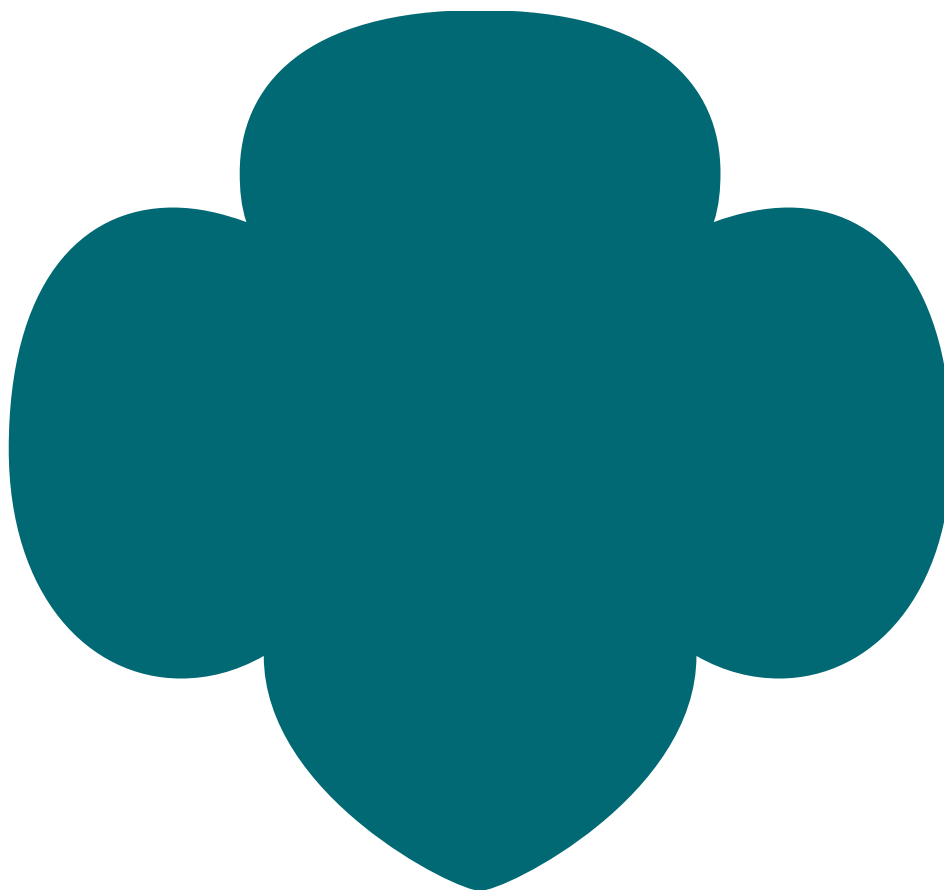




# Volunteer Policies

2024-2025 Edition



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## **GIRL SCOUT POLICIES AND CODE OF CONDUCT**

It is important that all Girl Scout Volunteers follow the policy requirements for conduct, not only to ensure girl safety, but to ensure the safety of the volunteers. Every adult in Girl Scouting is responsible for the physical and emotional safety of girls.

By accepting a volunteer position, you have a responsibility to Girl Scouts and to your fellow volunteers and girls to adhere to certain rules of behavior and conduct. The purpose of these standards is not to restrict your rights, but rather to be certain that you understand what conduct is expected and necessary. When each person is aware that they can fully depend upon fellow volunteers to follow the rules of conduct, then our organization will be a better place to volunteer for everyone.

### **Volunteer Philosophy**

Volunteers are defined as any person (18 years or older) who willingly gives one's time and service without concern for monetary compensation; therefore, volunteers are not considered employees. All volunteers are expected to support and promote the Girl Scout Promise and Law, the ideals and principles of Girl Scouting, and the policies and standards of Girl Scouts of the USA and Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU).

We maintain that the strength of the Girl Scout Movement rests in the voluntary leadership of its adult members who strive to build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

It is through voluntary leadership that the Movement serves girls. To ensure the satisfaction of volunteers and to utilize the skills and talents of volunteers effectively, it is essential that the following policies be established and maintained for all volunteers.

