



Boards of Review: An Overview for All Ranks

This section first covers board of review procedures for all Scouts BSA ranks. Then it addresses “Particulars for Tenderfoot Through Life Ranks” 8.0.2.0; and “Particulars for the Eagle Scout Rank,” 8.0.3.0.

Procedures for Sea Scout boards of review, and several related topics, are much the same as those for Scouts BSA. There are some exceptions, however, as noted in the sections beginning with “The Sea Scout Board of Review,” 4.4.2.0, and ending with “Appealing a Quartermaster Board of Review Decision,” 4.4.2.8. Boards of review for the Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit ranks in Venturing are covered in the topics beginning with “Venturing Boards of Review,” 8.0.5.0.

8.0.0.1 Purpose and Timeliness of Boards of Review

After a Scout has completed the requirements for any rank (except Scout rank), he or she appears before a board of review. A board of review must be a personal and individual experience. Its purpose is to determine the quality of the Scout’s experience and decide whether the requirements for the rank have been fulfilled. If so, the board not only approves the Scout’s advancement but also provides encouragement to continue the quest for the next rank. Because the board of review date becomes the effective advancement date, boards should be scheduled promptly as Scouts are ready or set up on a regular basis that assures Scouts are not delayed in beginning time-oriented requirements for the next rank.

Note that Scouts must be registered through the time they are working on advancement requirements, but need not be registered thereafter or when their boards of review are conducted.

Any advancement errors discovered after a board of review must not be held against a Scout in considering any future advancement, even if requirements were not properly completed.

8.0.0.2 Boards of Review Must Be Granted When Requirements Are Met

A Scout shall not be denied this opportunity. When a Scout believes that all the requirements for a rank have been completed, including a Scoutmaster conference, a board of review must be granted. Scoutmasters—or councils or districts in the case of the Eagle Scout rank—for example, do not have authority to expect a Scout to request or organize one, or to “defer” the Scout, or to ask the Scout to perform beyond the requirements in order to be granted one. Neither can a board of review be denied or postponed due to issues such as uniforming, payment of dues, participation in fundraising activities, etc.

In a case where there is concern that the requirements for a rank as written have not been fulfilled, it is appropriate to advise the Scout that he or she might not pass the board and to make suggestions about what might be done to improve the chances for success. It is, however, the Scout’s decision to go ahead with a board of review or not.

Except in disputed circumstances as noted in “Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances,” 8.0.3.2, the Scout or the Scout’s parents or guardians shall not be responsible for requesting that a board take place.

8.0.0.3 Composition of the Board of Review

A board of review must consist of no fewer than three members and no more than six, all of whom must be at least 21 years of age. For further specifications, see “Particulars for Tenderfoot Through Life Ranks,” 8.0.2.0, and “Particulars for the Eagle Scout Rank,” 8.0.3.0. Unit leaders and assistants shall not serve on a board of review for a Scout in their own unit. Parents, guardians, or relatives shall not serve on a board for their child. The candidate or the candidate’s parent(s) or guardian(s), or relative(s) shall have no part in selecting any board of review members.

8.0.0.4 Wearing the Uniform—or Neat in Appearance

It is preferred a Scout be in full field uniform for any board of review. As much of the uniform as the Scout owns should be worn, and it should be as correct as possible, with the badges worn properly. It may be the uniform as typically worn by the Scout’s troop, crew, or ship. If wearing all or part of the uniform is impractical for whatever reason, the candidate should be clean and neat in appearance and dressed appropriately, according to

the Scout's means, for the milestone marked by the occasion. Regardless of unit, district, or council expectations or rules, boards of review shall not reject candidates solely for reasons related to uniforming or attire, as long as they are dressed to the above description. Candidates shall not be required to purchase uniforming or clothing to participate in a board of review.

8.0.1.0 Conducting the Board of Review

Most adults would admit to nervousness if told they were to appear before a "board of review." Imagine how a Scout must feel. A certain level of formality and meaningful questioning should exist, but it is important that the atmosphere be relaxed and that the review is conducted with the Scout Law in mind. It may help if the unit leader introduces the candidate and if a few minutes are spent getting acquainted.

The unit leader may remain in the room, but only to observe, not to participate unless called upon. The number of "observers" at a board of review should otherwise be minimized. The members of the board of review, however, have the authority to exclude the unit leader or any other observers if they believe their presence will inhibit open and forthright discussion. Youth observers are not permitted in boards of review for Scouts BSA advancement.

