



VOLUNTEER POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Girl Scout Promise, Law, and Mission

GIRL SCOUT PROMISE

On my honor, I will try:

To serve God* and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

GIRL SCOUT LAW

I will do my best to be

honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong, and
responsible for what I say and do,

and to

respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place, and
be a sister to every Girl Scout.



GIRL SCOUT MISSION

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

*Girl Scouts of the USA does not attempt to define or interpret the word “God” in the Girl Scout Promise. It looks to individual members to establish the nature of their spiritual beliefs for themselves. When reciting the Girl Scout Promise, members may substitute for the word God in accordance with their own spiritual beliefs.

Introduction

Volunteers have been the support of the Girl Scout Movement since its founding in 1912. The contributions of volunteers at all levels of the organization have been and continue to be extraordinary. Girl Scouts of Silver Sage (*GSSSC*) could not fulfill its commitment to girls and the community without the dedication and excellent performance of its volunteers. Volunteer policies are developed in partnership with the *GSSSC* Board of Directors and the Girl Scouts of the United States of America (GSUSA) and implemented for the protection and support of volunteers. This document outlines the policies and procedures of *GSSSC* and ensures that *GSSSC* reaches its organizational goals through meaningful and satisfying adult volunteer involvement in serving girls.

It is not the intent of this document to repeat national policies but to adopt specific policies to clarify those areas that need to be defined for local use. These volunteer policies and procedures are intended to provide the basis for reasonable and consistent guidance for *GSSSC* volunteers. Anyone who donates his or her services under the direction of *GSSSC* without compensation is considered a volunteer. Volunteers are not employees of Girl Scouts of Silver Sage, and the policies and procedures contained herein do not constitute an employment contract or create any binding obligation on *GSSSC* and are subject to change at any time at the discretion of Girl Scouts of Silver Sage. *GSSSC* expects that volunteers will respect and implement any such changes. Either the volunteer or *GSSSC* may end the volunteer relationship at any time and for any reason.

Safety is a prime consideration in all activities. All members of Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) are responsible for adhering to the policies, practices, procedures, and guidelines in GSUSA's [Blue Book of Basic Documents](#), [Volunteer Essentials](#), and [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#). These documents are published by GSUSA and are used throughout the national organization.

In addition to all the standard volunteer policies, *GSSSC* has additional policies and standards, including training and certifications, required for some higher-risk activities, and will provide volunteers with any additional materials that may apply to their specific activities, and descriptions and codes of conduct that apply to specific volunteer positions.

Within this document, the term “*GSSSC*” is used interchangeably with the words “the Council.” The term “Volunteer” is defined as any person who is not a paid staff member, who is approved and appointed by *GSSSC*, and who delivers Girl Scout programming. Their participation affects the health, safety, and/or finances of the girl or adult membership.

These policies and procedures will be reviewed annually to ensure they reflect the volunteer management goals *GSSSC*, the current policies and trends in Girl Scouts, as well as current legislative requirements.

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PART 1: POLICIES

OUR COMMITMENT

GSSSC is committed to providing a welcoming and respectful environment for all girls, volunteers, and families. We value the unique backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives that each individual brings to our organization.

This commitment is reflected in our membership, leadership, and programming, and it plays a vital role in helping every girl feel supported, included, and empowered.

All volunteers are expected to uphold the principle that Girl Scouting is for every girl, and to create an environment where all girls can grow with confidence, courage, and character.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

GSSSC maintains a strong policy of equal opportunity. In keeping with GSUSA's [Blue Book of Basic Documents](#); Volunteers at all levels of GSSC shall be selected regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, age, national origin, gender, veteran status, marital status, physical, sensory, or mental disability, or any other legally protected status.

Furthermore, to ensure the membership of GSSSC reflects the diversity of population groups within its jurisdiction; GSSSC is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and outreach in the recruitment, selection, placement, development training, working together, and recognition of volunteers and the extension of Girl Scouting to adults in all communities within its jurisdiction.

Adults and volunteers are responsible for making Girl Scouting a place where girls are as safe emotionally as they are physically. Girl Scouts welcome all girls in grades K-12, regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, family structure, religion, and socioeconomic background. When scheduling, helping plan, and carrying out activities, carefully consider the needs of all girls involved (e.g. financial constraints, religious holidays, accessibility of appropriate transportation, and meeting places).

Any volunteer who engages in or encourages discrimination in any form is subject to release from their volunteer position at the discretion of GSSSC.

The Chief Executive Officer or his/her delegate has the discretion to resolve situations involving volunteers that appear to be outside of these policies.

MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION

All girls and adults participating in Girl Scouts must be registered as members of GSUSA and pay the annual membership dues as outlined by GSUSA, except those adults who are lifetime members.

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS & BENEFITS

Basic Volunteer Requirements

- Membership Registration - Adult volunteers participating in Girl Scouts must be registered as members with GSUSA.
- Must complete and pass a criminal background check.
- Believe in the Girl Scout Mission.
- Accept the Girl Scout Promise and Law.
- Have time to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position.
- Complete all the required training.
- Understand that services are provided without payment.
- Accept supervision and provide feedback.

Benefits to volunteers include:

- GSSSC newsletter and publications.
- Learning opportunities and support from GSSSC staff.
- Supplementary accident insurance as part of GSUSA membership.
- Volunteer experience that may be useful for career development.

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Volunteers are a valuable resource to GSSSC, its staff, and members. Volunteers shall extend the right to be given meaningful assignments, the right to be treated respectfully, the right to effective supervision, the right to full involvement and participation, and the right to appropriate recognition for work done.

In return, volunteers shall agree to perform their duties to the best of their abilities, to support the goals, policies, and procedures of GSSSC, and to ask for assistance and/or guidance from the service unit team or GSSSC staff if they find themselves in a situation that they are unsure of or may conflict with those goals and policies of GSSSC, as detailed in the Conflict Resolution section of this document.

Further, volunteers will agree that they will not use the Girl Scout name, related activities, publications and/or facilities for public or private promotion of their own views and opinions on topics unrelated to Girl Scouting (including, but not limited to, views on sexual orientation, religion, family situations, politics, etc.).

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

GSSSC is committed to the highest ethical standards, and we expect all volunteers to act in the best interest of the organization and its mission. This mission demands that we, as stewards, act ethically to uphold the public trust and the values of responsibility, integrity, openness, honesty, accountability, and respect in the name of Girl Scouts. Not complying with the standards listed below or participating in illegal activities, abuse, or mistreating girls, parents, volunteers, or staff, or otherwise acting in a way that negatively impacts the image of GSSSC, will lead to termination from a leadership position or any volunteer role with GSSSC.

I agree to uphold these values, and I will:

1. Affirm the Girl Scout Promise and Law.
2. Take all required training and comply with GSSSC policies, procedures, and safety

guidelines.

3. Welcome girls and adults from a variety of backgrounds and include them in activities.
4. Make an intentional effort to learn about, experience, and appreciate cultures other than my own.
5. Honor the leadership of the girls and support their decisions.
6. Act responsibly when overseeing Girl Scout funds, maintain accurate records, and timely file required reports. Girl Scout funds are only to be used in direct support of Girl Scout programs and to pay for appropriate Girl Scout expenses.
7. Model the behavior that shows respect for local, state, and federal laws and ordinances, as well as follow GSSSC Volunteer Policies & Procedures, [Volunteer Essentials](#), [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#), and in GSUSA's [Blue Book of Basic Documents](#).
8. Behave in a manner that models the ideals and values of the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Ensure all verbal or written communications (including telephone conversations, emails, texts, newsletters, electronic media, and announcements) do not contain profanity or condescending remarks. Refrain from inappropriate displays of anger, aggression, or berating of individuals in public or private.

VOLUNTEER AS ROLE MODEL

Adult volunteers are role models for adults and girls involved in Girl Scout programs as they work in partnership planning and implementing these programs. Volunteers are expected to honor the diversity of all people in all areas including race, ethnicity, religion, age, national origin, gender, veteran status, marital status, physical, sensory, or mental disability, and any other legally protected status.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

Girl Scouts of Silver Sage Council seeks to ensure the safety of the girls it serves and the adult members who carry out the Girl Scout program by maintaining policies and procedures that create a safe environment for our members. One of those policies is to conduct a criminal background check (CBC) for all new volunteers. Idaho Law also requires a background check for all volunteers working with youth. GSSSC conducts such histories before placing a volunteer and then periodically thereafter. Volunteers may request a copy of their criminal history report.

Who needs to complete a Criminal Background Check with GSSSC?

- Members of GSSSC's Board of Directors, except members of Board committees or Board Appointed task forces who serve in a temporary, advisory position.
- GSSSC staff
- Any person over the age of 18 years who is in the presence of Girl Scouts and engages in their activities more than (2) two times per year.
- Any person over the age of 18 years who
 - Participates in Girl Scout Activities.
 - Carries girls in a motorized vehicle of any type.
 - Participates in overnight activities.
 - Handles troop, service unit, or council funds.
 - Has access to girl data.

- Any member who has been inactive for more than one year must reapply and be re-screened.
- Any person over the age of 18 years who has been screened by another organization, council, or governmental entity must complete the GSSSC screening process as well unless the Criminal Background Check was completed by Verified Volunteers at the same screening level required by GSSSC.
- Rescreening of volunteers will occur every five years for as long as that volunteer is active in a position that requires screening.

Upon the receipt of a successful background check and completion of the volunteer application process, the applicant will become eligible for appointment.

Exceptions to the above are members of Board committees or Board Appointed task forces who serve in a temporary, advisory position.

How do I complete a criminal background check with Girl Scouts of Silver Sage?

After selecting to be a volunteer from the GSSSC website and completing the [membership registration](#), be on the lookout for an e-mail from our trusted vendor's website **Sterling Volunteers** (theadvocates@sterlingvolunteers.com) which offers screening services for our volunteer program.

During the Sterling Volunteers verification process, you will enter the necessary information to process your criminal background check online. Criminal background checks cannot be completed on paper.

Who are The Advocates?

The Advocates are the Sterling Volunteers customer care team. They are available via phone and e-mail and can help with platform usage questions and general inquiries. They can be reached at theadvocates@sterlingvolunteers.com or 1-855-326-1860, Option 3.

How long will the background search take?

Most searches will be returned in 48-72 hours, although that is not a guarantee. In some cases, especially if we find criminal information or if a candidate has lived in multiple locations, the search may take up to a month, or longer.

Why are my DOB and SSN required?

There are three pieces of information needed for an accurate, thorough criminal background check: 1) legal first name and legal last name, correctly spelled; 2) date of birth; and 3) Social Security Number (SSN).

I started the criminal background check and did not finish it. I went back in, and it did not work. What should I do?

Once you create a username and password, you will be able to log back in at any time to complete your criminal background check. If for some reason you cannot regain access to your account, contact theadvocates@sterlingvolunteers.com or by phone at 1-855-326-1860.

How much does a criminal background check cost?

GSSSC is currently covering the cost of criminal background checks. If you would like to make a charitable contribution to GSSSC to help defray the cost of the criminal background check, your contribution will be used to enhance the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. This option can be selected in the final processing of your criminal background check.

What does GSSSC check for? Are you checking my credit?

We only perform a criminal background check. We do not check financial information or credit. Our background check includes the screening of Social Security, National Criminal files, Sex Offender, relevant County Criminal, and Motor Vehicle records.

I had a criminal background check done at my place of employment; do I still need to complete one with GSSSC?

Sterling Volunteers is the criminal background check vendor that is used by GSSSC. We do not accept criminal background checks from other vendors.

What could exclude me from volunteering with Girl Scouts?

