

# **Order of the Arrow**

## **Unit Elections Guide Book**



## **Nacha Nimat Lodge**

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**Brotherhood**

**Cheerfulness**

**Service**



It is Pledged That This Manual Shall Be Safeguarded.  
 For use by Election Team Members only.  
 Safeguard This Handbook

## Preface

This is your Order of the Arrow "Unit Elections Guidebook." This booklet contains all of the information necessary for a successful unit election. All elections must be conducted by a TRAINED Lodge Election Team lead by a youth from that unit's Chapter. Unit Elections are to be conducted and results delivered to the Lodge Membership Committee within three (3) days of the election and no later than XXXX 1<sup>st</sup> for these candidates to be considered for this years ordeals. Results postmarked after XXXXX 1st will not allow adequate time to send needed information to those elected.

Adult forms must be mailed by April 1st.

If you have any questions please call the Lodge Unit Elections Chairman, Chapter Chief or Chapter Unit Elections Advisor.

Elections can only be held when 50% of the registered active youth members in the troop are present. All votes count equally. Any Scout who receives at least one half of the votes cast is elected.

It is strongly recommended that the OA Unit Election video and the enclosed "Election Ceremony" be used. It is best done by OA members in full uniform who have memorized their lines. Three OA members are required to show the election video and perform the Election Ceremony. In no event should this ceremony be ad-libbed or conducted in an extemporaneous manner. This circumvents the Unit Election Process which explains the purpose of the Order of the Arrow and the Unit Election procedures.

At least two weeks notice is required to schedule the election team to conduct an election

The unit election team needs to be prepared and do an excellent job when it visits a unit. Most of the members of the unit will never become members of the Order of the Arrow. Their experience with the order of the arrow during the election may be their only exposure to the order. The performance of the unit election team can create a very positive image of the Order of the Arrow with both the youth members and adult members of the unit. Take the care necessary to ensure that elections are meaningful experience for the Scouts and leaders, for Arrowmen in the unit who are conducting the election, and for the new candidates being elected.



## **ORDER OF THE ARROW**

### **Qualifications for Unit Elections**

#### **Youth Membership Qualifications**

- 1) A Boy Scout who holds the First Class rank, is **under the age of 21**, and is registered as an active member of the troop may, with the approval of his unit leader, be nominated for election. Prior to the annual unit election, the unit leader must certify the nominee's Scout spirit and youth membership qualifications. (This is done by signing the Youth Candidate Election Report form brought by the OA Lodge's Unit Election team the night of the election.)
- 2) After registration with the troop, the youth must have experienced 15 days and nights of Boy Scout camping during the two-year period prior to the election. The 15 days and nights must include one, but no more than one, long-term camp consisting of six consecutive days and five nights of resident camping, approved and under the auspices and standards of the BSA. The balance of the camping must be overnight, weekend, or other short-term camps.

Voting for youth candidates will be based on their spirit of brotherhood, cheerfulness (no matter how tiresome their duties), and a willingness to give unselfish and wholehearted service to others at all times.

#### **Adult Membership Qualifications**

Each year, upon holding a troop election for youth candidates that results in at least one youth candidate being elected, the unit committee *may recommend* one registered adult, **21 years of age or older**, to the lodge Adult Selection Committee. The OA Lodge's Adult Selection Committee, with the approval of the Scout Executive, will decide who will be candidates for inductions provided the following conditions are fulfilled.

- 1) Selection of the adult is based on the ability to perform the necessary functions to help the Order fulfill its purposes and is not for recognition of service, including current and prior achievements and positions.
- 2) The individual will be an asset to the Order because of demonstrated abilities that fulfill the purpose of the Order.
- 3) Adults fulfill the camping requirements set forth for youth.
- 4) The adult leader's membership will provide a positive role model for the growth and development of the youth members of the lodge.

#### **\*\*\* Handicapped Scouts \*\*\***

The Order of the Arrow recognizes Scouting for the handicapped, and elections should be held in handicapped units. Any handicapped individual who is classified as a youth member of the unit shall be considered a youth (voting) member of the Order of the Arrow regardless of age. Handicapped Scouts Must meet all other membership requirements.

Note - the Order of the Arrow Classifies youth membership as those who are under the age of 21.

## UNIT ELECTION RULES AND PROCEDURES

In Boy Scout Troops, every registered active member of the unit under age 21 at the time of election is eligible to vote in an Order of the Arrow unit election.

A Boy Scout who carries a current national membership card and participates in at least some unit activities during the year is considered to be a registered active member of the unit. For example, a youth away at college who participates in some unit activities when home, such as campouts, camporees, or occasional unit meetings, should be considered a registered active member.

A youth who moves away or drops out of the unit because of other interests would not be counted in the registered active membership figure.

OA elections are held in qualified troops only under the direction of the lodge in the council where the unit is chartered. **The lodge must approve all unit election teams in advance of their holding an election in a troop.** No unit may visit outside its own council and hold an OA election under the auspices of a lodge of another council.

