

# Citizenship in the Community Merit Badge

Updated: 1/26/26

Important information about how to prepare for the merit badge

Please make sure your Scoutmaster knows you are taking this badge.

Parents, please review the content of a merit badge prior to registering your Scout: some badges may be challenging for younger Scouts. Also, the class discussions are more interesting if Scouts review *all* the requirements for the badge before the program. The chances of your scout completing all the work for the badge increases dramatically when they are properly motivated and the badge content is age-appropriate.

Merit badges are not designed to be completed in a day and require independent work on the part of the Scout outside of the kick off meeting. During the kick-off meeting we will go over the requirements and what needs to be done. But the work on the requirements will need to be completed outside of the online meeting.

It is the Scout's responsibility to answer the requirements. NOT THE PARENT A Scout may use a parent's email account to submit requirement answers BUT:

It is NOT the parent's responsibility to scan in your work and send it to me That is the Scout's responsibility

Parents are not to act as an agent of the Scout. All assignments must be completed by the Scout and if there are issues, the Scout must communicate those to me.

**Before attending**, please make sure your Scoutmaster knows the Scout is taking this virtual merit badge class and indicates the Initial Unit Leader Signature in the merit badge in Scoutbook. [Click on the Scout in Scoutbook, click on their advancement, the merit badge and Initial Unit Leader Signature, enter a date.] (The Scoutmaster may alternately sign the front of a blue card for the badge. Blue cards are available here: <https://support.grandcanyonbsa.org/wpcontent/uploads/2022/11/mb-app-blue-card-fillable.pdf> send the signed card to: bill.nelson@scouting.org )

**IMPORTANT:** For full credit for the badge, evidence of the requirements, as explained below, must be sent to: bill.nelson@scouting.org

The kick-off meeting will be held in one session, with a follow-up discussion session.

Though not required, Scout workbooks are very useful and we prefer that Scouts use the workbook during the program. A workbook can be found at:

[https://scoutingevent.com/Download/010146606/OR/Citizenship\\_in\\_the\\_Community\\_Workbook.pdf](https://scoutingevent.com/Download/010146606/OR/Citizenship_in_the_Community_Workbook.pdf) **HINT, this badge is much easier for you if you use the workbook.**

About blue cards: We will utilize Scoutbook.com and record requirement completion online. Blue cards can be printed by parents and unit leaders in Scoutbook by clicking on the Scout, the Scout's advancement, the merit badge, and print blue cards.

## Using the Internet, Chatbots, Artificial Intelligence (AI)

It is OK to utilize chatbots and artificial intelligence to find out information to answer the requirements; HOWEVER; all the answers you submit to me **must be in your own words**. Copying answers from any source is not allowed.

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## Citizenship in the Community Requirements

- TYPE OR WRITE LEGIBLY AND WHERE NOT ASKED FOR A LIST, USE COMPLETE SENTENCES.
- PUT YOUR NAME IN EMAILS TO ME AND IN ALL ATTACHMENTS
- TRY TO BUNCH YOUR ANSWERS WHEN YOU EMAIL ME TO CUT DOWN ON EMAIL TRAFFIC. EMAIL TO: BILL.NELSON@SCOUTING.ORG
- READ THE REQUIREMENTS CAREFULLY, YOU MUST ANSWER THE REQUIREMENTS AND PROVIDE WHAT IS BEING ASKED FOR.
- COPY A PARENT OR GUARDIAN IN ALL CORRESPONDENCE

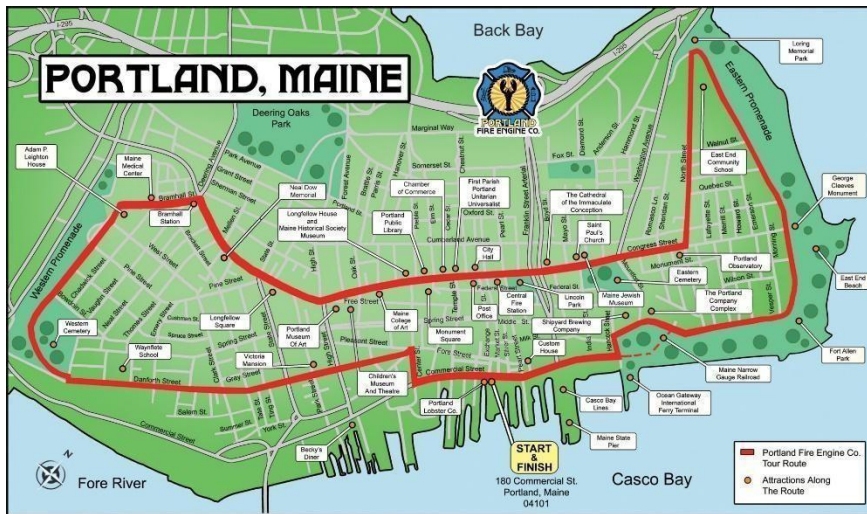
**First read the merit badge pamphlet.** The requirements for this badge are a lot easier to finish if you read through the merit badge pamphlet first. The pamphlet for this badge is available free at this link:

