

## National Order of the Arrow Requirements for Eligibility – Youth

As of February 1, 2019, unit elections are permitted in Scouts BSA, Venturing, and Sea Scout units. The Order of the Arrow membership requirements are as follows:

1. Be a registered member of the Boy Scouts of America.
2. Have experienced 15 nights of Scout camping while registered with a troop, crew, or ship within the two years immediately prior to the election. The 15 nights must include one, but no more than one, long-term camp consisting of at least five consecutive nights of overnight camping, approved and under the auspices and standards of the Boy Scouts of America. Only five nights of the long-term camp may be credited toward the 15-night camping requirement; the balance of the camping (10 nights) must be overnight, weekend, or other short-term camps of, at most, three nights each. Ship nights may be counted as camping for Sea Scouts.
3. At the time of their election, youth must be under the age of 21, and hold one of the following ranks corresponding to the type unit in which they are being considered for election: Scouts BSA First Class rank, the Venturing Discovery rank, or the Sea Scout Ordinary rank or higher, and following approval by the Scoutmaster, Crew Advisor or Sea Scout Skipper, be elected by the youth members of their unit.
4. The unit leader must approve all candidates. (This is done prior to presenting the slate to the unit)

### Temporary COVID 19 Virtual Camping Requirements

- 1) In light of the extended period of camping restrictions attributable to COVID-19, the following temporary modification is being made to the camping requirements for OA eligibility:
  - a) **Virtual camping** (i.e., backyard or solo camping) may be counted toward the required nights of camping for OA election eligibility if all the following stipulations are met:
    - i) To be counted, all virtual camping nights should be a direct result of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and be part of a BSA unit-organized unit camping event (i.e., multiple members of the unit are involved and camping simultaneously at remote locations).
    - ii) Some form of unit-organized communications should occur either during or immediately following the event.
    - iii) All existing youth protection policies and digital safety guidelines should be followed.
    - iv) No more than three (3) nights of virtual camping are to be credited in any month in which government- or council-imposed COVID-19 restrictions are in place.
    - v) This change is in effect until further notice
  - b) **Virtual Long-Term Camping Authorization**
    - i) Two situations have developed associated with the current pandemic that may prevent Scouts from having an opportunity to qualify for OA eligibility due to not having attended a long-term camp this summer.
      - (1) The local council camp is closed and not offering a traditional summer camp experience.
      - (2) Scout parents are unwilling to allow their child to attend traditional summer camp programs due to health concerns.
    - ii) In order to address these circumstances, virtual long-term camping of five (5) consecutive nights is authorized to be counted toward the long-term camping requirements for OA eligibility consistent with the above guidance and the following additional guidelines:
      - (1) A long-term camp plan must be developed and approved by the unit leader prior to the commencement of the long-term camp. This plan is to be individualized to each Scout's capabilities and situation and should strive to include:
        - (a) Progress toward advancement for each Scout

- (b) Outdoor relevant experience consistent with local conditions and restrictions
- (2) Unit-organized communications should occur on a daily basis during the camping experience and include discussion of progress made on summer camp goals.
- (3) An end-of-camp assessment must be conducted with the unit leader to report on progress made during the experience itself and discuss how future virtual long-term camping experiences can be enhanced. During this assessment the unit leader will make the determination if the Scout's participation warrants granting credit for a completed virtual long-term camping experience in terms of OA eligibility.
- iii) This virtual long-term camping authority is not meant to substitute for attendance at traditional council summer camp programs, but rather to provide an alternative for Scouts who fit in one of the two categories mentioned above.
- 2) An update from national on January 10. ...the following modifications to the above policies have been approved by the National Order of the Arrow Committee. It is emphasized that only these provisions have been changed. All other requirements of the temporary camping policy remain in effect.  
Changes in OA election eligibility requirements for the calendar year 2021 election cycle ONLY:
  - a) The limitation on counting no more than three (3) nights of short-term camping in a single month is increased to five (5) nights per month. All other requirements for virtual short-term camping eligibility remain in effect.
  - b) The requirement for a long-term camp of five (5) consecutive nights is relaxed. While council long-term camps should be utilized if available, any combination of short-term and/or long-term nights, in camp or virtual, that are part of a BSA unit-organized unit camping event held within the two years prior to election may be counted toward the 15 night requirement.
  - c) In cases where lodges have already begun their 2021 election cycle:
  - d) Units which have already held a 2021 election are authorized to hold one additional election.
  - e) Only individuals who were ineligible at the time of the first election due to the camping requirement then in effect can be eligible for this second election.
  - f) To be eligible, the Scout must have met the revised requirements at the time of their first unit's election.
  - g) This second election must be completed no later than May 1, 2021.

