

The 2008 Quality Lodge Assistance Pocketbook was created by the 2008 Western Region Quality Lodge Taskforce.

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Order of the Arrow - Western Region

Quality Lodge Assistance Planbook

How to Use this Planbook

The Quality Lodge Recognition Petition is a pretty complicated piece of paper. While there are only nineteen of them, the requirements span nearly every program in the Order. Understanding what the requirements mean can be difficult enough for new lodge officers and advisers, even before figuring out how the lodge can actually meet enough conditions to become a National Quality Lodge. This planbook is designed as a tool for lodges, officers and advisers of all levels to better understand and plan for becoming a National Quality Lodge. Whether you are a new officer trying to help your lodge complete the requirements for the first time, or a seasoned adviser looking for new ways to continue your lodge's streak of Quality Lodge awards, this planbook can help.

Planning & Communication: Two Keys to Success

This page discusses the important role of Planning and Communication in achieving Quality Lodge. As you work on each requirement and the pages in this book, remember to consider how the lodge will need to plan to complete the requirement, and how it will communicate with its members, chapter and the council throughout the process to make all of the lodge's efforts successful.

Requirement Pages

Each requirement is given its own page to allow for quick reference. Each page is divided into several sections, which are explained below:

Understanding the Requirement

The first section of each requirement page attempts to lay out the requirement's basic meaning. This section also tries to explain why each requirement is helpful to fulfilling the "Purpose of the Order of the Arrow" and the "Mission of the Lodge." These two statements comprise the core values and motivations of the Order and every level of its program. Each requirement for Quality Lodge, and in fact every program in the Order, is structured around making sure the lodge accomplishes its "Mission" and contributes to the Order's "Purpose." Both statements are frequently mentioned in this book, and they can both be found in their entirety on Page 8 of the *Order of the Arrow Handbook* and the National Order of the Arrow Web Site (<http://www.oa-bsa.org>), among other places. Making sure the lodge and all of its members understand and embrace the "Purpose of the Order" and the "Mission of the Lodge" is vital to becoming a Quality Lodge.

The Requirement In-Depth

It is often helpful to have some background information and even some theory on how to implement the lodge programs mentioned the requirement. This section aims at going beyond a basic explanation of the requirement and giving helpful context to the workings of the lodge. Topics in this section include:

- What do particular parts of the requirement mean?
- What is the role of the chapter and the lodge in this requirement?
- What other goals should the lodge set that will help it pass the minimum mark set down in the requirement?
- What are some general principles to keep in mind while working on this requirement?

Planning

Quality Lodge recognition is a mark of a successful lodge with good programs, active and trained members, and a strong record of supporting the council and other branches of Scouting. However, it should also be noted that Quality Lodge is simply a benchmark of the bare minimum a successful lodge should already be achieving. It is important to realize this so that the Quality Lodge petition does not become a goal-setting document, but so that lofty goals can be set. Planning is crucial to building any successful lodge, and it is equally important to making a Quality Lodge. But rather than planning to simply complete the requirements on the Quality Lodge petition, the lodge should plan for success while using the form as a reference to help it understand what programs it needs to implement in its normal operations.

Planning to become a Quality Lodge should begin before the start of the year. When the lodge goes to turn in its Quality Lodge Recognition Petition, the lodge leadership needs to analyze its performance during the past year. What requirements did the lodge have difficulty completing? What were some things the lodge could have done differently to avoid any troubles? Were there requirements the lodge had no plan for completing that it could have finished with a little preparation? When did the lodge complete its Quality Lodge requirements, and were there ways they could have done them sooner?

Once the lodge has an idea of where it would like to improve, it needs to start looking for ideas on how to better meet requirements. This is a good time for leaders to consult this

Optional REQUIREMENT #12

THE LODGE PUBLISHED A WHERE TO GO CAMPING PAMPHLET, CD, OR INFORMATION ON THE LODGE OR COUNCIL WEBSITE WHICH HAS BEEN UPDATED WITHIN THE LAST THREE YEARS.