### **Diversity & Inclusion**

Girl Scouts has a strong commitment to inclusion and diversity, and we embrace girls and adults of all abilities and backgrounds in our wonderful sisterhood.

Inclusion is at the core of who we are; it's about being a sister to every Girl Scout and celebrating our unique strengths. Part of the important work you do includes modeling friendship and kindness for girls and adults by showing them what it means to practice empathy.

### **Equal Treatment**

Girl Scouts welcomes all members, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, background, cognitive or physical abilities, family structure, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, and socioeconomic status

When scheduling, planning, and carrying out activities, carefully consider the needs of all members involved, including school schedules, family needs, financial constraints, religious holidays, and the accessibility of appropriate transportation and meeting places.

### **Religious Organizations**

Girl Scouts should be respectful when collaborating with religious organizations. Girl Scout groups must respect the opinions and practices of religious partners, but no member should be required to take part in any religious observance or practice of the sponsoring group.

### **Why do Policies and Standards exist?**

To protect the girls and adult members and to assure legal protection for the Movement.

### **How are they established, and where to find them?**

They are found in this document, Girl Scouts of Utah's Youth Protection Policies, Volunteer Essentials, and Safety-Activity Checkpoints. Many policies and standards have been set by the National Board of Girl Scouts of the USA, and all Girl Scout councils in the country must follow them. Local policies supplement national policies and standards and are set by the GSU management and Girl Scouts of Utah council Board of Directors.

## **Selection of Volunteers**

In order to ensure the safety and well-being of the girl and adult members of Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU), all prospective and current GSU volunteers must pass a criminal background check through external agents who will conduct the search, including sex offender registries, for volunteers working directly with girls and a repeated screening is required every two years. The council may request a criminal background check on any volunteer already appointed at any time during their appointment. Volunteer positions that require a criminal background check include, but is not limited to, the following volunteer positions:

- Troop Leaders, Troop Co-Leaders, Troop Supporters, Troop Treasurers, Product Managers, Outreach Program Volunteer, Specialty Troop Leader or Co-Leader, and Troop Facilitators.
- Volunteers fulfilling the adult requirement of the adult-to-girl ratio by grade level as detailed in *Volunteer Essentials* and *Safety Activity Checkpoints*.
- Volunteers attending overnight trips or sponsored events with troops. This is applicable whether sleeping is involved or not.
- Drivers of planned Girl Scout field trips and other activities - outside the normal meeting time and place - in which a group will be transported in private vehicles. Drivers must also maintain a good driving record, a valid license, and a registered and insured vehicle.
- Service Unit Volunteers in any role established by the council.
- Administrative volunteers who handle large amounts of money and/or product. Including, but not limited to, the troop or service unit Product Program Manager(s), the troop or service unit treasurer, and any signers on the troop or service unit bank account.
  - This does not mandate that all parents handling money for their daughter during product program activities need to be screened.
- First-aiders serving in troop, service unit, or council capacity.
- Council Trainers and Council Committee Volunteers.
- Individuals serving on the GSU Board of Directors, Board Development Committee, or any committee established by the Board.
- Short-Term, Camp, and Seasonal Volunteers.

Not every adult needs to be approved, for example: your troop emergency contact, a parent/caregiver attending a troop meeting or daytime event, as long as they are not counted as part of the adult/girl ratio, a special guest, or field trip guide would not be required to complete a background screening.

***Note:** Girl Scouts of Utah board members holding volunteer responsibilities at the time of election will relinquish operational responsibilities within 30 days of election.*

## **Criminal Background Policy for Volunteers**

Girl Scouts requires all volunteers to submit and recertify a background check every two years.

- New or renewing volunteers will receive an emailed notification to complete a background check from an external agent. This email will contain a link specific to the

individual who will be required to fill out and submit the background according to the instructions received.

- All adults who will have a consistent series of involvement with girls, drive girl members on a regular basis, handle money, or volunteer on troop or service unit level with any of the product programs, must undergo the GSU background check process.
- Without a completed criminal background check, a person cannot serve in or be appointed to a volunteer position with GSU.
- If a volunteer is charged or convicted of a criminal offense, other than minor motor vehicle violations, during any term of service with GSU, the offense must be communicated to the GSU Volunteer Manager or Director of Membership within five business days.