Definitions (Idaho Code, Title 18)

- A Felony is a crime that is punishable by death or by imprisonment in the state prison.
- An infraction is a civil public offense, not constituting a crime, which is punishable only by a penalty not exceeding three hundred dollars (\$300) and for which no period of incarceration may be imposed. [Minor traffic offenses in Idaho are called infractions.]
- Every other crime is a misdemeanor.

For purposes of this section, “Conviction” includes charges to which a person pled guilty or no contest.

- Any person convicted of a Felony offense will be denied appointment as a GSSSC volunteer.
- Registered sex offenders will not be considered for volunteer positions in which they are involved, or could be involved, with girls. Additionally, any registered sex offenders residing, staying or visiting the household of a volunteer applicant or current volunteer must be disclosed. Please be advised that GSSSC must be notified immediately of such situations should they arise at any point during the volunteer’s service with GSSSC.
- Providing false information during the Criminal Background Check screening process, such as driver's license number, Social Security number, or date of birth is grounds for automatic disqualification as a Girl Scout Volunteer, regardless of the result of the criminal background check.
- All Misdemeanor convictions, including DUI, will be reviewed by the review committee and a decision will be made regarding volunteer appointments with Girl Scouts of Silver Sage Council.
- The review committee reserves the right to restrict the driving of girls if the applicant shows a history of driving-related infractions.
- If charges are pending related to any criminal offense other than traffic violations, an appointment to GSSSC as an adult volunteer will be suspended pending disposition of the case.

When a record of criminal history is received on an adult member, the review committee will decide to 1) place the applicant, 2) place the applicant with restrictions (i.e. no driving of girls, no handling of money, no administrative duties, etc.), or 3) deny the application. If the application is denied or if a/some restriction(s) is/are placed on participation, clarifying communication advising of the volunteer rejection and a copy of the Criminal Background Check along with a summary of the applicant's rights. Communication will also be sent to the leadership of the troop and the GSSSC staff member to whom the adult member would be accountable, advising the restriction or the denial. No details regarding the nature of the offense will be shared. Records and information concerning negative background checks will be handled confidentially.

All Criminal Background Checks will be conducted by the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) which promotes the accuracy, fairness, and privacy of information in the files of consumer reporting agencies. If an applicant wishes to see the background information, the applicant may request the information through GSSSC.

Records and information concerning negative background checks will be handled confidentially.

For all other offenses, GSSSC will review the applicant's situation on a case-by-case basis. The decision on whether to allow volunteer participation will be within the discretion of GSSSC.

Failure to disclose any criminal conviction at the time of application may ban an applicant from volunteering.

If during the time a volunteer is engaged with GSSSC, he/she is arrested or convicted of a crime (including any criminal driving infractions such as a single DUI), or if a volunteer receives two (2) or more moving violations within two years, he/she must notify GSSSC staff immediately. This includes all such convictions or violations, whether or not they occurred while on Girl Scout business.

Who reviews my background check report?

The review committee consists of at least two (2) people who will review the negative background check report(s) on a case-by-case basis. The following people may serve on the committee:

- Chief Executive Officer or her/his designee
- Anyone else deemed appropriate by the Chief Executive Officer
- Legal Counsel (as the need arises)

Are there any factors taken into consideration when the background checks are reviewed?

Although GSSSC reserves the right to refuse to place a prospective volunteer for any reason, GSSSC also reserves the right to refuse placement of any prospective volunteer with a criminal history, regardless of the nature of the crime or the date of the offense. Factors that may be taken into consideration to determine disqualification or restriction of a person from volunteer participation include but are not limited to: the nature and severity of the criminal conduct, the date of the conviction, the length of time since the criminal conduct occurred, the volunteer's age at the time of the conviction, the sentence type, the position for which the person seeks to volunteer, the circumstances under which the crime was committed, degree of rehabilitation, the outcome of the interview with the applicant and

references, and the number of previous pertinent cases.

What kind of restrictions could be imposed on my volunteer position?

Volunteer approval may include **a restriction of handling funds** if there is a record of:

- Stealing
- Petty theft
- Misuse of troop credit cards, troop funds
- Having a debt with Girl Scouts of Silver Sage
- Writing bad checks

Background checks indicating violation records will be reviewed by GSSSC staff. A driving restriction may be placed on individuals prohibiting them from driving on behalf of GSSSC.

Volunteer approval may include **a driving restriction** if there is:

- Offense involving driving under the influence
- Reckless Operation
- Loss of License

Volunteer approval may include **an administrative restriction** when a leadership position cannot be appointed to the volunteer. Examples include:

- Incomplete or reviewed background check: A volunteer's background check is pending, incomplete, or has been reviewed and the committee decides the volunteer cannot be appointed to a leadership role.
- Insufficient training: The volunteer has not completed the required training or certification programs necessary for a leadership role, such as first aid or specific Girl Scout leadership training.
- Past Conduct Issues: There are concerns or documented issues from a previous role that indicate the volunteer may need further review or a probationary period before being appointed to a leadership position.
- Pending disciplinary actions: There are ongoing disciplinary actions or unresolved issues from previous volunteer roles that need to be addressed before the volunteer can assume a leadership position.
- Health or Accessibility concerns: There may be health or accessibility concerns that need to be considered, requiring adjustments or limitations to ensure the volunteer can effectively fulfill leadership responsibilities without compromising their well-being or the safety of others.

How do I dispute a decision made by Girl Scouts of Silver Sage (Right of Appeal)?

A rejected applicant can request a review of the denial of the appointment through the GSSSC Board of Directors. Any applicant who has been denied will receive 2 forms of communication from GSSSC. The first communication will allow the applicant to dispute or contest the information provided by the reporting agency directly with Sterling Volunteers, GSSSC's Background Check vendor. The second communication will detail the appeal process with GSSSC's Executive Committee of the Board of Directors. Such appeals must be in writing and include (1) an explanation of the circumstances surrounding the conviction, (2) current personal situation, and (3) letters from character references. Ultimately, the decision on whether to allow the volunteer appeal application shall be within the absolute and exclusive

discretion of *GSSSC*.

HARASSMENT/HOSTILITY/BULLYING

GSSSC is committed to and supports an environment in which relationships are characterized by dignity, respect, courtesy, and equitable treatment. It is the policy of *GSSSC* to provide all volunteers, staff, members (girl and adult), or other participants at *GSSSC* events and activities with an environment free from all forms of unlawful or unwelcomed harassment, hostility, and bullying, including implied or express forms of sexual harassment.

Harassment based on race, ethnicity, religion, age, national origin, gender, veteran status, marital status, or presence of any physical, sensory, or mental disability, or any other legally protected status, will not be tolerated and is grounds for release.

This policy includes physical violence as well as intimidation, stalking, coercion, display of weapons, threats, and talking or joking about harassment or hostility, whether in person or through some other means of communication such as writing, telephone, voice mail, e-mail, or any form of social media.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, “bullying” is defined as aggressive behavior that is intentional and that involves an imbalance of power or strength, typically repeated over time.

Cyberbullying is bullying that occurs online. Whether cyberbullying occurs in e-mail, a text message, an online game, or a social networking site, it is prohibited. This includes rumors or images posted online where other people may see them. *GSSSC* will cooperate with police, schools, and other organizations that share our values and who are attempting to enforce laws, regulations, and rules regarding cyberbullying regardless of the potential punishment.

Anyone, regardless of volunteer or member status, who violates this policy and/or refuses to abide by this policy, is prohibited from holding volunteer positions with *GSSSC* and from attending Girl Scout activities, events, and meetings. Any volunteer who engages in or encourages bullying is subject to immediate release from their volunteer position.

If you feel you have been subjected to harassment of any type, whether by another volunteer, youth member, *GSSSC* staff member, or any agent of *GSSSC*, promptly report the incident to your Membership Manager, the Director of Membership, or the Chief Executive Officer. *GSSSC* will investigate the report promptly and will not tolerate any retaliation resulting from a good-faith complaint.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

GSSSC strives to provide volunteers with an environment free of sexual harassment, which is a form of sex discrimination. It is expressly forbidden for any volunteer, male or female, to sexually harass another volunteer, staff member, Girl Scout member or other participants at *GSSSC* events and activities, of the same or opposite sex. Under this policy, *GSSSC* will not tolerate or condone sexual harassment of any kind.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome conduct which is either of a sexual nature or which is directed at an individual because of that individual’s sex or gender, and/or sexual orientation. Sexual harassment can be verbal, visual, or physical conduct that denigrates or shows

hostility or aversion towards an individual. This includes but is not limited to displays or demonstrations of sexual activity, sexual advances or flirtations, requests for sexual favors, obscene or vulgar comments or gestures, sexual jokes or comments about a person's body, propositions or suggestive or insulting comments of a sexual nature, or any other similar inappropriate behavior under federal, state and local law

Discussion of sexual issues is a private matter between girls and their families. If information on sexuality is part of a Girl Scout program, it is to be presented in an informational, objective, and nonbiased manner with prior written consent of a parent or guardian. Troop leaders will need to have parents or caregivers sign the [Permission to Participate in Sensitive Issues](#) form.

GSSSC maintains an environment that encourages any volunteer who believes that she/he has been the subject of any unlawful or unwelcome harassment as defined in this policy, to report the incident to the Council immediately. Similarly, a volunteer who believes that a girl member is the victim of any form of harassment must immediately report the fact to the Council. GSSSC will initiate an investigation and, depending on the findings, take appropriate corrective action.

If the harassment involves unwanted physical touching, coerced physical confinement, or coerced sex acts, the conduct may constitute a crime. Contact the local police department or, in an emergency, dial 9-1-1

GSSSC reserves the right to refuse appointment/reappointment to any position and to dismiss or suspend from any position or affiliation with GSSSC, any volunteer or member who violates this policy.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest exists when the interests or concerns of any volunteer member or any member of their family or any party, group, or organization in which the volunteer is actively involved may be seen as competing with the interests or concerns of GSSSC.

No volunteer or any member of his/her family shall utilize his/her position or contact information acquired as part of that position for monetary gain, to advocate for positions and causes not directly related to Girl Scout business, or to solicit for fund-raising for other organizations, including their children's schools, sports programs, etc. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of in-person requests, regular mail, telephone, email, text messaging, or any other electronic or other form of communication.

The purpose of the conflict-of-interest policy is to protect GSSSC's constituents when volunteers are contemplating entering a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of a volunteer or family member holding a leadership position over Girl Scout members or other volunteers.

Duty to Disclose: Volunteers shall disclose in writing a full description of any activity, interest, or relationship that might create or appear to create a conflict of interest as soon as practicable, before the inception of the activity, interest, or relationship.

In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest where a volunteer or family member is expected to gain financially, the volunteer must disclose the existence of financial interest and be allowed to disclose all facts to their service unit manager and GSSSC staff representative to consider the proposed transaction or arrangement. A volunteer who has a conflict of interest with any GSSSC activity or program, whether personal, philosophical, or

financial, will not be accepted as a volunteer with GSSSC or will be limited in their participation to volunteer positions that are clearly outside the area of conflict.

If a volunteer has brought legal action against GSSSC or has caused GSSSC to initiate legal action, GSSSC has the right, at its discretion, to decline to appoint that person to a volunteer position within GSSSC, or to remove that volunteer from her or his position is currently in place. Legal action includes any or all remedies of existing federal and state law.