<https://www.scouting.org/meritbadges/citizenship-in-the-community/>

1. Discuss with your counselor what citizenship in the community means and what it takes to be a good citizen in your community. Discuss the rights, duties (what you should do), and obligations (what you have to do) of citizenship, and explain how you can demonstrate good citizenship in your community, Scouting unit, place of worship, or school. We will discuss in class, but in addition answer it in the workbook: (USE THE [WORKBOOK](#) OR A WORD DOCUMENT)
2. Do the following:
  - a. Using an electronic mapping tool or paper map, locate and pinpoint the following services and landmarks in your community. Also provide a table that shows that you have determined and recorded the distances from your home including driving time AND either walking or biking time.
    1. Chief government buildings such as your city hall, county courthouse, and public works/services facility
    2. Fire station, police station, and hospital nearest your home
    3. Parks, playgrounds, recreation areas, and trails
    4. Historical or other interesting points of interest

You need to mark the sites yourself, either electronically or using a pencil or pen. If you decide to draw the map from scratch, make sure it includes road names.

(You will need to send me a pic of the marked-up map, AND a record of the distances required. there isn't a place on the workbook to do this. Make sure this is very clear as to what you are indicating.) Example of map (not including distances table):



Example of a distance table:

Location	Distance from Home	Driving Time	Walking Time
Fire Department	1 mile	3min	20 min
Police Department	2 miles	6min	40 min
Hospital	5 miles	15min	1hr 40min
Library	3 miles	9min	1 hr
Playground	.5 miles	2min	10min
Historical Home	2 miles	6min	40 min
Public Works	5 miles	15min	1hr 40min

A speed and distance time calculator can be found here:

<https://www.timecalculator.net/speed-distance-time-calculator>

- b. Chart the organization of your local or state government. Show the top offices and tell whether they are elected or appointed. (USE THE WORKBOOK OR A WORD DOCUMENT)

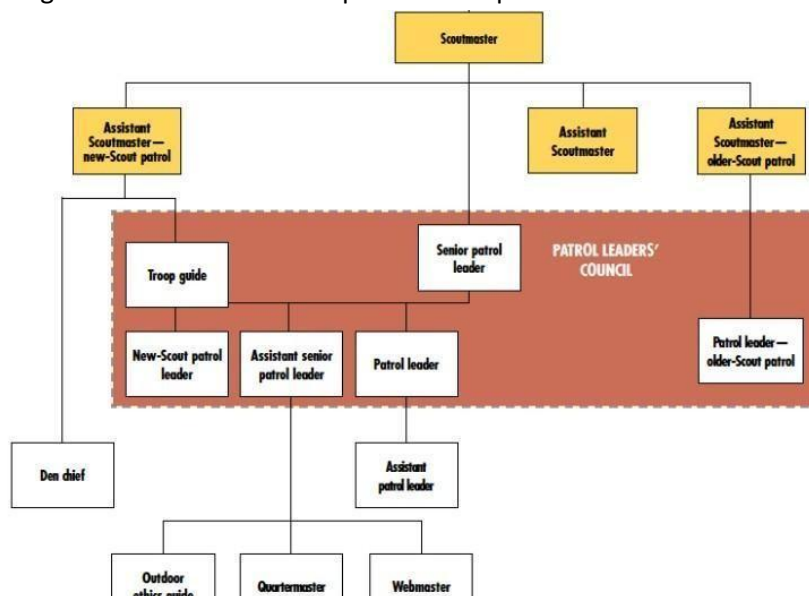
Note: you need to draw your own chart, not just copy and paste one.

An organization chart or "org chart" is a diagram that displays a reporting or relationship hierarchy. The most frequent application of an org chart is to show the structure of a business, government, or other organization. Org charts have a variety of uses, and can be structured in many different ways. The org chart shows the relationships of the people and areas within an organization or government.

