



# Eastern Region Section 9

## ORDER OF THE ARROW

**To: OA Council of Chiefs & Conclave Committee Members**  
**Date: February 7, 2026**  
**Subject: Strengthening the Culture of Section Officer Elections**

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The election of our section Order of the Arrow youth leaders is one of the most essential elements of our program each year. For many candidates, it represents the culmination of their Scouting journey — a chance to lead at one of the highest levels and serve our movement in a deeply meaningful way. To honor that opportunity, we must ensure that our elections are fair, welcoming, and rooted in the values that define Scouting and the Order of the Arrow.

In recent years, we have heard growing concerns from youth leaders about how election culture has evolved. At times, competition has overshadowed community. Some past campaigns became more focused on winning than on fulfilling the responsibilities that come with the position. Outside influence and inconsistent expectations have created stress and uncertainty. While elections naturally include an element of politics and persuasion, they should never compromise the integrity, inclusion, or well-being of our candidates and voters.

To help restore balance and strengthen trust in the process, the Order of the Arrow Section E9 has adopted a [Section Officer Elections Code of Conduct](#) and related policies. These tools reaffirm what we already know to be true: that Scouting's principles guide every part of our behavior, especially when the stakes feel high. Key points include:

- **Our ideals guide us.** The Scout Oath, Scout Law, and OA Obligation remain the foundation for all conduct before, during, and after elections.
- **Respect is nonnegotiable.** Bullying, intimidation, or disparaging others — online or in person — has no place in Scouting. Candidates should lift up ideas and values, not tear down individuals.
- **Be mindful of motives.** Lodge advisers should be aware of who attends their events and why. Visiting lodges should always serve the program, not campaigning.
- **Model integrity.** Section and lodge advisers, past and current officers, and adult mentors must avoid actions that could appear to favor or promote specific candidates. Encouragement is welcome; advocacy and influence are not.

We are also introducing several process improvements designed to make elections more transparent and supportive. These include [candidate statements](#) and releases, [candidate checklist & process guide](#), streamlined [council approval form](#), and continuing use of our clear [Election Script, Procedures, and Preparation document](#) that improved voting transparency.

This is not about an election policy; it is about culture. Each of us plays a role in shaping what these elections represent. To be clear, we will not tolerate the behaviors of the past. Violations of the Election Code of Conduct will result in consequences to the individual and could compromise our future ability to elect our young leaders. When we lead with **Brotherhood, Cheerfulness, and Service**, we ensure that this proud tradition remains worthy of the Scouts who aspire to it.

Thank you for helping us build an election culture that reflects the absolute best of Scouting and the Order of the Arrow

Yours in Service,

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