

Guidelines for the American Legion Square Knot Award

The American Legion, Department of Florida

PURPOSE

The American Legion established this award to recognize members of the Legion family (TAL, SAL & ALA), who are also registered Scouters, and who have furthered Scouting and its relationship with the Legion. It is awarded to those Legion Scouters who have demonstrated their commitment for personal improvement and performance in the Legion Scouting program.

In late 2018 the National Americanism Commission (which oversees Legion Scouting) met with BSA's National Representative to the American Legion and the Scouting Commission Chairmen of all of the Departments to review this program. The eligibilities, requirements for award and processing, as well as feedback from the field, were all considered. National particularly cautioned about those *"who want to misuse this award as a way to 'honor' their Scouting Chair as a 'retirement' award despite the individual having done little or nothing to further Scouting and its relationship with the Legion."* as an example. As a result the requirements were adjusted and the Departments were asked to publish guidance for handling the award. Accordingly, the following is provided:

ELIGIBILITY

Any member of the TAL, SAL or ALA who completes the requirements while also registered as a Scouter in the BSA may apply for the award. Requirements that are completed while the applicant is not both a Legion family member and a registered Scouter will not be considered. Note that not all of the requirements have to be completed. Because of the different involvements of the many different Scouting positions, the applicant may select those optional requirements most suited to their involvement. Again, an application should not be made by a Post or other person for a "congratulatory", "honorary" or "retirement" presentation.

APPLICATION

National has not provided a required format for the submission of the application, leaving it to the various Departments. The Department of Florida will accept both written and mailed applications as well as electronically copied and emailed ones. The applications and corresponding documentation should meet the following standards:

- any clear and easily readable format that displays which optional requirements are selected by the applicant and their corresponding proofs of completion.
- clear and convincing written proof of the completion by the applicant and matching the proof to the specific requirement that was completed.
- acceptable proofs include:
 - TAL records, TAL membership cards, BSA records, BSA completion cards, BSA membership cards, BSA Council/District completion records, screen captures from my.scouting.org or other official BSA websites, newspaper or periodical articles, event brochures and the like.
 - specifically, proofs must indicate **how** the applicant accomplished the completion.

- unacceptable proofs include:
 - self-certifying statements of the applicant
 - evidence that merely supports the applicant's presence and not participation in the requirement
 - simple listings of completions
 - anecdotal, vague and unclear support of completion
- including a copy of the Square Knot award brochure that was used will help
- Applications MUST contain a letter from the Legion Post Commander, SAL Squadron Commander or ALA Unit President (as appropriate) that outlines the applicant's involvement in the Legion Scouting program and that specifically recommends them for the award.

WAIVERS

National has not provided for waivers of requirements for any reason.

SUBMISSION

DO NOT SEND YOUR APPLICATION TO NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

If submitting by mail, send your application package to:

Program Director / Scouting Chair
The American Legion
Department of Florida
1912A Lee Road
Orlando, FL 32810

Mark on the outside of the envelope - Square Knot Award

If submitting by email, submit your application to BOTH

programs@floridalegion.org

and

scouting@legionmail.org

Subject Line – Square Knot Award

Your application will be processed for the required reviews and endorsements within the Department and then forwarded to National for final review.

CAUTIONS

If you “jump the chain of command” and submit your application directly to the Department Commander, your application will be delayed.

If you “dual channel” and submit to various officers in the Department, your application will be delayed.

If you submit directly to National, your application will be significantly frustrated.

PRESENTATION OF AWARD

Applicants have options for the presentation of their award. Provided that the application is submitted far enough in advance, it is complete and all of the completions of requirements are sufficiently proved, the applicant may request the award:

- be presented at the next Department Convention
- be presented at a Post or District meeting
- be presented at a Scout meeting or event

Note - If not for award at the convention, then information must be given for the individual and address to whom to forward the award package and the date the award will be made.

If you have any questions, forward them to scouting@legionmail.org