of their unit. They want to participate like other youth - and Scouting provides that opportunity.

An individual is considered to have a "disability" if he or she:

- ♦ Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities - seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, breathing, performing manual tasks, learning, caring for oneself and working
- ♦ Has a record of such impairment
Is regarded as having such an impairment
There are many resources available to parents and leaders of Scouts with disabilities and special needs:

[*Guide to Working With Scouts with Special Needs and DisABILITIES*](#), No. 510-071

[BSA Disabilities Awareness - Serving Scouts with Disabilities](#) webpage

[Scouting for Youth with Disabilities Manual](#), No. 34059
[Autism and Scouting](#) Webpage

[Guide to Advancement, Section 10, Advancement for Members with Special Needs](#)

Resources:

Individual Scout Advancement Plan

https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/512-936_WB.pdf

Guide to Advancement – Advancement for Scouts with Special Needs

<https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/gta-section-10.pdf>

Guide to Working With Scouts With Disabilities

<https://www.scouting.org/resources/disabilities-awareness/>

Scouting with Special Needs and Disabilities Information Sheet

<https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/specialneedsinformationsheet.pdf>

Request for Registration Beyond the Age of Eligibility

https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/512-935_wb.pdf

Application for Alternate Eagle Rank Merit Badges

<https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/512-730.pdf>

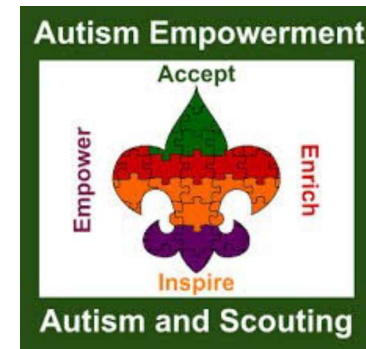


How Do I Register my New Scout as Having a Disability for Special Needs?

There is no special registration process for Scouts with a disability or special need or procedure to collect such information. Instead, the parents need to talk to unit leaders about their son's or daughter's particular challenges. A good unit can and does make simple accommodations for individual members whenever possible. If the youth has mobility or health restrictions that will affect camp activities, these are generally collected on the camp physical examination form. Camps don't necessarily share this information with the entire staff, so adult leaders may find it helpful to talk directly to camp counselors about these restrictions. The disability or special needs status of a Scout or Venturer isn't otherwise relevant outside the unit unless the youth requires - and qualifies for - Advancement accommodations or additional time to fulfill requirements. These accommodations are generally restricted to youth with "permanent and severe" disabilities.

Advancement Flexibility Allowed

Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturers or Sea Scouts who have disabilities may qualify for *limited flexibility* in advancement. Allowances possible in each program are outlined below. It does not necessarily matter if a youth is approved to be registered beyond the age of eligibility. Experience tells us those members whose parents are involved, or at least regularly consulted, progress the farthest. The [Guide to Advancement](#) outlines advancement for Cub Scouts (10.2.1.0), Scouts BSA (10.2.2.0) and Venturers and Sea Scouts (10.2.3.0) with special needs.



Individual Scout Advancement Plan

The [Individual Scout Advancement Plan \(ISAP\)](#), No. 512-936 is similar to an Individual Education Plan (IEP), which is used in schools to establish a student's special education eligibility. It can also help plan an approach for the education of a student who has disabilities that preclude his or her full participation in a typical curriculum. An ISAP is specific to each Scout and is usually prepared in a cooperative effort between parents, Scout leaders and a healthcare professional. The objective of an ISAP is to chart a course through the advancement program that helps a Scout or Venturer with disabilities achieve as much as any limitations will allow, and to facilitate applications for alternative requirements, merit badges and registration beyond the age of eligibility, as appropriate.

Application for Alternate Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges

In order to earn merit badges, Scouts must successfully complete all requirements as stated; no more, no less. Though this rule applies to Scouts with disabilities, some, because of the severity of their medical condition, are permitted to earn alternative badges in lieu of those required for the Eagle Scout rank. Section 10.2.2.3, "Alternative Merit Badges for Eagle Scout Rank", in the Guide to Advancement outlines the process. Scouts with special needs must first earn as many of the Eagle-required badges they are capable of earning before applying for any alternatives. With help from the parent or guardian and unit leader, the Scout's careful review of the requirements prior to starting work on an Eagle-required badge will help the Scout determine if the badge is attainable. If this isn't possible, the Scout should apply for approval to earn an alternative badge once he or she has completed all the other required ones. Planning ahead is the key. If the Scout qualifies, the parent or guardian and leader may proceed in helping the Scout apply for alternative merit badges early on so the [Application for Alternative Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges](#), No. 512-730, can be completed and submitted on time. It should also be noted the alternative merit badge chosen must provide a similar challenging experience as the required badge.



Registration Beyond the Age of Eligibility

Youth members with severe physical disabilities and youth and adults with developmental or cognitive challenges may be able to [Request Registration Beyond the Age of Eligibility](#), No.512-935, in the BSA. This allows them to work through the advancement program at a pace appropriate to their needs. The steps to do this are relatively easy and you will find them outlined in section 10.2.2.4 of the [Guide to Advancement](#).

A collaboration of parents, Scout leaders and qualified health professionals can complete the information that must be submitted to the local council for approval. This team should have a good understanding of the Scout's abilities and disabilities, and how these will affect his or her ability to complete requirements for advancement. The information submitted will help the council make a proper assessment, so preparers need to be sure to include as much detail as possible.

It is suggested that any Scout who qualifies should be registered this way as soon as possible so he or she has ample time to complete the requirements. The advancement program is challenging, but many members with disabilities have found ways to succeed. Providing them extra time to work on requirements and merit badges, when approved in advance, has proven to be helpful.