



## Advancement Committee Advisory Statement Regarding Online Merit Badge Classes

The Orange County Council, Boy Scouts of America Advancement Committee is issuing this advisory to all Unit leaders within the Council. Scoutmasters and Venture Crew Advisors need to verify the validity of online Merit Badge classes before issuing Merit Badge Applications (Blue Cards) to Scouts. Classes offered online must meet youth protection guidelines and be offered by a source that is approved by Boy Scouts of America or the Orange County Council. It is important to note that Merit Badges must be taught by registered and trained Merit Badge Counselors.

Before issuing Blue Cards, please verify that the class the Scouts wish to participate in is legitimate, confirm that the proper procedures for delivering the class is followed, and that the instructor is a valid counselor. In today's virtual environment, there are many individuals and companies vying for Scout participation that do not meet our safety guidelines. Unit leaders need to proactively communicate these concerns and guidelines to their Scouts and families. The safety of our Scouts is a top priority.

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