The Scout's parents, relatives, or guardians should not be in attendance in any capacity—not as members of the board, as observers, or even as the unit leader. Their presence can change the discussion dynamics. In cases where parents or guardians *insist* on attending a board of review, they should be counseled that their presence can change how their child addresses questions and that the opportunity to further self-reliance and courage may be lessened. However, if parents or guardians still insist on being present, they must be permitted to attend as observers. For Scouts with special needs, see additional information under "Advancement in Scouts BSA for Scouts With Special Needs," 10.2.2.0.

In situations where—before a board is held—one or more members are of an opinion the Scout should be rejected, they should discuss their reasoning with the unit leader or others who know the Scout. Generally, a unit leader is closer to the youth; he or she may be able to present a different perspective and prevent an uncomfortable or unfair scenario. Board members who cannot be fair and impartial should recuse themselves.

The BSA discourages mock or practice boards of review. "Practice" reviews may imply that board members will ask predetermined questions or that the board of review is anticipated to be other than a positive experience. Instead, the advancement committee should aim for unrehearsed, spontaneous answers revealing character, citizenship,

leadership, and mental and physical fitness at the boards of review.

8.0.1.1 Not a Retest or "Examination"

Though one reason for a board of review is to help ensure the Scout did what was supposed to have been done to meet the requirements, it shall become neither a retest or "examination," nor a challenge of the Scout's knowledge. In most cases it should, instead, be a celebration of accomplishment. Remember, it is more about the journey. A badge recognizes what a Scout has done toward achieving the primary goal of personal growth. See "Personal Growth Is the Primary Goal," 2.0.0.3. It is thus more about the learning *experience* than it is about the specific skills learned. See also "Mechanics of Advancement in Scouts BSA," 4.2.0.0.

A Scout must not be rejected at a board of review for reasons unrelated to advancement requirements. For example, the Scout must not be rejected for not bringing a Scouts BSA Handbook or being tardy for a board of review, but the reason for the tardiness may certainly be a topic for discussion.

8.0.1.2 What Should Be Discussed

During the review, board members may refer to the *Scouts BSA Handbook*, *Troop Leader Guidebook*, *Guide to Advancement*, and other such references. The *Troop Committee Guidebook* has examples of appropriate questions. Board members may ask where skills were learned by the Scout, who the Scout's teachers were, and what was gained from fulfilling selected requirements. The answers will reveal what was done to earn the rank. It can be determined, then, if this was what the Scout was supposed to do. Discussion of how the Scout has lived the Scout Oath and Scout Law at home, at school, in the unit, and in the community should be included. We must remember, however, that though we have high expectations for our members, as for ourselves, we do not insist on perfection. It is most important that the Scout has a positive attitude, accepts Scouting's ideals, and sets and meets good standards in daily life.

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A board is not required to record "minutes," but it is a good idea. Any such notes must remain confidential to the members of the board or to administrators with a need to know. They may be used in preparing a follow-up letter, should a Scout be turned down, and they can be helpful in an appeal process. In any case, once a review or appeal is completed, all notes must be destroyed.

A board of review may be conducted posthumously if all the requirements were met prior to the Scout's death. See "Bestowing Posthumous Awards," 5.0.6.0, for more information.

8.0.1.3 How Boards Can Lead to Program Improvement

Periodic reviews of members' progress can provide a measure of unit effectiveness. A unit might uncover ways to increase the educational value of its outings, or how to strengthen administration of national advancement procedures. For example, if it is discovered troop leaders are not ensuring that all requirements have been met before Scouts present themselves for the board of review, then process improvements can be recommended. A board can also help by considering the style of leadership best suited to current circumstances and ways to adjust it to different needs. Note that boards of review may also be held for Scouts who are *not* advancing. Much can be learned from them, as well.

8.0.1.4 Board Members Must Agree Unanimously on Decisions to Approve

After the board of review the Scout is asked to wait outside the room or out of hearing range while the board deliberates. To approve awarding a rank, the board must agree unanimously. Every effort should be made to deliberate with careful consideration of each member's perspective and in sufficient detail as to avoid factual misunderstanding. It is appropriate to call the candidate back if additional questions may provide clarification. Still, if any member dissents, the decision cannot be for approval. In the case of such disagreement, the Scout shall not be informed about the specifics of the conversations or any arguments taking place. As indicated below ("After the Review," 8.0.1.5), the Scout is only told what improvements need to be made.

