



TROOP 165

Crystal Lake, IL

Troop Handbook

Includes the Policies and Procedures of Troop 165

Updated November 2023

Contents

Troop 165 - Who We Are

Introduction to Troop 165

Welcome to Boy Scouts Troop 165! Troop 165 is an active and registered unit with Scouts BSA, Sycamore District, which is part of the Blackhawk Area Council #660 based in Rockford, IL. American Legion Post 171, Crystal Lake, IL, charters Troop 165. Membership in Troop 165 is open to any youth boy that meets the membership requirements of Scouting BSA and is willing to abide by Troop 165's Policy and Procedures.

Troop 165 Leadership

Scouts

It is the policy of Troop 165 to have a Boy-Led Troop. Empowering boys to be leaders is the core of Scouting. Scouts learn by doing, and what they do is lead their patrols and their troop. The boys themselves develop the troop's program and then take responsibility for figuring out how they will achieve their goals.

A Boy Scout troop is a small democracy. With the Scoutmaster's direction, the Scouts are formed into patrols, plan the troop's program, and make it a reality. In order for that to happen, a troop relies upon Scouts serving in positions of responsibility. The key boy leaders of the troop make up the *Patrol Leaders' Council*; they are the Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leaders and Troop Guides.

Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters

In Troop 165 we have a group of adults that have volunteered their time and talents to work directly with the Scouts. The Scoutmaster, with his assistants, help the Scouts implement the plans and goals that each patrol sets. These are dedicated and enthusiastic individuals whose purpose is to build character and foster the development of skills. These skills include leadership, self-confidence, a good work ethic, team spirit, and self-discipline. (This document provides a detailed list of each position's responsibilities)

Troop Committee

The Troop Committee gives logistical support to the troop and its program. Each individual on the committee brings a wealth of experience and a desire to serve. The positions on the Committee include, but are not limited to: Committee Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Advancement/Board of Review Chair, Training and Transportation Coordinator Chair, Equipment Coordinator Chair, Membership/Registration Chair, Secretary, Service Hours Coordinator Chair, Webmaster Chair, Special Events Coordinator, Fundraising Chair, Order of the Arrow Advisor, Religious Awards Chair, Merit Badge Coordinator Chair, etc. (This document provides a detailed list of each position's responsibilities)

Troop 165 Procedures

Meetings

Troop Meetings: Troop Meetings are on the first three (3) Tuesday nights of each month from 7:00 – 8:30pm. Troop Meetings are held at the Veteran Acres Park Nature Center – 330 N. Main Street, Crystal Lake, IL.

Scoutmaster/Assistant Scoutmaster Meeting (ASM): Meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Nature Center at 6:30 pm. All Assistant Scoutmasters are requested to be there along with any other interested adults.

Troop Committee Meeting: Meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Nature Center at 7:00 pm. All members of the committee are expected to attend. The meeting is also open to all interested parents.

Patrol Leaders Council (PLC): This meeting is held on the fourth Tuesday of each month. The Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leaders, Troop Guides and Scribe are expected to attend this meeting. All other appointed positions are also encouraged to attend and other scouts are welcome to observe. Patrol Leaders Council is conducted by the Senior Patrol Leader and is the planning meeting for all Troop activities. The Patrol Leaders report on the plans of the individual patrols and represent the Scouts in their patrols. If your son is involved in the PLC, he will be done by 8:30pm.

Scoutmaster's Conference: The Scoutmaster's Conference is a meeting between the Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster and a Scout that is held each time the boy completes the requirements for a rank (Scout through First Class Ranks). The Scoutmaster will conduct all conferences for the ranks of Star, Life, and Eagle.

A Scout may also participate in periodic Scoutmaster's Conferences for goal planning and training. It is a time when the Scoutmaster and the Scout can review that the Scout has actively participated in the troop, fulfilled his leadership requirements and has shown that he lives by the Scout Oath and Law. The Scout should wear his full uniform and bring his Boy Scout Handbook as his advancement record.

Scoutmaster Conferences are typically held during Troop Meetings. It is the responsibility of the Scout to ask for a Scoutmaster Conference once they have completed the requirements for the specific rank advancement.

