



BUDDHIST CHURCHES OF AMERICA
National Buddhist Committee on Scouting
Girl Scouts * Boy Scouts * Camp Fire

Buddhist Scout Sangha Award

The Purpose

The purpose of the Sangha Award is to give the Buddhist Scouts a practical guidance in achieving the spiritual pledge made in the Scout Oath and Law, thereby developing a Scout whose views and actions in life would stem from the highest of the Buddhist thoughts.

The Sangha Award program aims to do this by leading the Scout: 1) attain understanding and faith in the Buddha, 2) to learn the Teachings, and 3) to practice the harmonious Buddhist way to life, in the spirit of universal brotherhood of all living things. These are the dynamic aspects of the Scout's complete acceptance of the Three Treasures (Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha).

Further, the Award program duly recognizes the twelfth point of the Scout Law that the Scout "is faithful in his religious duties and respects the convictions of others in matter of custom and religion." The Scout is expected to receive religious training and participate actively in his temple program.

Finally the Sangha Award program gives the Scout a solid basis for fuller understanding and a greater appreciation of all phases of the scouting program.

The Sangha Award and What It Means

The Sangha Award is a medal consisting of a pendant, ribbon and a bar. The pendant is the Wheel of Dharma, sometimes called the Wheel of Life. It is a symbol, which represents the spreading of Buddha's Teachings. The Wheel is suspended from a multi-colored ribbon representing the aura of Buddha's many virtues. This ribbon is attached to a crossbar on which is inscribed the Sanskrit word "Sangha", meaning brotherhood.

The Boy Scouts of America has authorized the Sangha Award to be worn on the Official Uniform over the left breast pocket, to the left of the Eagle Badge, or when the Eagle Badge is not worn, centered above the flap of the left breast pocket.

The Award is presented by the temple to a Buddhist Scout in recognition of his spiritual growth as shown by his fulfilling the Award requirements.

The requirements are made quite flexible to suit different conditions, so that any Buddhist Scout who sincerely and earnestly applies himself to meeting the requirements of this Award will find it to be very rewarding.

Who is Eligible?

Any Buddhist Scout who is a registered member of a Scout Troop or Explorer unit may apply and begin qualifying for the Sangha Award. Since this is an individual program, a Buddhist Scout who is a member of any unit may qualify whether or not his unit is sponsored by a Buddhist Temple. A Scout can start at any rank in Scouting, but in order to receive the Award he must be at least a First Class and Explorer must have had at least one year in Exploring.

How to Earn the Sangha Award

1. Study must be under close guidance of a qualified Buddhist minister, "Qualified" Lay leader, or a counselor appointed by the Buddhist minister is required for assistance with the program. The Sangha Award program requires approximately 72 hours of instruction normally meeting once a week for an hour over the course of two years of study.
2. An Application to Teach form must be submitted to the Chair of the National Buddhist Committee on Scouting and must be approved by the National Buddhist Committee on Scouting prior to the start of the Program.
3. Upon approval of the Instructor, request a Sangha Award application form from the National Buddhist Committee on Scouting Chair.
4. Submit the Scout's Sangha Award application together with the appropriate registration fee. On approval of your application, you will receive a Service Record Book. A suggested list of study materials is available upon request.
5. After fulfilling all the requirements for the Sangha Award to the satisfaction of your minister, Lay leader, or counselor, arrangements will be made for you to appear before the Sangha Board of Review with the submittal of an essay.
6. If the Sangha Award Board of Review finds that you have maintained the high standard set for the requirements, your certified Record Book and a letter of certification signified by the submittal of the Completion Form will be sent to the National Buddhist Committee on Scouting along with the essay for final approval.
7. When all approval is made, the Sangha Award and certificate will be forwarded to the minister of your temple to be presented to you at an appropriate ceremony.

Administration

The Sangha Award program is administered and supervised by the National Buddhist Committee on Scouting. However, the Boy Scouts of America through its National, Regional, and District Councils is giving full support and encouragement to this program. The Scout leaders are acquainted with the church award program. For further information, contact your local Buddhist temple, your local Scout Executive or the Chairman of the National Buddhist Committee on Scouting.

