



***TROOP 355***  
***RANK ADVANCEMENT POLICY***  
***April 2004***

As a boy moves through the scouting program he will have many new and exciting experiences, earn merit badges, learn valuable leadership skills, develop character, fitness, last, but not least, advance in rank.

Advancing in rank is a way of measuring what the scout has achieved. Naturally, the higher your rank, the greater the prestige.

There are several steps he will need to follow in order to advance in rank:

1. Complete all of the requirements in his scout book and have each requirement signed and dated by one of the following: (a) Your Scout Master; (b) An Assistant Scout Master; (c) An Appointed Scout Dad; or (d) An Authorized Scout (generally at rank of star and above). Remember, a parent may not sign their son's scout book.

A scout may work on tenderfoot, second, and first class rank all at the same time. It is generally best to concentrate on your tenderfoot requirements first. However, during camp-outs, summer camp and scouting events, a scout may be given opportunities to work on other rank advancements and he should take those opportunities as they come up.

If a scout needs help with advancement, a Troop Instructor is a valuable resource. Instructors are experienced scouts and would be happy to help. He can also ask the senior patrol leader who may assign an older scout to help you through the process. A scout should never hesitate to ask a more experienced scout for help. The teaching of others is the best way to reinforce scouting skills. If a scout becomes frustrated or confused with the advancement process, he should not hesitate to call the Scout Master.

2. Scout Spirit Conference: A scout will need to meet with one of the Assistant Scout Masters and discuss matters concerning the Scout Oath and Law. This is a formal meeting and should be arranged by the scout. He will need to wear his uniform to the meeting. During this meeting, they will discuss his participation in the scouting program, leadership or other assigned positions.

The scout will be asked questions that have no right or wrong answers, such as: What have you learned from being a patrol leader? What has your camping



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experience taught you? How have you kept yourself physically fit? Give an example of how you have been reverent. What do you think about during the flag ceremony? What is the most important point of the Scout Law? Why? Generally, these meetings will last 30 to 40 minutes. The Assistant Scout Master is there as a character coach and will most likely give encouragement; point out areas of strength, and give character issues to ponder in the future. If he feels that the scout's of good character, he will recommend him for the next step, the Scout Master conference. Tenderfoot rank advancement does not require a Scout spirit Conference.

3. Scout Master Conference: This is a formal meeting and should be arranged by the scout. It should take place at the Scout House or can be arranged in your home. The scout will need to bring the following to the Scout Master Conference: (a) scouting records; (b) Scout Handbook; (c) a record of service hours; (d) a record of camp-outs; (e) merit badge cards; and (f) badge sash with all merit badges sewn in place. In addition, the scout will need to wear his full uniform including shirt, insignia, neckerchief, slide, scout belt and scout socks.

During the Scout Master Conference, the scout will be asked to recite the Scout Oath, Scout Law, and Outdoor Code. He will also be asked questions on the rank he is being tested for, plus all previous ranks. He is expected to know all of this information. The goal of the Scout Master Conference is to prepare the scout for the Board of Review and, as such, this is a coaching session in which we fill in deficient areas of his scouting knowledge. Please take time to read through the Scout Handbook, review the first aid section and prepare as thoroughly as possible for the Scout Master Conference.

Many scouts have difficulty in the following areas: (a) knots; (b) map and compass; and (c) first aid. The Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmasters will be happy to help with any subject material that they do not understand. Additionally, the more senior scouts can be very helpful in teaching these skills. The scout should seek them out for help.

Generally, the scout can expect to spend an hour or two in the Scout Master Conference. Following the successful completion of the Scout Master Conference and demonstration that he is proficient in all areas of the current rank, he will be recommended for a Board of Review.



**TROOP 355**  
**RANK ADVANCEMENT POLICY**  
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4. Board of Review: The scout should request his Board of Review from the Troop Board of Review Chairman. It is imperative that the scout, and not the parents, requests the Board of Review. He should call no later than seven days in advance of the Board of Review session calendared to allow the Board of Review Chairman to arrange for adult leaders. During the Board of Review, the scout will meet with 2 or 3 adult leaders who will ask him questions regarding his scouting skills. He will be asked to demonstrate his knots, recite the Scout Oath and Scout Outdoor Code. The scout will be asked questions concerning all areas of pertaining to his rank advancement request and all previous ranks. The Board of Review may spot check to see if he has strong knowledge in a specific area. Additionally, he will be asked questions about his scouting spirit such as the following: What has his leadership position taught him? What have been the challenges? What has he done to meet those challenges? How would he approach leadership differently next time?

The scout will be asked character questions regarding the Scout Oath and Scout Law. He may be asked questions such as: What is the most important point of the Scout Oath? What is the most important point of the Scout Law? Why? These will be essentially the same questions that were asked during his Scout Spirit Conference and his Scout Master Conference. For this reason, it is suggested that he schedule his Board of Review immediately after his Scout Master Conference. This way, he should have no difficulty during the Board of Review. His answers should be concise and complete. This tends to speed up the Board of Review process.

Keep in mind that the scout may be able to complete a Scout Spirit Conference, a Scout Master Conference or a Board of Review (for rank advancement below First Class) at a Troop campout. He will still want to make arrangements in advance of the event by checking with the appropriate leaders.

If he has any questions regarding the advancement process, or if he needs any further assistance in aiding him along the way, please do not hesitate to call the Scout Master or any of the Assistant Scout Masters at any time.