

Merit Badge Counselors

All adults serving as merit badge counselors must be registered as a Merit Badge Counselor, position code 42, in the district they are serving by completing the Adult Application form, No. 524-501, and filing it in the local council. They may choose to pay a registration fee to receive Scouting magazine or to pay no fee.

However, they must complete the adult application even if no registration fee is paid, for the purpose of processing their name through the computer system and completing a criminal background check. They must be at least 18 years old and qualified to teach their respective merit badge subjects.

The Scout executive or a designee must sign the adult application for merit badge counselors. The advancement chair registered in the district or council should approve the application.

Counselor Information form No. 34405* must be filled out and attached to the adult application for council approval. **NOTE: Laurel Highland Council has their own form.*

FAQ

Question: Must individuals who are serving as a merit badge counselor register as a merit badge counselor with the Boy Scouts of America?

Answer: Yes, an Adult Application must be completed for each position in which the individual wants to serve. The application allows only one position per form. For instance, an individual who wants to serve only as a merit badge counselor will need to complete only one application. However, a Scoutmaster or assistant Scoutmaster who wants to serve as a merit badge counselor must complete two applications—one for the Scoutmaster position and one for the counselor position.

Question: Once the adult leader application has been submitted, how long does the approval process take?

Answer: The process usually takes from four to six weeks.

Question: Once a volunteer is registered and approved as a merit badge counselor, is that registration for life?

Answer: Approvals for merit badge counselors and all other adult volunteer positions are valid for one year only and must be renewed annually.

Note: It is acceptable for a counselor registered in one council to approve merit badges for Scouts in another. This is an important consideration, especially in areas where counselors are scarce, or when Scouts are away from home and want to continue advancing.

Refer to Boy Scout Guide to Advancement #33088 for additional information.

www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/33088.pdf