



Tahosa Lodge Unit Election Guide

This document contains information for:

-  Youth elections (voted by the boys in the unit)
-  Adult selection is handled through a different process (i.e., it is conducted by the unit committee). Please refer to “Tahosa Adult Nominations Guide” for this information

YOUTH CANDIDACY REQUIREMENTS

Requirements of Candidacy

To be eligible for election as candidates to the Order of the Arrow, the Unit Leader (i.e., Scoutmaster or Varsity Team Coach) must certify that the Scout:

- Has the approval of unit leader prior to the election
- Is a registered member of the Boy Scouts of America within the unit
- Demonstrates Scouting Spirit, adherence to the Scout Oath & Law, and participation in the unit
- Is under the age of 21
- Hold the First Class Rank of the Boy Scouts of America, as a minimum rank
- Experienced fifteen (15) nights of camping during the two-year period prior to election. The sum of the camping days and nights must include:
 - Six (6) consecutive days (including five nights) of long-term, resident camping, approved and under the auspices and standards of the Boy Scouts of America
 - The balance having been overnight, weekend, or other short-term camps (i.e., for candidacy, a youth may only count one week of long-term summer camp)

Scouts with Disabilities

The Order of the Arrow recognizes Scouting for youth with disabilities, and elections should be held in these units. Any scout with disabilities 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. Scouts with disabilities must still meet all other membership requirements.

YOUTH ELECTION OVERVIEW

- *Candidates for youth member shall be elected by other youth members in accordance with policies set forth by the national committee of the Order of the Arrow.*
- *How a Scout is Elected:* to become a member of the Order of the Arrow, a Boy Scout or Varsity Scout is chosen by vote of the youth in his unit. Lodge members in the unit have a vote as well as nonmembers.
- *Who Casts a Vote:* In Boy Scout Troops and Varsity Teams, every registered active member of the unit under age 21 in attendance at the time of the election is eligible to vote. A Boy Scout or Varsity 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.



YOUTH ELECTION OVERVIEW (CONT)

- *Elections and Inductions Outside the Registered Council:* No unit may visit outside its own council and hold an OA election under the auspices of another council. In all cases, newly elected candidates for membership in the Order, both youth and adult, should complete the Ordeal and be inducted into the Order by the lodge that serves the council in which their unit is chartered.
- Once elected by the unit, a Boy Scout or Varsity Scout OA candidate remains a candidate for one year from the date of the election, or until completion of the Ordeal and Ordeal ceremony held by the Lodge. If the candidate fails to complete the Ordeal within one year's time, he is no longer a candidate for OA membership. To become a candidate again, he must be re-elected through a proper OA election by the unit. On rare occasion, the executive committee of the lodge may extend the one-year limit between election and induction for unusual circumstances.

UNIT ELECTION PROCEDURE FOR YOUTH

Location and Timing Standards

The unit leader in coordination with the Chapter Elections Chairman and/or Advisor (and overseen by the Lodge Unit Elections Chairman and/or Advisor) determines the date and place of the election. The following elements should be followed:

- The unit schedules the election at least 14 days in advance with the OA Chapter.
- A unit is permitted only one (1) OA election per calendar year
- Prior to the election, unit members have been educated on the purpose, history and organization of the Order of the Arrow
- At the time and place determined by the unit leader, the Boy Scouts and/or Varsity Scouts should be assembled with their leader to meet the OA election team for the purpose of electing candidates for membership to the Order of the Arrow

Requirements for the Election

- The Order of the Arrow must be represented by a team comprising of no-less-than two OA youth election team members, preferably with an adult advisor in attendance.
- At least one of the youth on the election team needs to have completed Lodge Unit Election Training in the past year.
- The team must be led and advised by OA members who are not part of that particular unit, though OA members of that unit may assist with the running of the election.
- Failure to have a qualified team conduct the election may invalidate election results.
- Before the election, the OA team must secure from the unit leader verification that at least 50% of the registered, active unit's youth membership is present. At least 50% attendance is required; without which, an election cannot be held.



Procedures for the Election

- The number of registered unit members and the number of members present is entered in spaces provided on the "Youth Candidate Election Report."
- The unit leader provides the number of all registered active members of the unit and the number of those members who s/he certifies meet all the eligibility requirements including attitude spirit and participation. These members are entered on the report form and the unit leader signs the certification.
- The unit leader reiterates to the unit's members the purposes of the OA and the basis on which candidates should be selected (i.e., who best exemplifies the spirit of Scouting and demonstrates that in his daily actions) and how not to vote (i.e., by who is most popular).
- The OA election team leader describes the method for the election to the group:
 - This is the current method of election approved by the National OA Committee and Tahosa Lodge, and approved by the Denver Area Council.
 - Members will receive paper ballots listing the names of who is eligible for election and will cast their votes with that ballot
 - All eligible youth 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 results of this vote are final.
 - A voter may list on his ballot any combination of names, including all candidates who he believes are worthy to become members of the Order of the Arrow.
- The OA team conducts the election using the Lodge Election Ceremony which stresses the following points:
 - Select 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 unit
 - If you feel that no one is worthy, turn in a blank ballot
 - If you do not know the candidates well enough to vote wisely, you may abstain by not turning in a ballot; this will not effect the final results
 - Youth eligible for election also vote, and they may vote for themselves if they feel they are worthy
- At the conclusion of voting, the OA election team counts the number of ballots turned in, and enters the number on the elections report.
- The OA team determines the number of votes one must receive to be elected as follows:
 - Even number of ballots (e.g., 2, 4, 6...): divide this number by two
 - Odd number of ballots (e.g., 1, 3, 5...): add one then divide by two
 - The number of votes a youth must receive to be elected is entered on the youth election report
- The votes are counted in private by the OA election team to determine who has been elected. All votes count equally. If at least one youth has been elected this result is final. If no one is elected, the OA team announces this fact and states that the unit will now be given the opportunity to vote again.
- Time is allowed for further explanation of the purpose of the Order and the election procedures, and for any questions
- No information about the votes received by candidates is to be revealed at any time
- The second election is then held immediately, and if the unit still elects no one, this is the final result for this year's election



Reporting of Election Results

In coordination with the Unit Leader and the OA Election Team Adviser, the OA election team lists the names of those who have been elected in Part A of the "Youth Candidate Election Report." Their addresses, birth dates, rank, emails, and telephone numbers will also be included. The unit leader and the OA team members sign the report, unless it is filled out electronically.

- Copy or e-mail report to Unit Leader
- Keep the original Hard copy for the OA Chapter
- Fill out online election form for each elected candidate, and e-mail electronic copy to Elections@tahosalodge.org or electionstahosalodge@gmail.com

Announcement of Results

The OA recommends that the announcing of the results be held for an upcoming auspicious time for the unit, such as a Court of Honor, a district camporee, or during a week at a Denver Area Council summer camp. This provides the opportunity to use Arrowmen dressed in American Indian-styled clothing to conduct a proper, respectful, and meaningful call-out ceremony for those unit members elected by their unit for OA candidacy. Additionally, doing so allows the simultaneous call-out of any adults nominated and approved for candidacy by the unit's committee.

As such, it is the Unit Leader's choice when the election results will be announced. Again, we encourage using a special occasion to do this to enhance the experience of all involved.