

Merit Badge Counselor Special Qualification Guidelines

In addition to the adult application and the merit badge counselor application, the following documentation/forms have to be submitted for the specific merit badges listed below.

Special Qualifications are required to instructors for certain merit badges and require additional documentation. These badges are explained in Chapter 7 of the [Guide to Advancement](#). For these badges, the prospective Merit Badge Counselor must provide a copy of current certification **OR** a letter specifying that instruction and activities for the merit badge will be conducted by a currently certified instructor as described below:

Archery – current evidence of training in one of the following

- BSA National Camping School –trained shooting sports director
- USA Archery instructor
- National Field Archery Association instructor
- By someone who has been trained by one of the three
- Or at least Level 1 training in the operation of an archery range from USA Archery, NFAA

Canoeing – current evidence of training in one of the following

- BSA Aquatics Instructor
- Canoeing Instructor certification from the American Canoe Association, American Red Cross, or equivalent
- **UNIT ONLY:** Completed the BSA course: Paddle Craft Safety taught by one of the above, or equivalent . Adult can be a counselor on a District / Council level **ONLY** if they are a Paddle Craft Safety Instructor or higher (Higher levels are outlined in MB book under the 'to the counselor' section).

Climbing

- At least 21 years old and:
 - Trained in BSA Climb on Safely
 - Training as a BSA climbing Level 2 Instructor is highly recommended but not required

Kayaking – current evidence of training in one of the following

- BSA Aquatics Instructor
- Paddle Craft Safety Instructor certification
- **UNIT ONLY:** Completed the BSA course: Paddle Craft Safety taught by one of the above, or equivalent . Adult can be a counselor on a District / Council level **ONLY** if they are a Paddle Craft Safety Instructor or higher (Higher levels are outlined in MB book under the 'to the counselor' section).
- Kayaking instructor certification from the American Canoe Association, British Canoe Union, or American Red Cross, or equivalent

Lifesaving

- An adult at least 21 years old and:
 - Red Cross First Aid/CPR/AED or equivalent, and:
 - BSA Lifeguard or
 - Aquatics Instructor or equivalent or

- Aquatics Supervision: Swimming and Water Rescue taught by one of the above

Rifle Shooting – current evidence of training in one of the following

- BSA National Camping School (NCS) shooting sports director
- National Rifle Association (NRA) Rifle Shooting Instructor or Coach.

Muzzle Loading – current evidence of training in one of the following

- NCS shooting sports director or
- NRA/National Muzzleloader Rifle Association (NMLRA)–certified muzzleloader firearms instructor.

Rowing

- BSA Aquatics Instructor certification or equivalent
- Completed the BSA course Aquatics Supervision: Paddle Craft Safety taught by one of the above (or equivalent)

Scuba Diving

- Prospective MB Counselor must provide a letter stating that all instruction will be conducted by an insured recreational diving instructor in good standing with a recognized agency and approved by the council.

Shotgun Shooting – current evidence of training in one of the following

- Certified NCS shooting sports director or
- NRA Shotgun Instructor or Coach.

Swimming

- Current certification in BSA Safe Swim Defense and BSA Safety Afloat.

White water

- Certified as white water canoeing or kayaking instructors by the American Canoe Association

All certifications listed above must be current.

For other merit badges where specific BSA requirements do not exist, counselors should have sufficient depth of knowledge and experience to understand how to safely present the material.

For questions, please contact Bill Nelson, Council Advancement Chair at GCCAdvancement1@gmail.com