8.0.1.5 After the Review

If the members agree a Scout is ready to advance, the Scout is called in and congratulated. The board of review date—not that of a subsequent court of honor—becomes the rank's effective date.

If a board does not approve, the candidate must be so informed and told what can be done to improve. Most Scouts accept responsibility for their behavior or for not completing requirements properly.

If it is thought that a Scout, before his or her 18th birthday, can benefit from an opportunity to properly complete the requirements, the board may adjourn and reconvene at a later date. If the candidate agrees to this,

then if possible, the same members should reassemble. If the candidate does not agree, then the board must make its decision at that point. In any case, a follow-up letter must be promptly sent to a Scout who is turned down. A copy of the letter should also be sent to the council's designated appeals coordinator, council advancement chair, and advancement staff advisor. The letter must include actions advised that may lead to advancement, and also an explanation of appeal procedures. (See "Appealing a Decision," 8.0.4.0, or—if applicable—"Appealing a Quartermaster Board of Review Decision," 4.4.2.8, or "After the Venturing Board of Review," 8.0.5.5.) The council must keep a copy of the letter.

After any board of review, the unit leader is informed of the decision.

8.0.1.6 Boards of Review Through Videoconferencing

Boards of review for any rank are meant to be face-to-face, personal experiences. From time to time, however, due to communicable disease, or as Scouts go off to college or the military, or live in very remote locations, for example, it may be difficult to hold in-person boards of review. In those rare situations where it is unreasonable to expect a Scout to travel long distances or to wait several months, it is permissible to use videoconferencing. If such boards of review are held, however, they must be conducted according to the following requirements.

1. It is a local council decision to allow videoconference Eagle Scout boards of review. Videoconference boards of review may be held for other ranks without local council approval, but they still must comply with the following requirements.
2. All equipment, including the cameras, lighting, microphones, software, and internet connection, should be tested ahead of time to provide the best audiovisual experience possible.
3. All members of the board of review must be visible to the Scout, and any observers with the Scout must be visible to the members of the board of review. No one within hearing range on either side shall be off camera. It is important to consider your technical capabilities when planning how many board of review members to involve. Observers should be minimized for any board of review, and this applies especially to videoconference reviews. Their presence can change the discussion dynamics.

4. For Scouts under the age of 18, care must be taken to ensure compliance with the *Guide to Safe Scouting* (www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/gss01).
5. Videoconference boards of review must not be recorded.

Boards of review under disputed circumstances and appeal boards may be conducted via videoconference under the same rare circumstances and the requirements listed above.

8.0.2.0 Particulars for Tenderfoot Through Life Ranks

The preceding applies to boards of review for all Scouts BSA ranks (except Scout rank), but there are a few differences for the ranks other than Eagle:

1. The board is made up of three to six unit committee members—no more and no less. In units with fewer than three registered committee members available to serve, it is permissible to use knowledgeable parents (not those of the candidate) or other adults (registered or not) who are at least 21 years of age and who understand Scouting’s aims. Using unregistered adults for boards of review must be the exception, not the rule. Registered committee members familiar with the unit program, who have had a background check, and who are Youth Protection trained are preferred. Scheduling boards of review when and where unit committee members can attend usually alleviates the problem of not having enough committee members for a board.
2. Composition for Scouts BSA rank boards of review held in Venturing crews or Sea Scout ships is the same as that for Scouts BSA troops.
3. One member serves as chair. The unit committee decides how he or she is chosen. The chair conducts review meetings according to BSA procedures and reports results to the unit advancement coordinator.
4. The location should be comfortable, such as the unit’s meeting place or a camp setting.
5. The review should take approximately 15 minutes, but not longer than 30 minutes.
6. Ranks shall not be presented until the signed advancement report is submitted to the local council.
7. If a Scout is to be reviewed for more than one rank (Tenderfoot, Second Class, or First Class), each rank should have a separate board of review. While these boards may be conducted on the same date, it is preferred—if feasible—that different members be involved on the boards to give the Scout an enhanced experience and an opportunity to interact with a variety of adults.

8.0.3.0 Particulars for the Eagle Scout Rank

The particulars below pertain only to the Eagle Scout rank.