This policy statement is not intended to apply to gifts and/or similar entertainment of nominal value that are in keeping with good business ethics and do not oblige the recipient. Any matter of question or interpretation that arises relating to this policy should be referred to the Chief Executive Officer for a decision. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

NON-DISCLOSURE AND DATA PRIVACY

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary, privileged, or sensitive information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a staff member, volunteer, member (girl or adult), or another person, or overall GSSSC or personal business. Confidential information includes but is not limited to non-public technical, business, operational, and financial data, as well as private information about councils, girls, volunteers, customers, suppliers, and employees. Examples may include names, addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and information related to family health, living arrangements, or financial circumstances.

Data Privacy, as defined under applicable laws and Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) policies, refers to the responsible collection, use, storage, and protection of personal data. GSSSC, as a Girl Scout council, is committed to Data Privacy compliance to safeguard the personal information of all our members and partners. Volunteers are key partners in upholding this responsibility.

Personal, medical, and/or financial information about any girl or adult member that becomes known to a volunteer must be kept strictly confidential and may only be shared when necessary, and only through approved GSSSC systems or designated staff channels. Health or medical information may be disclosed solely for treatment or emergency purposes.

Names, addresses, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers of girls and adults must never be shared with any person or business outside of Girl Scouting, except when necessary for safety or emergency situations. Confidential information must not be published in any form, including on the internet or media platforms.

Volunteers should be aware that email is not always secure, and confidential content must not be transmitted through unsecured means. They are expected to take all reasonable steps to protect personal data in their possession, whether in paper or electronic form, and ensure it is stored securely.

Volunteers must always exercise sound judgment and discretion to avoid any unauthorized or improper disclosures of confidential information. Discussions in public places should be limited to non-sensitive matters that do not compromise member privacy. The privacy of all members must be respected and always protected.

Any volunteer affiliated with multiple youth-serving organizations is expected to honor and protect the integrity, proprietary materials, and reputation of Girl Scouts. Using or sharing Girl Scouts' confidential or branded materials with competing organizations is strictly prohibited and may lead to suspension, release, or non-renewal of the volunteer role.

Failure to comply with these confidentiality and Data Privacy standards may result in the volunteer being released from their position with GSSSC or facing other corrective actions.

Any volunteer serving in a leadership or sensitive role will be required to sign a [Non-Disclosure Agreement \(NDA\)](#) to confirm their understanding and commitment to confidentiality and data privacy.

WHISTLEBLOWER

Retaliation against anyone who has reported an allegation of harassment, sexual harassment, or any violation of any GSSSC policy is expressly prohibited and, if it occurs, will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including releasing the person who has engaged in the retaliatory behavior from their volunteer position. No volunteer making a good faith report shall be subjected to any retaliation from GSSSC. GSSSC's complete Whistleblower Policy is available upon request by contacting customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org

CHILD ABUSE

GSSSC maintains and supports environments that are free of child abuse and neglect as defined by the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act. Child abuse and neglect are unlawful acts. Every volunteer who works with youth is required to complete the ***Girl Scouts Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention*** training on the Girl Scout training platform, gsLearn.

Idaho laws require staff to report incidents of suspected abuse or neglect to the Idaho Child Protective Services (CPS) or local law enforcement agencies. GSSSC staff who become aware of a suspected case of child abuse involving any child participating in GSSSC activities or events are guided by GSSSC staff policies, procedures, and Idaho State law. For volunteers' responsibilities in this regard, see Volunteer Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect, below.

GSSSC reserves the right to refuse membership endorsement or reappointment, and to dismiss or to exclude from affiliation with GSSSC, any volunteer who in the judgment of GSSSC poses a risk of injury to a minor or is believed to have abused or neglected any child or who has been convicted of any crime against a child.

Abuse and neglect include, but are not limited to the following:

- Emotional mistreatment of girl members or other children participating in GSSSC activities or events, including verbal abuse or verbal attacks.
- Physical neglect of girl members or other children participating in GSSSC activities or events, including failure to provide adequate safety measures, care, or appropriate supervision of activities.
- Any form of sexual abuse of a child, including sexual touching, inappropriate bodily contact, exhibitionism, voyeurism, or any involvement of girl members or other children participating in GSSSC activities or events, with pornographic materials.
- Physical abuse of girl members participating in GSSSC activities or events, including all types of corporal (physical) punishment, e.g. spanking, slapping, or shaking.

Although GSSSC may terminate a volunteer at any time for any reason, abuse and neglect are unlawful and will not be tolerated. As a result, GSSSC reserves the right to:

- Suspend from his/her position any volunteer during an investigation of allegations of abuse or neglect. This includes instances where the volunteer was aware of potential abuse or neglect by another and did not report it to staff, CPS, or local enforcement officials.
- Refuse membership endorsement or re-appointment to any volunteer accused of, arrested for, or convicted of child abuse or child neglect, or is a registered sex offender.
- Dismiss or exclude from affiliation with GSSSC any volunteer who has been accused of, arrested for, or convicted of child abuse or neglect or is a registered sex offender.

Volunteer Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect:

As a volunteer, you are strongly encouraged to report any suspected incident of child neglect or abuse directly to Child Protective Services (CPS). However, even if you choose not to make a report directly to CPS, you must report any suspected incidents to GSSSC staff. Volunteers who make a report directly to CPS should also notify their GSSSC's Membership Manager, or other GSSSC staff overseeing their volunteer program area, that they have done so.

Procedures for reporting suspected cases of child neglect or abuse:

- Contact the nearest law enforcement agency or Child Protective Services (CPS) within 24 hours to report the information. You can contact CPS by calling (866) 343-4276. This toll-free, 24-hour number will give you the local CPS number in your area.
- Volunteers are strongly encouraged to report suspected incidents of child neglect or abuse directly to CPS within 24 hours. If they choose not to report directly, they must report the incident to GSSSC staff. CPS can be reached at 1-866-343-4276, a toll-free, 24 hour number that provides the local CPS contact information. Volunteers working in troop programs should also inform their Service Unit Manager, who will contact CPS within 24 hours.
- If you are a volunteer working with girls in settings other than the troop program, such as a community overnight or day camp, or other event, please contact law enforcement or CPS directly, or the staff person working with the specific event or activity.
- The reporting volunteer must also complete and file a GSSSC [Accident and Incident Report](#).

All information is to be kept confidential. Information is to be discussed only with appropriate council staff. Any person making a good faith report concerning suspected child abuse or neglect is provided civil and criminal immunity by the Idaho Code Section 15-1606.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflicts and disagreements are an inevitable part of life, and when handled constructively can enhance communication and relationships.

For purposes of this policy, a conflict is defined as any kind of disagreement between two or more people.

GSSSC is committed to providing individuals with the right to a safe and neutral process to resolve conflicts. Recognizing that everyone has both a personal interest in and a share of the responsibility for resolving conflicts in which she or he is involved, GSSSC uses a progressive conflict resolution process for volunteers.

The most effective way of resolving complaints and concerns is usually by calm, open discussion between the individuals involved by telephone or in person. For this reason, before any kind of escalation, the parties involved are encouraged to try to resolve the matter informally among themselves. E-mail exchanges, text messages, and social media communication are generally not conducive to a prompt and efficient resolution and, therefore, are not considered an effective way of resolving conflict and should be avoided.

Below are potential scenarios and steps to follow before escalating a conflict or concern. Please use the [Conflict Management Notes Worksheet](#) to guide the conversation:

- **Girls in a Troop:** Has the troop leader addressed this situation? Has the troop leader worked with the girls, parents, and other troop volunteers to resolve this matter? If it cannot be resolved at the troop level, has the service unit manager been asked to assist as a mediator for the troop?
- **Adults Within a Troop:** Has the troop leader addressed the situation? Has the troop leader mediated with the parties involved? If it cannot be resolved at the troop level, has the service unit manager been asked to assist as a mediator for the troop?
- **Volunteers:** Has the troop leader/service unit team member/volunteer worked to address the situation? If it cannot be resolved between the volunteers, has the service unit manager been asked to assist as a mediator for the troop?

Conflict/Problem Resolution Procedure

If all the steps above have been taken to resolve the conflict informally but the matter has not been resolved, then the Council's Membership Manager should be informed of the dispute and be provided with a copy of the completed [Conflict Management Notes Worksheet](#)

As soon as GSSSC's Membership Manager is notified and given the [Conflict Management Notes Worksheet](#), the information-gathering process will begin. This process can include phone calls, e-mails, and/or in-person meetings with all parties involved. Please note that this information gathering can take a minimum of 10 business days. Once all information has been gathered, GSSSC's Membership Manager will provide a resolution to all affected parties.

If deemed necessary, other Council staff members may be brought in to assist in resolving any situation.

DELINQUENT FUNDS

GSSSC reserves the right to restrict or remove from GSSSC any person who owes money to GSSSC

Restriction or dismissal may occur as a result of delinquency and/or mismanagement of troop funds. Reappointment to a volunteer position is at the discretion of GSSSC. GSSSC will make a good faith attempt to collect any monies owed and reserves the right to use outside collection agencies. If restitution is not paid within the agreed-upon time, GSSSC retains the right to file criminal and/or civil charges.

GSSSC reserves the right to take legal action if the funds owed are not remitted. A legal action includes but is not limited to, taking out a warrant to appear in a small claims court, reporting to law enforcement, and submitting to legal and or collection agency.

GSSSC volunteers who are authorized signers on a troop bank account are personally responsible for all financial consequences of overdrafts that they initiate.

A volunteer owing a debt to GSSSC for more than 4 months will be removed from their volunteer position if there is no communication with GSSSC regarding a payment plan. She/he will not be eligible to be reappointed or serve in an appointed volunteer position until that debt is paid in full. When the debt is paid in full, the volunteer may serve only in a volunteer role that does not have financial responsibilities for one full Girl Scout year or upon reevaluation. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to contact GSSSC and request a review of her/his volunteer eligibility status.

A troop owing cookie funds to GSSSC will not be allowed to participate in any money-earning activities, such as next year's Fall Product or Cookie Sale. The Troop Fall Product and Troop Cookie Manager are required to sign a contract at the beginning of the sale and are therefore held personally responsible for any Fall Product or Cookie funds that are due to Council or proceeds that are due to the troop.

Additional restrictions or actions may be applied for specific circumstances; the volunteer will be notified in writing of any restrictions or actions taken.

Volunteers, both at troop and service unit levels, must follow the policies and procedures related to Finances and Money Earning as detailed in both this document and [Volunteer Essentials](#). This includes but is not limited to:

- Adhering to requirements for submitting annual finance reports by the established deadlines.
- Following requirements and guidelines for appropriate money-earning activities.

AGREEMENTS AND CONTRACTS

Volunteers may not enter into or sign any agreements or contracts that contain a hold-harmless agreement or obligate GSSSC to assume any liability or financial responsibilities. In instances where hold-harmless agreements may be required, contact customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org.

Volunteers may sign rental car contracts or agreement paperwork after the trip approval form has been approved. A copy of this paperwork must be turned in to GSSSC before the trip. Bus rentals must be approved, and contracts can only be signed by a GSSSC designee.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE

Volunteers may not interact with, or deliver programs to, girl members or other children participating in GSSSC activities, or be in Girl Scout branded clothing, while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs/substances. Alcohol shall not be available or consumed during any Girl Scout activity or program where girls are present on the property.

(Note: property includes the entire physical space under GSSSC staff or volunteer control, or which is being used by them to deliver a program or event; e.g. if a service unit (SU) is renting part of a state park, the property includes the space the SU has rented and any camp space rented by adults providing Girl Scout programming or accompanying girls, even if they are in a private RV away from the girls.)