One part of the "Purpose of the Order of the Arrow" is to, "promote Scout camping." As honor campers, Arrowmen are uniquely prepared to help their fellow Scouts get the most from their camping experiences. Promoting where good local locations for camping are, is one way the lodge can support camping in Scouting. By preparing and distributing resources for units to decide where to hold their events, the lodge is providing a practical service to unit leaders and Scouts. A Where to Go Camping guide promotes camping and helps build strong leaders who might one day become members of the Order.

The Requirement In-Depth

- The requirement specifies several different types of media that the lodge can use for its Where to Go Camping resource. Since each of these different formats has unique positive and negative aspects, the lodge might consider using all of them to reach the largest possible audience.
- Since the resources are targeted at the council and not just the lodge, make sure to work with the council in making any Where to Go Camping guide. Council leadership can be helpful in producing the resources, and units can be useful sources of location ideas.

Optional REQUIREMENT #13

EACH CEREMONY TEAM MEMBER MEMORIZED HIS PART AND EACH CEREMONY WAS PRESENTED IN AN EFFECTIVE AND IMPRESSIVE MANNER IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OFFICIAL CEREMONY BOOKS AND THE GUIDE TO INDUCTIONS.

The Order's ceremonies are profound and moving events that often last with Arrowmen throughout their lives. Every Arrowman should experience inspiring and high-quality ceremonies. This means that ceremonies are memorized and well-performed by a practiced team.

Working hard to improve ceremonies is simply a kind way to repay candidates who have worked hard through Ordeal weekends and lodge activities to further their membership in the Order. Ceremonies are unique opportunities to motivate and stir Arrowmen. When they inspire a new member they fuel the spark of a bright future.

The Requirement In-Depth

- In addition to the individual ceremony team's preparation and performance, the lodge can help improve ceremonies overall through leadership in organizing and training teams.
- A great deal of work has been put into making the ceremony books the best possible resource for teams throughout the Order. By holding to the practices and ideas within the ceremony books, teams can make their ceremonies inspiring and memorable events. Memorizing ceremony parts, in particular, is prescribed by the official ceremony books and really does add to the quality and impact of the ceremonies.
- Ceremony teams must make sure to be respectful in their presentation both to participants and the spirit of the ceremonies. Ceremonies are serious and meaningful events and should be treated as such.

Optional REQUIREMENT #14

THE LODGE KEY 3 MET AT LEAST SIX TIMES DURING THE YEAR TO DISCUSS THE PROGRESS OF THE LODGE.

The Key 3 is made up of the Lodge Chief, Lodge Adviser, and Lodge Staff Adviser. This group oversees all of the lodge's workings and guides the LEC and lodge leadership in running the lodge. The Key 3 is also important in setting goals for the lodge and serving as a link with council leadership. Several opportunities for Key 3 meetings are even included in the requirements for Quality Lodge, including an annual meeting with the Scout executive and council executive board that will probably require its own pre-meeting of just the Key 3. Frequent meetings of the Key 3 allow for initial goal setting at the first of the year and later progress checks. The last meeting of the year should involve a closing report with final thoughts and a summary of everything that was done over the year, both positive and negative. Plus, it is never too early to think about ideas for next year. Meetings between the Key 3 are important because planning is always the first step to running a successful program.

The Requirement In-Depth

- This requirement does not really specify what must happen at each Key 3 meeting. Meetings can be long or short depending upon circumstances, but what is most important is regular communication between the lodge chief and Advisers.
- This requirement should serve as a minimum goal because Key 3's that meet less frequently will probably not be able to successfully monitor and guide the lodge.
- For six meetings in a year, space the meetings for every two months in an easy and central location. Contact info between the Key 3 should always be up-to-date and readily accessible.
- Because he is the most likely to need it, the Advisers in the Key 3 should make sure the Lodge Chief has transportation to all meetings.
- Meeting in person is always the best method of communication. However phone conferences can work as substitute for an occasional meeting.