1. Council advancement committees must determine—and make known—method(s) for conducting Eagle Scout boards of review: whether unit committees or the council or district advancement committees administer them, and also how board chairpersons are selected.
2. If conducted at the unit level, at least one district or council representative, who is not affiliated with the unit, must serve as a member. If the unit requests it, more than one may do so.
3. There shall be no fewer than three and no more than six members, all at least 21 years old. They need not be on an advancement committee or registered with the Boy Scouts of America, but they must have an understanding of the rank and the purpose and importance of the review. This holds true for Eagle boards of review held in any unit, whether troop, crew, or ship.
4. A board of review shall not occur until after the local council has verified the application. In the case of a board of review under disputed circumstances, the council must verify all the information that is not in dispute before the board of review is scheduled.
5. The chair works with all involved parties to schedule the date, time, and place. Boards of review should be scheduled promptly to avoid delaying a Scout’s opportunity to earn Eagle Palms. Eagle boards are often held in more formal settings than a troop meeting location or camping site.
6. A board of review must not be denied or postponed due to unresponsive references. See “References Contacted,” 9.0.1.7.
7. If a unit leader or unit committee chair fails to approve an application, the candidate is still granted a board of review, but the lack of approval may be considered in the decision. See “Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances,” 8.0.3.2.
8. To go over the application, references, and service project workbook, members should convene at least 30 minutes before the scheduled board of review.
9. Eagle boards generally last 30 minutes or somewhat longer. This is the highest rank a Scout may achieve; there should be a discussion of his successes, experiences, and future plans, but rarely should one last longer than 45 minutes.

10. An Eagle candidate may have only one board of review (though it may be adjourned and reconvened). Subsequent action falls under the appeals process. (See "Appealing a Decision," 8.0.4.0.)
11. The Eagle Scout medal or patch must not be sold or otherwise provided to any unit or to the Scout, nor should the court of honor be scheduled until after the certificate is received at the council service center from the National Advancement Program Team. Alternatively, a council-generated report from the PAS/ScoutNET system may be used to purchase Eagle Scout items in lieu of the official certificate.

credentials be released or permission granted for a board of review. Requirements in effect at the time of membership are used, but regardless the practices of the day, all must have been completed before age 18.

An Eagle Scout board of review shall not be denied or postponed due to unresponsive references.

8.0.3.1 Eagle Scout Board of Review Beyond the 18th Birthday

1. An Eagle Scout board of review may occur, without special approval, up to 24 months after a Scout's 18th birthday. See "Boards of Review Must be Granted When Requirements are Met," 8.0.0.2. Even if there are some concerns that requirements have not been fulfilled, the Scout is entitled to a board of review.
2. To hold a board beyond 24 months after the 18th birthday, the candidate, the candidate's parent or guardian, the unit leader, or a unit committee member must submit a Belated Rank Application (11.3.0.0). See item #3 below.
3. It is possible for those who completed the requirements for the Eagle Scout rank in their youth, but never received it, to obtain credentials necessary for acquiring it. If a board of review was not held, and the individual met the BSA membership eligibility rules in effect at the time, then a board of review may be requested. In any case, all requirements must have been completed before age 18. Using the Belated Rank Application (see 11.3.0.0), evidence of completion must be submitted to the National Advancement Program Team through the local council where the individual resides. An Eagle Scout Rank Application signed at the time work was finished can serve as evidence of requirements such as active participation, Scout spirit, or positions of responsibility. Blue cards or other suitable proof of merit badge completion, advancement reports, or troop records may be used for merit badges. Because of their availability on the internet, actual merit badges or sashes are not normally accepted. Only when the application is well-documented and compelling shall

8.0.3.2 Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances

A board of review under disputed circumstances is available only for the Eagle Scout rank. It is held at the district or council level. Volunteers from the candidate's unit are not involved. It is indicated when a unit leader or committee chair does not sign the application, if a unit leader (Scoutmaster) conference is denied, if it is thought a unit will not provide a fair hearing, or if the unit leader or project beneficiary refuses to sign final approval for what might be considered a satisfactorily completed service project. See "Evaluating the Project After Completion," 9.0.2.13. The process outlined below, for a board of review under disputed circumstances, also applies in councils where Eagle boards of review are already held at the council or district level.

If a unit leader or committee chair does not agree a Scout has met the requirements, then before a board of review is held, he or she should confer with the Scout and the Scout's parent or guardian and come to an understanding of all viewpoints. Guidance should also be sought from the district or council advancement chair to assure expectations are not more than are actually required. If the leader or chair remains unconvinced, then they may deny approval of the Eagle Scout Rank Application. In this case, the application, along with a letter explaining the reasons for denial and the right to request a board of review under disputed circumstances, is returned to the Scout, or the Scout's parent or guardian who may then choose to request a board of review under disputed circumstances.