As a general matter, the decision whether to exclude or limit a prospective or current volunteer's participation is exclusively within the discretion of GSU. Factors to be considered by GSU in making such determinations include but are not limited to the type of volunteer duties for which the applicant is applying and the job relatedness of each conviction to such volunteer duties; the nature and severity of the criminal conduct; the length of time since the criminal conduct occurred; and the applicant's efforts at rehabilitation. GSU's primary concern is always to safeguard the safety and best interests of its members.

GSU does not appoint any volunteer who is a registered sex offender. Nor do we appoint anyone who has a record of any offense against children. Girl Scouts also reserves the right to dismiss or exclude from affiliation with the organization any volunteer who is found guilty of child abuse or neglect or has been convicted of child abuse or neglect. GSU will comply with all applicable regulations governing child abuse and reporting standards, this means that GSU would cooperate with criminal prosecution.

## **Role Models**

The female role model is essential to fulfilling the purpose of Girl Scouts. Because Girl Scouts believes that female role models are especially important to young girls during their developing years, when men serve as adult troop volunteers, they do so as one of several volunteers in collaboration with female volunteers.

## **Confidentiality**

It is the responsibility of adults and volunteers to maintain the confidentiality of all proprietary, privileged, or sensitive information (confidential information) to which they are exposed while serving in their role—whether this information involves a staff person, volunteer, girl, or GSU business in general.

Confidential information is defined as any non-public information or communication (printed or electronic) that contains personally identifiable information about GSU members, donors, or staff; information that could potentially identify GSU members, donors, or staff; and any information or communication that is marked or otherwise identified as confidential by GSU or GSUSA.

Failure to comply with this policy and its standards will result in consequences up to and including termination of employment, removal from Girl Scout volunteer roles, termination of contract(s), and possible legal action under local, state, and federal laws.

## **Volunteer Performance**

### **Evaluation of Volunteer Position & Performance**

An annual evaluation review should be conducted with volunteers by the appropriate team leader, for example, troop volunteers are reviewed by the Service Unit Leadership Team or GSU Staff; Service Unit Team members are reviewed by GSU Staff. Topics to be evaluated include but are not limited to role-modeling, appropriate dress, behavior, and inclusivity.

## **Volunteer Conduct & Behavior**

While engaged in Girl Scouts of Utah business, volunteers are expected to act in a professional manner. Volunteers should refrain from swearing, gossiping, and/or talking negatively about girls, parents, other volunteers, council staff, or the council.

### **Role-model the right behavior.**

Never use illegal drugs. Don't consume alcohol, smoke/vape, or use foul language in the presence of girls. Do not carry ammunition or firearms in the presence of girls, unless given special permission by GSU for group marksmanship activities.

### **Create an emotionally safe space.**

Adults are responsible for making Girl Scouting a place where girls are as safe emotionally as they are physically. Protect the emotional safety of girls by creating a team agreement and coaching girls to honor it. Agreements typically encourage behaviors like respecting a diversity of feelings and opinions; resolving conflicts constructively; and avoiding physical and verbal bullying, clique behavior and discrimination.

### **Ensure that no girl is treated differently.**

Girl Scouts welcomes all members, regardless of race, ethnicity, background, disability, family structure, religious beliefs, and socioeconomic status. When scheduling, planning, and carrying out activities, carefully consider the needs of all girls involved, including school schedules, family needs, financial constraints, religious holidays and the accessibility of appropriate transportation and meeting places.

### **Dress appropriately.**

Volunteers are expected to present a clean and professional appearance when representing the organization. Dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the professional attitude and morale of all volunteers and affect the image presented to girls, caregivers, and community partners.

Volunteers are expected to dress in casual attire that is appropriate for meeting with girls. What volunteers wear should not offend anyone or make any of the other volunteers, or girls uncomfortable. In general clothing and appearance should be neat, clean, and modest. Clothing should fit properly, not be provocative or revealing. Clothing should not be offensive, suggestive, lewd, drug, gang, or alcohol related, and should not endorse political parties, commercial products, or sensitive issues. (This list is not intended to address all types of clothing available or be all-inclusive.)

