



November 1, 2017

Mandatory Merit Badge Counselor Training Memo

In support of the continuous effort to provide our youth with the safest and best quality programs possible, the Garden State Council Advancement and Training Committees have determined it is in the best interest of our youth to ensure that all Merit Badge Counselors in our council are fully trained for their position by January 1, 2018.

Those who are not fully trained by December 31, 2017, will not be re-registered in that position.

A fully trained Merit Badge Counselor has completed:

- Youth Protection Training – covering the new registration period
- Merit Badge Counselor “Position Specific Training,” which is fulfilled by one of the following two options:
 - Essentials of Merit Badge Counseling, (in-person, classroom course)
 - Merit Badge Counselor Online Training, consists of six modules

Note: A key benefit of the “module” structure is that most of these are the same ones required for other positions, and many volunteers who have completed their training online have already taken them. For example, a Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster or Troop Committee member who took their position specific training online, needs only to complete the modules “Merit Badge Counselor Sign Up” and “Merit Badge Counselor For Boy Scouting” as they have already completed the other modules.

Current Merit Badge Counselors credited with completing voluntary training in this area previously will be credited with completing the new required training.

All new Merit Badge Counselors will need to provide evidence of being fully trained before they can register and begin their service to Scouts.

Why the Change?

As defined by the national organization, Merit Badge Counselors had to complete both Youth Protection Training and Merit Badge Counselor Orientation to be considered trained in their position. However, these individuals were not previously required by the Garden State Council to be fully trained in their position due to limited local training opportunities. In June of this year, Merit Badge Counselor Training became available online, through the learning center at www.my.scouting.org. This addition made the training much more accessible than the previous classroom in-person version only.

The requirement for merit badge counselors to be trained in one’s position continues the Council’s efforts to have all leaders fully trained.

Thank you to all our Merit Badge Counselors for your service and commitment to continue to offer great experiences to our Scouts!

Yours in Scouting,

Ron Dresslove
GSC Dean of Merit Badges

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