

HOW BRIGHT IS YOUR UNIT'S BEACON?

2026 Unit Lighthouse Award

Is your unit a beacon for attracting new Scouts and their families and retaining your current Scouts? In partnership with our commissioner team by emphasizing the importance of safety, training, excellent activities and events, membership, and fundraising, unit leadership can better align strategic focus to support quality unit programs. These metrics create a roadmap to track, create, and enhance your program to ensure a positive experience for all participants. This structured approach helps build stronger units and fosters a more engaging environment for existing and potential Scouts and their families. Qualifying units will receive recognition for taking actions based on best practices by becoming a lighthouse for Scouting!

Earn Beacons in the following categories to receive Council-wide recognition and various incentives.



Safety: The health and safety of our members is the top priority.



Training: Trained leaders are more effective in their positions.



Adventure: Youth join Scouting for adventure, fun, and friends!



Membership: Marketing, visibility, and promotion are essential to grow your unit and Scouting.



Fundraising: Well-planned unit programs need to be funded through approved fundraisers and money-earning projects.

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Purpose

- By partnering with the commissioner team, align strategic focus to support quality unit programs.
- Focus on criteria that are the most critical in fostering safe, positive unit-level experiences for members.
- Encourage and recognize units for taking actions based on best practices.
- Motivate units to be the best they can be in serving youth and families throughout the council.

Beacon Categories



Safety: The health and safety of our members is the top priority.

Safety is a fundamental aspect of Scouting America, ensuring the well-being of youth members and adult leaders. It is integral to the Scouting program's mission to provide a secure environment for its youth.

- At least one leader has a current first aid/CPR certification (must be reported annually at [NCScouts.org/safety](https://ncscouts.org/safety)).
- Have an assigned trained leader to serve as the unit's youth protection champion (position is assigned through the organization management tool found at [my.Scouting.org](https://my.scouting.org) and is a listed functional position.)
- ♥ *FYI- Coming in 2027: Unit Safety Workshop completion requirement.*



Training: Trained leaders are more effective in their positions and deliver a better program.

Proper training is essential for successful leadership and program delivery.

- All Unit Leaders (Cubmasters, Scoutmasters, Skippers, Advisors) and Committee Chairs have completed Position Specific Training and are current with Safeguarding Youth Training.
- All Direct Contact Leaders (DCLs)* are current with Hazardous Weather Training (as of 12/31 according to My.Scouting Training Manager).
- For packs, at least two DCLs have completed BALOO (as of 12/31 according to My.Scouting Training Manager).
- For troops, at least two DCLs have completed IOLS (as of 12/31 according to My.Scouting Training Manager).



Adventure: Youth join Scouting for adventure! Quality experiences are central to the Scouting program and helps attract and retain youth. Outdoor adventures and camping are an essential part of the program.

- Hold an Adventure Presentation.
- Hold an outdoor "super activity" and log it in Scoutbook.
- At least 30% of your Scouts have advanced in rank in the previous 12 months.



Membership: The joining process should be easy and consistent across the organization.

A growing unit indicates a healthy program that attracts new Scouts and families.

- Ensure your unit's BeAScout pin is updated (My.Scouting Organization Manager).
- Plan and conduct at least two open houses (spring and fall) and submit information to the Narragansett Council at least one month prior for digital advertising, flyers, and peer-to-peer or buddy cards.
- Earn at least one Fleur de Lis in Commissioners' Tools for Membership or Growth.
- Participate in at least one community event (parade, fair, festival, etc.) to increase your unit's visibility and promote Scouting,



Fundraising: Well-planned unit programs need to be funded through approved money-earning projects.

- Create a unit budget (annually) to identify the unit's financial needs and objectives, then...
- Participate in a council-supported fundraiser (popcorn sale or the digital sales platform) or conduct an approved money-earning project and submit Unit Money-Earning Application to the Council office prior to the event or activity.
- Conduct a unit annual campaign via the online giving platform through your unit's unique link to be provided by the council.

**Direct Contact Leaders or DCLs refers to Cubmasters, Den Leaders, Scoutmasters, Assistant Scoutmasters, Skippers, and Advisors.*



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Recognition

Earn one Beacon: Recognition on council website

Earn two Beacons: Above + Early registration for select programs (i.e. merit badge college and cub scout college)

Earn three Beacons: Above + 15% discount for youth attending an NC NYLT course and adults attending an NC Wood Badge Course or free BALOO training for Cub Scout leaders and a Three-Beacon Unit banner for your unit's flag.

Earn four Beacons: Above + and an extra free leader at Yawgoog Summer Camp (with unit or Webelos Outdoor Adventure) OR one free youth for an NC NYLT course OR one free adult for the next NC Wood Badge Course, early cabin reservation privileges when the council calendar opens in the spring, and a Four-Beacon Unit banner for your unit's flag.

Earn all five Beacons: Receive all four previous recognition items plus special limited addition patch for all unit members and a Five-Beacon Unit banner for your unit's flag.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Are units required to do this?

No, this is a recognition program overseen by our commissioner staff for units that would like to participate. We encourage units to work with their commissioner to frequently review the criteria as helpful guideposts for creating safe, high-quality programs and seek assistance when needed.

2. When must the criteria be met?

Within the calendar year and no later than December 31; this will be an annual program. The first Unit Lighthouse Award recognitions will be awarded at Thrive 2027.

3. Will our unit get regular updates from the council about our progress toward achieving the criteria?

The council doesn't track unit progress toward the Unit Lighthouse Award on a continuous basis. Units either meet the criteria as detailed above or they don't. Units (with the help of their commissioner) are responsible for monitoring their own progress if they wish to qualify for the recognition.

4. How do we know if we qualified?

After the end of the year, the commissioner team will verify submitted forms, training records, and information available through My.Scouting to confirm eligibility and submit the list of qualifying units to the council. Unit Key-3s will be notified about the unit's met criteria for the previous year.

5. When is recognition given out?

In the following calendar year at our "Thrive" event.

6. How do we assign a leader to be the unit's youth protection champion?

The position can be assigned by your unit's Key-3 through the organization manager tool in My.Scouting.