In any case, if a Scout or the Scout's parent or guardian has legitimate concern that a unit cannot deliver a fair hearing, one of them may write a letter explaining the reasons and request a board of review under disputed circumstances. The letter is attached to the completed Eagle Scout application and sent with the service project workbook to the council service center. The council advancement chair or staff advisor, or other designated volunteer or professional, should notify the unit leader or unit committee chair that the request has been received, and then guide the process through the council or district advancement committee according to local practices. After the board has met, the unit leader or unit committee chair should be informed of the decision.

It should be rare that a council or district would deny a request for a board of review under disputed circumstances. However, the request may be denied if it is deemed frivolous, or any concerns about the unit's inability to

deliver a fair hearing are deemed invalid. In that case, the initial board of review must be held according to local council practices (not under disputed circumstances). If that board decides not to approve, the Scout may appeal the decision (see “Appealing a Decision,” 8.0.4.0).

Procedures for a board of review under disputed circumstances, including the option for the Scout or the Scout’s parent or guardian to appeal the decision, are the same as for any Eagle Scout board. The members should be well versed in related policies and organized in advance so they can research background and facts. Written statements or telephone interview summaries must be obtained from the unit leader, knowledgeable committee members, a representative of the service project beneficiary (if applicable), and others familiar with the case. Every effort should be made to have balanced representation. Only review-board members and administrators with a need to know may see the evidence.

The board of review is like any other for Eagle, but with extra attention to the concerns at issue. It is also permissible to hold the review via videoconference under the rare circumstances and the requirements found in “Boards of Review Through Videoconferencing,” 8.0.1.6. Afterward, all statements, summaries, or notes are sent to the council and then destroyed once any appeal efforts are concluded. Note that in councils where Eagle boards of review are already held at the council or district level, the time and effort put into researching the background and facts may be the only real difference from a typical board of review.

If a board of review under disputed circumstances approves a candidate, the candidate’s application goes through the process as outlined under “The Eagle Scout Rank Application Process,” 9.0.1.0. The board must attach a letter to the application indicating it may be processed without the signature of the unit leader or unit committee chair, without the date of the Scoutmaster conference if it had been denied, or without the date of the final Eagle service project signature if that was at issue.

8.0.4.0 Appealing a Decision

If a board of review or a board of review under disputed circumstances does not recommend a candidate for rank advancement, only the Scout or the Scout’s parent or guardian may appeal the decision to the local council.

Adverse decisions for Star and Life ranks can be appealed to the local council. Should this occur, the National Advancement Program Team is available for advice only. Adverse decisions for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class are not appealable. The National Council reviews appeals only for the Eagle Scout rank.

All interviews, deliberations, conversations, and related details in summaries and statements are kept confidential to appeals board members and those assigned oversight, such as the designated appeals coordinator or staff advisor. Others’ knowledge should be limited to overview information as required for reports to advancement committees.

8.0.4.1 Filing and Processing an Appeal

1. The Scout should have received communication from the board of review advising actions that could lead to advancement and explaining appeal procedures. If this was not received, the Scout or the Scout’s parent or guardian should contact the council advancement chair, staff advisor for advancement, or the Scout executive to request it. To initiate the appeal, the Scout or the Scout’s parent or guardian prepares a letter notifying the local council of the appeal. It should detail the reasons it is believed the Scout met all the requirements and should not have been denied. The letter is sent to the council service center, to the attention of the council advancement committee. The communication from the board of review mentioned above should be attached.
2. To assure all appeal requests are handled consistently throughout the council, they are first routed to the council advancement committee.
3. The council advancement committee, through its chair or a designated member or its staff advisor, coordinates the appeals process. This designated appeals coordinator’s primary role is to get the paperwork in the right place and orient and guide those who will hear the appeal.
4. The appeals coordinator designated in #3 above routes a copy of the request to the district or council advancement committee according to local practices. It is recommended that appeals of a unit decision go to the district, and those elevated from a district go to the council. This allows an additional step before the National Advancement Program Team is involved.