The use of prescription or over-the-counter drugs in a manner not prescribed by a medical professional or the drug manufacturer is also prohibited. However, over-the-counter drugs

or prescribed medication may be used for its stated purposes if the recommended dosage is not exceeded. In addition, the medication should not prevent the volunteer from performing necessary duties safely and effectively. The volunteer is to check with his/her physician or pharmacist to determine whether the medication could inhibit the volunteer's effective performance, including driving.

The consumption of alcohol on GSSSC properties is limited to adult-only fundraising events planned and organized by GSSSC. All other adult events desiring alcohol usage require prior written approval from the Chief Executive Officer. No girl members will be permitted anywhere on the site at any GSSSC event at which alcohol is served.

Violators of the alcohol and drug policy will be asked to leave GSSSC property or activity site. Any violation of this policy will be grounds for appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including removal from the volunteer role.

TOBACCO/SMOKING/VAPING

Volunteers function as role models at all times, and therefore the use of tobacco/smoking/vaping products is prohibited whenever girl members are present in any environment. In all cases, Idaho State laws regarding smoking must be observed whether children are present or not. (No girl member or other children participating in GSSSC activities or events may smoke at any Girl Scout event or while conducting any Girl Scout business, even if the participant is of legal age to smoke.) This policy applies to all types of smoking/vaping and similar apparatus and the use of tobacco in any form.

TRANSPORTATION

Volunteers who drive vehicles for Girl Scout activities must be adults, 21 years or older, with a valid driver's license, have been licensed drivers for at least three years, and carry current motor vehicle insurance in compliance with Idaho State Law.

Note: The three-year experience requirement begins at the time the driver becomes licensed. It does not include the period during which the driver had an instruction/learner's permit.

All volunteers are required to comply with all relevant federal, state, or local laws regarding safety, including laws regarding seat belt use and the use of cell phones while driving. The primary volunteer in charge of a Girl Scout outing or trip should inquire with all drivers that they are volunteers, without a driving restriction, have a valid driver's license, and a current auto insurance policy. The primary volunteer doesn't need to maintain a copy of these documents.

Check for additional information under the section "Transporting Girl Scouts" in [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#).

FIREARMS AND WEAPONS

Possession of any firearm is prohibited, whether carried on the person, or stored in a vehicle, by volunteers or non-members attending any Girl Scout activity or event.

At troop meetings or event sites not owned or leased by GSSSC, all firearms must be secured to ensure that children cannot access them.

This policy does not apply to law enforcement officers who are acting in an official capacity or are required to carry weapons even when off-duty, or to any GSSSC-approved rifle and/or

gun-safety programs according to the guidelines for such in [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#).

Subject to exceptions noted above, use or possession of a deadly weapon or firearm, as defined below, by girls or adults is prohibited at any Girl Scout activities.

Idaho statutes, Section 18-3302 defined deadly weapons and firearms.

- Deadly weapon is “any dirk, dirk knife, bowie knife, dagger or firearm” and “any other weapon, device, instrument, material or substance that is designed and manufactured to be readily capable of causing death or serious bodily injury.”
- Firearm means “any weapon that will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive.

NOTE: Pocket knives, archery equipment, and firearms, when used for their intended Girl Scout purposes and under-trained adult supervision for program activities, are allowed under this policy.

Any violation of this policy will be grounds for appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including removal from the volunteer role.

UNIFORMS

Girl Scouts of the USA is a uniformed organization in which the [uniform](#) is a symbol of pride and respect and a mark of distinction. The Girl Scout uniform for girls is required when participating in Girl Scout activities, events or representing Girl Scouts.

The official emblem of the Girl Scout Movement in the United States is the trefoil. The badges, insignia, and uniforms of Girl Scouts of the United States of America shall be fully protected and shall be made available to and used only by members registered with Girl Scouts of the United States of America, or persons authorized by the National Board of Directors.

An adult uniform is not required for participation in Girl Scout activities. Volunteers who are conducting Girl Scout business or representing Girl Scouts are encouraged to wear the Girl Scout pin or logo wear when not otherwise in uniform.

ANIMALS

Animals may not be brought onto any *GSSSC* property or into any activity without the written permission of the Chief Executive Officer or her/his designee. Exceptions will be made for animals needed to assist persons with disabilities and for fulfilling program activities.

PROPERTY

No person should use or alter *GSSSC* property or equipment without permission from the Council.

The use of *GSSSC* properties and/or equipment, for personal gain or purposes of solicitation or distribution of literature for non-sanctioned Girl Scout events is prohibited.

No sale or solicitation of materials or services of any type is allowed on *GSSSC* properties without the written permission of *GSSSC*.

"Solicitation" means requesting another person to purchase goods and/or services; donate goods, services, or money to any person or organization; or sign petitions or the like for any purpose.

PART 2: PROCEDURES

VOLUNTEER PHILOSOPHY

GSSSC volunteers, supported, directed, and assisted by GSSSC staff, make Girl Scouting available to girls within its 72,000 square miles of jurisdiction. Our volunteers are GSSSC's greatest asset in guiding generations of girls to become leaders in their own lives and the world. It is through this volunteer leadership that the Girl Scout Movement serves girls and realizes its mission to build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

GSSSC is firm in its commitment to creating an organization that values diversity among its volunteers. We cherish the rich traditions of Girl Scouting while challenging ourselves to be innovative in approaching programs and services to meet the current needs of our girls and volunteers. GSSSC encourages and supports open and respectful communication with other volunteers, Girl Scout members, GSSSC staff, and community members. To ensure job satisfaction of volunteers and to utilize the talents of volunteers effectively, the following policies and procedures must be established and maintained. Together we can work to ensure the safety and well-being of all members.

GSSSC has created a culture of appreciation that includes both formal and informal methods to recognize all volunteers for their time, talent, and impact. Volunteers can also be nominated, or they can nominate other volunteers for service unit (SU) and more formal council and national recognition consistent with the GSUSA guidelines, Adult Recognitions in Girl Scouting. More information can be found in GSSSC's [Adult Recognition](#).

VOLUNTEER WELLNESS

Volunteer service can involve multiple commitments. Enthusiasm, energy, and positive attitudes are essential to providing girls and adults with worthwhile and enjoyable leadership experiences. To this end, adult volunteers mustn't overextend themselves by volunteering for too many overlapping roles. Building a broader base of adult support by encouraging others to participate increases and expands the opportunities for everyone to grow and share. GSSSC is committed to providing enriching quality experiences for both girls and adults.

VOLUNTEER/STAFF PARTNERSHIP

GSSSC staff are employed to provide full-time managerial and specialist expertise, research capability, and continuity to support the delivery of the program to girls through volunteers.

Volunteers and staff are partners in implementing the Mission, the Girl Scout Leadership

Experience, and the goals of GSSSC. Each partner must understand and respect the needs and abilities of the other.

VOLUNTEER ROLE

A volunteer is any adult (male or female, 18 years of age or older) who, without compensation or expectation of compensation, performs a task on behalf of GSSSC. A volunteer must be approved (registered member of Girl Scouts and background check approved) and appointed by GSSSC before performing the task.

All adults accompanying troop/group meetings or activities regularly or attending any overnight activity or who at any time are assuming care, custody, or control of girl members and/or Girl Scout money must be both a registered adult member of GSUSA and a volunteer of GSSSC.

GSSSC has two main categories of volunteers:

- Operational Volunteers: Adult members who provide direct/indirect services to girls and adults. Operational volunteers are appointed for a term of up to one year, depending on the volunteer position held.
NOTE: Episodic volunteers are also operational volunteers who serve on a one-time or limited basis. These volunteers may not go through the same appointment process based on the responsibilities/tasks of their assignment.
- Governance Volunteers or Board members: Members who communicate ideas and feelings, influence proposals, and make decisions that govern GSSSC and its members. They are accountable to the voting members of GSSSC. Governance volunteers are elected or appointed. Board members are primarily 18 years of age or older, although girls aged 14 and above may serve as National Council Delegates or Alternates. See [GSSSC Bylaws](#)

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS AND PLACEMENT

Each volunteer position will have a description that defines specific responsibilities, clarifies expectations, and forms the basis for assessment of volunteer performance, reappointment, rotation to another position, and/or release.

GSSSC makes every attempt to place volunteers in positions that match the skills of the volunteer and the needs of both GSSSC and the volunteer. However, final placement decisions will be made by GSSSC in its sole discretion. Volunteers involved in Program delivery (“Operational Volunteers”) will be provided with a written position description. Placement in a volunteer position can be terminated at any time by either party for any reason.

Note: All volunteers who are the primary leaders or advisors for their girl group must be at least 18 years old (or graduated high school). Limited exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis, e.g., Ambassador girls who lead a Daisy troop under close supervision of their Ambassador troop leaders

ACCEPTANCE AND APPOINTMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer eligibility is determined, and acceptance is completed online. Before applying for a volunteer position, it is the responsibility of the prospective volunteer to review the volunteer position description for the role for which they are applying.

Girl Scout volunteers must be appointed to their position, using the procedures below. It is the responsibility of the prospective volunteer to complete all the required steps. GSSSC reserves the right to limit volunteer involvement until all steps have been completed.

1. The prospective volunteer reviews the volunteer position descriptions located on GSSSC website to determine their interest in becoming a volunteer.
2. The prospective volunteer joins Girl Scouts by registering online, selecting the appropriate volunteer role, and paying the membership dues.
3. The prospective volunteer completes the required criminal background check. Criminal background checks are conducted every 5 years for current/active volunteers. GSSSC will notify volunteers when their criminal background check needs to be renewed.
4. The prospective volunteer receives notification that her/his criminal background check has been approved.
5. After reviewing the volunteer position description, the new volunteer accepts the position by signing and returning their volunteer position description to GSSSC.
6. The new volunteer appointment is conditional based on the successful completion of the required training for their position.

Appointment Terms

- Operational volunteers may be appointed for a term of up to one year and will be reappointed based upon completion of responsibilities as outlined in the volunteer position description. Please see the *Volunteer Supervision, Performance Assessment, and Reappointment* section of this document for more information.
- Terms for governance volunteers (including delegates, members and Officers of Board of Directors and its committees, etc.), vary and are detailed in the Girl Scouts of Silver Sage Council Board-Approved [Council Bylaws](#) {April 30, 2021}

By accepting a volunteer role with Girl Scouts of Silver Sage, whether as a troop leader, service unit team member, or council advisory committee member, individuals acknowledge that they are expected to uphold the values, mission, and policies of Girl Scouts, including the behavioral expectations outlined in this document. Acceptance of a volunteer position implies agreement to act in alignment with council procedures and the principles of integrity, respect, accountability, and safety. GSSSC reserves the right to take corrective action, including removal from a volunteer position, when these expectations are not met.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING, SUPPORT AND PROGRAM QUALITY

To ensure Girl Scouts receive a meaningful, high-quality experience, Girl Scouts of Silver Sage provides robust training and support for all volunteers.

The purpose of Volunteer Training

Volunteer training is not just about checking boxes, it is about equipping troop leaders and volunteers with the tools, knowledge, and confidence to deliver the full Girl Scout Leadership Experience. *The Girl Scout Leadership Experience is what makes Girl Scouting a unique experience for girls and includes research-based processes such as girl-led, learning by doing, and cooperative learning.* The experience is rooted in four key program pillars:

- STEM
- Outdoor
- Life Skills
- Entrepreneurship

When troop leaders plan activities and badgework that span all four areas, girls benefit from a well-rounded girl-led journey that fosters confidence, leadership, and real-world skills. Volunteer training helps secure you're ready to guide your troop through this experience effectively and meaningfully.

