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Our Council Advancement Committee has seen an increasing number of requests for scouts to complete their Eagle requirements beyond their 18th birthday due to medical conditions. Apparently other Councils have had similar experiences. Since all extension requests must be approved by National they have recently come out with clarification on what constitutes a scout with disabilities and what type of circumstances they will or will not approve. The National memo is included here for your information. Unit leaders should advise their scouts that the chance of getting an extension for a medical reason is not easy. If a scout does qualify as a scout with special needs then he should be registered as such.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION FOR SPECIAL NEEDS SCOUTS

There has been much confusion among volunteers and professionals as to the *rules and regulations* regarding who qualifies and, most importantly, who doesn't qualify as a special-needs Scout for age exemption.

In an effort to clear up confusion, Article XI, Section 3, Clause 20 of the BSA's Rules and Regulations governing special types of registration states:

*"Mentally Retarded or Severely Physically Disabled Youth Members. In the discretion of the Executive Board, and under such*



*rules and regulations as it may prescribe upon consultation with appropriate medical authorities, registration of boys who are either mentally retarded or severely physically handicapped, including the blind, deaf, and emotionally disturbed, over age 11 as Cub Scouts and over age 18 as Boy Scouts or Varsity Scouts, and registration of young adults who are either mentally retarded or severely physically handicapped, including the blind, deaf, and emotionally disturbed, over age 21 as Venturers, and the participation of each in the respective advancement programs while registered, is authorized."*

The operative words are: **mentally retarded or severely physically disabled** young people. Examples

of these medical conditions include:

- Down syndrome
- Legal blindness
- Severe autism
- Deafness
- Persons permanently confined to a wheelchair, i.e., quadriplegics

The *Annual Health and Medical Record Form*, No. 34605, must be used as part of the procedure for registering a severely physically disabled youth in Scouting. The person's medical condition must be certified with a signed statement from a licensed physician. In the case of mentally retarded or emotionally disturbed candidates, their condition must be certified by a statement signed by a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist. Individuals whose medical conditions are not severe, as defined in Clause 20, do not qualify as a special-needs Scout, and may not register as such.

## Nonapproved Time Extensions for Eagle Candidates

In the past, families of Eagle Scout candidates have tried to use nonsevere, temporary medical conditions as "extenuating circumstances" to get national approval for a time extension. Such an extension would enable the candidate to work toward Eagle requirements beyond his 18th birthday. Such requests will continue to be denied, and families and individuals should be discouraged from requesting a time extension for these reasons.