CERTIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR INSTRUCTING SPECIFIC MERIT BADGES

Certain merit badges have additional requirements to serve as an instructor. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE THE FOLLOWING CERTIFICATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING LIST OF MERIT BADGES, YOU MAY SERVE AS A COUNSELOR, BUT ACTUAL INSTRUCTION MUST BE DONE BY SOMEONE WHO HOLDS THE REQUIRED CERTIFICATION.

GENERAL

- Climbing. All climbing, belaying, and rappelling exercises and activities must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult rock-climbing instructor, age 21 or older, who has completed BSA Climb On Safely training and who understands the risks inherent to these activities. Training as a BSA climbing Level 2 Instructor is highly recommended. Someone with certification in First Aid/ CPR/AED from the American Red Cross (or equivalent) must be present at these activities. Current policies are found in the Guide to Safe Scouting at www.scouting.org/ health- and-safety/gss/gss08/#a and supersede any other publications or literature.
- Snow Sports. Activities in the field must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult 21 years or older who is committed to compliance with BSA Winter Sports Safety. Current policies are found in the Guide to Safe Scouting at www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/ gss12/#b.

AQUATICS

The qualifications below for aquatics-related merit badge counseling and supervision not only assist in managing risk, but also give counselors credibility. Current policies are found at www.scouting.org/health- and-safety/gss/ gss02 and supersede any other publications or literature.

- Canoeing. Those supervising canoeing activities must have either BSA Aquatics Instructor or Canoeing Instructor certification from the American Canoe Association, American Red Cross, or equivalent; OR local councils may approve individuals previously certified as such or trained by an instructor so qualified.
- Kayaking Those supervising kayaking activities must have formal training in kayaking and paddle craft instruction, evidenced by either BSA Aquatics Instructor or Paddle Craft Safety Instructor certification, or kayaking instructor certification from the American Canoe Association, British Canoe Union, or American Red Cross, or equivalent; OR local councils may approve individuals previously certified as such or trained by an instructor so qualified.
- Lifesaving. Demonstrations or activities in or on the water must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult, age 21 or older, with certification in Red Cross First Aid/CPR/AED or equivalent, and as a BSA Lifeguard or Aquatics Instructor or equivalent.
- Motor Boating. Motor boating activities must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult, age 21 or older, who has completed Safety Afloat training.

Appropriate credentials include current or previous certification by an organization (such as the National Safe Boating Council, the United States Power Squadrons, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, or the US Powerboating component of US Sailing) that meets the voluntary National On-Water Standards for Powerboating or the NASBLA national boating education standards for powerboating; OR local councils may approve individuals previously certified as such, or trained by an instructor so qualified.

- Rowing. Those supervising rowing activities must have either BSA Aquatics Instructor certification or equivalent; OR local councils may approve individuals previously certified as such or trained by an instructor so qualified.
- Scuba Diving. All phases of scuba instruction— classroom, pool, and open-water training—are limited to instructors trained and certified by one of the BSA's recognized scuba agencies as found in the Guide to Safe Scouting.
- Small Boat Sailing. Those supervising sailing activities must have completed Safety Afloat training. They must be mature and conscientious adults age 21 or older. Appropriate credentials include instructor certification with a recognized sailing agency or school, US Sailing, or the American Sailing Association for sailing experience with different hull types including the rig being used for instruction; OR local councils may approve individuals previously certified as such, or trained by an instructor so qualified.
- Swimming. Demonstrations or activities in or on the water must be conducted according to BSA Safe Swim Defense and BSA Safety Afloat.
- Water Sports. Demonstrations or activities in or on the water must be conducted according to BSA Safe Swim Defense and BSA Safety Afloat.
- Whitewater. Those supervising whitewater activities must be certified as whitewater canoeing or kayaking instructors by the American Canoe Association or have equivalent certification, training, or expertise.

SHOOTING SPORTS

The qualifications below for shooting sports-related merit badge counseling and supervision not only assist in managing risk, but also give counselors credibility. Current policies are found at www.scouting.org/health- and- safety/gss/gss08/#a and supersede any other publications or literature. See the Guide to Safe Scouting and the BSA National Shooting Sports Manual for further details on shooting sports.

- Archery. Archery activities must be supervised by a BSA National Camping School-trained shooting sports director or USA Archery or National Field Archery Association instructor, or by someone who has been trained by one of the three; or alternatively, the activities may be supervised by someone with at least Level 1 training in the operation of an archery range from USA Archery, NFAA, or an equivalent.
- Rifle Shooting. The merit badge counselor is responsible for ensuring that all instruction or other activities involving any handling of firearms or live ammunition is consistent with state and federal law and supervised by a certified BSA National Camping School (NCS) shooting sports director, or National Rifle Association (NRA) Rifle Shooting Instructor or Coach. Instruction or other activities involving handling muzzleloaders must be

supervised by an NCS shooting sports director or NRA/National Muzzleloader Rifle Association (NMLRA)-certified muzzleloader firearms instructor. Shooting must be supervised by an NRA certified Range Safety Officer (RSO). If instruction and shooting are to occur at the same time, both the RSO and qualified instructor must be present. The supervisor and instructor may not be the same person. Note that commercial shooting ranges may provide RSOs.

- Shotgun Shooting. The merit badge counselor is responsible for ensuring that all instruction or other activities involving any handling of firearms or live ammunition is consistent with state and federal law and supervised by a certified NCS shooting sports director or NRA Shotgun Instructor or Coach. Instruction or other activities involving handling muzzle-loading shotguns must be supervised by an NCS shooting sports director or NRA/NMLRA-certified muzzleloading shotgun instructor. Shooting must be supervised by an NRA-certified Range Safety Officer. If instruction and shooting are to occur at the same time, both the RSO and qualified instructor must be present. They may not be the same person. Note that commercial shooting ranges may provide RSOs.

All certifications listed above must be current.

Please review 7.0.1.1 of The Guide to Advancement for more information.