Required Training for Troop Leaders

All new troop leaders must complete the following training upon acceptance of their volunteer role:

- GSSSC New Leader Orientation: Covers the Girl Scout mission and structure, basic troop operations, and available support systems. Offered in person or by Zoom (on request).
- GSUSA Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Training: Ensures compliance with state law and prepares volunteers to recognize, prevent, and report abuse. Available on gsLearn.
- Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) Training: Guides leaders through the online planning tool that provides badge requirements, meeting plans, tracking, and more. Available on gsLearn.
- Girl Scouts in the Outdoors: Prepares volunteers to lead safe and enriching outdoor activities like hikes and nature outings. Available on gsLearn

Ongoing Training and Support

Volunteers are encouraged to continue developing their skills and confidence throughout their Girl Scout journey. This may include optional workshops, enrichment opportunities, and refresher training.

Training expectations for specialized roles are outlined in each volunteer position description. Certain high-risk activities may require additional training or certification before proceeding. Refer to [Volunteer Essentials](#) and [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) for more details.

Volunteer training is delivered in various formats to meet individual learning styles, including written guides, in-person sessions, and online interactive courses. Training records are tracked in gsLearn, and volunteers are encouraged to maintain personal

records as well.

Financial Support for Training

Troops may choose to cover volunteer training costs as a troop expense, especially when training enhances program quality or safety.

VOLUNTEER SUPERVISION, PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT, AND REAPPOINTMENT

Volunteers are essential in providing support, guidance, and supervision to other volunteers. In addition, *GSSSC* staff shall be available to all volunteers for consultation and assistance. To have the best experience, volunteers are encouraged to utilize this support system to help navigate new roles or challenges.

Supervision of volunteers may include monthly verbal and/or written coaching by Council's membership staff, based on expectations outlined in the volunteer position description. The purpose of the coaching could be to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of *GSSSC* volunteers, to evaluate changes that need to be made, to help assess whether a position is a good fit or to make any other recommendations to help the volunteer be successful in her/his role.

Volunteers are automatically reappointed to their current volunteer position(s) unless otherwise notified by *GSSSC* staff. Exceptions are the Fall Product and Cookie Manager positions. For these roles, the volunteer will sign an annual contract. In the case of unsatisfactory performance, the volunteer will be asked to make changes or to fulfill specified requirements to correct the unfavorable behavior within a specified timeframe. Failure to improve performance will subject a volunteer to redirection or release. At any time, a volunteer may be appointed to another Girl Scout position, removed from a position, or may resign from a position.

Service unit team members will be reappointed based on past performance, adherence to *GSSSC* and *GSUSA* policies and procedures, support of the Girl Scout mission, promise, and law, supporting *GSSSC* goals, as well as positive relationships with the community, parents, other volunteers, and *GSSSC* staff. Service unit team positions are a one-year, renewable term, except for the service unit manager position, which is a three (3) -year term to encourage succession planning. Service unit team members will be evaluated on their performance before reappointment. There will be mutual acceptance of position accountabilities, expectations, and time commitments.

Volunteers with financial responsibility to troops/groups or *GSSSC* will not be reappointed to a position if the required financial responsibilities have not been met.

Although troop finances can be managed by any approved, registered adult listed to the troop, troop leaders and troop treasurers are ultimately responsible for the troop's finances and its submission via the Finance Tab. Troop cookie and fall product managers are responsible for all cookie and fall product troop funds and funds due to *GSSSC*.

VOLUNTEER RESIGNATION

Volunteers may occasionally need or want to resign their positions before the end of their terms. If a volunteer elects to leave their volunteer position, GSSSC requests that the following steps be followed:

1. Notify the Membership Manager with as much lead time as possible to ensure a smooth transition and discuss the reason(s) for ending the volunteer position.
2. When applicable, we ask that the volunteer assist in identifying a replacement and communicating her/his decision with members of the troop and/or service unit team.

The volunteer may be required to balance Girl Scout funds/accounts and return property and records before her/his release. The volunteer and their GSSSC Membership Manager will be responsible for completing all necessary steps to ensure a smooth transition.

VOLUNTEER REDIRECT/RELEASE

Girl Scouts of Silver Sage (GSSSC) may redirect or release a volunteer from their position at any time. This action may be initiated by either GSSSC or the volunteer, prior to the end of a term of appointment, and may be based on a variety of reasons. All decisions to release a volunteer are carefully reviewed and evaluated on a case-by-case basis to ensure fairness, safety, and alignment with Girl Scout values.

A volunteer may be released or redirected for reasons including, but not limited to:

- Restructuring or elimination of the volunteer role.
- Inability or failure to complete the requirements or the responsibilities of the position.
- Conduct that is inconsistent with the values, mission, or principles of the Girl Scout Movement.
- Behavior that creates a disruptive, unwelcoming, or unsafe environment for other volunteers, girls, families, or staff. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Bullying, harassment, or intimidation of other volunteers, girls, or parents.
 - Persistent non-communication or failure to collaborate in a team-based setting.
 - Disruptive behavior that interferes with troop functioning or service unit effectiveness.
 - Speaking negatively or disrespectfully about girls, families, staff, or other volunteers.
 - Posting inappropriate, negative, or inflammatory comments about Girl Scouts, GSSSC, or its members on social media or other public forums.
- Failure to support the goals, programs, policies, or initiatives of GSSSC or GSUSA.
- Refusal to comply with GSSSC or Girl Scouts of the USA policies and procedures, including but not limited to:
 - Unauthorized possession of dangerous weapons on Girl Scout property or during Girl Scout activities.
 - Willful violation of safety or security procedures, or careless actions that endanger others.
 - Failure to submit required financial reports or obtain permission for additional money-earning activities.

- Non-compliance with travel procedures or [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#).
- Acts of discrimination or harassment based on race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status, marital status, or any legally protected category.
- Membership in or public support of an organization whose values conflict with those of GSUSA or GSSSC.
- Abuse, neglect, or mistreatment of girls or adults.
- Criminal behavior, including conviction of a felony, acts of violence, or credible threats.
- Being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substance while volunteering; or the use, possession or sale of illegal substances while on Girl Scout premises or at Girl Scout events (excluding medications lawfully prescribed and responsibly used).
- Breach of confidentiality, especially relating to personal, health, or financial information.
- Refusal to participate in conflict resolution efforts with GSSSC staff, other volunteers or families.
- Misuse or misappropriation of troop, service unit, or council funds, or failure to resolve financial obligations owed to GSSSC.

All volunteers who are redirected or released from a position will be notified in writing. GSSSC will make every effort to maintain confidentiality; however, in some cases it may be necessary to inform affected individuals or teams of the change to ensure continued program integrity and member safety.

Volunteers who are released or redirected are no longer considered approved volunteers with GSSSC. However, they remain members of GSUSA and GSSSC unless it is determined that they no longer meet the membership criteria, specifically, the requirement to support the Girl Scout mission and values.

Depending on the nature and severity of the situation, individuals who are released or redirected may also be restricted from attending or participating in Girl Scout activities and events, even as general members.

REINSTATEMENT OF RELEASED VOLUNTEERS

Girl Scout volunteers who have been released may be considered for reinstatement to their volunteer position. A former/prospective volunteer who wishes to be reinstated as a volunteer with GSSSC may submit a request in writing after 24 months from the date of GSSSC decision to restrict or remove the individual from her or his position. Fulfillment of the waiting period and submission of a request does not guarantee an applicant will be reinstated as a volunteer.

It is the responsibility of the former/prospective volunteer to complete all the required steps to apply for reinstatement as a volunteer.

When a volunteer is reinstated, GSSSC reserves the right to coach the volunteer for a minimum of 12 months to ensure compliance with the Girl Scout Promise and Law and their volunteer position description. Coaching may include but is not limited to check-ins with GSSSC staff, training updates/refreshers, troop/event drop-ins, etc. Should a

reoccurrence arise where the reinstated volunteer is having the same issues/behaviors that led to their original release GSSSC reserves the right to immediately release them from all volunteer positions with the organization.

GSSSC reserves the right to limit or deny reinstated volunteer involvement as deemed appropriate.

OTHER YOUTH-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS

To ensure the integrity of our brand and the safety of our members, all volunteers are charged with ensuring that girl members participate in activities that are safe, girl-led, and conducted under the supervision of registered and trained adult Girl Scout volunteers.

Girl Scouts will continue doing what is best for girls and Girl Scouts – that means a strong girl-led, all-girl, and girl-focused program. All Girl Scout members should:

1. Use the full name of Girl Scouts whenever possible. Do not refer to Girl Scouts as “Scouts” or “Scouting.”
2. Wear uniforms proudly and publicly whenever you are representing Girl Scouts. Do not mix uniform pieces with those of other youth-serving organizations.
3. Use the “Girl Scouts” name, logos, and likenesses according to guidelines provided by Girl Scouts of the USA. If you wish to use the Girl Scout logo, please contact GSSSC’s marketing department at customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org for assistance and approval.
4. When participating in community events such as parades, flag ceremonies, or festivals, request a distinct Girl Scout booth or marching space if possible.
5. If girls are members of multiple youth-serving organizations, ensure that funds earned by Girl Scouts are spent on Girl Scout expenses and Girl Scout troop experiences only.
6. Sharing of membership information including, but not limited to, name, phone number, email addresses, program level, and membership status is strictly prohibited.

FLYERS/INFORMATION IN MAILBOXES

18 U.S.C. § 1725 states that *“whoever knowingly or willfully deposits anyailable matter, such as statements of accounts, circulars, sales bills, or other like matter, on which no postage has been paid, in any letter box established, approved, or accepted by the postal service, for the receipt or delivery of mail matter, or any mail route, with intent to avoid payment of lawful postage thereon, shall for each such offense be fined under this title.”* This means that under this title, Girl Scouts and Girl Scout volunteers may not place any matter, not bearing postage, into a mailbox. This includes flyers, Cookie Program information, letters, etc.

APPROPRIATE GRADE-LEVEL TROOPS/GROUPS

Girls participate in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience in troops or independently, organized by the following program grade levels:

- Girl Scout Daisies: Grade K-1
- Girl Scout Brownies: Grade 2-3
- Girl Scout Juniors: Grade 4-5
- Girl Scout Cadettes: Grade 6-8
- Girl Scout Seniors: Grade 9-10
- Girl Scout Ambassadors: Grade 11-12

Each girl is placed in a troop within a Service Unit based geographic boundaries. A Service unit is a local volunteer-led team that supports Girl Scout troops in a specific geographic area. Service Units help connect families and volunteers to local events, resources, and leadership support throughout the year.

Bridging girls to the next grade level early is not recommended due to the progressive nature of the Girl Scout program. Advancing a girl before she is developmentally ready, such as moving a girl just finishing 2nd grade into a Girl Scout Junior (4th & 5th grade) troop instead of allowing her a second year in Brownies, can limit her experience and exclude her from age-appropriate opportunities.

In some cases, extenuating circumstances may lead to the need for a multi-grade level troop. When this happens, troop leaders work closely with their Service Unit and council staff to ensure programming meets the needs of all girls.

OPPORTUNITY CATALOG

The Opportunity Catalog is an online listing of troops in *GSSSC* and helps the council ensure that every girl who wants to be a Girl Scout can participate in a troop experience. All troops with less than 12 girls (Brownies through Ambassadors) and 10 girls (Daisies) will be displayed in *GSSSC*'s Opportunity Catalog as open to accepting new girls.

Troops may request to “Opt-Out” of having their troop displayed in the Opportunity Catalog by appealing to their Membership Manager. The Membership Manager will review the appeal request considering the following parameters:

- Size of the current troop
- Program level of the girls
- Availability of similar program levels in the area
- Reason for the appeal

Appealing does not guarantee that the request will be approved. The Membership Manager will determine the outcome within three business days by communicating the decision by email to the troop leaders.