5. For appeals heard by a district, the district advancement chair and district staff advisor (usually the district executive) must agree on appeal-board members. The council advancement chair and staff advisor have the authority to approve them (or to call for different members) should they believe this action will lead to more equitable appeals consideration.
6. If the appeal is to be heard by the council, then the council advancement chair and staff advisor must agree on appeal-board members.
7. There shall be an odd number of appeal-board members—either three or five. A board chair may be one of these voting members, or serve additionally with no vote. All must be objective volunteers with thorough knowledge of advancement and appeals procedures. No individual who served on the original board of review or appeal board shall serve on a subsequent district or council appeal board for the same Scout. The council-designated appeals coordinator may be present and provide advice. No other guests, including the candidate’s parents or guardians, are allowed. If the Scout is being interviewed, and the Scout’s parents or guardians insist on attending with him, see “Conducting the Board of Review,” 8.0.1.0.
8. The appeal-board meeting may be held via videoconference under the rare circumstances and the requirements found in “Boards of Review Through Videoconferencing,” 8.0.1.6.
9. An appeal board is not another board of review. It focuses only on the issues that brought about rejection at the lower level(s). A majority is sufficient for a decision.
10. If an appeal is rejected at the district level, the Scout or the Scout’s parent or guardian may appeal to the council advancement committee.
11. If a council-level Eagle Scout board of review or appeal board rejects a candidate, then the Scout or the Scout’s parent or guardian may appeal through the local council to the National Advancement Program Team.
12. A decision at any level that finds in favor of a Scout shall be final. Units, districts, and councils are not allowed to appeal them. Similarly, decisions for rejection delivered through the National Advancement Program Team are final. For rulings in favor of a Scout, the date of the original board—not the appeal board—is the effective date of advancement.

individuals might include the Eagle candidate, the unit leader and assistants, parent(s) or guardian(s), unit committee members, and, as applicable, a representative of the chartered organization or Eagle service project beneficiary. Every effort should be made to have balanced representation. Only appeal-board members and administrators with a need to know may see the evidence. If a face-to-face meeting with the Scout is impractical, extra care should be taken to collect information from the Scout’s perspective. After the meeting, any notes are filed with the council and destroyed once the appeal is resolved. A written report setting out the details of the appeal and the reasons for the decision shall be prepared and forwarded to the council Scout executive. A copy is sent to the Scout who brought the appeal.

Appeals forwarded to the National Advancement Program Team are processed through the local council. A designated appeals coordinator combines, into a packet, the Eagle Scout application and service project workbook (if at issue); all letters, statements, and interview summaries; and any reports or minutes from the original board of review and appeal board(s) held; and a cover letter from the Scout executive (not designee) briefly summarizing the facts and stating the council’s position.

8.0.4.2 Appeal Board Must Research the Case

To allow time to research background and facts, appeal-board members must be organized in advance. Written statements or telephone interview summaries are obtained from those with pertinent knowledge of the case. These

8.0.5.0 Venturing Boards of Review

The topics below cover board of review procedures that apply to the Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit ranks. They are followed by 8.0.6.0, "Particulars for the Discovery and Pathfinder Ranks," and 8.0.7.0, "Particulars for the Summit Rank."

8.0.5.1 Purpose and Timeliness of Venturing Boards of Review

After completing the requirements for Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit ranks, Venturers appear before a board of review. They must not be denied this opportunity. The purpose is to review the quality of the candidate's experience, and through discussions and stories about the fun, adventure, and benefits of Venturing, to decide whether the Venturer has fulfilled the requirements.

8.0.5.2 Conducting the Venturing Board of Review

Upon completion of the Adventure, Leadership, Personal Growth, and Service requirements, a Discovery, Pathfinder, or Summit candidate participates in an Advisor conference. Then a board of review is scheduled.

The Venturing Advisor conference is conducted under the same general policies and procedures as the Scouts BSA Scoutmaster conference. See "Unit Leader (Scoutmaster) Conference," 4.2.3.5. For example, a conference required for a rank must not be denied, and the conference is neither a retest of requirements nor a pass or fail event. In Venturing, however, the conference takes place after all the other requirements for a rank have been fulfilled.

The board of review chair works with all involved parties to set the date, time, and place of the review. The place may be at the crew meeting site or another convenient and comfortable location.

The crew Advisor, associate Advisor, or a member of the crew committee should coach the Venturers ahead of time on boards of review to ensure the reviews are enjoyable experiences devoted to discussions and stories about activities and adventure. Each review should be an opportunity to take pride in accomplishments and to recount the events and activities in which the candidate has participated. This is the best way for the board members to hear what they need to hear about the quality of the experience and how the Venturer fulfilled the

requirements. The stories may also inspire ideas for more fun and adventure in the future that will help crew officers improve the program.

