Advancement during COVID-19: Eagle extensions

The BSA has a message to young people concerned that the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak will prevent them from completing Eagle Scout rank requirements before their 18th birthday: Don’t worry; we’ve got your back.

During this unprecedented interruption to Scouting nationwide, the BSA has released new guidance on advancement during COVID-19. This includes:

- Time extensions for qualifying Scouts and Venturers working on the Eagle Scout, Summit and Quartermaster awards. Local councils will have the authority to grant this extension through the end of September 2020.
- The ability to accept electronic signatures for rank advancement and award applications — effective now through the end of September 2020.
- An option to complete Scoutmaster conferences via videoconferencing. (Section 4.2.3.5 of the Guide to Advancement says Scoutmasters “should not” conduct Scoutmaster conferences online; it doesn’t say “must not.” The new COVID-19 guidance clarifies that this practice is OK, as long as Youth Protection rules are followed.)
- An option for Scoutmasters to allow time missed during the COVID-19 outbreak to count toward requirements for participation and positions of responsibility.

Here’s what else you need to know.

**Time extensions for Eagle Scout, Summit and Quartermaster awards**

Normally granted only in rare circumstances, the BSA and its local councils will allow extensions for Life Scouts needing more time to finish their Eagle Scout requirements. The authority for councils to grant this extension is effective immediately and continues through Sept. 30, 2020.

Extensions also are available for Venturers needing to finish Summit Award requirements and Sea Scouts needing to finish Quartermaster Award requirements beyond their 21st birthday.
These extensions are reviewed case by case, and not all Scouts will qualify. To get an extension through a local council, Scouts must meet the following requirements:

1. It can be established that COVID-19 disruptions were the only circumstances that delayed work on Eagle Scout/Summit/Quartermaster advancement requirements, such as the service project or merit badges. If any other causes were involved, the extension request must go to the National Council following the process outlined in the Guide to Advancement.

2. Extensions shall only be granted to youth in Scouts BSA who have already achieved Life rank.

3. When the council receives a COVID-19-related request for a time extension, the council reviews the request and approves it if appropriate. A written response stating the outcome of the extension request must go to the youth. If approved, the notification must be attached to the youth’s Eagle/Summit/Quartermaster rank application.

4. For Eagle, the extension must not exceed 3 months from the youth’s 18th birthday; for Summit/Quartermaster, the extension must not exceed 3 months from the youth’s 21st.

5. Upon turning 18, the Scout must submit a completed adult application and successfully complete Youth Protection training. Their participant code will now be UP for SBSA or VP for Venturing and Sea Scouting.

6. Extension requests for more than 3 months beyond the youth’s 18th/21st birthday must be sent to the National Service Center following the process outlined in the GTA.