



Disabilities Awareness

Scouts BSA · Citizenship

Name

Started

Completed

Disabilities Awareness is about understanding, respect, and making sure everyone can take part. You'll meet people with disabilities, learn how to be a good friend and ally, and find ways to make your community more welcoming.

Requirements

Every official requirement, in plain language. Check the official wording when you sign off (scouting.org/merit-badges/disabilities-awareness/). Tips and examples are ideas, not extra requirements.

1 Disability awareness basics

Tips for this section: Learn person-first language and simple etiquette, like speaking directly to a person rather than their companion. Ask your counselor about anything you're unsure of.

Example for this section: Practice etiquette with real situations: speak directly to a person, not their interpreter or companion; ask "Would you like help?" and wait for the answer; don't touch someone's wheelchair or pet a working service dog. Ask your counselor about respectful terms.

- ☐ **1a** Explain and discuss with your counselor what these terms mean: person-first language, disability, accessibility, accommodation, adaptation, and invisible disability

- ☐ **1b** Explain why good disability etiquette matters and how it can vary with the disability, giving three examples

- ☐ **2** Visit an agency that serves people with physical, mental, emotional, or learning-related disabilities; gather and read about its work and the training, job, and education opportunities for its members; discuss what you learned with your counselor

Tip: Look for local groups that serve people with disabilities, such as a center for independent living, a special education program, or an adaptive sports group.

3 Learning from others: Choose 2 of 5

Tips for this section: Listen more than you talk. Ask people about their everyday life and what helps, and learn how tools like wheelchairs or screen readers work.

Example for this section: If you learn about aids, try a few and explain how they work: a reacher grabber, a magnifier app, captions, or a communication board. If you talk with people with disabilities, ask about their everyday routines, what helps, and what people get wrong.

- ☐ **3a** Talk with a Scout who has a disability about their experiences in Scouting activities and earning merit badges, then discuss what you learned with your counselor

- ☐ **3b** Talk with a person who has a disability about their experiences and the activities they enjoy, then discuss what you learned with your counselor

- ☐ **3c** Pick an adaptive sport or recreation activity and learn how people with disabilities participate in it, then discuss it with your counselor

- ☐ **3d** Learn about aids for independent living, like service animals, canes, and communication devices such as captioned phones and videophones, and discuss with your counselor how people use them

- ☐ **3e** Plan or join an activity that helps others understand what living with a visible or invisible disability is like, and discuss what you learned with your counselor

4 Site visits: Choose 1 of 2

Tips for this section: Pick two places you visit often, like your school, place of worship, a Scout campsite, or a museum, and look at them through the eyes of someone with a disability.

Example for this section: An accessibility survey of your school or place of worship might check the parking, the path from the car to the door, door handles, restrooms, and whether a program could be followed without hearing. For each of your two places, list five things that work well and five that could be better, and talk them over with your counselor.

- ☐ **4a** Access: visit two of the places below and take notes on how accessible they are for people with disabilities, listing five features that make the site welcoming and five possible improvements; discuss what you saw with your counselor (choose 2 of 4 below)

- ☐ **4a1** Your school

- ☐ **4a2** Your place of worship

- ☐ **4a3** A Scouting event or campsite

- ☐ **4a4** A public place to visit, like a museum, park, or theater

- ☐ **4b** Accommodation: visit two of the places below and note the features and methods used to accommodate people with invisible disabilities, ask staff to explain features that aren't obvious, note ideas for improvement, and discuss with your counselor (choose 2 of 4 below)

- ☐ **4b1** Your school

- ☐ **4b2** Your place of worship

- ☐ **4b3** A Scouting event or campsite

- ☐ **4b4** A public place to visit, like a museum, park, or theater

- ☐ **5** Explain what advocacy is, then do one of the following (choose 1 of 3 below)

Tip: Advocacy means speaking up so others are included. Choose an activity where you can make a real difference, even a small one.

Example: Explain advocacy with everyday examples, like asking your troop to add captions to its slideshow videos or writing the school about a broken automatic door. Then pick one option, such as a short talk for a Cub Scout pack on person-first language, or a list of 10 myths about disability with the facts for each.

- ☐ **5a** Give a counselor-approved disabilities awareness presentation to a Cub Scout pack or another group, explaining and using person-first language

- ☐ **5b** Find out about disabilities awareness education in your school or district, or contact a disability advocacy agency, and volunteer 8 hours with a program or agency

- ☐ **5c** Using sources like advocacy and government agencies, news magazines, and the internet (with a parent or guardian's permission), list 10 myths or misconceptions about people with disabilities and the facts for each; share the list with your counselor, then present it to a Cub Scout pack or another group

- ☐ **6** Tell your counselor what you commit to doing to show and encourage positive attitudes toward people with disabilities, and discuss how your own awareness has changed

Tip: Think about specific ways you'll act, like including a classmate at lunch. Share your commitment with your counselor in your own words.

Example: Put your commitment in your own words: "When I plan patrol games, I'll pick ones everyone can play, and I'll ask before helping instead of assuming."

- ☐ **7** Name five professions that serve people with disabilities, research the education, training, and experience one of them requires, and discuss with your counselor why it interests you

Tip: Learn about jobs like special education teacher, physical therapist, or sign language interpreter. Ask someone in that field why they chose it.