

## **Appendix B – The GSC Merit Badge Counselor Process**

### **Applying**

When approved, the volunteer will be registered as a Code 42 Merit Badge Counselor (MBC) with no charge for this volunteer.

- A. The GSC limits the number of merit badges a counselor may coach to eight.
- B. Volunteers interested in becoming a Merit Badge Counselor must:
  1. Comply with requirements in the current *Guide To Advancement* (33088), Section 7.0.1.0, About Merit Badge Counselors
  2. 'Submit a completed BSA Merit Badge Counselor Information form (34405) and a BSA Adult Application (524-501) to a GSC Resource Center.
- C. The scout executive designee for district volunteers:
  1. Receives the original paperwork from the Resource Center
  2. Submits a request for a background check of applicant through BSA
  3. Forwards a copy of the Merit Badge Information form to the GSC Merit Badge Dean and the appropriate District Merit Badge Dean for vetting
  4. Upon a successful background check, the designee
    - a. Signs the BSA Adult Application for the scout executive
    - b. Requests the Registrar enroll the volunteer as a Merit Badge Counselor without any merit badges of responsibility
    - c. Archives the original paperwork.
- D. The District Merit Badge Dean:
  1. Reviews the applicant's qualifications as listed on MBC Information form for the requested merit badges
  2. Contacts the applicant and reviews information provided, along with establishing and confirming that this new counselor will be available for the entire Council or if the applicant is only willing to work with a specific Troop or Unit
  3. Recommends acceptance of applicant as a Merit Badge Counselor and specifies a list of merit badges they should be approved for.
- E. The GSC Dean:
  1. Endorses or rejects the district recommendation
  2. Negotiates a final decision with the district executive and the designee for district volunteers about which merit badges the Merit Badge Counselor should be approved to counsel.

- F. Upon receipt of a successful background check and the recommendation of the GSC Dean, the district executive notifies the applicant of acceptance as a Merit Badge Counselor for specific merit badges.
- G. Upon completion of Youth Protection Training by the volunteer, the Merit Badge Counselor database is updated with counselor's approved list of merit badges.

**Note:**

You do not have to be a registered member or have a member ID to take Youth Protection Training. To take Youth Protection Training go to MyScouting.org and create an account. From the MyScouting.org portal, click on E-Learning to take the Youth Protection Training. You may take the training immediately and submit a printed certificate of completion with your volunteer application or wait to take the training later once the local council has processed your application and a member ID has been issued.

- H. A new list of approved Merit Badge Counselors is generated and posted on the GSC web site.

## **Deactivation**

- A. A Merit Badge Counselor will be notified automatically by email when the expiration date of his/her Youth Protection Training (YPT) approaches.
- B. When a Merit Badge Counselor's YPT has expired, the counselor will be notified by mail of a change in status to "deactivated" and provided information on how to restore their status to "active".
- C. When a Merit Badge Counselor's status remains deactivated for more than two months, they shall not be re-registered automatically as a Merit Badge Counselor with the GSC and must re-apply.

## **Updating**

- A. Each Merit Badge Counselor is responsible for reporting changes in the information submitted on the BSA Merit Badge Counselor Information form and the BSA Adult Application to the GSC.
- B. Requests to add or remove specific merit badges should be made by submitting a new BSA Merit Badge Counselor Information form.
- C. The update request shall be processed like a new request except the background check may be omitted for MBCs in good standing.

### **Approved Merit Badge Counselors List Maintenance**

Changes to the content of the approved Merit Badge Counselors list are driven by new applicants arriving and existing counselors retiring. The GSC will react to these events by publishing a new list using the same password protection. Notice of the update shall be given after the fact to all. A password change is different.

- A. The password on the Merit Badge Counselors list shall be changed at least once a year on March first.
- B. The password may be changed at other times as determined by the GSC Dean of Merit Badges.
- C. A password change should be announced to unit leaders at least two months in advanced when practical.
- D. The District Scout Executive shall distribute the new password in advance to scoutmasters and committee chairs.

### **Merit Badge Instruction By Local Experts**

Organizations develop and maintain expertise in many areas applicable to merit badges. As part of their community outreach, an organization may offer educational opportunities that allow a scout to earn such a merit badge. Based on scouting's demand, these experts spent time to instruct scouts. It may not be practical always to register and fully train every expert an organization provides.

- A. A fully trained merit badge counselor may serve as an organization's point of contact (POC) for outreach activities.
- B. A POC shall insure compliance to BSA rules including Youth Protection during outreach activities that involve scouts.
- C. A POC shall sign blue cards for work directed by unregistered instructors / experts, completed by scouts, and supervised by the POC with the approval of the Dean of Merit Badges.