



**The  
ETZ  
CHAIM  
AWARD**

**for Grades Nine and Above**

# ETZ CHAIM AWARD REQUIREMENTS

The **Etz Chaim (Tree of Life)** Award is designed for Boy Scouts in high school, ages 14 to 18, and registered Explorers ages 14 to 20. The purpose of the award is to encourage the young adult to explore adult Jewish roles in the context of family, community, and Jewish people. The requirements can be completed in six months and with a counselor's assistance.

When you and your counselor agree that you have successfully completed the requirements, submit the completed application to the **Cleveland Jewish Committee on Scouting**. The award will be presented to you at an appropriate public ceremony, such as at a Scout Shabbat service, or Court of Honor, in consultation with the Jewish Committee on Scouting, your unit leaders and your family.

## Selecting a Counselor

You will need to select an adult who is familiar with your Jewish community to help you complete the requirements for this award. The counselor should have a working knowledge of Jewish traditions and culture and be available to provide guidance. A rabbi, Jewish school teacher, Jewish Community Center executive, or Jewish youth group advisor might make suitable counselors. The Cleveland Jewish Committee on Scouting or the National Jewish Committee on Scouting will assist you in locating and selecting a counselor if necessary.

Meet with your counselor to review the requirements and to determine how often you should both meet. If your counselor has any questions about the requirements, contact the Cleveland Jewish Committee on Scouting. If you and your counselor decide that you are unable to complete a requirement because the resources necessary are not available in your community, you can contact the National Jewish Committee on Scouting for a substitute or alternative activity.

Keep a notebook of all the information you collect while completing the requirements for this award. You and your counselor will want to review it, and you might need it to complete the last requirement.

## Prerequisites

**The Ner Tamid emblem is a prerequisite for the Etz Chaim Award.** If you have not earned the Ner Tamid emblem, you will need to do so. Obtain a copy of the Ner Tamid requirements from the Cleveland Jewish Committee on Scouting or the Greater Cleveland Council service center. You should complete all of the mandatory activities for the Ner Tamid, plus three of the optional Ner Tamid activities you and your counselor select before completing the Etz Chaim Award. You may, however, work on the requirements for both awards at the same time. If you complete all of the requirements for the Ner Tamid emblem, it will be presented to you with your Etz Chaim Award. Otherwise, only the Etz Chaim Award will be presented.

## Requirements for the Etz Chaim Award

1. Community and Family History
  - A Find out when the first Jewish person arrived in your community and from where and why he or she left to come here.
  - B Find out when the following were established in your community and by whom:
    - The first Jewish cemetery.
    - The first synagogue.
    - The first social club or benevolent society.
    - The first Jewish relief society or charity organization.
  - C Find out when your first family member arrived in your community, from where and why he or she left to come here.
2. Community Institutions and Agencies
  - A Collect the bulletins, newsletters, and membership brochures of five Jewish organizations in your community or neighborhood. Be sure to include at least one synagogue or independent chavurah, and the Jewish Community Center if one of each exists in your community. (If there are fewer than five such organizations in your community, contact the state or regional offices of Jewish organizations that serve your community.)
    - List the purpose or mission of each organization.
    - Give three reasons why someone might join or use the services of each organization.
  - B Examine the names of organizations, the bulletin or newsletter mastheads, the logs, etc. Identify any Hebrew names or phrases.
    - For each name or phrase, list where it is found in Jewish sources or tradition.
    - For each name or phrase, tell why you think the organization chose it and what the name or phrase says about the organization today.
  - C Give a minimum of ten hours of volunteer service to a Jewish organization or agency in your community, or any agency that serves Jewish people. (If your high school has a community service requirement that you have already completed, ask your counselor if those hours can be applied to this requirement. Write a brief report about your experience, including why you think the service you provided is important to your community.
3. Community Jewish Leaders
  - A Interview five adult Jewish leaders who are prominent in your community. Choose at least one rabbi and one leader from a Jewish agency or organization.
    - Why did the leader enter his or her chosen career or occupation?
    - What were the Jewish influences in the leader's life while growing up?
    - What volunteer work does the leader do now and why?
    - How do Judaism and Jewish values influence his or her life today?
  - B Write a short composition (five hundred words) on "The Qualities of Adult Jewish Leadership Today."
4. Your Community and the Jewish World
  - A Obtain a copy of the Jewish newspaper that serves your community or region.
    - Locate, read, and summarize two articles dealing with the concerns of Jews in the United States.
    - Locate, read, and summarize two articles dealing with the concerns of Jews from areas other than the United States, for example, Israel, Europe, Canada, etc.
  - B Ask three Jewish adults you know what they do to help Jews outside the United States and why. Tell which effort interests you most.
5. Your Community and the Future
  - A Ask ten Jewish young adults and ten Jewish adults what they think are the three most important challenges that Jewish people face in your community today. Organize the responses into three lists: personal issues, family issues, and community issues. Select one issue from each list and tell what you think should be done to deal with it.
  - B Locate and read an article from a national Jewish magazine about Jewish people and the future. Tell how the topic discussed in the article might affect your Jewish community.
6. Community Sharing
  - A Create a record of your work for the Etz Chaim Award. This may be a photographic essay, a videotape recording, a series of drawings, or a written journal.
  - B Give a presentation of what you have learned about your Jewish community to at least two groups. At least one of these should be a group of younger Jewish children. Use your record in your presentation.

The Scout or Explorer is to fill out the following application:

## Application

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Rank \_\_\_\_\_

Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Place \_\_\_\_\_

Council Name \_\_\_\_\_

Headquarters City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Rabbi or Counselor \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

## Certification

This is to certify that

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Print)

has fulfilled the requirements of the Etz Chaim program. He or she is worthy of the award.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Unit Leader

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rabbi or counselor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cleveland Jewish Committee on Scouting

\_\_\_\_\_  
Certification by the local council

## To Order the Award

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street

\_\_\_\_\_  
City

\_\_\_\_\_  
State

\_\_\_\_\_  
Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone

In the Greater Cleveland Council, all Etz Chaim Award applications are handled by the **Cleveland Jewish Committee on Scouting**, which covers the cost of the emblem and certificate. Once your son has completed all the activities and You, his Unit Leader, and rabbi or counselor have signed the certification, send the completed application and your son's notebook (which will be returned) for final verification to:

Stuart L. Woldman, Awards Chairman  
Cleveland Jewish Committee on Scouting  
4070 Eastway Road  
South Euclid, OH 44121  
(216) 381-3668

You and your son's Scout Leader or Explorer Advisor, together with the Jewish Committee on Scouting, should then determine an appropriate occasion during which to present the emblem, such as at a Scout Shabbat service, or Court of Honor.