A city organization chart is like a family tree that shows how a city government is structured. It outlines the different departments, roles, and leaders, and how they connect to each other. At the top, you usually find the mayor or city manager, followed by key departments like police, fire, public works, and

parks. The chart helps you understand who's responsible for what and how decisions are made to keep the city running smoothly.

Here is an organization chart of a Troop as an Example:



3. Do the following:

- Attend an in-person meeting of your city, town, or county council or school board, local court session; OR another state or local governmental meeting approved in advance by your counselor (See the suggestions in Requirement 4) {Note: you only have to attend one court session. There are trials almost every day, especially in municipal courts, so if you are having trouble finding a meeting to attend, consider a court session.}
- Choose one of the issues discussed at the meeting where a difference of opinions was expressed, and explain to your counselor why you agree with one opinion more than you do another one.

(USE THE WORKBOOK OR A WORD DOCUMENT to send me evidence of this, include all sub-requirements)

4. Choose an issue that is important to the citizens of your community; then do the following:

- Find out which branch of local government is responsible for this issue.
- With your counselor's and a parent's approval, interview one person from the branch of government you identified in requirement 4a. Ask what is being done about this issue and how young people can help. (Tell me who you interviewed and what you found out) You cannot satisfy this requirement by just sending them a letter. You have to interview them.
- Share what you have learned with your counselor. (There isn't a place in the workbook for this, so you will have to send it to me separately)

**SUGGESTIONS:** This can be a hard requirement to get started with.

- If your issue is School related, interview your principal or ask them for a contact at the School Board to interview

- Attend one of the meetings in requirement 3, call ahead to learn about what issue(s) they will be covering and do some research beforehand.
  - Attend the meeting and at some point introduce yourself to one of the speakers as a Scout working on the badge, and ask them if they have a minutes that you can ask them a couple of questions.
  - Ask them what branch of government their program most closely relates to and what a young person can do to help.
- Ask your parent or a teacher what government agency handles the issue you are interested in. Contact that agency and inform them that you are a Scout working on this badge and if there is someone you can ask a couple of questions about the issue.

I have added more suggestions for assistance in locating someone to interview in a note below after the requirement listing. \*\*

(USE THE WORKBOOK OR A WORD DOCUMENT to send me evidence of this.)

5. With the approval of your counselor and a parent, watch a movie that shows how the actions of one individual or group of individuals can have a positive effect on a community. Discuss with your counselor what you learned from the movie about what it means to be a valuable and concerned member of the community. See recommended movies at end of this document\*

(USE THE WORKBOOK OR A WORD DOCUMENT to send me the answer to this) Be prepared to discuss this during a follow up meeting.

6. List some of the services (such as the library, recreation center, public transportation, and public safety) your community provides that are funded by taxpayers. Tell your counselor why these services are important to your community.

(USE THE WORKBOOK OR A WORD DOCUMENT to send me the answer to this)

7. Do the following:
  - a. Identify three charitable organizations outside of Scouting that interest you and bring people in your community together to work for the good of your community.

**IMPORTANT:** [A list of charitable organizations is here](https://www.charitynavigator.org/) another one is here: <https://www.charitynavigator.org/> . If the ones you choose are not on a list, contact me for approval.

- b. Pick ONE of the organizations you chose for requirement 7a. Using a variety of resources (including newspapers, fliers and other literature, the Internet, volunteers, and employees of the organization), find out more about this organization.
- c. With your counselor's and your parent's approval, contact the organization you chose for requirement 7b and find out what young people can do to help. While working on this merit badge, volunteer at least eight hours of your time for the organization. After your volunteer experience is over, discuss what you have learned with your counselor. Be prepared to discuss this during a follow up meeting.

**HINT:** Taxpayer funded organizations are not considered charitable organizations. However, many local communities have charitable organizations that assist those in need. Three organizations that you can volunteer with for the good of your badge include but are not limited to:

- Your church or religious institution.
- Homeless shelters and also soup kitchens.
- Animal humane societies and fostering facilities.

(USE THE WORKBOOK OR A WORD DOCUMENT to send me the answer to this. Make sure to give me the name, address and contact information of the organization and dates / hours served. Provide a letter from someone there or your parents stating you did volunteer 8 hours of your time.)

8. Develop a public presentation (such as a video, slide show, speech, digital presentation, or photo exhibit) about important and unique aspects of your community. Include information about the history, cultures, and ethnic groups of your community; its best features and popular places where people gather; and the challenges it faces. Stage your presentation in front of a group, such as your patrol or a class at school OR send your merit badge counselor a video of you giving your presentation.

