



Harford District Internet Advancement News

01 February 2017

All Unit Leaders, Advancement Chairs and Committee Chairs of the Capitol District

Important Notice: Reporting Advancement via Internet Advancement is Mandatory beginning 2 April 2017

This newsletter focuses on Internet Advancement. It is important to share this information with your advancement volunteers by email so they can access the embedded links.

This newsletter contains several sections that provide significant information on the implementation and use of Internet Advancement (IA). For quick reference, the sections are as follows:

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Features and Benefits

BSA Internet Advancement (IA) was launched in 2006 as a web based interface to allow units to report Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, and Sea Scout ranks as well as merit badges and many other awards available through Scouting programs directly into council’s ScoutNET database.

BSA Internet Advancement reporting provides the following benefits:

- Straightforward and direct method for reporting advancement and awards.
- Enforces BSA advancement rules for recording ranks, badges, and awards.
- Consolidates data files to reduce or eliminate record gaps when Scouts transfer to new units.
- Supports national data analysis for advancement statistics.
- Assures advancement is counted in the Journey to Excellence.
- Helps BAC and National verify Eagle Scout Rank Applications.

- Reduces manual data entry tasks for council staff.
- Uploads data from certified 3rd party software such as TroopMaster, PackMaster, ScoutBooks.

Internet Advancement allows units to:

- Print a current unit roster at any time.
- Print an advancement report, secure the proper signatures for purchase of awards at the Scout Shop. Note: Units must bring a signed hardcopy of your Advancement Report to the Scout Shop in order to purchase of supplies. IA will generate an order form as well.
- Print previous Advancement Reports.
- Print an advancement summary for selected or all youth in your unit.
- Print temporary Membership Cards for any member of your unit.
- Create advancement archive files for unit rosters and submitted Advancement Reports.

With these benefits in mind, the Baltimore Area Council Advancement Committee has determined that beginning **April 2, 2017**; all units will be required to submit unit advancement and awards using Internet Advancement. With the exception of Eagle Scout rank, hardcopy advancement reports will no longer be accepted by the BAC.

Internet Advancement Resources

To assist units with the Internet Advancement transition the following services are offered:

1. Internet Advancement information pages have been added to the Harford District advancement web located at <http://www.baltimorebsa.org/resources/advancement/54904>. These pages provide links to presentations, IA guides and links to IA resources offered by others. At a minimum, it is recommended that you review the BSA National and Council\District Internet Advancement training presentations.
2. Briefings about Internet Advancement will be presented at the February and March Round Tables.
3. Telephone and walk in help services for IA will be offered by the [BAC Scout shops](#) during normal hours of operation. Units should familiarize themselves with the training information prior to calling. It is best to schedule an appointment for hands on assistance.
4. For special services such as providing unit IDs, unit IA access activity reports, change passwords, reset unit profiles\data and correcting previously submitted advancement records the unit IA processor should contact Jim Grant at jawigrant@gmail.com. Jim can provide information and work with council resources as necessary for these services.
5. National Support Center, myscouting@scouting.org, (972) 580-2267.
6. [University of Scouting](#) Internet Advancement training CED 226, Saturday, March 11, 2017.

Accessing Internet Advancement

Internet Advancement can be accessed using current versions of popular web browsers such as Chrome, Firefox and Internet Explorer. Scouters who have performed Internet Re-charter will be comfortable with the interface and operation.

BSA Internet Advancement can be accessed at <https://scoutnet.scouting.org/iadv/UI/home/default.aspx> or through MyScouting at <https://my.scouting.org>, by clicking Menu> Legacy Web Tools> Internet Advancement.

A unit ID is required to access Internet Advancement. If needed, this ID can be obtained from Jim Grant. If a unit needs to reset the unit ID, or if ownership should be transferred to another unit Scouter, then please contact the council IA help desk at (443) 573-2500. With this ID the advancement processor enters the website as a first-time user, and registers themselves and the unit then sets up a personal password for future access. The website then allows the unit Advancement Processor to manually enter information using the web page forms or upload advancement information from 3rd party software such as TroopMaster, PackMaster, Scout Book, etc.

Using Internet Advancement

Data entry, review and report submission is a multi-step process. The [Internet Advancement Step by Step](#) page provides guidance for using the software as well as a YouTube [Internet Advancement](#) video link showing Internet Advancement in operation. Note that IA does not offer a training mode; however, it is safe to experiment with the tool in the 'Update Member' stage so long as no data is submitted to council.

