FAQ to the current policies and procedures for Occoneechee MB Counselors.

Updated 2026-04-28 version 2

FAQ 1: What is a "primary paid" registered position?

Answer: As of August 1, 2023, all Scouting volunteers, (including MBC) must pay annually to participate in the Scouting program. Your first registered position is your "primary paid" position. Additional registered positions do not require a fee.

FAQ 2: What is a "multiple" registered position?

Answer: You can also be approved and registered in additional positions. Multiple registrations run concurrently with your primary registration. Multiples do not require payments. Multiple therefore means, "more than one" registration.

FAQ 3: Can I select which position I want to be my "primary" and "multiple" position?

Answer: Yes, however there are limitations. You cannot be "primary" as a merit badge counselor unless this is your only primary registered position.

FAQ 4: What is the Occoneechee Council SYT policy?

Answer: On September 25, 2025, the Occoneechee Council rescinded the former April 23, 2023 Council YPT policy. Occoneechee Council now follows the National Council SYT (Safeguarding Youth Training) policies as it relates to registration renewals. Updated SYT advice April 2026

FAQ 5: How frequently are MBC "*multiple*" registrations required to be renewed?

Answer: All registrations must be renewed annually. MBC *multiple* registrations will be *automatically* renewed annually, *if* the counselor's SYT expire date meets the National Council policy, *and* their primary registration is active, paid, and ***does not lapse***. (see FAQ 21)

FAQ 6: How frequently are MBC "*primary"* registrations required to be renewed?

Answer: MBC primary registrations must be ***manually*** renewed annually when the MBC completes the online survey, uploading their latest PDF copy of the SYT certificate, *and* pays the $51 annual fee, via the link in FAQ 8 below.

FAQ 7: Why am I being asked to pay $51 to be only a merit badge counselor, when it was previously free?

Answer: On August 1, 2024, Scouting America national enacted an annual fee of $25 when your primary and only registration is merit badge counselor. Occoneechee Council Board also requires an additional Council fee of $26.

FAQ 8: My only registration in Scouting is MB Counselor, how do I pay my $51 fee?

Answer: This link is ONLY for Occoneechee merit badge counselors that have no other registration in Scouting. If you are registered in any other active paid registration do **NOT** use this link:

https://go.ocscouts.org/MBC-Registration-Payments

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FAQ 9: What date am I required to renew my registration(s) annually?

Answer: MBC can check their current expiration dates, using their MYST (my.scouting.org) login. Click on the *My Profile* icon in the upper right corner. If you are an active MBC, scroll down further to see the merit badges you are authorized to counsel. Active badges listed, do not have an expiration date. Badges listed with an expiration date, **are no longer authorized**.

FAQ 10: If I add an additional multiple registration, will this registration expire at the same date as my primary paid position?

Answer: Yes, it should. However, should you see a difference in expiration dates, please send an email to tiffany.edmiston@scouting.org Attach screen shots to help pinpoint your concern. It is the end stage goal for every volunteer to have the same expiration dates for all their registered positions.

FAQ 11: Why is the online list of merit badge counselors matched with their unit registrations, no longer available on the Council website?

Answer: Merit badge counselors have never been associated with any unit. The Occoneechee Council Advancement Committee, along with the Council Key 3 leaders, removed this list to ensure compliance with Guide to Advancement policy 7.0.2.2

FAQ 12: How can authorized unit leaders find registered merit badge counselors to recommend to Scouts needing a counselor?

Answer: All officially approved, and background checked merit badges counselors can be identified using the Scoutbook Plus web tool. Access to this list in Scoutbook requires your registered positions to be on the allowed permissions list. (Updated: 4/20/2026)

FAQ 13: I am adult leader and my unit has asked me to coordinate / remind / register our unit MB counselors. How can I get a list of MB that are active in my unit?

Answer: The "by unit list" no longer exists, because MBC are council, not unit registrations. All MB counselors are expected to request or renew their registrations themselves. Refer them to this current online MB counselor policy on the https://ocscouts.org website.

FAQ 14: How many merit badges can each counselor be approved to offer in Occoneechee Council?

