

Membership Requirements

Unit leader approval. To become eligible for election, a Boy Scout or Varsity Scout must be registered with the Boy Scouts of America and have the approval of his unit leader **prior** to the election. The unit leader must certify his Scout spirit (i.e., his adherence to the Scout Oath and Law and active participation in unit activities). The unit leader must also certify that the nominee meets all specified requirements at the time of this annual election.

Youth membership qualifications. All members of, or candidates for membership in, the Order of the Arrow who are under 21 years of age shall be considered youth members or candidates for youth membership, subject to meeting the following requirements:

- Be a registered member of the Boy Scouts of America.
- Hold the First Class rank of the Boy Scouts of America, as a minimum.
- After registration with a troop or team, have experienced 15 days and nights of Boy Scout camping during the two-year period prior to the election. The 15 days and nights must include one, but no more than one, long-term camp consisting of six consecutive days and five nights of resident camping, approved and under the auspices and standards of the Boy Scouts of America. The balance of the camping must be overnight, weekend, or other short-term camps. Candidates for youth membership shall be elected by other youth members in accordance with policies set forth by the national Order of the Arrow committee.

Scouts with special needs. The Order of the Arrow is committed to including Scouts and Scouters who have special needs because of a disability. In the case of special-needs troops, election teams should follow the same procedures, keeping in mind that any Scout who is classified as a youth member of a troop, regardless of age, will be considered a youth (voting) member. All other membership requirements remain the same. When inducting a Scout or Scouter with a special need, as with any candidate, lodges should make the activities challenging within the individual's limitations, and plan accordingly. Accessibility to ceremonial circles, sleeping sites, and appropriate work projects should be taken into consideration to ensure a meaningful induction.

Adult membership qualifications. All members of, or candidates for membership in, the Order of the Arrow who are 21 years of age or older and who are registered members of the Boy Scouts of America shall be considered adult members or candidates for adult membership. Individuals shall be selected as candidates based on the following:

1. Adult leaders in units: Each year, upon holding a troop or team election for youth candidates that results in at least one youth candidate being elected, the unit committee may nominate one adult to the lodge adult selection committee, composed of the lodge adviser, the chairman of the council committee on which the lodge adviser serves, and the lodge staff adviser. Troops or teams having more than 50 registered active youth members may nominate an additional adult for every 50 registered, active youth, or fraction thereof. For example, a troop having 51 to 100 registered, active youths may nominate two adults each year if at least one youth has been elected. Recommendations

of the adult selection committee, with the approval of the Scout executive, serving as Supreme Chief of the Fire, will be candidates for induction, provided the following conditions are fulfilled:

- Selection of the adult is based on the ability to perform the necessary functions to help the Order fulfill its purpose, and not for recognition of service, including current or prior achievement and positions.
- The individual will be an asset to the Order because of demonstrated abilities that fulfill the purpose of the Order.
- The camping requirements set forth for youth members are fulfilled.
- The adult leader's membership will provide a positive example for the growth and development of the youth members of the lodge.

2. Adult leaders in council and district positions: The lodge adviser, district chairmen, council president, or members of the professional staff may nominate adults to the lodge adult selection committee. All requirements set forth for adult leaders in units must be fulfilled, with the exception of the camping requirements, which may be waived at the discretion of the lodge adviser and Scout executive. Recommendations of the adult selection committee, with the approval of the Scout executive, serving as Supreme Chief of the Fire, will become candidates for induction. Adults may be nominated for membership only one time per year as either unit Scouters or district/council Scouters, but not both. How they are nominated depends on where they maintain their primary registration.

Because the Order of the Arrow is principally a youth organization, unit, district, and council Scouters are not selected for membership as a recognition. Selection should take place only when the adult's position in Boy Scouting or Varsity Scouting will make Order of the Arrow membership more meaningful in the lives of the youth membership.

Professional membership. Members of the professional service of the Boy Scouts of America shall be considered ex officio members of the lodge of the council in which they are employed. Members of the professional service designated by the Scout executive to serve in camp positions should be given an opportunity to complete the Ordeal and the Ordeal ceremony if they have not previously been inducted into a lodge of the Order. Members of the professional service whose responsibility in the council would be enhanced may be inducted into the lodge based on the recommendation of the Scout executive and upon completion of the Ordeal experience and ceremony. Camp staff members (paid but not considered members of the professional service) shall be elected only by members of their own unit if they are under age 21 and meet the youth membership requirements. Staff members over age 21 must meet the adult membership requirements and be selected as either unit Scouters or district/council Scouters.

Honorary membership. Honorary membership in the Order of the Arrow is not authorized and shall not be given. Membership in the Order shall be gained only through fulfillment of membership requirements as stated in the official literature of the Order of the Arrow, Boy Scouts of America. Visiting Scouts or leaders cannot be given honorary memberships in the Order.

Life membership. A life membership in the Order of the Arrow is not authorized and shall not be recognized. Membership in the Order of the Arrow requires current registration with the Boy Scouts of America. There is no official or authorized life membership registration status for the Order of the Arrow in the Boy Scouts of America.

Unit Elections

To become a member of the Order of the Arrow, a Boy Scout or Varsity Scout is chosen by vote of the youths in his unit. This is a unique feature of the Order since the majority of those who select their candidates for this honor are not members of the lodge.

However, lodge members in the unit have a vote as well as nonmembers. In this way membership is controlled by the youths in their own units and not by those who are already Arrowmen.

It is important that the members of the unit have the membership requirements properly explained to them.

Registered active member. In Boy Scout troops and Varsity Scout teams, every registered active member of the unit under age 21 at the time of election is eligible to vote. A Boy Scout or Varsity Scout who carries a current national membership card and participates in at least some unit activities during the year is considered to be a registered active member of the unit. For example, a youth away at college who participates in some unit activities when home, such as a campout, camporee, or occasional unit meeting, should be considered a registered active member. A youth who moves away or drops out of the unit because of other interests would not be counted in the registered active membership figure.

Elections outside the registered council. All elections must be conducted by the Order of the Arrow lodge of the council in which the unit is chartered. *No unit may visit outside its own council and hold an OA election under the auspices of an OA lodge of another council. Elections are held only in troops or teams.*