Crew committee members, Advisors, associate Advisors, or other adults who may be present at a Discovery or Pathfinder board of review have a role different from what they do in Scouts BSA. The adults are not members of the Discovery and Pathfinder boards, and are not there to ask the questions. They are there to answer them, and to provide coaching, guidance, and perspective. It is up to the Venturers to guide the discussion and the subject matter of the discussions and stories. To assure their complete understanding, all adults present at Venturing boards of review should study the Venturing Board of Review Guide found at www.scouting.org/advancement, and complete the leader-specific training located at filestore.scouting.org/filestore/training/pdf/511-904_WB.pdf.

"Boards of Review Through Videoconferencing," 8.0.1.6, also applies to Venturing.

8.0.5.3 What Should Be Discussed at a Venturing Board of Review

A Venturing board of review shall become neither a retest or "examination" nor a challenge of a Venturer's knowledge. Instead, it uses an approach involving discussions and stories about the fun, adventure, and benefits of the program.

After their adventures, it is natural for young people to want to tell the world about what they have done. A board of review gives Venturers an opportunity to relive the thrills, their accomplishments, and lessons they have learned—and to get excited about them all over again! In listening to these stories, the board of review will uncover how the candidate achieved the rank requirements, gaining insight into not only the participant's progress and growth but also the unit's program.

The board should try to touch on each of the elements in the ALPS model (Adventure, Leadership, Personal Growth, and Service). The questions and guidance examples found in the Venturing Board of Review Guide will help the members bring out the desired stories and discussions, but they are free to come up with their own approach based on the case at hand.

8.0.5.4 Unanimous Vote Is Required for Approval of Venturing Advancement

After the board of review for the Discovery, Pathfinder, or Summit rank, the Venturer waits outside the room or out of hearing while the board deliberates. A unanimous vote is required for the approval of advancement. The chair is a voting member. Every effort should be made to deliberate with careful consideration of each board member's perspective, and in sufficient detail as to avoid factual misunderstanding. It is appropriate to call the candidate back if additional discussion may provide clarification. Still, if any member dissents, the decision cannot be for approval. In the case of such disagreement, the Venturer shall not be informed about the specifics of the conversations or any arguments taking place. As indicated below ("After the Venturing Board of Review," 8.0.5.5), the Venturer is only told what improvements need to be made.

8.0.5.5 After the Venturing Board of Review

If board of review members vote to approve advancement, the candidate is called in and congratulated. The board of review date becomes the rank's effective date.

If the board decides that the candidate has not fulfilled all the requirements, he or she must be so informed and told what to do to pass the board. The candidate shall not be told any specifics about the board's deliberations. If it is thought that a Venturer could properly complete the requirements before his or her 21st birthday, the board may adjourn and reconvene at a later date. If this is done, it is best, if possible, that the same members reassemble. In all cases when advancement is denied, a follow-up letter must be sent promptly to the Venturer who has been turned down. It must suggest actions that could help him or her successfully complete the requirements. In the case of the Summit rank, the letter must also explain the appeal procedures that may be followed.

Negative decisions of a Summit board of review may be appealed. The procedure is the same as described in "Appealing a Decision," 8.0.4.0, "Filing and Processing an Appeal," 8.0.4.1, and "Appeal Board Must Research the Case," 8.0.4.2. Simply replace the Scouts BSA references with those related to Venturing. Adverse decisions regarding the Discovery and Pathfinder ranks are not appealable.

8.0.6.0 Particulars for the Discovery and Pathfinder Ranks

The particulars below pertain only to the Discovery and Pathfinder ranks.

1. Discovery and Pathfinder boards of review consist of the candidate's peers in the crew, and the board is chaired by the crew president.* There is no required number of Venturers for the board, but a group of three—the chair and two members—is considered most appropriate. Fewer than that does not fully reflect the importance of the rank milestones. The chair selects the other board members from the crew.
2. Two adults—age 21 or older who are registered with the crew, preferably from the crew committee—must be present as advisors, though the crew Advisor or associate Advisors may also fulfill this responsibility.
3. At no time should there be more adults than Venturers present at a board of review.
4. The chair conducts review meetings according to BSA procedures and reports results to the crew Advisor and advancement coordinator.
5. The review should take approximately 30 minutes, and should give the candidate and review-board members a chance to explore the subjects being discussed.
6. The rank shall not be presented until the signed advancement report is submitted to the local council.
7. The Venturer's parents, relatives, or guardian should not be in attendance in any capacity.