Board of Review: A Board of Review is required for rank advancement. When a Scout has completed the Scoutmaster Conference, the Scoutmaster will schedule a Board of Review with members of the Troop Committee. This review is not to retest the Scout but to make certain the Scout has passed the requirements for a higher rank, to get a sense of the value Scouting has for the Scout, and to clear

the way for further advancement. Scouts should make arrangements with the Advancement Chair minimally two weeks prior to the requested Board of Review date.

Courts of Honor: Troop 165 holds four to five Courts of Honor each year. Normally, these are held during those months that have five (5) Tuesday's and are held on the fifth Tuesday of the month. These are formal ceremonies to recognize the Scout and the achievements that he has made. All Scouts are expected to attend to show support for their fellow scouts. Family members are invited to attend.

Eagle Scout Court of Honor: When a Scout has completed all of the requirements for Eagle Scout and has passed an Eagle Scout Board of Review, an Eagle Court of Honor will be held. This will be scheduled at the request and convenience of the scouts and his family. This is a very special event that will be planned by the Scout and the Scout's parent(s), with the assistance of the Scoutmaster.

Troop Dues and Scout Account Policy

At the end of each calendar year, leaders and scouts will need to re-register with the troop. Scouts will pay for fees determined by BSA Scouts and the Troop fee, which helps the Troop run the program provided.

Registered Leaders fees will be paid for by the troop if they meet these minimum requirements:

Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters

Active Participation in the Troop which minimally includes:

- *Attendance at most ASM meetings. If a leader can't attend a meeting, they will let the ScoutMaster know in advance and provide any necessary information for upcoming outings they are leading.
- *Attendance at most Troop meetings
- *Attendance at minimally 4 campouts a year, one of which they are the Leader In Charge

Committee Members

Active Participation in the Troop which minimally includes:

- *Attendance at most Committee meetings. If a committee member can't attend a meeting, they will let the Committee Chair know in advance and provide a report regarding their position.
- *Attendance at Troop Meetings when relevant information needs to be shared with the scouts
- *Attendance at one District Round Table meeting in order to bring information back to the Troop

Scout Accounts

Each Scout will have the opportunity to accumulate funds in his Scout Account. This account is held in trust within the general funds of the troop. A record of the Scout's account is available for review with the Treasurer at any time. At any time you wish to use the account, the money is available to be

spent on scout-sponsored activities or for specific personal equipment related to scouting. However, Scout Account funds are not available for the purposes of supporting an eagle scout project.

If you decide to leave Troop 165 and move to another Boy Scout troop, these funds can be transferred to the next troop. If you leave scouting completely, the funds remain with Troop 165 and are returned to the general account fund. The scout account is the responsibility of the parent and guardians. The troop will make every effort to make sure the funds are reviewed annually and dispersed in accordance with this policy. If the scout leaves the troop and the funds are not requested to be transferred within six months of non-activity in the troop, the funds will automatically be returned to the general account fund.

The Troop organizes an annual Mulch Fundraiser. The Patrol Leaders Conference and Committee will predetermine what a scout needs to do in order to be fully “vested”. A fully vested scout will receive the full benefit of the fundraiser. Those that are not fully vested will receive a proportional amount. These funds can only be used for Summer Camp or a High Adventure Camp. These funds can’t be used for monthly outings, scouting gear, etc. If a scout leaves Troop 165, these funds will remain at Troop 165 and will not be transferred to another troop. Participation in the Mulch Fundraiser acknowledges acceptance of these policies.

Troop Positions and Responsibilities

The adults that volunteer to take leadership/committee positions are valued greatly. These adults help our troop run smoothly, provide opportunities for the boys to attend outings, plus much more. Although it is appreciated that adults volunteer for these positions, one must understand the responsibilities that come with each position.

Committee Members (As stated above)

Active Participation in the Troop which minimally includes:

*Attendance at most Committee meetings. If a committee member can’t attend a meeting, they will let the Committee Chair know in advance and provide a report regarding their position.

