

Youth Positions of Responsibility

Understanding the Leadership Rank Requirements for Older Scouts

April 3, 2025
Susquehanna District Roundtable
Scouts BSA Breakout





Rank Requirement

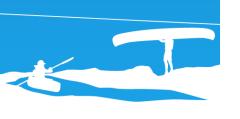
"While a [First Class | Star | Life] Scout, serve actively in your troop for [four | six] months in one or more of the following positions of responsibility [(or carry out a Scoutmaster-approved leadership project to help the troop)]:"





Positions of Responsibility

- "Positions of Responsibility" are required for Star, Life, and Eagle
- Leadership is not just a title—it's about fulfilling duties and making an impact
- Purpose: Help Scouts develop responsibility and leadership skills
- Scoutmaster-Approved Leadership Project as alternate option
 - This is NOT the same scope as an Eagle Project
 - Ref 1 Ref 2 Ref 3







What Counts as a Position?

- Must be listed in rank requirement
- Units cannot require specific positions (e.g., demanding a Scout be SPL for Eagle)
- Exceptions:
 - Lone Scouts: Can use school, church, or community roles
 - Provisional units (e.g., jamboree troops) do not count
- Leadership Projects: Allowed for Star & Life ranks if assigned by the unit leader

Guide: 4.2.3.4.1





Positions of Responsibility

Position	Star (4 mo)	Life (6 mo)	Eagle (6 mo)
Assistant Patrol Leader	NO	NO	NO
Patrol Leader	V	٧	V
Assistant Senior Patrol Leader	V	V	V
Senior Patrol Leader	V	٧	V
Troop Guide	V	٧	V
Order Of The Arrow Troop Representative	V	V	V
Den Chief	V	V	V
Scribe	V	V	V
Librarian	V	V	V
Historian	V	٧	V
Quartermaster	V	V	V
Bugler	V	V	NO
Junior Assistant Scoutmaster	V	٧	V
Chaplain Aide	V	V	V
Instructor	V	V	V
Webmaster	V	V	V
Outdoor Ethics Guide	V	V	V
SM-Approved Leadership Project	٧	V	NO







Meeting the Time Requirement

- Months of active service—not just holding a title
- Different positions can add toward the total time
- Holding two roles at once does not reduce required months
- Gaps between positions are allowed continuous service is not required

Guide: 4.2.3.4.2

If the Unit has 'time-off' (e.g., summer break) that time may not be excluded





What is Active Participation?

- The Scout is registered
- The Scout is in good standing
 - Has not been dismissed or suspended for disciplinary reasons
- Meets Unit's reasonable expectations, or lower participation is explained
 - Communicate expectations in advance
 - Time need not be consecutive

Guide: 4.2.3.1

- Time away for other positive endeavors should not be excluded
- Youth must be allowed to balance their lives with positive activities outside of Scouting





Meeting Unit Expectations

- If unit expectations exist, the Scout must meet them within reason (4.2.3.0). Establish, Document, and Share
- Doing nothing in a role does not count!
- If performance is lacking:
 - Early feedback is key! Don't wait until the term is over.
- Examples
 - https://troopleader.scouting.org/general-troop-information/troop-structure/troop-positions/
 - https://siennatroop140.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Troop140_LeadershipPositions.pdf
 - https://www.boyscoutfun.org/Training/BSA_leadership_pos.pdf

Guide: 4.2.3.4.3

https://bsa1776.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Troop-Scout-Positions.pdf





Meeting the Requirement in Absence of Unit Expectations

- If no documented expectations exist:
 - Leaders should define responsibilities for the Scout.
 - Communicate frequently on performance
- Without guidance, if the Scout is deciding their responsibilities
 - Reasonable effort = requirement fulfilled.

Guide: 4.2.3.4.4



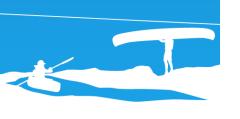


When Responsibilities are Not Met

- If clearly established documented expectations are not met within reason
 - Communicate the problem EARLY
 - Coach the Scout on how to improve

Guide: 4.2.3.4.5

- Use leading questions to guide the Scout to a decision
- If performance does not improve, remove the Scout form that position and find another option
- If no feedback was given, a Scout may not suddenly be denied credit for the time at the end of the term
- If performance is disputed, a Board of Review may be requested





"Responsibility" and "Leadership"

- Leadership is not just being in charge
- Responsibility is the foundation of leadership
- Some Scouts lead from the front, others support from behind the scenes
- Examples:
 - A strong Instructor who mentors younger Scouts demonstrates leadership

Guide: 4.2.3.4.6

 An experienced Den Chief who guides both Cubs and their Adult Leaders





Key Points

- Set clear expectations for leadership positions.
- Guide Scouts through the experience mentorship is essential.
- Provide feedback early—help them grow.
- Encourage responsibility, not just rank advancement.
- Leadership is about action, not position!





Discussion

- What challenges have you encountered in ensuring Scouts actively fulfill their positions of responsibility, and how have you addressed them?
- How can unit leaders better support Scouts who may not naturally step into traditional leadership roles but still demonstrate responsibility?
- What strategies can we use to provide timely feedback and course correction for Scouts who are not meeting position expectations, rather than waiting until the end of their term?





Questions? Ideas?