Buddhist Scout Sangha Award Requirements

First Stage

BUDDHA

1. Relate briefly the life of Sakyamuni Buddha and name about five principal events in his life.
2. Explain what is meant by a Buddha.
3. Explain in your own words what Buddha means to you in your personal life.
4. Show that you have provided the necessary daily care of the shrine in your home for at least three months.
5. Demonstrate the correct method of shrine arrangement.
6. Show evidence of personal daily morning and evening meditation before the shrine.
7. Explain and demonstrate correct etiquette and procedures before the shrine, including gassho, used of meditation beads (juzu), incense burning, etc; and give the symbolic significance of each.

DHARMA

8. Explain briefly some of the principal teaching of Buddhism and answer the following:
 - a. What are the Four Noble Truths? Noble Eightfold Paths?
 - b. What are the three characteristics of existence?
 - c. Explain what Buddhist Karma means.
 - d. What are the eight sufferings?
 - e. The ten goodnesses?
 - f. The six paramitas?
 - g. The five precepts?
9. State briefly the biography of the founder and the history of your own denomination.

SANGHA

10. Show that you express Buddhist gratitude regularly before and after meals.
11. Describe the administration, the organization, and the affiliated organizations of you own local temple.
12. Show that you attend Dharma School services regularly.
13. Choice of one:
 - A. Plan and complete a project satisfactory to the minister or qualified counselor.
 - B. Give twenty-five hours of dana to your temple by any of the following methods:
 - a. Distribution of temple literature, posters, etc
 - b. Collection of article, etc. for the needy.
 - c. Doing errands.
 - d. Repairing temple property, decorating rooms.
 - e. Cleaning yard, helping in the kitchen, etc.
 - f. Clerical services.
 - g. Others recommended by the minister or qualified counselor.
14. Know the major activities and the events of you temple and show how you had helped in one or more of them.
15. Name some of the social welfare activities of your temple and show how you had helped in one or more of them.

Second Stage

BUDDHA

1. Relate the life of Sakyamuni Buddha explaining the spiritual significance of the various events both before and after his enlightenment.
2. Explain enlightenment and why there could be many Buddhas.

3. Give the meaning of your shrine symbols.
4. Reach an understanding with your minister or qualified counselor on "Faith".
5. Relate briefly the significance and development of the use of the shrine in Buddhist services.
6. Give the meaning of the historic Buddhist symbols.
7. Lead a family service at home for at least seven different times in three months, using Te-Sarana (Three Treasurers) and any of the following: A sutra of your temple, readings from Dhamapada, passages from the Dharma School text or Young Buddhist Association Service text, or similar text.

DHARMA

8. Explain the following:
 - a. The aim of Buddha's teaching.
 - b. Enlightenment or Nirvana
 - c. The Buddhist concept of self.
 - d. Rebirth (reincarnation and spiritual)
9. Explain briefly the characteristics of Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism.
10. Explain the Three Aspects of Buddha (Tri-kaya).
11. Name the sutras used in your temple, and give a brief explanation of the sutras and the fundamental teachings on which your temple is based.
12. Exemplify in your daily living the practice of the Noble Eightfold Path, the Six Paramitas, and the Five Precepts in the light of the principal beliefs of your temple.

SANGHA

13. Give the meaning and relate the beginnings of the Buddhist Sangha.
14. Show that you're are giving financial contributions regularly to your temple, as well as attending Sunday services.
15. Know the history and the administrative organization of your temple system in our country, and include the counterpart of your temple in some foreign country.
16. Explain what a minister is and how a person may become one.
17. Show active participation in the youth organization of your own temple.
18. Give a five-minute talk on Buddhism before a group, or write a 500-word essay on some aspect of Buddhism.
19. Show ability and willingness to do any one of the following:
 - a. Lead a Y.B.A. service, Dharma School, Choir.
 - b. Be on the Dharma School teaching staff.
 - c. Serve as leading officer of the youth organization.
 - d. Work as conference committee chairperson.
 - e. Any other recommended by the minister or qualified counselor.
20. Describe a few of the present worldwide Buddhist denominations in America.
21. As a Buddhist, show how through you own daily living you can contribute toward the achievement of harmony among mankind.