Optional REQUIREMENT #15

THE LODGE PROVIDED MANPOWER, RESOURCES, AND/OR PROGRAM ASSISTANCE IN SUPPORT OF THE SCOUT COUNCIL'S CUB SCOUT OUTDOOR PROGRAM AND WEBELOS TRANSITION TO BOY SCOUTS.

The Cub Scout outdoor program and Webelos transition to Boy Scouts are integral parts of the success and survival of the Boy Scouts of America, as a whole. The Cub Scout program lays the foundations for future leaders in both the Boy Scouts and the Order of the Arrow. Supporting the Cub Scout program is important to the Order's future because it helps build stronger councils and helps encourage more Cub Scouts to continue on as Boy Scouts. Setting the example and helping the Cub Scout program is another way the lodge can ensure its future prosperity. The Cub and Webelos Scout programs are the roots of the Scouting tree and the first stage of development for Arrowmen of the future.

The Requirement In-Depth

- By supporting Cub Scout camping in the council, the lodge helps make future "honor campers" and thus promotes the Order's founding purpose.
- Promoting Cub Scout activities increases the council's Cub Scout membership retention rate. Communication is important to maintain a working relationship and reputation with the council's Cub Scout program.
- The need for extra manpower, resources and/or program assistance to support the council's Cub
- Scout program and the transition of Webelos can be determined by maintaining a positive relationship with packs in the council.

OPTIONAL REQUIREMENT #16

WITHIN THE LAST TWO YEARS, TWO YOUTH ATTENDED A NATIONAL LEADERSHIP SEMINAR AND COMPLETED THEIR CONTRACTS, AND ONE ADULT ATTENDED A NATIONAL LODGE ADVISER TRAINING SEMINAR AND COMPLETED THE REQUIRED DISCUSSION WITH THE SCOUT EXECUTIVE.

Proper training is crucial to making leaders successful, and the lodge is full of youth and adult leaders who change jobs regularly. Whether an Arrowman is new to the Order or just new to his position, quality training is helpful because it shows the Arrowman how to do his job and do it well. National Leadership Seminars (NLS) and National Lodge Adviser Training Seminars (NLATS) are two of the best training opportunities available to the lodge and should be attended by as many lodge members as possible. By making sure that members attend and fully complete each program, the lodge is reinforcing the strength of its leadership.

The Requirement In-Depth

- National Leadership Seminars are open to both youth and adults in the Order and the lodge should promote the program to both groups. An NLATS is a smaller and more in-depth program and participants at National Lodge Adviser Training Seminars should have previously attended an NLS. Therefore, the lodge should spend more time promoting the NLS to members at large.
- This requirement should serve only as a bare minimum number of lodge members attending the seminars. Rather than simply sending two youth and one adult, the lodge should aim to fill as many participant seats as the region will let the lodge have.
- Completing the seminars is even more important than just attending them. The projects assigned to participants at the end of each event are useful tools for members to use and retain the lessons learned at the training. The lodge should support at seminar attendees and work with them to make sure they complete their final projects and finish the training.

OPTIONAL REQUIREMENT #18

THE LODGE PRODUCED AND DISTRIBUTED (BY HARDCOPY, EMAIL, OR LODGE WEBSITE) A MINIMUM OF FOUR NEWSLETTERS TO ITS MEMBERS AND CONTRIBUTED ARTICLES TO THE COUNCIL'S NEWSLETTER OR WEBSITE. LODGE WEBSITES CONFORM TO THE COUNCIL'S WEBSITE POLICIES.

Understanding the Requirement

Communication is easily the most important ingredient to making any organization function well. Scouting and the Order are no exception. The lodge's newsletter and website are important tools of communications because they are accessible to members of the lodge and the council. Both forms also provide a meaningful record of the lodge and chapters' activities, and give members contact information for lodge leaders. In order to keep the lodge informed about current activities and upcoming events, the newsletter and website updates must be published regularly. Working with the council's newsletter and websites will also help the lodge members of entire council informed about its activities. The lodge also has the responsibility to keep its website in line with council website policies to make sure the lodge properly addresses the unique challenges and risks posed by the internet.