(Please send me a copy of your presentation and an email from your parent, teacher or Scout leader stating you completed this requirement.)

**\* Recommended Movies for Requirement 5** - With the approval of your counselor and a parent, watch a movie that shows how the actions of one individual or group of individuals can have a positive effect on a community.

*All these movies are acceptable to me as a merit badge counselor. **You must also get permission from your parents.** If you have another movie you would like to watch in fulfillment of Requirement 5, please get my permission first.*

- 12 Angry Men One man, Henry Fonda, sways a jury and saves an innocent man. NR but would be G today.
- 42 PG-13 (Sports): In 1947, Jackie Robinson confronts racism and becomes the first African-American to play Major League Baseball.
- Amazing Grace Chronicles the struggle of William Wilberforce to stop the British slave trade in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. PG for disturbing images of slavery.
- A Man For All Seasons The story of Sir Thomas More who challenged King Henry VIII's divorce and remarriage. Rated G.
- The Blindside The true story of Michael Oher, a homeless boy who became a first round Baltimore Raven draft pick with the help of a caring woman and her family. PG-13.
- The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind PG (Drama): A thirteen-year-old boy in Malawi, Africa, invents a way to save his family and village from famine.
- Bridge over the River Kwai - After settling his differences with a Japanese PoW camp commander, a British colonel cooperates to oversee his men's construction of a railway bridge for their captors - while oblivious to a plan by the Allies to destroy it. PG
- Cars G (Animated): A self-centered race-car gets stuck in a small town and finds the true meaning of friendship and family.
- A Civil Action - The families of children who died sue two companies for dumping toxic waste: a tort so expensive to prove, the case could bankrupt their lawyer. PG
- Coach Carter About a coach who tries to instill merits of scholarship and ethics by benching his undefeated basketball team because of poor academic performance PG-13
- Dark Waters PG-13 (History/Drama): An attorney singlehandedly takes on an environmental lawsuit against a giant chemical company that exposes a lengthy history of pollution
- Fly Away Home An adventure to save orphaned geese. PG.
- Facing the Giants PG (Sports): An underdog football team and losing coach face their 'giants' of fear and failure on and off the field.
- Follow Me Boys The story of how one guy starts a Boy Scout troop to help the town. G
- Forrest Gump One slow-witted but good-hearted man is at the center of key events of the 20th century. "Stupid is as stupid does." PG-13 for brief sexual content and war scenes.

