

# California Inland Empire Council Shooting Sports Committee Merit Badge Counselor Application Process



**Purpose:** To establish a standardized process for the California Inland Empire Council regarding the approval of merit badge counselors for the shooting sports – Rifle Shooting, Shotgun Shooting and Archery.

**Background:** In 2011, the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America released the National Shooting Sports Manual. In the manual, the requirements for a shooting sports merit badge counselor are defined. From the manual, page 45:

**To qualify as a shooting sports merit badge counselor, a volunteer must:**

- Register annually with the Boy Scouts of America.
- Be at least 18 years old.
- Be of good character.
- Be proficient in the merit badge subject by vocation, avocation, or special training.
- Rifle Shooting and Shotgun Shooting—The merit badge counselor must take responsibility to assure that all instruction involving the handling of firearms or live ammunition must be supervised by a certified National Camping School (NCS) shooting sports director, National Rifle Association (NRA) rifle instructor, or NRA coach for the Rifle Shooting merit badge or an NRA shotgun instructor or coach for the Shotgun Shooting merit badge. That involving muzzleloaders must be supervised by an NCS shooting sports director or NRA/NMLRA-certified muzzleloading firearms instructor for the merit badge discipline. Shooting must be supervised by an NRA certified range safety officer (RSO). If instruction and shooting are to occur at the same time, the RSO and qualified NRA instructor both must be present. The RSO and NRA instructor may not be the same person. Note that commercial shooting ranges may provide RSOs. In approving merit badge counselors, the local council advancement committee has the authority to establish a minimum, reasonable level of skills and education for the counselor of a given merit badge. For example, NRA certification could be established as a council standard for approving counselors for the Rifle Shooting or Shotgun Shooting merit badges. (Reference: Guide to Advancement)
- Be able to work with Scout-age youth.
- Be currently trained in BSA Youth Protection.

**NOTE:** As of January 1, 2015, USA Archery or National Field Archery Level 1 instructor certification is required by the California Inland Empire Council to be approved as an Archery Merit Badge Counselor.

**Policy:** It is the policy of the California Inland Empire Council that a shooting sports merit badge counselor shall be NRA certified as an instructor for the firearm discipline requested (i.e., Rifle instructor for Rifle Shooting and Shotgun instructor for Shotgun shooting.) Archery merit badge counselors shall be certified as a Level 1 Instructor by the USA Archery or National Field Archery Association (NFAA.) It is also the policy of the California Inland Empire Council that all shooting sports merit badge counselor applicants must be approved by the CIEC Shooting Sports Committee.

**Procedure:** Merit Badge Counselor applicants who are interested in the Archery, Rifle Shooting, and Shotgun Shooting merit badges shall be referred to the CIEC Shooting Sports Committee for verification and approval for the merit badge counselor requirements as outlined in the National Shooting Sports Manual and the Guide to Advancement.

The CIEC and District Advancement Committees will look to the expertise of the Shooting Sports Committee to verify the qualifications and certificates required for Archery, Rifle Shooting, and Shotgun Shooting Merit Badge Counselors.

The approved listing of these merit badge counselors shall be maintained and shared by the Shooting Sports Committee with the various District and CIEC Council Advancement Committees to include for distribution to Unit Leaders to allow Scouts to work on these merit badges. Updates to the Shooting Sports approved list of Merit Badge Counselors shall be accomplished by the Shooting Sports Committee.

Applicants for all Shooting Sports Merit Badge Counselors shall submit the required application packet to the Council Registrar at the CIEC Council Office. The Council Registrar will forward the required information to the Shooting Sports Committee Chair. The Shooting Sports Committee will either approve or reject the application based on compliance with BSA regulations. The Shooting Sports Committee Chair shall send an e-mail to the Merit Badge Counselor applicant and to the appropriate District Merit Badge Coordinator regarding the applicant's status. If rejected, the Shooting Sports Committee Chair will notify all involved parties as well as the District and Council Advancement Committees of the reason.

The applicant must submit a packet of materials that include:

1. Current copies of Youth Protection Training (YPT) certification
2. BSA Adult Application (#524-501)
3. BSA Merit Badge Counselor Information form, No. 34405 available at:  
<http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/34405.pdf>
4. A current copy of the applicant's NRA Instructor ID and/or USA Archery instructor ID showing instructor ID number and expiration date.

To maintain CIEC certification, a Shooting Sports merit badge counselor will:

- a. Submit annually copies of their current NRA Certificates / USA Archery/NFAA Credentials to the Shooting Sports Committee.
- b. Submit annually copies of their current YPT Certificates to the District Merit Badge Coordinator for verification.

On an annual basis, prior to the annual District rechartering:

- a. District Merit Badge Coordinators shall verify YPT with copy of Adult Application as position "42" are current and valid on an annual basis.
- b. Shooting Sports Committee shall verify that NRA certificates are current and valid for merit badge counselors required in compliance with the Guide to Advancement and the National Shooting Sports Manual.
- c. Shooting Sports Committee shall verify USA Archery/NFAA credentials are current and valid for merit badge counselors as required to be in compliance with the Guide to Advancement and the National Shooting Sports Manual.

The Shooting Sports Committee will keep copies of all NRA, USA Archery and NFAA certifications on file for each Shooting Sports Merit Badge Counselor authorized by the California Inland Empire Council.

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