Troops with less than 5 girls are automatically open on the Opportunity Catalog. There is no “Opt-Out” available for those troops. Girl Scouts welcomes all girls, this procedure helps us ensure all girls have the opportunity to participate in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Having at least 5 girls fosters a healthier more enriching environment for developing leadership, collaboration, and friendship

SCHOLARSHIPS AND AID GUIDELINES

Girl Scouts of Silver Sage (GSSSC) would like all girls to have the opportunity to engage in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, regardless of financial status and is based on need without regard to race, creed, color, religion, national origin, ability, or any other characteristic protected by Federal or state law.

What does a Scholarship cover?

- GSSSC can provide financial assistance to girl members for all or part of their membership. Financial assistance may also be available for basic uniform components and camp opportunities
- Financial assistance is subject to the availability of funds within GSSSC's operating budget.
- Troops who have had the opportunity to participate in the Fall Product Program and/or the Cookie Program should use troop funds to renew girl and volunteer memberships.

Receiving a scholarship indicates a commitment to participate in Product Programs (Fall and Cookie).

Understanding the Order of Funding Support:

Girl Scouts encourages girls to participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program as their first step toward financial self-sufficiency. Through this program, girls can earn Program Credits that should be used first to cover membership renewals, uniform pieces, camp and other Girl Scout related expenses.

Parents and troop leaders are encouraged to teach girls how to budget their Program Credits wisely. This approach reinforces core aspects of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, i.e., goal setting, money management, and financial decision-making, which are important life skills.

If a girl is unable to earn enough through Program Credits to cover her Girl Scout expenses, the following steps should be taken:

1. Troop funds should be the next source of financial support. It's important that troop budgets reflect the collective needs and goals of the girls.
2. If troop funds are not available, troops may contact their Service Unit to inquire about any additional financial resources or support.
3. Only after these options have been explored should a Council scholarship be requested.

This progression ensures that all girls have equitable access to Girl Scout experiences while also learning the value of financial planning, shared responsibility, and community support.

Troop budgeting is a powerful tool to teach girls how to set goals, plan for future needs,

and work collaboratively. These financial literacy skills are a key part of Girl Scouting and will benefit girls throughout their lives. Additional troop fundraising may also be conducted, as outlined later in this manual.

How do I apply for a Scholarship?

1. Membership

Families can request a scholarship by selecting “Financial Aid” on the Payment screen for their girl during the online membership registration process. In addition, families are required to complete the [Membership Aid](#) form. GSSSC will review the scholarship application. If the scholarship is approved, GSSSC will grant the approved amount. If an applicant is denied, GSSSC will send an email advising the applicant of the denial.

2. Uniforms

Scholarships for uniforms can be requested by calling or visiting the Girl Scouts of Silver Sage store. Funds for uniforms are limited.

3. Camp

Select “Financial Aid” as your payment type when registering for camp. A registration deposit of \$50 is required from every camper to reserve your spot at camp. If you do not receive the scholarship amount requested, you can receive a full refund of payments, including the \$50 deposit. Once you register for camp with “Financial Aid” as your payment type, you will receive an email from Silver Sage with a link to the [scholarship request form](#). You will need to complete this form for your request to be reviewed. Each request is considered on an individual basis, and decisions are based on the girl’s need and availability of funds. We ask that Program Credits and earned rewards (e.g. "2022 Adventure Credits") be utilized whenever possible. There is a limit of one scholarship per girl. Any requests received after the review period will be considered until funds are depleted.

Your request is noted as **PENDING** until the request is approved.

Requesting a scholarship or any financial assistance does not guarantee approval.

If I was declined for a scholarship, can I appeal a decision made by GSSSC?

- Yes, GSSSC’s decision can be appealed by responding to the denial email and giving additional reasons why financial assistance should be granted.
- Please note that appealing the financial assistance denial does not guarantee that financial assistance will be approved.
- To ensure we best serve our membership, when awarding financial assistance, we take into account the total number of requests and our available funds.

GSSSC also recognizes that there may be people qualified and eager to volunteer in Girl Scouts but whose economic situations do not allow them to cover expenses directly related to their volunteer activities. If this describes your situation, we encourage you to consult privately and

confidently with your Membership Manager to determine whether GSSSC may assist you with some or all of the incidental expenses necessary to fulfill your volunteer role.

BANK ACCOUNTS

Money earned, raised, or received in the name of Girl Scouting is for Girl Scouting and shall not be distributed to individual girls or adults for their personal benefit, either as cash, gift cards, funds, or scholarships.

Troop funds belong to the troop, regardless of how much each individual girl may have earned while participating in the Fall or Cookie programs, or other money-earning activities. Hence it is the property of the troop, and financial decisions should be guided by girls' input and following the Girl Scout program.

Funds of more than one troop may not be co-mingled in one bank account with funds from other troops; each troop must have its own bank account. Co-mingling funds will be regarded as misappropriation.

Service Unit, Troop, Day Camp, and Special Event Checking Accounts

All monies shall be safeguarded in bank accounts under the name of:

- Girl Scouts of Silver Sage Council, Troop #xyz
- Girl Scouts of Silver Sage Council, xyz Day Camp/Special Event
- Girl Scouts of Silver Sage Council, Service Unit #xyz

Council requires two (2) approved signatures in each account.

Authorized approved signers must be registered members for the current year and may not be related by blood or marriage

Authorized approved signers may be issued a debit card.

Authorized approved signers have no outstanding balance with Girl Scouts of Silver Sage

Troops and service units must follow GSSSC procedures when opening accounts, closing accounts, or changing bank account signers at a financial institution. GSSSC has the authority to change bank account signers, request bank statements, or close accounts whenever it is necessary.

The following steps are followed to open a troop bank account:

Step 1: Pick your 2 (or more) bank account signers. To safeguard Girl Scout funds, every Girl Scout troop must establish a troop bank account with 2 or more signers. Bank Account Signer Criteria:

- Must be a registered Girl Scout Member for the current year.
- Must have completed a Background Check and be eligible to volunteer.
- Must not be related to, living with, or being in a relationship with any other account signer.
- Have no outstanding balance with Girl Scouts of Silver Sage.

Step 2: Choose one of the GSSSC-approved banks

Important: You won't need to physically go to the bank until Step #4, but you will need to select one before requesting to open your bank account. For a list of recommended financial institutions, contact customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org

Step 3: Request to open a new bank account - After selecting the bank and getting a contact person, complete form [TRP112 Opening a Bank Account](#) to request to open a new bank account. Submit the completed form to customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org or mail it to Girl Scouts of Silver Sage, 8948 W Barnes St, Boise, ID 83709 After Council receives your request, it can take between three (3) and five (5) business days for Council staff to review and process it. When approved, the council will email the necessary Authorization documentation to the bank employee. You will receive an email notifying you that this step has been completed and what next steps are needed.

Step 4: Open the account at the bank - All signers will need to go into the bank to officially open the account. Check with your bank if all signers must go in together.

Step 5: Register your bank account - Once you have been approved by the council and opened your troop bank account, you must register the bank account. This authorizes Girl Scouts to perform ACH* transactions for payments toward product sales programs and rebates. Register your new account number by emailing both your troop and account number to customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org. *ACH stands for Automated Clearing House. An ACH withdrawal is an electronic fund where funds are taken out of one financial account and placed into another

Step 6: Apply for New Troop Start-Up Funds - Now that your account is open and has been registered, your troop may qualify* for \$25 in new troop start-up funds. This can be requested by completing form [TRP104 Request for New Troop Start-Up Funds](#). Once completed, submit the form to your service unit manager, who will forward it to customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org. It will take approximately 10 days to receive your \$25 check in the mail.

**Criteria to qualify for the \$25 troop start-up funds: The troop has to meet the definition of a "New" troop, which is defined as: a troop where 75% of the girls are new to Girl Scouts, with two (2) non-related adults appointed as troop leaders. The troop must have at least five registered girls, from a minimum of two (2) or more families*

NOTE: Troop financial records (e.g. bank statements, finance reports, bank receipts, cash disbursements, Product sale receipts, etc.) must be retained for seven (7) years

- Once money is received into the troop bank account, it no longer belongs to individual girls.
- Cash-based accounts may not be kept for or distributed to individual girls. This includes gift cards, etc.
- Savings accounts are not allowed.
- All benefits provided should relate to supporting the Girl Scout mission; decisions should be based on our tax-supported philosophy regarding what is mission-related.

For example, camp, travel, and Girl Scout events are mission related. Scholarships to an outside organization would not be mission related.

- A business or individual may not receive a tax deduction for money given directly to troops or an individual Girl Scout, as they are not considered a charitable nonprofit. Follow the fundraising process.
- Troops and service units may obtain no more than 2 debit/check cards. The debit/check card must not be used for personal purchases. The cardholder(s) are responsible for obtaining purchase receipts, securing the card(s), and are legally responsible for the transactions posted to the card. Online banking is permitted.

GSSSC reserves the right to review troop and service unit accounts. If a troop or service unit fails to submit its annual finance report, it is subject to financial review and/or closure of the account by *GSSSC*. Other situations that may result in a financial review include but are not limited to:

- Complaints from parents/caregivers
- Suspected misuse
- Mismanagement or theft of funds,

Financial reviews may be initiated at the full discretion of *GSSSC*.

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Volunteers who oversee Girl Scout funds whether for troops, service units, day camps, or any other reason, are accountable to *GSSSC* and girls in all financial matters.

The troop leader and/or troop treasurer is responsible for good management of funds including timely deposits of funds, up-to-date recordkeeping, monthly review of bank statements, responsible management of funds, and submission of timely reports to affected girls, their parents, and *GSSSC*. Receipts showing how the money was spent must document all cash withdrawals. If cash is collected, receipts must be provided which document the reason for the payment.

Volunteers must obtain approval from the Membership Manager before incurring expenses that need to be reimbursed by the troop or by *GSSSC*. *GSSSC* also suggests that you keep accurate records of your expenditures because some non-reimbursed expenses associated with your volunteer activities may be tax deductible.

All troops, service units, and day camps are required to submit an annual finance report to *GSSSC*. Parents/caregivers can view completed troop finance report(s) on the Volunteer Toolkit; therefore, it is important to comply with this procedure as financial transparency at all levels of Girl Scouting encourages trust and confidence. Additionally, any registered Girl Scout and their parents/caregivers will be given access to view financial records upon request. The troop leader has access to the Finance Tab on the Volunteer Toolkit and must work with the troop treasurer (if there is one in place) to submit the finance report annually by the May 31st deadline. Service unit annual reports are due by June 30.

Failure to exercise proper management over finances will result in funds restriction or release from a volunteer position.

MONEY EARNING AND FUNDRAISING GUIDELINES

Helping girls earn and manage money is an integral part of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience; your Girl Scout troop, group, and/or individual girls are responsible for planning and financing their own activities, with volunteer guidance/supervision.

Girl Scout troops are funded by a share of the money earned through council-sponsored product programs – Fall Product Program & Cookie Program, council-approved money-earning activities, and any dues your troop may charge.

All money raised or earned, and other assets received in the name of and for the benefit of Girl Scouting must be authorized by Girl Scouts of Silver Sage Council used for Girl Scouting.

Definitions

- **Money-earning** is defined as activities organized by a Girl Scout group/troop or individual Girl Scout (not by the Girl Scout Council, in this case, GSSSC) which earn money for the group/troop or individual Girl Scout, and are planned and carried out by girls, in partnership with adults.
- **Fundraising** is defined as activities organized by a group of adults to assist a group or troop with raising funds.
- **A worthy cause** is defined as a cause that merits attention, aid or action due to an inherent goodness of values or intention. The Cause must be a non-profit organization that has a 501(C)(3) status.

