



# Youth Positions of Responsibility

## Understanding the Leadership Rank Requirements for Older Scouts

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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





# Positions of Responsibility

Position	Star (4 mo)	Life (6 mo)	Eagle (6 mo)
Assistant Patrol Leader	NO	NO	NO
Patrol Leader	✓	✓	✓
Assistant Senior Patrol Leader	✓	✓	✓
Senior Patrol Leader	✓	✓	✓
Troop Guide	✓	✓	✓
Order Of The Arrow Troop Representative	✓	✓	✓
Den Chief	✓	✓	✓
Scribe	✓	✓	✓
Librarian	✓	✓	✓
Historian	✓	✓	✓
Quartermaster	✓	✓	✓
Bugler	✓	✓	NO
Junior Assistant Scoutmaster	✓	✓	✓
Chaplain Aide	✓	✓	✓
Instructor	✓	✓	✓
Webmaster	✓	✓	✓
Outdoor Ethics Guide	✓	✓	✓
SM-Approved Leadership Project	✓	✓	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
- 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
  - 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://siennatroop140.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Troop140_LeadershipPositions.pdf)
  - [https://www.boyscoutfun.org/Training/BSA\\_Leadership\\_pos.pdf](https://www.boyscoutfun.org/Training/BSA_Leadership_pos.pdf)
  - <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.





# 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
    - Use leading questions to guide the Scout to a decision
  - If performance does not improve, remove the Scout from 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
  - 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?