### **Rules for Electing Scouts into the Order of the Arrow**

1. 50% of the ACTIVE youth members MUST be present to hold an election. An active member is to be determined by the unit leader, but must be at least a currently registered member of the Boy Scouts of America. Adults under the age of 21 are considered youth for this purpose and may vote.
2. All youth members (under 21) have a vote, including current Order of the Arrow members.
3. All eligible youth who receive votes from at least 50% of those who turned in ballots are elected.
4. Each voting youth is allotted one vote per candidate. They may use all their votes, some of their votes, or none. No voting youth may give more than one vote to any candidate.
5. Yes, eligible youth can vote for themselves.
6. Guidelines should be given to the unit by the election team concerning how the Scouts can use their vote. The team is there to answer any questions.

7. After the ballots have been collected, the election team will check to make sure they have the correct number. They will then determine how many votes were needed for election. If 10 ballots were returned, then five votes are needed to be elected. If 11 ballots are returned, six votes are needed. Always round up. Blank ballots must also be returned.
8. The election team will count the votes in private and determine the Scouts elected. They will fill out the unit election form and it must be signed by them and the unit leader. If no one was elected, the unit is given the option to immediately hold another election that same day. If, on the second election, no one is elected, a form must be returned indicating that no one was elected.
9. Whether or not any youth were elected, the unit leader should sign the election form, indicating that an election was held or at least offered. If no election was held, write "No Election" across the form, and sign it. If no one was elected, write "No Scouts Elected" across the form and sign it. We need one form per troop in the Council to account for Unit Election Team results.
10. The unit leader should retain a list of those elected and has the right to announce the results of the election. If he chooses to wait, then the youth will discover the results at their chapter call-outs, usually held at that district's Spring Camporee.

NOTE: The call-out is a public recognition ceremony only. It is NOT a necessary part of the Ordeal progression. Scouts who have been elected may attend an Ordeal even if they have never been called out.

### **Rules for Recommending Adults into the Order of the Arrow**

1. At least one youth must be elected by the unit, or else no adult can be nominated. **Two** adult may be nominated for every three youth elected (or fraction thereof). So if a unit elects 1-3 youth, it may nominate 2 adults; if it elects 4-6 youth, it may nominate 4 adults; and so on. In addition, if the unit leader has served in that position for at least one full year and is not a member of the OA, he or she may be nominated without counting against this ratio.
2. The adult **must** meet the same camping requirement as the youth and must be a registered member of the Boy Scouts of America. See above for COVID-19 temporary changes.
3. The unit committee must fill out the Adult Recommendation Form and attach a letter of recommendation that specifies how he or she will benefit the lodge and the OA (see 6, below). This form, when completed entirely, must be given to the adult member of the chapter election team or to the Chapter Adviser. It will then be sent to the Associate Lodge Adviser of Chapters to be approved for consideration by the adult selection committee.
4. Be sure to keep a copy of the form.
5. The adult is not to be told of his/her recommendation. The results of the Adult Selection Committee will be given to the Vice Chief of Chapters, and a list of approved adults will be sent to each chapter in time for call-outs. Adult nominations are **not** automatic; they must be approved.
6. The only reason to recommend an adult is that, by having him or her as a member, the youth of the lodge will benefit. It is not intended as an honor for an adult. We are here for the youth. Therefore, if an adult will serve as an adviser, work to promote the order, provide transportation for the youth, attend events with them and encourage them to attend, and provide resources to the youth, or support

them in other ways, he or she is a good candidate for the Order. If not, do not recommend him or her, no matter how much experience he or she may have.

**7. Adult forms must be received by the Lodge no later than March 1.**

**Candidate Status:**

After election, a youth or adult remains a candidate until completion of the Ordeal or one year from the date of election (NOT the date he or she is called out). If, after one year from the election, the Ordeal has not been completed, the candidate is dropped from the roster and is no longer considered to be a candidate. To become a candidate again, he or she must be reelected. If the candidate was ill or for other unusual circumstances could not attend any of the Ordeal weekends, he or she must send a personal letter to the Lodge Executive Committee explaining their reasons. The Executive Committee may then extend the candidate status for another year, with a majority vote.

Tecumseh Lodge follows all election procedures as outlined by the National Order of the Arrow Committee. Any questions may be addressed to the Lodge Vice Chief of Chapters, his Adviser, the Lodge Chief, or his Adviser. See the lodge website, [www.tecumseh65.org](http://www.tecumseh65.org), for contact information.

LAST UPDATE 1/10/2021