### UNIT ELECTION RULES

- 1) The lodge shall determine the time of year unit elections will be held and should inform troop and team leaders of this by mail well in advance. The lodge, through the unit elections committee, should work with the troop leader in establishing the time and place to conduct the election.
- 2) Hold the election at the time and place determined by the unit leader, and have Boy Scouts assembled with their unit leader ready to elect candidates. Elections are not to be held in Venturing Crews or Cub Scout Packs. The Order should be represented by a two-or three-member team from the lodge elections committee (the team may include Arrowmen who are registered in the unit holding elections, however, **at least one member of the election team must be from “outside” the membership of the unit having the election.**)
- 3) Before the election, the unit leader must verify to the OA team that at least 50 percent of the registered active unit membership is present. If at least 50 percent is not present, an election cannot be held. The number of registered active members and the number present are entered in the spaces provided on the Unit Leader Election Report (see enclosed).
- 4) The unit leader provides a list of registered active members of the unit who meet all the eligibility requirements, including attitude and participation. The names of these members are entered on the report form and the unit leader signs the certification.
- 5) The election team leader explains the following to the unit leader:
  - this is the current method of election approved by the national OA committee in use by this lodge
  - all eligible youths who receive votes from at least 50 percent of those who turn in ballots are elected. If no one is elected, a second vote may be held immediately, and the result of this vote will be final.
- 6) A voter may list on his ballot any combination of names; including all eligible candidates he believes are worthy to become members of the Order of the Arrow.
- 7) The OA team conducts the election.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS OF RESULTS

As soon as the election is completed, the names of members elected will be announced to the unit. The Unit Election Report Form must be completed in its entirety before leaving the meeting. (Missing or incomplete addresses on this form is one of the most cited reasons for elected candidates not receiving the Ordeal weekend reservation information.) The election team must forward names and addresses of the newly elected candidates to the lodge membership committee immediately. Information pertaining to their invitation to the Ordeal Induction weekend will be mailed to them based on this election report form being submitted in a timely fashion.

Candidates may be called out in a public ceremony at the earliest possible time either at a camporee, Klondike, or other special event; however, it is not necessary to have a call out.

## CANDIDATE STATUS

After election, Boy Scouts and adults remain candidates until completion of the Ordeal weekend and Ordeal Ceremony. If this period exceeds one year, the candidate's name will be dropped; and, to become candidates again, they must be re-elected by their unit.

## ADULT RECOMMENDATIONS

Each year, upon holding a troop election for youth candidates that result in at least one youth candidate being elected, the unit committee **may recommend** one registered unit adult, 21 years of age or older, to the lodge adult selection committee for approval to be a candidate for induction. Adults may not be called out or notified they are candidates until the lodge adult selection committee approves the recommendation.

Because the Order of the Arrow is principally a young man's Organization, unit, district, and council Scouters are not nominated for selection to membership as recognition. Nomination for selection into the Order should take place only when the adult's job in Scouting will make the Order of the Arrow membership more meaningful in the lives of the youth membership.

Selection of those candidates nominated by their unit committee rests with the Lodge Selection Committee: Lodge Adviser, Council Camping Chairman, and Scout Executive. The Unit Committee person submitting the nomination will be notified by mail of their candidate's status. Candidates approved for participation in the induction process will also be notified by mail of their selection. This adult will be an asset to the Lodge due to demonstrated skills and abilities, which fulfill the purpose of the Order because: This adult leader's membership will provide a positive roll model for the growth and development of the youth members of the Lodge because: Selection of the adult is based upon ability to perform the requisite functions (and NOT as a honor or recognition of service) including current or prior achievement and position. The individual's abilities include: list all Camping dates and places within the past 2 years, list Scouting positions held and their current BSA registration number on the Nomination Form.

Adults can be nominated by the Unit Committee, District Chairman, Council President, or the Scout Executive.

All requirements set fourth for adult leaders in units must be fulfilled. The camping requirement may be waived for District and Council Scouters at the discretion of the Lodge Selection Committee.

The Adult Nomination Form must be filled out in its entirety, and a letter of recommendation must accompany the form. (Note: Adult Nomination Deadline is xxxxx 1)

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# Election Ceremony

## OA Member A:

Fellow Boy Scouts, the Order of the Arrow is a national brotherhood of honor campers. Its purpose is to recognize and honor those campers who best live up to the Scout Oath or Promise and the Scout Law in their daily lives and to guide them in expanding the service that has made them outstanding.

The Order promotes Scout camping and maintains camping tradition and spirit. It emphasizes that the good scout camper is not only skilled at Scoutcraft, but also true to the ideals of Scouting and its tradition of the daily good turn. The only way a Scout can become a member of the Order of the Arrow is to be elected for this honor by the members of his unit.

To be eligible for election, a youth must fulfill the camping requirement and hold the First Class Rank. Although the unit leader must certify eligibility of all nominees, leaders 21 or older are not permitted to vote in the election or to influence the votes for or against particular nominees.

