



# BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council

## Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council Advancement Committee

July 22, 2020

### Virtual Camping for Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class Ranks and Camping Merit Badge

On April 13, 2020, Scouts BSA permitted “virtual camping” for Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class Ranks to ensure Scouts could continue their advancement while shelter-in-place restrictions generally prevented troop and patrol activities. Scouts BSA will allow “virtual camping” to be considered as an organized Scout activity until September 1, 2020. (This deadline will be re-evaluated as necessary)

Questions have been asked about counting virtual camping nights towards Camping Merit Badge requirements. Scouts BSA has not provided a definitive statement regarding this issue. However, BSA’s Guide to Advancement (GTA 4.2.3.6 Fulfilling More Than One Requirement With a Single Activity) allows that “When for all practical purposes, two requirements match up exactly and have the same basic intent - for example, camping nights for Second Class and First Class ranks and for the Camping merit badge — it is appropriate and permissible, unless it is stated otherwise in the requirements, to use those matching activities for both the ranks and the merit badge.” \*

Can “virtual camping nights” be counted towards the 20-night Camping Merit Badge requirement? The answer is **yes**, as long as they meet the intent of the Camping Merit Badge. Could a Scout earn all 20 camping nights for Camping MB with virtual camping? The answer is **no** because requirements 8(d), 9(b) and 9(c) must be fulfilled while on a camping trip. The intent of the Camping Merit Badge is to develop a Scouts’ camping skills and it allows one long-term camp (up to six nights) plus 14 additional camping nights to fulfill the 20-night requirement. Additionally, if a Troop camps two nights a month excluding summer camp, could 4 virtual camping nights in a month count towards the 20 nights? **Probably not**, as it would not meet a troops philosophy on camping.

In the final analysis, it is up to the Camping Merit Badge Counselor and the Scoutmaster to determine which virtual camping nights meet the intent of Camping Merit Badge and would count towards the 20-night requirement.