

FAQ – Three Fires Council Online Merit Badges

Q: Is this a new way of doing merit badges?

A: Yes, as such there will be an occasional glitch that we will have to work through together. This is new territory so please be patient as we learn together.

Q: How will Youth Protection and “no one-on-one contact” be maintained?

A: There is to be no one-on-one contact through these classes. Each class must have at least

- **A Scout and parent or**
- **2 Scouts and another adult within earshot/eyesight of the teleconference.**

When you are on the teleconference make sure to identify to the Counselor who is on the call and if you are an adult in the room. If the class starts and these requirements are not met, then the class will end, and the Counselor will need to reschedule with the group. For any communication outside of the teleconference (email, text, etc.) please have your Scout copy in a parent/guardian so that that is no one-on-one contact digitally with the Counselors as well.

Q: I am from a Troop in another Council. Can I still participate?

A: Yes, a \$5 fee will be charged with registration. All classes will be CENTRAL DAYLIGHT TIME (CDT).

Q: What about Scoutmaster approval? Scouts should have their approval before beginning a merit badge, right?

A: Yes, there is a Scoutmaster approval question during the registration process.

Q: Will you be offering more badges?

A: Yes, we hope to continually add merit badges over the next couple of weeks. The same registration link (<https://www.scoutingevent.com/127-OnlineMB>) will provide those opportunities and more as we continue to add more learning opportunities for Scouts!

Q: How will scouts join the classes online?

A: Each Merit Badge Counselor will be using a teleconference system of their choice. The access information to join the video conference will be sent, to the email you enter as you register for classes, through the BlackPug registration system at least 24 hrs. before the merit badge class starts. In that email you will also be provided with the Counselor’s contact info for any issues connecting to the teleconference and for follow-ups on requirements. Some systems, like Zoom-40 minutes, have a time limit so be prepared to log back in if needed to “re-up” the time.

Q: Will Scouts be able to complete the merit badges in one class session?

A: It depends on the merit badge requirements, Counselors, and preparedness of the Scout. Most merit badges will take more than one session. Any subsequent session(s) will be set up in that first class by the Counselor.

Q: Do we need a camera and microphone to participate?

A: Yes, by way of smart phone, tablet/ipad, laptop, computer, etc. Sufficient Data/WiFi is required as well. You are encouraged to access the teleconference several minutes before the start of the class to make sure you can connect ok. Remember to mute your mic during the class when you are not talking, as it reduces the echoes, background noise and electric feedback.

Q: Are there any prerequisites?

A: Scouts with no prior work complete can participate. Most merit badges will have requirements that will need to be completed at home either prior to, between classes, or after classes. The Counselors will let you know which ones those will be. Scouts are encouraged to view a current list of requirements and start preparing. Some prerequisites will be evident as the Scout reads the requirements. Partial awards will be given for any of the following:

- **If certain requirements are not able to be completed because of Social Distancing or the limitations of teleconferencing (Once lifted, the Scout can continue to work on the merit badge with these Counselors or find another Counselor in their area to finish with) or**
- **If the Scout does not complete all the necessary requirements**

Q: How will we get their "blue card" Merit Badge Applications?

A: Our registration system (through BlackPug Software) helps us track everyone's progress and provides printable "blue cards" that we will e-mail to each family after the Merit Badge is complete. This will be our main method, but you can also work with the Counselors to update merit badge requirements through Scoutbook if needed.

Q: Are these classes free?

A: The registration fee is \$0, but there are still costs associated with these opportunities. If you are able, please consider donating through the registration process to keep opportunities like these going. Also, some merit badges will require you to provide supplies to accomplish the requirements.