*If the crew president is the subject of the board of review, then a crew vice president becomes the chair.

8.0.7.0 Particulars for the Summit Rank

1. The Summit board of review must consist of at least five, but no more than six, members. At least one half of the members, excluding the chair, must be Venturers currently participating in the program. The composition of the board shall be as follows:

Chair: The chair shall be an adult at least 21 years of age who is a Venturing-certified* member of the local council or district advancement committee or their designated Venturing-certified representative. He or she is selected according to local council practices.

*Becoming Venturing-certified includes studying the Venturing Board of Review Guide, completing the Venturing Board of Review training (available on my.scouting.org), and developing a basic knowledge of Venturing.

Venturer membership: The board of review shall include at least two Venturers, at least one of whom shall be from the candidate's crew. Other Venturing members of the board of review should be selected from the following list:

- Current holders of the Summit rank
- Venturers who are members of the council or national service territory Venturing Officers Association or equivalent

- Venturers who currently hold a Venturing elected office
- Eagle Scouts or Sea Scout Quartermasters

If the chair determines no Venturer is available who meets one of these qualifications, the crew president may nominate another Venturer(s) from the candidate's crew to serve on the board of review.

Adult representation: The board of review shall include at least one adult, in addition to the chair, who is registered with the BSA—preferably in the Summit candidate's crew—and who works regularly with the Venturing program at any level. The crew Advisor, associate Advisors, or parents, guardians, or relatives of the Venturer shall not be members of the Summit board of review. The candidate or his or her parent(s) or guardian(s), or relative(s) shall have no part in selecting any board of review members.

Community representative: It is recommended that the board of review also involve at least one well-respected adult representative of the community, who need not be affiliated with the BSA.

The candidate's crew president and the board of review chair must agree upon the final membership of the board of review. If the candidate is the crew president, the crew's vice president of administration must be in agreement with the chair. If the chair and crew president (or vice president of administration) cannot agree, the candidate's crew Advisor will make the final determination, considering the potential members previously discussed by the crew president and chair.

2. A board of review shall not occur until after the local council has verified the Summit Rank Application.
3. The members should convene at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled board of review to review the Summit application and service project workbook.
4. Summit boards generally last 45 minutes or somewhat longer. This is the highest rank a Venturer may achieve; there should be a discussion of the candidate's successes, experiences, and future plans. It is acceptable for the review to last somewhat longer if the discussions are positive and enjoyable. For additional information, see the Board of Review Summit Rank Fact Sheet, www.scouting.org/filestore/venturing/pdf/512-502_WEB.pdf.
5. The Summit candidate may have only one board of review (though it may be adjourned and reconvened). Subsequent action falls under the appeal process. (See "After the Venturing Board of Review," 8.0.5.5, "Appealing a Decision," 8.0.4.0, "Filing and Processing an Appeal," 8.0.4.1, and "Appeal Board Must Research the Case," 8.0.4.2. In those topics covering Scouts BSA board of review appeals, simply

replace the Scouts BSA references with those related to Venturing.)

6. The Summit medal or patch must not be sold or otherwise provided to any crew or to the Venturer nor should the court of honor be scheduled until after the certificate is created at the National Service Center.

8.0.7.1 Initiating Summit Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances

A board of review under disputed circumstances is available for the Summit rank. Volunteers from the candidate's crew are not involved. It is indicated when a crew Advisor or committee chair does not sign the application, if a crew Advisor conference is denied, if it is thought a crew will not provide a fair hearing, or if the crew Advisor or project beneficiary refuses to sign final approval for what might be considered a satisfactorily completed service project. A board of review under disputed circumstances in Venturing is subject to the same policies and procedures as one for an Eagle Scout candidate. See "Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances," 8.0.3.2.

8.0.7.2 Summit Board of Review Beyond the 21st Birthday

For information about a Summit board of review after a Venturer's 21st birthday, see "Eagle Scout Board of Review Beyond the 18th Birthday," 8.0.3.1. The procedures are the same, with the following exceptions:

- References to the 18th birthday are replaced with the 21st birthday for Venturers.
- Procedures for awarding the Summit rank to someone who completed the requirements as a youth but never received the recognition are the same as outlined for those in the same circumstances who are seeking the Eagle Scout rank. The required documentation, however, would relate to proving Summit requirements were met.