*Attendance at Troop Meetings when relevant information needs to be shared with the scouts

*Attendance at one District Round Table meeting in order to bring information back to the Troop

Committee Chair

- Oversees all Committee Positions
- Regularly attends ASM Meetings in order to communicate information to the Committee
- Prepares a monthly agenda for Committee Meetings, which includes all Troop Activities for the next 3 months and the opportunity for each Committee position to provide a report
- Communicates important information to Troop Families
- Supports all Committee Positions and helps when needed

Fundraising Chair

Treasurer

Registration Chair

- Register existing members once a year using Troop 165 Recharter Form, collect forms and payment, complete charter on spreadsheet showing members name, Scouts Life Magazine, payment and method of payment such as Scout Account/Cash/Check Number, complete JTE, complete Charter Agreement, file online with BAC.
- Turn the spreadsheet and payments over to the Treasurer.
- Accept new Scout, Leader and Committee Member Applications throughout the year and register with BAC.
- Hold annual recruiting activity. We typically invite Scouts to an outing every year. This would be coordinated with the Scoutmaster and ASMs

Medical Records Chair

- Send attached BSA Health Form A, B1, B2 and C along with Recharter Form, ask members to print and complete emailed form due to it being partially filled out with information that is typically not completed accurately. **Please note;** C-Form is not required at this time and will be requested at a later date if Scout attends any outing over 72 hours.
- They will need to turn in three copies of Health Forms A, B1 and B2. These forms are sent in fillable Word Document and should be able to be completed on a computer.
- Members will need to make three copies of the front and back of their Health Insurance Card.
- Note: Tell parents to save completed Health Forms, including C-Form and a copy of Insurance Card on their computer for future use!
- Go over forms and return incomplete forms to Scout or Parent to be corrected and resubmitted.

Transportation Chair

- At recharter time, all adults transporting scouts should complete the Transportation Form, which includes a copy of the driver's license and insurance card.
- Verify those towing trailers have a capable vehicle and towing knowledge. Loaded weight is 3500-4000#

Advancements Chair

Training Chair

- All registered adults need to have YPT current through the current year, AND following year before recharter can take place. Work with the Registration Chair to make sure that all adults re-registering are compliant
- All ASM's need to take IOLS and hazardous weather training (this part expires every 2 years). Make sure all registered adults in this position are compliant and provide information when these training sessions are being held.

Merit Badge Coordinator

Service Hours Chair

- Set up a fall and spring service project with the Crystal Lake Park District. You would promote it to the scouts and probably have a sign-up. Also, send communication via email and Facebook.
- Set up 1-2 other opportunities for service, depending on scout interest (Scouting For Food will probably be one of these, which the district will communicate information about it)
- Organize Court of Honor locations and snack/food schedule with members of the Troop. Communicate information about this to the troop via email and FaceBook.

Equipment Chair

- Work with Quartermaster to understand trailer and equipment responsibilities.
- Oversee Quartermaster and make periodic checks of items such as propane, paper goods, charcoal, etc.
- Once a year run annual Troop Equipment Day.
- Inspect trailers for damage, low or damaged tires or overall condition.
- Scoutmaster is responsible for annual registration.

Webmaster

- Maintain and update the Troop website as necessary

Order of the Arrow Advisor

- Inform all current OA members of upcoming events

Religious Awards Chair

- Inform the Troop about upcoming religious activities, such as Scout Sunday
- Inform the Troop about any opportunities in the area related to religious events in scouting
- Provide scouts information about how to earn religious awards

Secretary

Communications

There are three primary methods that the troop uses to communicate.

1. Website – www.bsatroop165.org has a calendar and a lot of other information about the troop and activities. There is also a Contact Page with email links to the Scoutmaster and several key committee members.

2. Facebook Page – **Troop 165 – Crystal Lake, IL** will be the place to go for photos and updates during outings and activities.

3. Email Distribution List – **troop@lists.bsatroop165.org** allows any scout or adult volunteers to send emails to the entire troop (see website for recommended guidelines). Please contact the Webmaster to have an email added to the list for any scout or their parent/guardian.

In addition to the methods listed above, scouts and parents will feel more informed by:

- Attending the last 15 minutes of every troop meeting for announcements.
- Reading the monthly Committee Meeting minutes
- Reading emails and FaceBook posts
- Attending all Courts of Honor (whether your scout is receiving recognition or not).