Note: To participate in group money-earning activities, the troop must have participated in GSSSC's Council product programs.

Group or Troop Money-Earning

- Choose the money-earning activity
- Complete the Application for Money Earning Projects at least 30 days before the group's activity is planned and submit to Customer Care at customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org
- Once approved, the group can proceed with your chosen activity.

Fundraising

- Adult members and Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors working on their Gold Award Projects may fundraise for purposes relating to Girl Scouting.
- The group must request approval from GSSSC before soliciting funds
 - Submit the list of businesses the group will be soliciting **and** the [Donation to Group/Troop \(Pass Through\)](#) form and submit to customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org at least 14 days before the solicitation
 - Volunteers must not solicit businesses that are on GSSSC's Corporate Donors List, without working directly with GSSSC's Fundraising staff for consultation and approval.

- The Internal Revenue Code (sec. 170 (f) (8)) requires that Girl Scouts of Silver Sage acknowledge single donations of services, goods, materials, equipment, or money with a value of \$250 or more. Therefore, troops or Girl Scout volunteer representatives must report all donations with a \$250 value or greater to the council office within 30 days of receipt by sending the check and completed [Donation to Group/Troop \(Pass Through\)](#) form to *8948 W Barnes St, Boise, ID 83709, ATTN: Fund Development*
- In-kind donations to a group
 - Groups are welcome to have family or friends purchase in-kind items for your troop (i.e. party supplies, camping reservation, etc.). If they would like an in-kind receipt for their donation to your troop, receipts and an [In-Kind Donation](#) form must be distributed to customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org within 30 days of the receipt date. If it is not received within 30 days, it will not be recognized. This is especially important if you anticipate receiving matching fund gifts from parent or friend businesses. If GSSSC does not have a record of an in-kind donation within 30 days of receipt, they cannot verify matching gift funds for corporations for your troop.

Small Grants¹

- Adults, or Senior/Ambassador Girl Scouts working on their Gold Award project, may request approval from the council to apply for grants in two ways:
 - List the small grant request on their Gold Award proposal forms
 - If the grant is found after the proposal process, reach out to the council at least 30 days before
- Any grant money awarded is required to go through the council as a 501(c)(3).
- If a girl is awarded a grant, she will complete the required paperwork for grant completion and submit a copy to the council office. The council's Fund Development team will offer guidance and support to the girl if needed.

Additional Guidelines for Working with Other Organizations²

1. Avoid Fundraising for Other Organizations

Girl Scouts are not allowed to solicit money on behalf of another organization when identifying themselves as Girl Scouts by wearing a uniform, a sash or vest, official pins, and so on. This includes participating in a walkathon or telethon while in uniform. However, you and your group can support another organization through Take Action projects. Girl Scouts as individuals can participate in whatever events they choose as long as they're not wearing anything that officially identifies them as "Girl Scouts."

2. Cookie and Product Program Proceeds

Troops may use the money earned from the Girl Scout Programs to fund a project that will improve their community or donate the money to a worthy cause³. For the Girl Scout of Silver Sage, money earned from the Girl Scout programs may be donated to a worthy cause as part of a Take Action Project. Troops must first apply using the [Philanthropic Use of Cookie Proceeds](#) Form and submit it to customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org thirty (30) days before the identified donation date.

¹ [Girl Soliciting Donations for Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Projects: Frequently Asked Questions](#)

² Volunteer Essentials

³ [GSUSA All About Cookies: Support Girls Success](#)

3. Steer Clear of Political Fundraisers

When in an official Girl Scout capacity or in any way identifying yourselves as Girl Scouts, your group may not participate, directly or indirectly, in any political campaign or work on behalf of or in opposition to a candidate for public office. Letter-writing campaigns are not allowed, nor is participating in a political rally, circulating a petition, or carrying a political banner.

4. Be Respectful When Collaborating with Religious Organizations

Girl Scout groups must respect the opinions and practices of religious partners, but no girl should be required to take part in any religious observance or practice of the sponsoring group.

5. Avoid Selling or Endorsing Commercial Products

A commercial product is any product sold at a retail location. Since 1939, girls and volunteers have not been allowed to endorse, provide testimonials for, or sell such products.

Who can Participate in Money-Earning/Fundraising?				
Age Group	Money-Earning	Fund raising	Small Grants	Details
Daisies	✗	✗	✗	Daisies shouldn't participate in money-earning activities other than the two council-sponsored product programs.
Brownies	—	✗	✗	Brownies shouldn't participate in money-earning activities other than the two council-sponsored product programs; however, a Troop may request approval for one extra money-earning project per membership year.
Juniors	✓	✗	✗	Junior troops may apply to participate in money-earning activities.
Cadettes	✓	✗	✗	Cadette troops may apply to participate in money-earning activities.
Seniors	✓	—	—	Seniors working on their Gold Award Project can fundraise. They must follow the same processes as adults who fundraise. All fundraising efforts must be outlined in their project plan. Contact the Fund Development team for more information on Small Grants.

Ambassadors				Ambassadors working on their Gold Award Project can fundraise. They must follow the same processes as adults who fundraise. All fundraising efforts must be outlined in their project plan. Contact the Fund Development team for more information on Small Grants.
Adults				Adults may engage in combined fund raising authorized by the council and in which the council is a beneficiary.⁴

Examples of Possible Money-Earning Projects

Collections/Drives

- Cell phones for refurbishment
- Used ink cartridges turned in for money
- Christmas tree recycling

Food/M Meal Events

- Lunch box auction (prepared lunch or meal auctioned off)
- Themed meals, like a high tea, pancake breakfast, or a build-your-own-taco bar, related to activities girls are planning (For instance, if girls are earning money for travel, they could tie the meal to their destination.)

Service(s)

- Service-a-thon (people sponsor a girl doing service and funds go to support a trip or other activity)

When girls participate in money-earning activities they learn important skills such as goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills, and business ethics.

- Babysitting for holidays (New Year's Eve) or council events
- Raking leaves, weeding, cutting grass, shoveling snow, walking pets (no girls should use power tools)
- Cooking class or other specialty class

Other

- Talent show
- Badge workshop
- Crafts
- Yard/garage sale

⁴ GSSSC Fund Raising Policy, January 2016

Examples of Projects not allowed⁵

- Home Party Sales; Tupperware, candles, etc.
- Restaurant fundraisers
- Selling fireworks or other commercial products

Examples of Money-Earning Projects			
✓	Talent show	✓	Wrapping Gifts
✓	Pancake breakfast, bake sale, spaghetti dinner, etc.	✓	Ushering or helping in other ways at special events in the community
✓	Babysitting	✓	Making and selling craft items
✓	Cooking or other classes, etc.	✓	Sponsoring dances, talent shows, fashion shows, haunted houses, or other forms of entertainment
✓	Badge workshop	✗	Home Party Sales; Tupperware, candles, etc.
✓	Crafts	✗	Restaurant fundraisers
✓	Yard/garage sale	✗	Selling fireworks or other commercial products
✓	Shoveling snow or walking pets	✗	Fundraising for other organizations (you may donate in-kind gifts to other organizations or donate funds made from cookie sales ⁶)
✓	Raking leaves or other lawn work without the use of power tools	✗	Political fundraisers

HELPING GIRLS REACH THEIR FINANCIAL GOALS

It is great for girls to have opportunities such as the Girl Scout Fall product and Cookie Program to earn funds as part of their Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Part of the role of troop leaders and other GSSSC registered volunteers is to help the girls balance money earning with opportunities to enjoy other activities that have less emphasis on earning and spending money. The girls must have a clear plan and purpose for their proceeds from the Girl Scout Fall Product & Cookie Program and other money-earning activities. An important aspect of the Entrepreneurship Pillar is facilitating girl-led financial planning, which includes the following steps:

1. Set goals. What do girls want to do during the year that requires money? In addition to earning money, what skills do they hope to build? What leadership opportunities

⁵ Volunteer Essentials

⁶ [GSUSA All About Cookies: Support Girls Success](#)

present themselves?

2. Create a budget. Use a budget worksheet that includes both expenses (the cost of supplies, admission to events, travel, and so on) and available income (the troop's account balance, projected cookie and fall product proceeds, and so on).
3. Determine how much additional money the group needs to earn. Subtract expenses from available income to determine how much additional money your troop needs to earn.
4. Make a plan. The troop can brainstorm and make decisions about its financial plans. Will the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program - if approached proactively and energetically - earn enough money to meet the troop's goals? If not, what additional money earning might offset the difference in anticipated expense and anticipated income? Will more than one money-earning activity be necessary to achieve the group's financial goals? In this planning stage, engage the girls through the Girl Scout processes (girl-led, learning by doing, and cooperative learning) and consider the value of any potential activity. Have them weigh feasibility, implementation, and safety factors.
5. Write it out. Once the group has decided on its financial plan, put the plan in writing.

General

- Troops must follow GSSSC Volunteer Policies & Procedures, [Volunteer Essentials](#), and [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) to ensure girl safety, including appropriate girl-to-adult ratios of approved Girl Scout volunteers.
- If a Girl Scout has not participated in the Girl Scout Cookie Program and/or Fall Product Program, she shall not be excluded from any activities due to lack of participation.
- If troop dues are collected, Girl Scouts shall not be excluded from any activities regardless of their ability to pay troop dues.
- The money earning should have a purpose that helps develop skills girls are learning in Girl Scouts.
- Girls are involved in the development of the budget for the amount of money that is needed.
- Girls must be able to explain the reason they are earning money.
- Money earning should not exceed the amount the troop needs for their proposed activity(ies).
- The activity should be age appropriate.
- Participation is voluntary.
- Parents/guardians must give written permission to participate.
- Local ordinances and health and safety laws related to the involvement of children in money earnings must be observed.
- Arrangements must be made for safeguarding money during money earning.
- Troop money belongs to every registered girl in the troop equally.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS DUE TO TROOP CHANGES

Graduating Girl Scout Ambassador Troops

When all girls of a troop graduate, care must be taken with the final expenditure of troop funds. All troop money is the property of the troop, not the individual girls, and the troop should decide how to spend the money before dissolving the troop and closing the bank account. All decisions concerning the disposition of troop funds should be made by the troop not by the leaders to “surprise the girls”. **Troop funds must be spent on expenses tied to the Girl Scout program.**

Options to consider depending on the remaining amount of troop funds:

- Purchase discounted Lifetime Girl Scout memberships for each graduating girl.
- Leave a legacy to Girl Scouts by donating to a fund or program in honor of the troop.
- Take advantage of the last year of girl membership to participate in *GSSSC-planned* activities and events.

New Troop Leadership

If new troop leadership has been appointed, the troop supplies, financial records, and bank accounts shall be turned over to the new troop leader(s). A new [Opening a Bank Account/Making changes to an Existing Troop/Service Unit Account](#) form shall be completed and turned into Council, so the proper authorization forms can be prepared.

Troop Leadership Vacancy

If new leadership has not been determined, all troop supplies and financial records shall be turned over to GSSSC.

Troop “Merges” or Splits

If a troop in its entirety merges with another troop the funds and supplies will be combined for use by all the girls in the newly formed troop. In this case, one of the troops will officially disband while the other troop will continue. If any one girl in the troop that is merging is NOT continuing in the newly merged troop, the troop is no longer considered “merging” since not all members are continuing with the newly formed troop. In this case, the troop will follow the disbanding process, and funds are allocated as such.

