



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
BAY-LAKES COUNCIL

In these challenging times we understand the urgent need to find ways to allow and encourage Scouting to continue. In the past week, we have heard from many units who are successfully conducting virtual meetings using such platforms as Zoom and Google Hangouts. During this time, we have also seen a rapidly increasing number of virtual merit badge advancement opportunities being offered online.

Today, we are communicating that, since we have no way to actively monitor merit badge programs offered by other councils, individual youth should refrain from participating in online Merit Badge programs offered by other councils. We understand there are many leaders and volunteers in Bay-Lakes Council that can and will work together to offer opportunities for virtual learning and advancements for Bay-Lakes Scouts. This guideline is being implemented in the interest of ensuring a safe environment for all of our Scouts.

If units are utilizing technology to keep programs running locally, here are some important notes to consider:

- Ensure the [Guide for Advancement](#) and [Guide to Safe Scouting](#) are followed.
- Two deep leadership MUST be adhered to at all times, including when engaging in two-way electronic communication.
- Before engaging in any online activities [Cyber Chip](#) must be completed by Scouts; including receiving parent permission to use an online platform.
- Scouts must work through their Scoutmaster to receive prior approval before beginning any merit badge program.
- [Frequently asked Advancement questions during COVID-19](#).

Again, this guideline is being implemented in the interest of ensuring safety for all our Scouts.

If you have any questions please contact Brian Robb, Director of Field Service at the Center for Scouting at (920) 734-5705 or Brian.Robb@Scouting.org.