Answer: Effective April 1, 2023 per Occoneechee Council Advancement Committee policy, each counselor can be approved to offer up to 20 unique merit badges. Consider not filling your list to 20, to give yourself flexibility to adding new badges as they are added.

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FAQ 15: I am a current MB counselor who has been approved to offer the maximum of 20 badges. How can I update the list of badges approved and how often can I change my list of approved badges?

Answer: Occoneechee MB Counselors can update their list of approved badges only **ONCE** during each calendar year. To change your list of approved badges, simply resubmit the Occoneechee merit badge survey form. Pending any other limiting issues (like expired SYT), your new badge list will be reflected in your approved list in MYST within 10 business days. ***You MUST provide qualifications for any new badge(s) you add.***

No update requests will be accepted via email, or telephone call. Our tracking of updates is the survey submission receipt date/time

FAQ 16: Which web browser is recommended for all Scouting America websites?

Answer: Google Chrome is the preferred web browser. Mac/Apple users can download Chrome for Mac. It is also strongly recommended you clear your Chrome cookies and cache frequently, before reporting any odd, unexpected results in any Scouting America website.

FAQ 17: I have active registration(s) in Scouting and recently requested to add a MB Counselor registration. Why am I being asked to complete an additional adult application?

Answer: MB Counselor registrations are not associated with any unit registrations. The person that originally approved your unit registrations does not have authority to approve non-unit registrations, like a MB Counselor. Scouting America registration policies require a supplemental adult application be completed if you are adding a MB Counselor registration in Occoneechee Council, ***for the first time***. In the case you were registered in another Council, prior to Occoneechee, you ***also must*** submit an additional adult application.

FAQ 18: Who approves new MB Counselor applications in Occoneechee Council?

Answer: The Occoneechee Council Advancement committee reviews and approves all MB Counselor registration and MBC applications. This is documented in the Scouting America Guide to Advancement section 7.0.1.2 and 7.0.1.3 and in the Scouting America Registrar Guidebook (restricted)

FAQ 19: Who approves each merit badge requested by the MB Counselor?

Answer: See the Guide to Advancement (GTA) 7.0.1.4 The Occoneechee Council Advancement committee maintains the policy and procedures. Additionally, there are 15 merit badges with specific qualifications and/or qualifications. They are listed in GTA 7.0.1.1
Note: Effective 2/27/2026, Citizenship in Society (CIS) MB has been discontinued. MBC are no longer allowed to be approved to offer this badge. Citizenship in Society Merit Badge Discontinuance

No later than 1/01/2027 – all existing MBC who are approved for the CIS badge, will automatically have that approval removed from their records.

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FAQ 20: If my only Scouting registration is a MB Counselor, can I attend an overnight activity with Scouting units?

Answer: **NO**! Sole registration as a merit badge counselor or lapsed/expired adult volunteers do not meet the leadership requirements to attend an overnight activity. Note that limited exceptions may allow MBC to attend an overnight activity at a District or Council level that are conducted and approved under NCAP standards. See the authorized District or Council event organizer for approval to camp overnight.

FAQ 21: What is a lapsed registration?

Answer: Lapsed registrations including MB Counselor registrations, occur when an active registration end date occurs and the MBC does not renew within two months of the expire date.

FAQ 22: I cannot view the approved MB Counselor list to help a Scout find a MB counselor. What do I do?

Answer: Effective January 1, 2025, the Guide to Advancement 7.0.0.3 (official Scouting America policy) was updated and now requires the Scout's unit leader to meet with the Scout. Prior to this this update, this meeting was suggested. It must be noted that this meeting is a **required** part of the merit badge process, and that it should be documented either by the unit leader's signature (or their delegate's on the Application for Merit Badge (blue card) or in Scoutbook Plus or other method. Only the current unit leader can delegate this required meeting and/or referral for a Scout to an Council approved MBC.