Family Support

A Scout Troop, with a high level of programs, outings, advancements, and service that Troop 165 provides, requires the support of many families and friends. No single person can do it all. As an obligation for membership of their Scout in Troop 165, parents are expected to support the activities in some way during each year. This can be done by simply driving and chaperoning scouts on campouts and activities. In addition to the Committee and Assistant Scoutmaster positions, you could also volunteer as a Merit Badge Counselor. See our Merit Badge Coordinator for details.

Please think about how you can best help! You should plan to be present to hear Troop announcements around 8:15 p.m. on meeting nights just before picking up your scout. Remember that your scout may have clean up responsibilities and, if so, will need to stay for a few minutes after the meeting.

Please note – BSA Youth Protection Policy requires Two-Deep Leadership at all campouts, activities and meetings. **Please do not drop off your Scouts at the Nature Center or at any event without confirming that there are two adult leaders in attendance.**

Adults Attending Outings/Campouts

All adults accompanying a Scouting unit who are present at the activity for 72 total hours or more must be registered as leaders. The 72 hours need not be consecutive.

Two-deep leadership on all outings required, which is minimally 2 registered Scouts BSA leaders.

All registered Adult Leaders must be Youth Protection Trained. It is mandatory that all adults that would like to attend any Troop outings go through the training, whether you are registered or not.

For Summer Camp, Troop 165 has set the policy that all adults attend as Assistant Scoutmasters and have the appropriate training. There are training opportunities that adults can participate in to help them understand how a Boy Scout Troop works. The first step would be to register with the Troop. You can ask the Membership Chair or the Scoutmaster how to register. Many of the training courses are offered on-line at www.scouting.org.

Adults tent and cook as their own patrol. Scouting is for the Boys, and they will do the work, plan the meals, cook the meals, etc. The scouts are expected to depend, as much as possible, on the youth leadership for direction. This helps them to develop as leaders. We emphasize the Patrol Method and each Patrol must camp and work together as a group.

Youth and Adult Camping Fees

It is the policy of Troop 165 that all Scouts and Adults pay for participation in all Troop 165 activities where there is a fee. There are monies set aside in the Troop account to assist any youth or adult on an as-needed basis. For those adults that provide transportation for Scouts or gear to any Troop or Patrol Campout, the Troop will provide reimbursement for fuel based on actual receipts provided by adults that transport youth or equipment.

The Troop provides fundraisers for both the Scouts and Adults to assist in paying for Troop 165 Activities to include weekend campouts and summer camp. It is the responsibility of the Adult Leader that has been assigned to the activity by the Scoutmaster to ensure all Scouts and Adults know the cost of a given activity. The committee has imposed a \$50 maximum on all weekend outings. Any costs beyond this amount will be covered by other funds.

Reimbursement and Deposits

When a member of Troop 165 needs reimbursement for expenses, they need to complete the required form and attach the receipt of payment. Reimbursement requests must be submitted no more than 30 days after the purchase date on the receipt. Failure to do so will result in a declined reimbursement.

When a member of Troop 165 needs to deposit money, they need to complete the required form. All cash and checks must be submitted no more than 30 days after collection.

Health and Safety

Troop 165 activities are designed to provide new experiences and challenges to Scouts. While safety is always a prime objective, our activities, by their very nature involve a certain element of risk. Troop policies for health and safety are based on *The Guide to Safe Scouting*.

A few important things to remember for Scouts regarding transportation to and from events:

- Permission slips are required for all events and must be signed and returned by the date indicated on the form. This is necessary to ensure proper patrol menu planning and to secure transportation. No refund will be given on Troop or Patrol outings if the Scout is committed to an event unless an emergency such as serious illness or death in family occurs.
- Current Annual BSA Medical forms are required for all Scouts and Adults to participate in Troop or Patrol activities. The Troop requires three (3) copies to be supplied to the Troop. Outings less than seventy-two (72) hours require parts A and B signed by a parent or guardian. For events that last longer than seventy-two (72) hours part A, B, and C are required, which includes a physical from a licensed physician. For “High Adventure” activities, A, B, C and D are required.
- Scouts should be sure to carry on their person sufficient money for a meal or snack on the trip if this has been specified on the permission slip. It is not fair for drivers to pay for lunch or snacks and try to be reimbursed later.
- Scouts should be careful in the cars – they are guests of the driver. A “thank you” is appropriate and always appreciated by the driver (*A Scout is Courteous!*).
- Scouts are not to leave meetings or outings early without prior parental consent that should be communicated to the Scoutmaster.
- Finally, friends of scouts who are not members of Troop 165 may attend an outing prior to joining with the permission of the Scoutmaster.