If a troop splits and all troop members agree that the troop shall split, equal portions of the troop funds and supplies will follow the girls to their new troop. This will be done with guidance and direction from GSSSC’s Membership Manager. If one (1) of the troop leaders decides to leave, along with some of the girls, and this has not been agreed upon by all the members in the troop, none of the money follows the troop leader.

Disbanded Troops

A troop is considered disbanded if the troop no longer meets or has not registered as a troop for four (4) months from the expiration of its last registration.

If a troop disbands, the troop leader will complete the [Troop Disband Notice](#), after going through the [Troop Disband Checklist](#), to ensure all proper steps are followed. Along with the Troop Disband Notice, the troop leader will submit a final finance report including all required bank statements.

Any monies remaining in the troop account, when a troop disbands, will revert to Council and be allocated as follows:

- If all the girls continue in Girl Scouts, and new leadership is identified, troop funds remain with the troop, and an “[Opening a Bank Account/Making Changes to an existing Troop/Service Unit Account](#)” form needs to be completed to make changes to an existing bank account.
- If any of the girl(s) join a different troop, a portion of the money will follow the girl(s) to the new troop. The portion of the money is determined by the number of registered girls when the troop disbanded, and the amount of money left in the troop’s account.
- If any of the girl(s) choose to transition to different troops (two or more), funds will be apportioned among those troops based on how many girls join each troop.
- If none of the girls join another active troop, funds are held by the Council for one (1) year. If after one (1) year none of the girls join a new troop or participate in any Council-provided programs as Individually Registered Girl Scouts, such as camp, the funds will be used for financial assistance and support girl programs.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in the closure of the troop bank account, restrictions on handling money, and/or volunteer termination.

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (IRS) COMPLIANCE AND BANK ACCOUNTS

GSSSC cannot control, change, or influence IRS requirements. Non-compliance with IRS requirements is a risk management issue that may affect the tax-exempt status of this council and the tax-exempt status of other Girl Scout councils nationwide.

All volunteer finances must be managed responsibly, and spending must be tracked.

Troop-to-troop movements of girls are not allowed during the Cookie Program. All troop movements must be completed by January 1. No additional troop movements will occur until April 1 of that same year.

THIRD-PARTY PAYMENT PROCESSING SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS

GSSSC does not allow troops or service units to set up and use PayPal, Venmo, Cash App, or other payment processing software that uses an individual’s personal information including social security number to register the software. This is per GSUSA legal advice. These accounts cannot be legally connected to the council and carry a greater financial risk and potential income tax liabilities for the individual who opens the account. All third-party processing software applications must be connected to the troop account.

ADULT SUPERVISION

Girl Scouts has a strict standard that **whenever Girl Scouts meet, whether in person or virtually, there are to be at least two unrelated, registered, and Girl Scout-approved adults who have been background checked, and one of whom is female, supervising Girl Scout members.** A registered and approved adult volunteer is one who has passed a background check and has been through GSSSC volunteer onboarding and training process. The two adult volunteers must not be related to each other (for example, not a sibling, spouse, domestic partner, parent, child, or anyone who would be considered a family member) and do not live in the same residence.

This requirement applies to every Girl Scout gathering including troop meetings (in person and virtual), day trips, camp, sleep-away travel, special events, activities, and projects. Non-member children who are present should be considered in the ratios.

Troop leaders must always be adults. Youth or youth members are not permitted to substitute for adult supervision. This rule applies to every Girl Scout gathering including troop meetings (in person and virtual), day trips, camp, sleep-away travel, events, activities, and projects. **There are no exceptions to this rule.**

There are different specific adult-to-youth ratio requirements for Girl Scout troop meetings as compared to events outside of the regular Girl Scout troop meeting such as outings, activities, camping, and travel. Activities and travel outside of the regular troop meeting space require more adult supervision.

ADULT VOLUNTEER TO YOUTH RATIOS

Girl Scout Volunteer-to-Youth Ratios	Group Meetings		Events, Travel, and Camping	
	Two unrelated volunteers (at least one of whom is female) for up to this number of youth:	One additional volunteer to each additional:	Two unrelated volunteers (at least one of whom is female) for up to this number of youths:	One additional volunteer to each additional:
Girl Scout Daises (Grades K-1)	12	1-6	6	1-4
Girl Scout Brownies (Grades 2-3)	20	1-8	12	1-6
Girl Scout Juniors (Grades 4-5)	25	1-10	16	1-8
Girl Scout Cadettes (Grades 6-8)	25	1-12	20	1-10

Girl Scout Seniors (Grades 9–10)	30	1–15	24	1–12
Girl Scout Ambassadors (Grades 11–12)	30	1–15	24	1–12

Some high-adventure activities may require more adult-to-youth supervision than stated above. For those activities, the individual activity's [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) will provide the specific adult-to-youth supervision ratios. Remember, some activities are less safe for younger members, particularly Daisies and Brownies. Younger Girl Scout members may not be permitted to participate based on their age, as appropriate, and this will be specified on the individual activity's [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#). In cases where younger girl participation is an option, but only under certain conditions, this is indicated on the first page of the individual activity's [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#).

Note: For mixed-grade level troops (Multi-Level Troops), use the adult-to-youth ratio for the lowest grade level in the troop. For example, if the troop consists of Daisies and Brownies, the Daisy adult-to-youth ratio should be followed.

ACTIVITIES/ TROOP TRIPS/GIRL DESTINATIONS

To be considered a Girl Scout trip/activity, the troop/group leader must:

- Make sure all participants are registered members of GSSSC,
- Provide parents/caregivers with written details (date, time, locations, and brief description) of the trip/activity before its occurrence.
- Ensure trip/activity meets all requirements in [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#). A completed [Intent to Travel](#) form must be turned in to GSSSC and approved by GSSSC before certain activities and day trips 100+ miles and overnight trips.
- Receive from parents/caregivers a signed [Permission for Special Activities](#) form

A completed [Intent to Travel](#) form must be turned into GSSSC at least four (4) weeks before the troop's domestic planned trip to allow enough time for data verification and approval. Since this approval process ensures the safety of the volunteers and girls, GSSSC reserves the right to refuse approval if not received four (4) weeks in advance. If travel is denied, because submission was not timely or documentation was missing, troop funds or girls' Program Credits cannot be used for travel.

If the trip is an international trip, all documents must be received by the Council at least 3 months before the planned trip to allow sufficient time for data verification and approval.

Girl Scouts are not allowed to travel to international locations rated "Level 4: Do not travel" by the United States Department of State, as outlined in [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#).

Girl Scout Destinations are the ultimate adventure for the individual Cadette, Senior,

and Ambassador Girl Scouts. Girls can search for [destinations](#) around the world that spark their interest.

Girls can use Program Credits to pay for Destinations by completing the [Program Credit Reimbursement for Destinations](#) form.

Scholarships are available for registered Girl Scouts planning to travel through GSUSA's Destinations program and who would otherwise not be able to participate without additional financial support. Decisions are based on available funds and expressed needs. Scholarships are approved by GSSSC's Destinations Committee. Girls approved for Destinations can submit a [Scholarship Application for GSUSA Destinations Travel](#) to apply for a scholarship.

FIRST AID/CPR TRAINING

At least one adult volunteer who is trained in first aid/CPR accompanies the troop any time they leave their regular meeting place. For many activities, GSSSC requires at least one adult volunteer be first aid/CPR certified. More information on which activities require an adult volunteer to be first aid/CRP certified can be found in [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#).

Volunteers can take advantage of first aid/CPR training offered by chapters of the American Red Cross, American Heart Association, or other sponsoring organizations approved by GSSSC. First aid/CPR training opportunities are offered by GSSSC.

First aid/CPR training that is available entirely online does not satisfy GSSSC requirements. Such courses do not offer enough opportunities to practice and receive feedback on your technique.

EMERGENCIES

If an emergency occurs during a Girl Scout troop meeting, activity, etc., Girl Scout volunteers must follow the GSSSC Emergency Procedures. These procedures ensure safety is the number one concern in any emergency and volunteers are guided to seek help and report the incident, efficiently and effectively.

The course of action required during or immediately after a significant accident or contentious situation:

1. Move the troop to a safe location and assign an adult in charge.
2. In the event of an accident, call 911 and follow proper first aid and/or CPR procedures until medical help arrives.
3. In the event of a fatality, notify the police and ensure that the victim and the surrounding area remain undisturbed until the police arrive.
4. Consult with the council emergency contact and give complete facts about the situation. At this juncture, the council contact will decide whether to notify the parents.
5. File the [Accident/Incident Report](#) with the council within 24 hours by emailing the completed form to customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org.

6. **AVOID ALL COMMUNICATION WITH THE MEDIA!** The emergency council contact will manage all communication with the media.

If other scenarios arise that draw significant public or media attention, promptly reach out *GSSSC*.

ACTIVITY ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Girl Scouts provides Activity Accident Insurance underwritten by Mutual of Omaha to support Girl Scouts participating in Girl Scout approved and supervised activities and events.

Activity Accident Insurance is automatic upon membership registration and applies to all adult and youth members who may become injured during a Girl Scout approved and supervised activity.

The coverage works like supplemental medical/health coverage and is intended to help with out-of-pocket medical expenses that may not be covered by personal insurance.

Activity Accident insurance extends to non-members who are invited to participate in a Girl Scout approved and supervised activity, whether an adult volunteer for the day, or a friend of a Girl Scout who is joining.

Activity Accident Coverage applies to day events, overnight trips (including camp) and international travel.

	Class 1 Activity Accident	Class 2 Added Sickness	Class 3 International Travel and inbound
Eligibility	All member and *nonmember participants of Girl Scouts sponsored and supervised daylong events and activities (100% participation) *Nonmember participants are those personally invited by a registered member (adult or youth) to participate in a Girl Scout activity as a guest.	All member and *nonmember participants of Girl Scouts sponsored and supervised overnight events, lasting one (1) night or greater. (100% participation) *Nonmember participants are those personally invited by a registered member (adult or youth) to participate in a Girl Scout activity as a guest.	All member and *nonmember participants of Girl Scouts sponsored and supervised international travel or inbound international travel. (100% participation) *Nonmember participants are those personally invited by a registered member (adult or youth) to participate in a Girl Scout activity as a guest.
Coverage (any approved and supervised Girl Scout Activity)	Day Events	Overnight Events	International Travel
Premium Rates	No cost to Girl Scout councils or troops	No cost to Girl Scout councils or troops	No cost to Girl Scout councils or troops

A completed [Accident/Incident Report](#) must be submitted to begin the insurance claim process.

MEETING PLACES/CAMPS/SITES

A meeting place needs to provide a safe, clean, and secure environment that allows for the participation of all girls and adults. You might consider using meeting rooms at schools, libraries, houses of worship, community buildings, childcare facilities, and local businesses. For teens, you can also rotate meetings at coffee shops, bookstores, and other places girls enjoy spending time.

See [Volunteer Essentials](#) for a few points to keep in mind as you consider meeting locations.

GSSSC can provide a Certificate of Liability Insurance to any venue that requires insurance coverage. Troops must complete the [Request for Liability Insurance](#) form and submit it to customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org.

Girl Scouts of Silver Sage discourages troops from using a personal home as a meeting location for regularly scheduled troop meetings. This should be a last resort. Due to the high amount of liability on the volunteer holding the meeting, there are strict guidelines that MUST BE met. The volunteer must review and submit the [Permission to Meet in the Home Application and Approval form](#).

Please note that during all Girl Scout activities including ones at the volunteer's home two, unrelated, registered and background-checked approved volunteers must be present at all times.