- Friendly Persuasion - The story of a family of Quakers in Indiana in 1862. Their religious sect is strongly opposed to violence and war. It's not easy for them to meet the rules of their religion in everyday life...
- Dunkirk PG-13 (War): Allied soldiers come together to evacuate and protect civilians during a fierce battle in World War II.
- Gettysburg Historical account of Colonel Joshua Chamberlain who held Little Round Top though greatly outnumbered. Out of ammunition, Chamberlain orders a charge instead of retreating. PG for war scenes.
- Ghandi - Biography of Mohandas K. Gandhi, the lawyer who became the famed leader of the Indian revolt against the British rule through his philosophy of nonviolent protest. PG
- The Great Escape WWII POW escape. NR, but some violence.
- He Named Me Malala PG-13 (Documentary): A look into the tragic story of Pakistani schoolgirl, Malala Yousafzai, who spoke out for girls' education at the United Nations.
- Hidden Figures PG (Biography/Drama): Based on a true story, a mathematician team of female African-Americans play a vital role in the early years of NASA.
- High Noon A marshal faces a man just released from prison where he was put by the marshal. His own town refuses to help & the odds are high he will not live. NR. Gunfight at the end.
- Hoosiers - A coach with a checkered past and a local drunk, trains a small town high school basketball team to become a top contender for the championship. PG
- Holes PG (Adventure): A wrongfully convicted boy is sent to a desert detention camp where he joins a community of other boys in digging holes.
- Hoot The film is about a group of children trying to save a burrowing owl habitat from destruction. PG for language
- It's A Wonderful Life The message in this film is one of courage and sacrifice for the greater good as George Bailey, a man with big ideas about seeing the world, continually forsakes his own desires to do what is right for the town. The second message is that each life important. No matter how insignificant we feel we are, we are all inextricably linked to each other and play an important part in the fabric of one another's lives.
- The Kite Runner PG-13 (Drama): After spending years in California, Amir returns to his homeland in Afghanistan to help an old friend's son.
- The Last Bricklayer in America PG A man must cope with the loss of his wife and the obsolescence of his job before finding redemption by becoming a role model to an equally lost thirteen-year-old.
- Lean on Me Story of Paterson NJ principal Joe Clark (PG-13)
- Lincoln PG-13 (Historical): Abraham Lincoln's heroic story of abolishing slavery and working to end the Civil War.
- The Man Who Planted Trees A lone shepherd changes the character of an entire valley.
- Mighty Ducks Emilio Estevez stars as a lawyer doing community service who becomes coach to a pee wee hockey team. PG.
- Mr. Holland's Opus A frustrated composer (Richard Dreyfuss) finds fulfillment as a high school music teacher. PG.
- Mr. Smith Goes to Washington One of Jimmy Stewart's signature roles as an idealistic senator caught in the corruption of the political machine. NR.
- Norma Rae - A young single mother and textile worker agrees to help unionize her mill despite the problems and dangers involved. PG
- October Sky The true story of Homer Hickam, a coal miner's son who was inspired by the first Sputnik launch to take up rocketry. PG.
- One Night with the King The story of Esther. Rated PG for mild violence, suggestion of sensuality.
- Pay It Forward Like some other kids, 12-year-old Trevor McKinney believed in the goodness of human nature. Like many other kids, he was determined to change the world for the better. Unlike most other kids, he succeeded. Rated PG-13 for mature thematic elements.
- Phenomenon - John Travolta is hit by a light and becomes very smart and addicted to learning. PG. 123 minutes.
- Radio - based on the true story of a small-town HS football coach who befriended a developmentally disabled man which ultimately inspires the local townsfolk
- Remember the Titans The true story of a newly appointed African-American coach and his high school team on their first season as a racially integrated unit. PG.
- Rudy True story of a boy who struggles with life in order to realize his dream: to play football for Notre Dame. PG
- Selma PG-13 A chronicle of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s campaign to secure equal voting rights via an epic march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, in 1965.

- Spartacus The slave, Spartacus, leads a revolt against a corrupt Rome. NR.
- Stand and Deliver Story of LA math teacher Jaime Escalante (PG)
- Till PG-13 In 1955, after Emmett Till is murdered in a brutal lynching, his mother vows to expose the racism behind the attack while working to have those involved brought to justice.
- To Kill a Mockingbird (1962) is about helping others. The story is set in the deep south during the 1930s, and centers around a young girl named Scout, her brother Jem, and their father Atticus Finch. Atticus is a lawyer who takes on the case of a black man accused of rape, even though he knows he will be up against a lot of prejudice. He does it because he believes it is the right thing to do. The movie shows how important it is to stand up for what you believe in, even when it isn't popular or easy. Not Rated
- We Are Marshall When a plane crash claims the lives of members of the Marshall University football team and some of its fans, the team's new coach and his few surviving players try to keep the football program alive. PG.
- White Fang PG Jack London's classic adventure story about the friendship developed between a Yukon gold hunter and the mixed dog-wolf he rescues from the hands of a man who mistreats him.
- Zootopia PG (Animated): A bunny cop and con artist fox set aside their differences to uncover a conspiracy and save their city.

**\*\* Additional Suggestions for Interviews** For requirement 4b of the Citizenship in the Community merit badge, where Scouts need to interview someone from local government about a community issue, here are some additional suggestions for who they can interview. These options complement the ideas of interviewing school officials or attending meetings, focusing on various government roles based on the issue:

- **Elected Officials:** City council members, mayors, or county commissioners can provide a broad overview of community issues and may direct the Scout to specific departments.
- **Department Heads:** For example, the Public Works Director for infrastructure issues, Health Department Official for public health, or Parks and Recreation Director for community events.
- **Specialized Board Members:** Officials from boards like the Planning Commission (for zoning) or School Board (beyond just the principal) can offer detailed insights.
- **Public Information Officers (PIOs):** These are often available to answer public questions and can connect Scouts with the right person.

#### Practical Tips

- Scouts should first identify the issue (e.g., environmental concerns, public safety) and use local government websites to find the responsible department.
- Attending public meetings, like city council sessions, can help identify potential interviewees. The Scout can introduce themselves as working on the badge and request a short interview.
- Prepare questions in advance, such as what challenges the official faces, what successes they've had, and how young people can help.

For more details, Scouts can refer to resources like [Scouter Mom](#), [Scouting America](#), and [ScoutSmarts](#).