Camping Essentials

Personal Overnight Camping Gear:

- Pack (or Duffle Bag for non-hike-in events)
- Foam sleeping pad or air mattress
- Plastic trash bag to protect sleeping bag
- Mess Kit: Plate, bowl and cup
- Utensil Kit: Knife, Fork and Spoon
- Toilet Kit: Toothbrush and paste, comb, soap, towel, and toilet paper
- Watch
- Scout Handbook

- Paper and pen
- Extra clothing in plastic bags to keep dry
- Spending money (<\$10.00)
- 10 ft. of parachute cord or ¼" nylon rope

Optional items may include:

- Camera
- Sunglasses
- Wide-brim hat or ball cap

Troop 165 Ten Essentials

- Pocket knife (with Totin' Chip Card)
- Personal first aid kit
- Matches in waterproof container (with Fireman's Chit)
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Rain gear
- Audible signaling device (whistle)
- Water bottle (filled)
- Extra Clothes based on weather and area
- Insect repellent (non-aerosol)
- Sunscreen (non-aerosol)

Items **prohibited on outings**

- Cell phones
- Electronic gaming systems
- Playing Cards

The Troop supplies each Patrol with all the required patrol equipment needed for a weekend camping trip, with the exception of personal gear and clothing. Troop 165 has an ample supply of tents, chef kits, cooking utensils, wash and clean up buckets, lanterns, stoves, and of course, the Troop first aid kit. Each tent sleeps two (2) scouts and costs \$100.00 to replace, therefore we stress that each scout is cautious in and around the tents to prevent damage. Each scout takes his turn drying and refolding his tent after an outing (*at his home*) prior to returning it for storage with the other troop equipment. This helps prevent mildew and rot and makes the tent last longer.

What Equipment is Needed Most?

The most important equipment to consider first is:

1. A good sleeping bag
 - a. A 3-season synthetic filled bag rated to +20 degrees is the best choice.
 - b. A fleece liner can be added for winter use.
2. Proper footwear e.g. hiking boots. A sturdy high-top shoe is the next best investment.
3. A Scout will need something to carry his gear in. A backpack is needed for hike-in camping, but initially a duffle bag or sports bag may suffice for campsites with nearby vehicle access.

As far as a backpack goes, you might want to borrow one from someone you know before investing. If your Scout is young, you may also want to get one that is adjustable as he grows. You'll hear differing opinions on whether an internal frame backpack or external frame backpack is better. The bottom line is it is really up to the wearer and what they are most comfortable with. You can ask for advice from the Scoutmaster or any of the ASM's.

Where Can I Get Good Equipment?

Ask the Scoutmaster or any of the Assistant Scoutmasters if you need advice.

You will want to try the equipment to make sure it feels right. REI has a good return policy. It can be a little pricey but if you watch for deals, you will find them. They have a 100% satisfaction, no questions asked, return policy. www.Campmor.com is another great source through their catalog if you know what you are buying.

Note – Do not skimp on gear. Your Scout's health and comfort could depend on it.

Boy Scout Uniforms

The uniform indicates affiliation with Scouting BSA and can create an immediate sense of belonging. The Scout uniform identifies a Scout as part of the World Brotherhood of Scouting. We strongly encourage all members of **Troop 165** to wear the full uniform, but no Scout will be excluded if he is unable to purchase one. Unfortunately, the teenage years are also the time of the most significant physical growth, so Scouts quickly outgrow what last year was too large. For this reason, **Troop 165** keeps a supply of good, "experienced" uniforms of varying sizes that have been handed down from other Scouts. These uniforms are available to any Scout who might need them. If you have any good, "experienced" uniforms that you would like to donate, please see any member of the Troop Committee. The Troop Committee will also provide opportunities through fundraisers for any Scout to earn the money needed to purchase a full Scout Uniform.