After being elected, the Scout must undergo the Ordeal, which is a series of tests of his sincere dedication to the high ideals of Scouting and the Order. If he is faithful in performing the tests, he takes a solemn pledge of service and is admitted into the Order. A long period of self-improvement and service then follows.

The patch, the arrow ribbon, and the distinctive sash identify the Order of the Arrow member. They are symbols of service. Our Lodge has its own activities and projects, but our program does not replace the member's responsibility to his unit. Indeed each Arrowman is expected to give richer service to his own troop in return for the honor his unit extended to him.

Indian lore is an attractive sideline in our Order. The Indian is ours to preserve. Indian dances and ceremonies add color to our program of service, and members often make Indian lore their hobby. However, one does not need Indian attire or skill in Indian lore to become a valuable member of the Order of the Arrow.

Scouts you will elect representatives to our Brotherhood of cheerful service, and we are here to assist you in the election. All active registered youth members of this troop, except those 21 years or older, are entitled to vote. All those who receive votes from at least half of those who turn in ballots are elected.

The number you elect will depend on how your votes agree with other members.

Remember that an Order of the Arrow election is not a popularity contest! Don't vote for a Scout just because he is your friend or just because he is a good athlete or just because he is older than the rest. What really counts is his loyalty to the Scout Oath or Promise. Campaigning in the Order of the Arrow election is not permitted. You are expected to think for yourself, do not let others influence your decision. The election is by secret ballot and no discussion will be permitted, so no one will know for whom you are voting. This important decision about your fellow scouts is entirely up to you.

Before we announce the names of those eligible, and beginning the election are there any questions?

## **OA Member B:**

The following members of this unit have met the camping and advancement requirements and are eligible for election, as certified by your unit leader. Will you stand and form a line over here (point) as your names are called? (point out place and read the list slowly. Arrange the candidates in line facing the voters at the place indicated; the line can be semicircular if the eligible group is large. Write each name on chalkboard or flip chart as called.)

Scouts, you should answer each of the following questions to yourself; your answer will help you make the right selections.

## **OA Member C:**

Who in this group is a friend to all and brother to every other Scout? Who is pleasant and easy to get along with? Is he kind and helpful? In all, if you were a Tenderfoot, would you like to hike and camp with him?

Who is cheerful, even when he has many tiresome jobs to do? Who smiles whenever he can? Who obeys promptly and cheerfully? Does he control his temper? If you were to camp with him for several weeks, do you think you would enjoy it? Who is always ready to give unselfish and wholehearted service to others? Who, in serving others, can forget his own desire and interests? Who has served your unit all year round, faithfully attending your meetings and helping with your service projects? Do you think he will continue his service in the future? If you were his Patrol Leader, could you depend on him? In all, ask yourselves: Who in this group, by living up to the Scout Oath or Promise, serves your fellow Scout with such an example of brotherhood and cheerfulness that you look up to him with deep respect and admiration?

## **OA Member B:**

Scouts, on the ballot you will be given, print the first and last names of the candidates who, in your opinion, have set the best examples of brotherhood, cheerfulness, and service. Vote only for those you believe will continue in unselfish service to your troop. If you feel that no one is worthy, turn in an unused, blank ballot. If you are new in the troop and do not know the candidates well enough to vote wisely, you may abstain by not turning in a ballot at all, and this will not affect the final result. Those eligible for election also vote, and they may vote for themselves if they feel they are worthy. The names of those eligible are listed on this chalkboard (flip chart, poster, etc.). When you are finished fold the ballot only once and give the pencil and ballot to any of us. (Distribute election ballots and pencils.)

(collect ballots and pencils.)

(Count the votes in private with the unit leader.)

## Sample Election Ballot Session

10 ballots are turned in; and 4 boys are eligible: Joe, Fred, Mark, and Poindexter.

Joe gets 4 votes. Fred gets 6 votes. Mark gets 5 votes. Poindexter gets 5 votes.

From this information we know that Fred, Mark and Poindexter were elected.

Each one of them got votes from one half (or more) of the Scouts who turned ballots in. Joe will have to run again next year.

(Elected candidates and any Order members within the unit who can be spared are taken into a separate room. The following paragraphs should then be presented as a charge to the candidates and present Order members.)

### **OA Member B:**

That you, my fellow campers, have been chosen by your companions to become members of the Order reflects great credit upon you, and I congratulate you upon your election. You have impressed upon those who have lived closest to you the sincerity of your purpose to live in accordance with the high ideals of the Scout Oath or Promise. The judgment of your fellows could hardly have been mistaken.

In a short time, you will take upon yourselves another solemn obligation to be unselfish in service and devotion to the welfare of others. Your fellow Scouts elected you because they felt that you would continue your service. do not let them down.

### **OA Member C:**

My brothers in the Order, you have proven during the past year that the traditions of our Brotherhood are not a collection of meaningless words. As we welcome these new candidates (the new candidate) on our journey, let us be mindful of our obligation to help and guide them (him) during the trials that lie ahead.



Adult Nomination Form

***(INSERT UNIT ELECTION REPORT HERE***

Unit Elections Results Report

**(INSERT ADULT MONINATION FORM HERE**