

## **Eagle Projects and COVID-19 Greater Los Angeles Area Council Guidelines Version of 14 July 2020**

On June 25, 2020, the National Advancement Team updated their COVID-19 Q&A and among the additions related to the Special Extension of the time to earn Eagle was the following:

*Councils should remind Scouts/Venturers/Sea Scouts receiving extensions who need the time to complete their Eagle/Summit/Quartermaster Service Projects to consider making changes to the Projects, including possibly changing Projects, so they can be completed by the new deadline.*

With the July 13, 2020 return of stricter Safer at Home restrictions ordered by the State of California and the County of Los Angeles, here are some specific points to consider in completing an Eagle Project under COVID-19. [This document is current as of the date above and will be updated as Council, County, and State requirements change.]

### **Guidance Statements for COVID-19 Protocols**

The conducting of Eagle Projects during the time of COVID-19, or any Scouting activities for that matter, must be done in light of our Youth Protection Training (YPT) and the Guide to Safe Scouting. While not a topic specifically covered in the YPT training, it is still the responsibility of the BSA adult leadership to conduct activities in a way that safeguards the youth and positively manages the risk inherent in many activities.

There are a number of COVID-19 policy statements to guide Scouting activities, including the conducting of Eagle Projects:

- Greater Los Angeles Area Council: See the “Important Re-Opening Information” at the top of the page [https://www.glaacbsa.org/Scouting\\_at\\_Home](https://www.glaacbsa.org/Scouting_at_Home)
- County of Los Angeles: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/coronavirus/>
- State of California: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/ncov2019.aspx>

In addition, the BSA has published a very helpful “Restart Scouting Checklist” that covers all scouting activities. It is intended as a guide and with the national coverage does not address specific local restrictions, regulations or procedures.

<https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/HealthSafety/pdf/680-693.pdf>

Unit leadership must remember that they are responsible for the safety of those working on the project as described in the “Navigating the Eagle Scout Service Project” document. With that in mind, the unit leadership, the chartering organization, and the benefiting organization may have guidelines as well.

## **Possible Project Styles**

### Individual work

This type of project would involve the project helpers working on a piece of the project at their homes self-isolated from others outside the household. Project examples would include but are not limited to, sewing face masks or construction of face shields for a charity, or the recording of audiobooks for a school or library.

The Eagle Candidate must demonstrate leadership and would be responsible for recruiting and training helpers, coordinating the work, distributing the materials (if any), and collecting the completed work for delivery to the benefiting organization. The training should be done by video or videoconferencing, and delivery and pick-up must be done in a manner consistent with appropriate use of COVID-19 personal protective equipment (“PPE”) and following all State and County health safety protocols.

### Project done by a single household group

In this case, the Eagle Candidate leads his or her own household group in completing a project. A household group is the group of people that the scout lives with on a day-to-day basis and does not have to maintain COVID-19 related physical distancing. So, when conducting a project the physical distancing is not a factor although other precautions should be observed as appropriate to the location of the project.

The Eagle Candidate must demonstrate leadership and the group must be large enough for that to happen and the scout needs to take the initiative in leading this group that the scout would not normally be the leader of. The project that is proposed must be suitable for such a project style.

### Staged work by different household groups

This differs from the previous model in that the helpers work in groups from their own household and not from the Eagle Candidate's household. Like the single household group project, as a household group takes their turn working on the project, the household group would not need to be physically distant from each other (because they live together), but appropriate and clearly prescribed precautions would need to be taken between different household groups. Depending on the setting and nature of the project, the Eagle Candidate leading the project must observe physical distancing when interacting with household groups other than the Eagle Candidate's own household.

The Eagle Candidate must demonstrate leadership and be prepared for each group as they arrive. The Eagle Candidate must maintain physical distancing and wear appropriate PPE when interacting with different household groups. Materials and tools must be staged so they are ready for the next group and instructions, verbal or written, need to be clear and appropriate. In addition, there must be appropriate scheduling between groups so that the Eagle Candidate can disinfect tools and materials and stage them for the next household group that will be arriving to work on the project.

A project involving staged work by different household groups at a common location (i.e., playground, garden, building, etc.) must receive prior written approval from District and Council before commencing as staged work by different household groups.

### Monitored project work

In this style, significant work on the project would be done at a Council facility where full COVID-19 protocols are in place and would be implemented and monitored by trained Council personnel. This would allow a slightly larger group that is not a household group to gather to work on a project. At the present time, the Trask Scout Reservation has COVID-19 protocols in place and could host such a project. Clearly the project must be suitable for work under these conditions and, if required, transport into and out of the location. It is important to keep in mind that while the work on a project may be done at a BSA facility, the project may not be done *for* a BSA facility. The Eagle Candidate is expected to follow all Council personnel directives on the use of PPE and complying with health orders, including physical distancing and disinfecting work materials.

## **District Project Approval Considerations**

Clearly each District must adapt their Project Proposal approval process to the times in which we find ourselves. Much as the National Advancement Team has asked the scouts to adapt their project to the current situation the District Advancement Teams need to be ready to adjust to them as well. Projects need to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis for appropriateness at this particular time. District Advancement Teams are expected to abide by County health orders and Council COVID-19 protocols and directives without exception.

One aspect of the approval process should be to hold Project review meetings by videoconference until such time as in-person meetings are again allowed by County health orders and then by a final decision of Council. Just as the precautions of YPT are part of in-person meetings they should be for videoconference meetings as well.

Another aspect is that what would be considered best practices at an earlier date will need to be set aside at this time. One example would be the usual encouragement for scouts to include other scouts, particularly younger ones, in their project. (While this can not be required it is a good practice as it gives other scouts an example and experience to prepare them to lead their own Eagle Projects.) At this time a project by a household group may be the best means for a scout to accomplish the completion of the project and should be regularly considered if the project is suitable.

Clearly, the project must be closely reviewed for COVID-19 considerations in the Safety section and in discussions with the Eagle Candidate. It should be clear to the reviewer that the scout has considered this, has a detailed plan incorporating PPE and health safety protocols and knows that they will need access to resources needed to protect their helpers and themselves. Likewise, unit leadership reviewing and approving the plan should be prepared to guide a scout in implementing these protocols.

Finally, with scouts needing to meet new deadlines with revised or new project plans, the district should be ready to review, and if appropriate approve the Project Proposals in a timely manner.

## **District Project Eagle Boards of Review and other Eagle Candidacy Meetings**

Each District is expected to comply with all State and County health orders without exception. An Eagle Candidate should be guided using the best available information when planning any Eagle Project. District and/or unit leadership experiencing difficulty ascertaining best available information should seek assistance rather than make ad hoc decisions. It is imperative that the Eagle Candidate and all leaders review health orders and Council directives as the Eagle Project proceeds from planning to implementation.

Until Council provides different written guidance, ALL Eagle related meetings, including Boards of Review, must be done using videoconferencing and not in-person. In-person meetings at Council, District and/or Unit level are subject to State and County health orders. Until small group meetings are permitted by the County and then by Council, it is expected that District and Units abide by all health orders and Council guidance.