We request that the Boys and the Leaders wear their uniform whenever they are participating in the Scouting program. The uniform should be worn at all ceremonial and indoor activities including Patrol Meetings, Troop Meetings, meeting with merit badge counselors, Scoutmaster Conferences, Boards of Review, and Courts of Honor. The uniform should also be worn during special outdoor occasions, such as flag ceremonies, Scout shows, and parades. It will **always** be worn when traveling to and from outings. During physically active outdoor events and informal activities, Scouts may wear the **Troop 165** Activity Shirt.

For those Scouts coming from another activity, we encourage them to bring the uniform so that they can change into it prior to the Meeting or Activity.

Full uniform:

1. Official Scout shirt (short or long sleeve) tucked neatly into pants.
2. Official Scout Pants
3. Scout Belt
4. Scout Socks
5. The following items are presented to the Scout upon joining the Troop and are provided by the Troop Committee (If lost or damaged, the scout will be charged for the replacement cost).
 - a. Troop neckerchief and slide
 - b. Troop number patch
 - c. Green loops for shirt epaulets
 - d. BSA Scout Handbook
6. Scout Hat – baseball style cap (optional).

Activity Uniform: Every year the Scouts of **Troop 165** have a design contest for that year's Troop Activity shirt. It is recommended that the Scouts order two for outdoor Troop activities including Summer Camp.

When not to wear the uniform

- Do not wear the uniform while selling a commercial product or service, even for Scout fundraising purposes. The only exceptions are Council or District sponsored fundraisers, i.e., popcorn sales.
- Do not wear the uniform in situations that might mistakenly imply endorsement by the BSA of a product, service, political candidate, or philosophy. Scouts and Scouters are encouraged to take part in political matters as private individuals but not while wearing the uniform.
- Do not wear the uniform while engaged in any activity that could dishonor or discredit the Boy Scouts of America, the uniform, or the person wearing it.

Advancements

The Boy Scout advancement program encourages boys to meet significant challenges that lead to personal growth. As a Scout works his way from Scout through the ranks toward Eagle, the requirements he must successfully complete will help him develop physically, emotionally, and morally into manhood.

Advancement is one of eight methods used by Scout leaders to help boys fulfill the aims of Scouting BSA. Properly used, a troop's advancement program can tie together and energize the other seven methods. The eight methods of Scouting are:

1. The ideals (Scout Oath, Law, Motto, and Slogan)
2. Patrol method
3. Outdoors
4. Advancement
5. Association with adults
6. Personal growth
7. Leadership development
8. The uniform

As your son participates in the activities planned by the leadership of **Troop 165**, the progression from Scout to Eagle will be a natural outcome. These activities will provide the Scouts many opportunities to complete advancement requirements. Scouts are personally responsible to bring their Scout Handbooks to Troop Meetings to have requirements signed off and to schedule Scoutmaster Conferences.

The Four Steps to Advancement

- A Scout learns.
- A Scout is tested.
- A Scout is reviewed.
- A Scout is recognized.

Merit Badges

Through the Boy Scout merit badge program, many Scouts have been introduced to a lifelong hobby or even a rewarding career. They have discovered new abilities, increased their self-confidence, and become experts in subjects that have enriched their lives and their ability to serve their community.

The requirements for each badge appear in the current BSA merit badge pamphlet for that award and in the *Boy Scout Requirements* book. When a Scout has decided on a badge he would like to earn, he follows these steps:

1. The Scout obtains a signed merit badge application and the name of a qualified counselor for that merit badge from his Scoutmaster or Merit Badge Coordinator.
2. Along with **another Scout, a relative, or a friend**, the Scout sets up and attends his first appointment with the merit badge counselor. **(No one-on-one contact is permitted. A Scout must have a buddy with him at each meeting with a merit badge counselor.)** The counselor will explain the requirements for the merit badge and will help the Scout plan ways to fulfill them in order to get the most out of the experience.
3. The Scout works on the badge requirements until he completes them, meeting with the counselor **(and his buddy)** whenever necessary.
4. Once the merit badge counselor has filled out the merit badge card, the Scout must take the card to his Scoutmaster or Merit Badge Coordinator. Once the Adult Leader has completed his portion of the merit badge card, he will send the completed form to the members of the Troop Committee responsible for advancement. **The merit badge card must be completely filled out to be accepted.** The merit badge will be then awarded at the next Court of Honor.
5. The Scout has until his 18th Birthday to work on any merit badge. There is no expiration date on any merit badge that is partially completed. Please retain your Merit Badge Application to ensure you are given credit for work completed.