The Requirement In-Depth

- The lodge website should be updated as often as possible. This can be done adequately by publishing a newsletter each quarter and updating the website twice a month.
- Publishing the newsletters in multiple forms (mailings, website postings, handouts at events, etc.) will make sure they are as accessible to members as possible.
- Adhering to the council's website policies will make sure the lodge website is acting appropriately and responsibly representing the Boy Scouts of America.

OPTIONAL REQUIREMENT #17

THE LODGE CREATED A PLAN TO SERVE THE OA SCOUTREACH MENTORING PROGRAM. THE PLAN WAS APPROVED BY THE SCOUT EXECUTIVE OR THE COUNCIL SCOUTREACH COMMITTEE AND WAS INCLUDED IN THE LODGE ANNUAL REPORT.

The Scoutreach Mentoring Program is a joint effort of the Order and the national Scoutreach Division to help units meet the needs of their Scouts. The program is targeted particularly at rural and urban units whose resources might be limited or who face economic or social disadvantages. The Scoutreach Mentoring Program is simply the name of the Order's efforts to support the larger Scoutreach Division in its mission. As representatives of the Order within the council, the lodge has a part to play in helping the council assist Scouts through Scoutreach. Essentially, the Scoutreach Mentoring Program assigns Arrowmen as mentors to units identified by the council and districts. The Scoutreach Mentoring program is available to all units even if they are not in the Scoutreach program. The mentor(s) then work with the unit to provide service, leadership and resources to help the unit improve its programs. Scoutreach Mentoring is a great way for Arrowmen and the lodge to benefit individual Scouts and create a stronger and more inclusive Scouting program.

The Requirement In-Depth

- The Scoutreach Mentoring Program is very flexible; both in its wide reach to different kinds of units and its ability to personally fit each one. Every unit will have unique needs, so the lodge must work individually with each unit leader and mentor to provide the specific support necessary. The lodge must take special care to find the right mentor for each unit.
- Cooperation with the council is vital to this requirement. It is important to remember that the lodge's role is simply to support the council in its various Scoutreach efforts. The lodge must work with the council and districts when creating, implementing and evaluating its Scoutreach Mentoring Program.
- Many Arrowmen might not be familiar with the Scoutreach Mentoring Program, so it might be necessary to provide some general education to the lodge membership. The Lodge Leadership Development program provides a training unit on the basics of Scoutreach Mentoring in lodges.

- Working well with the council is also helpful for making sure lodge events and activities are reported on the council website.
- Communicating through both lodge and council publications allows the lodge to not only promote its activities, but reach Arrowmen in the council who might not be currently registered with the lodge but are interested in returning to active membership.

OPTIONAL REQUIREMENT #19

ONE YOUTH MEMBER ATTENDED A NATIONAL OA HIGH ADVENTURE PROGRAM. A MINIMUM OF THREE YOUTH AND TWO ADULT MEMBERS ATTENDED THE SECTION CONCLAVE. AT LEAST FIVE MEMBERS PARTICIPATED IN ARROWCORPS5

Attending programs outside of the lodge is a great opportunity for all Arrowmen. At a National Order of the Arrow Conference or section conclave, lodge members can learn about new programs and receive expert training that might not be available within the lodge. These Arrowmen can then return to the lodge and share their knowledge. Similarly, the three OA high adventure programs (OA Trail Crew, OA Wilderness Voyage and the OA Ocean Adventure) give members of the Order the unique opportunity to experience service and leadership in the outdoors where the Order was born. Most importantly, national and section events provide opportunities for fellowship with Brothers from around the country. Memories forged at these programs are lasting, and making sure that lodge members attend such events is a good way to keep Arrowmen constantly learning and more committed to the Order.

The Requirement In-Depth

- This requirement can be one of the most easy to complete as long as the lodge is willing to communicate with its members and promote attendance at national events and the section conclave. In order to do this, the lodge must stay informed about all events and registration materials.