Instructions for unit leaders or their delegate to connect their Scout with an approved MBC are available via this new training and video in the Scoutbook Support Forums

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OCCONEECHEE COUNCIL, BSA
SERVING NORTH CAROLINA'S FUTURE PARENTS, WORKFORCE & LEADERS

Occoneechee Council Merit Badge Counselor Policy

Adopted 20150828 – Revised 20260428
Download linked version at https://go.ocscouts.org/MBC-policy-procedure

- Guide to Advancement, 7.0.1.2: "There are two aspects to merit badge counselor approval: Approval for registration in the position of merit badge counselor and approval for the badges to be counseled. Both functions are the responsibility of the council advancement committee, though how they are carried out is left to council determination."
- Merit Badge counselors are Council and District level registered positions. They are not unit level positions. Unit approvals are not required, nor should they be included. If a unit key-3 has a concern with any individual serving as a MBC, please send your concerns to your assigned District professional, or District Advancement Chair.
- Council no longer prints or mails MBC membership cards. You can look up your status and optionally print your card, via the MYST (my.scouting.org) website.
- Merit Badge counselors must be at least 18 years old and of good character.
- Effective April 1, 2023 – The former merit badge selection form, has been superseded by the new Occoneechee MB counselor registration survey.

Merit Badge Counselor registration or renewal procedures

- *New*, 1st time MB counselors, need to complete an Adult application, personally sign, then scan it to a PDF file.
- Do not use or submit Scouting America merit badge selection form 34405, it will not be accepted. In Occoneechee we only accept badge selection via the Occoneechee specific MB Counselor registration survey ← click to register
- MB Counselors who have no other current Scouting registered positions, must also submit the additional disclosures and background check authorization form. This form is part of the adult application, page 6 of 6.
- A Safeguarding Youth Training completion certificate must be submitted, with all registrations or renewals.
  SYT training expiration date must be on or after your MBC registration expiration date.
  - Online mandatory SYT training is here: https://training.scouting.org/courses/SCO_3014
    Online training is available in the Scouting America Learn center at MYST (my.scouting.org)
- Save a PDF copy of your SYT certificate: This can be found in MYST (my.scouting.org), → Menu → My Training → on right, "Print Certificate → press download arrow, and save it as PDF.
- MB counselor position specific training must be complete. One of the following four options are allowed:
  - Classroom Merit Badge Counselor Orientation (D76) -or-
  - Online MB Counselor training: SCO_402, SCO_403, SCO_407, SCO_415, SCO_416, and SCO_417 -or-
  - Online MB Counselor training: SCO_431, SCO_433, SCO_430, SCO_435, SCO_448, and SCO_434 -or-
  - *CURRENT* MB Counselor training: SCO_471, SCO_472, SCO_474, and SCO_486

    Online training is available in the Scouting America Learn center at https://training.scouting.org – Choose the Merit Badge Counselor Position Specific Training from the catalog. (use Google Chrome browser)
    Any one, of the four training options above, are acceptable to be a trained MBC. Reminder: This national training refers you to the national merit badge selection form. *Do not use this form in Occoneechee*.

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Important requirements and reminders:

- 15 specific merit badges, require certifications to be registered for that badge. See the Guide to Advancement, section 7.0.1.1, on the Scouting America national website, for details on the required certifications for each of these badges. Counselors who do not upload the required supporting certifications via the badge selection survey, will not be registered for that badge. See update in FAQ 19 above. (4/28/2026)
- Be recognized as having the skills and education in the merit badge subjects covered and hold any required qualifications and training as outlined in the Guide to Safe Scouting or the Guide to Advancement—or use others so qualified. You will be prompted to list your qualifications for every badge you request approval to counsel.

Policy For Occoneechee Nova Counselors and/or SuperNova Mentors

- Scouting America no longer offers the Nova or Supernova programs. Occoneechee Council Advancement Committee determined that we follow the recommendations of the National Council. It is no longer possible to register as a nova counselor and/or supernova mentor. S.T.E.M is now integrated into all aspects of the Scouting America programs.

How to find active an approved MBC to refer Scouts:

Updated: 4/28/2026

Authorized Unit leaders in Troops, Crews, and Ship, based on their active registrations, can look up active and approved merit badge counselors in Scoutbook Plus https://advancements.scouting.org/meritBadgeCounselors

- Login to Scoutbook Plus using your MYST (my.scouting.org) credentials
- If your active registrations authorize you to view MBC, you will see on the left column "MB Counselors"
- New advice can be found in the Scoutbook Plus Merit Badge Counselor Guide
- If you cannot view the menu item or find a counselor that you think should be available, email Tiffany.Edmiston@scouting.org