Merit Badge Counselors

Troop 165 adheres to the **Blackhawk Area Council** Guidelines for Merit Badge Counseling.

One-on-one boy/adult activities are NOT authorized by Scouting BSA.

The merit badge program has long been a vital part of the Boy Scout advancement plan. In order that this unique educational program might continue and to protect both the individual Scouts and merit badge counselors, some important guidelines concerning merit badge counseling have been established by the BSA.

1. All merit badge counselors must be registered members of Scouting BSA. There is no fee, but filling out the adult leader application and an annual merit badge application/renewal is required.
2. Scouts are encouraged to use “the buddy system” (two or more Scouts) when working towards a merit badge. It is a requirement of the BSA that when meeting with a merit badge counselor, the Scout takes with him another Scout, a relative or a friend.

3. Merit badge counselors are encouraged to have another adult present whenever working with Scouts (such as the counselor's spouse, a Scout's parent, committee member, etc.)
4. All merit badge counselors must continue to be certified to counsel specific subjects through district and council advancement committees. A Merit Badge Counselor list of certified counselors is available from the Scoutmaster or Merit Badge Coordinator.

Note:

Troop 165 does not allow parents to act as merit badge counselors for their own son, even if they are certified for that particular merit badge. Although the National policy permits this, the National Headquarters of the BSA also recommends against it. Since the Council and the District have an extensive list of counselors available, it shouldn't be necessary to have Scout's pass off the merit badge to their parents, even if the parent is a certified merit badge counselor. The only exception to this is when the parent is working with the Troop/Patrol as a group.

Activity Policy

It has been decided by the Troop Committee that in the case where a Scout needs specific or constant supervision regarding a health issue, either physical or emotional, a parent is to be present on activities that are longer than 24 hours. Each particular case will be decided at the discretion of the Scoutmaster. The level and difficulty of the activity as well as the Scout's previous experience will be taken into consideration.

Supervision

It is the policy of the Boy Scouts of America that a scout must be accompanied by at least two adults at all times. There is no exception to this rule. Our leaders are very conscious of this and ask the help of our parents and guardians to use good judgment when putting their child in our care. This includes dropping off and picking up your child for meetings or activities. Always check in with an adult who is aware of the activity and the schedule. Do not allow your child to be left unless the proper supervision is available. Always remember to be sure the facility is open and well lit for an event before leaving. Let the appropriate leaders know when you have picked up your child. The adult leaders are responsible for each and every scout at all times. Respect the leadership by following this policy and being responsible for your child.

Behavior

Proper behavior of the Scouts in our Troop is the ultimate responsibility of our Adult Leadership. Vandalism in any form, either to our meeting place or on any campout, is not acceptable. Any injury,

hazing, bullying or harassment to any other Scout will not be tolerated. We fully adhere to the Policies of the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America and the Youth Protection Program.

The following policies will be strictly followed:

- Discipline is the responsibility of the Scoutmaster
- Vandalism or injury to others will not be tolerated.
- Hazing or bullying is strictly prohibited.
- If there is any “rough-housing”, the first time the Scout(s) will be given a warning. The second time they will be sent home.
- Any fighting that includes physical contact will not be tolerated and the parties will be sent home. There will be no second chance.
- The Patrol Leader will handle disagreements within his Patrol.
- The Senior Patrol Leader will handle disagreements within the Troop.
- If the Patrol Leader and Senior Patrol Leader are unable to resolve the disagreement, the Scoutmaster or his designee will step in.

Acceptance of Policies and Procedures

By registering with Troop 165, you agree to abide by these Policies and Procedures. Please feel free to ask questions and discuss these decisions. We have built these decisions based on experience both within Troop 165 and scouting in general. Our purpose is to keep your child safe in our care and protect the leadership at the same time. These decisions are openly discussed at committee meetings, and all parents are invited and encouraged to attend.