

Town of Buckfield, Maine

Boston Post Cane Policy

1. History

The Boston Post Cane tradition was established in 1909 by Edwin Grozier, Editor and Publisher of the Boston Post Newspaper. On August 2nd of that year, he sent letters to 700 Select Boards in Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island asking them to be the trustees of the ebony, gold topped canes that he had contracted to be made the year previous. Towns which responded to the letter were to present this cane as an honor to each town's oldest resident; though only males were eligible at the time. A stipulation in the letter was that the original Cane would belong to the Town, and not the citizen who received it, in order to provide for the preservation and public awareness of the tradition as well as protection of the cane from loss or damage. The recipient held the honor as long as they lived within the town's boundaries. Upon their death or relocation outside of the municipality, the cane would be awarded to the next oldest resident.

2. Purpose

The Buckfield Selectboard hereby establishes the following policy and protocols for the selection of the Eldest Buckfield Citizen and for the appropriate recognition of said citizen. The Boston Post Cane itself is strictly ceremonial, and due to its historical value it shall remain in possession of the Town or its Lessee. The Town may choose to lease the Boston Post Cane to a local historical organization for a nominal fee if the Selectboard so chooses.

3. Nomination/Application Process

- a. The Town of Buckfield shall announce an open nomination & application period for the oldest known, eligible citizen. Such announcement shall be posted at the Buckfield Town Hall and be publicized in media normally seen by the public, including but not limited to local newspaper(s), the Town of Buckfield Website, Newsletter/email list, and social media.
- b. The search may also include an informal survey, general public knowledge and inquiries to nursing homes, civic groups, and/or churches.
- c. Boston Post Cane Nomination/Application Forms shall be available at the Buckfield Town Office and on the Town's website www.buckfield.maine.gov.
- d. Citizens who can prove their age and who meet the eligibility criteria may be nominated or apply.
- e. Nominations must be received no later than 60 days from the date the open nomination period is announced.

Applicants must be:

- a. At least 80 years of age.
- b. Must have resided in the Town of Buckfield for at least the past 10 years.
 - If the applicant is now in a home or other facility but still claims Buckfield as their place of residence, they are eligible to be nominated.
- c. If these conditions cannot be met, the Buckfield Selectboard may modify these requirements by a majority vote at a normal scheduled meeting.

4. Selection

- a. Selection of the honoree shall be by the Selectboard or their designee based upon submitted nominations and available data as to eligible citizens.
- b. The Town of Buckfield recognizes that the eldest citizen may not wish to receive the title and therefore asserts that in such cases the recognition will be made to the next eldest citizen that wishes to hold the title.

5. Presentation

- a. The Selectboard or their designee shall present Buckfield's oldest citizen with a certificate to signify the honor and shall cause the name of the honoree to be inscribed on a plaque displayed along with the Boston Post Cane at the Buckfield Municipal Building or alternate location determined by the Selectboard.
- b. The location of the presentation will be determined according to the circumstances of the honoree.
- c. The recipient will retain this honor as long as they live.
- d. The Town Office must be notified if the recipient of the Boston Post Cane passes or otherwise refuses or returns the honor. The Town may, at an increment of time deemed appropriate by the Selectboard, inquire about the current recipient's wellbeing. In the event of the recipient's passing or resignation of the honor, the search / nomination / application protocols will be initiated to choose a new recipient.

Policy adopted by the Buckfield Select Board at a duly called meeting on January 7, 2025.