The unit Advancement Processor completes 3 stages to submit an advancement report:

1. **Load Roster:** The processor downloads current unit data directly from ScoutNET (council's advancement database). This data is saved to a temporary database in Internet Advancement (unit's database). Note: the 2 databases are completely separate while the unit is creating a new advancement report for submission.
2. **Update Member:** The processor enters new advancement and awards, validates entries, and views other reports from ScoutNET. Internet Advancement checks data entries against the BSA's rank advancement rules and displays error messages for any violations. The errors must be corrected before the Unit Processor can proceed.
3. **Submit Report:** When data entry is complete, the processor submits the advancement file report to ScoutNET which updates member records and unit statistics.

Additionally, the Processor prints the Advancement Report, acquires appropriate approval signatures, and follows the BAC procedures for submitting the report. The processor should create archive files for each Advancement Report submission.

Other Considerations

Unit Primary Advancement Tool and Data Backup

Units may choose to use Internet Advancement as their primary advancement tool or continue to use certified 3rd party advancement software such as PackMaster, TroopMaster or BSA's ScoutBooks. When using one of the alternate tools it will be necessary to upload advancement report files through IA into ScoutNET.

Whichever tool a unit chooses it is **critical** to create and archive hardcopy and electronic files each time advancement reports are submitted into ScoutNET. See the district [Internet Advancement Training](#) presentation for additional archiving details.

While infrequent, a few Internet Advancement users have reported that records previously submitted have disappeared and needed to be resubmitted. Maintaining a unit archive will help should any records need to be resubmitted.

ScoutNET will continue to be the official advancement record used by BAC.

New Unit Members

If a unit Internet Advancement Processor loads the roster and finds that one or more youth members are missing, he/she must submit the approved member applications to the Council. Advancement can on be submitted for members who are listed in the unit roster.

Eagle Scout Reporting

IA is used to track and record requirements necessary to earn Eagle rank but **cannot** be used to submit and electronic advancement report. The Approved Eagle Application must be used. It is suggested to print out an advancement report for the Eagle Scout candidate to assist with Eagle Application preparations. Any mismatches between the unit's and Council's information will need to be resolved. This step will avoid delays in processing the Scout's Eagle application.

Roles and Responsibilities

Unit Internet Advancement Processor Responsibilities

- Learn the Internet Advancement tool.
- Create, manage and archive advancement data.
- Print final reports for submission to the Scout Shop and archives.
- Protect the account access password. The unit IA processor owns the unit account and is responsible to protect the account information. Due to the importance of advancement data and requirement to protect youth Personal Identification Information (PII) it is recommended that access to IA be very limited.

District Advancement Committee Responsibilities

- Provide education about the Internet Advancement process and assist units as requested.

Council Responsibilities

- Maintain ScoutNET, Internet Advancement tool, network access and database management.
- Manage IA account access for units.
- Process Eagle Scout rank as before.
- Provide help services to Internet Advancement users.
- Review and file hardcopy advancement reports.

Final Comments

What Has Not Changed

- Units should submit advancements monthly, or more often if needed. At the end of the year, it is important to make sure all advancements are submitted by December 31 so accurate Journey to Excellence (JTE) advancement statistics will be computed for your unit and district.
- Advancement reports must be signed by the appropriate people and submitted to the Scout Shop to purchase advancements (rank badges and merit badges). It is permissible to submit a single IA report which spans multiple boards of review so long as separate advancement report forms are attached for each board.
- The Scout Shop will submit the paperwork to the council. Save a copy for your files.
- Unit advancement personnel are responsible for maintaining the primary advancement records for Scouts in their unit. Historical archive files and hardcopy advancement reports should be stored in a secure location.

- Collect all advancement records, award records, and merit badge applications with the appropriate signatures and submit advancement records.

Conclusion

Units are encouraged to assign a unit committee member as Internet Advancement Processor as soon as possible so that they can review the information on the web site and attend the round table sessions.

Most units will assign the unit advancement chair as the Internet Advancement Processor. While interaction with Internet Advancement is reasonably straight forward it will be a good idea to involve a volunteer with good computer skills as an assistant if the chair is uncomfortable self-teaching new software tools.

Please reach out for assistance if you have trouble. Remember to backup data frequently.

The Harford District Advancement Team