As with clothing, if a tattoo is considered offensive (including nudity, inappropriate language, images, or symbols, or is violent in nature) it must be covered at all times.

Volunteers who do not project proper grooming and dress standards will be directed to conform to proper standards and may be asked to change their clothing to more appropriate attire.

### **Alcohol and Tobacco.**

The use of alcohol is strictly prohibited at troop or service unit functions at which someone under 21 is present. At any Girl Scout activity, tobacco use by adults must be limited to designated areas where girls are not present. Tobacco use by minors (under 21 in the state of Utah) is illegal and prohibited in all instances.

## **Volunteer Separation**

### **Voluntary Resignation**

Reason(s) for resignation should be discussed with, and proper notification given to GSU as far in advance as possible (with a minimum of thirty (30) days), to ensure another volunteer can be established in the role as soon as possible.

### **Involuntary Termination**



Situations may arise that make it necessary to release an individual from an assigned role. A written report will be made of interviews and action taken, and the appropriate council staff member(s) informed along with the appropriate service unit leaders. The operational volunteer being terminated will be informed of the reasons for termination by the appropriate staff liaison.

Release from a volunteer position does not cancel membership with Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA). Once granted, membership cannot be canceled until it expires. GSUSA membership payments are non-refundable.

**Note:** *Most volunteer appointments are made on an annual basis. In some cases, reappointment may not be granted when it is in the best interests of the girls and the organization.*

## **Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention**

Child abuse is a crime. Utah law requires the reporting of suspected child abuse. Therefore, if you witness or suspect that a girl member has been or is the subject of abuse or neglect, whether inside or outside of Girl Scouting, follow the council's guidelines for reporting your concerns to the proper agency within your state.

Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU) requires all operational and program volunteers to agree to adhere to all abuse prevention policies and procedures as set forth by Girl Scouts of the USA and Girl Scouts of Utah and completed the required Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention training. This training must be taken online through the gsLearn platform. Refer to the Girl Scouts of Utah Youth Protection Policies for detailed information and processes surrounding the report of child abuse or neglect.

## **Conflict Resolution and Grievance Policy**

Most potential conflicts and grievances can be anticipated and prevented by merely being sensitive and respectful to others. Many complaints and concerns can be resolved if they are brought to the direct attention of the appropriate individual with a genuine intention to discover a resolution satisfactory to all parties involved. Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU) believes that most, if not all, complaints can be resolved informally. Girl Scout volunteers, parents/guardians, and staff are expected to practice self-control, confidentiality, and diplomacy so that conflicts do not erupt into regrettable incidents.

Every individual should expect prompt attention to their concerns and volunteers should expect a fair resolution of the complaint without fear of jeopardizing their volunteer status. The conflict resolution procedure, however, will not restrict GSU from taking action to protect the safety and health of its members. GSU reserves the right to refuse reappointment, dismiss, or exclude affiliation with any volunteer who does not conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the principles of the Girl Scout Movement, or who violates any policies or procedures of Girl Scouts of the USA or GSU. Decisions made by GSU are deemed final.

Girl Scouts of Utah does not get involved in domestic custody issues unless directly associated with a Girl Scout activity, event, or meeting, or if a child is in need of protection from harm, abuse, or neglect. We encourage all GSU volunteers to be neutral and unbiased when custody issues are present.

**Use of GSU's Grievance Procedure Report form is required for the council to formally take action.** The form is a helpful resource to ensure complete information is properly documented. The form is found on the GSU Forms and Resources webpage.

## **Harassment and Discrimination**

There shall be no discrimination on the basis of age, race, religion, color, sex (including marital status, family status, pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation, gender expression, or any other subcategory of sex recognized by applicable law), parental status, national origin (including ancestry or any other sub category of national origin recognized by applicable law),



disability, family medical history or genetic information, political affiliation, military service, or any other classification protected by federal, state or local laws.

Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU) is committed to maintaining an environment that is free of harassment and discrimination. In keeping with this commitment, GSU is committed to an environment in which relationships are characterized by dignity, courtesy, respect, and equitable treatment. It is the policy of the council to provide all volunteers with an environment free from all forms of discrimination, and harassment including sexual harassment. All volunteers are responsible for helping to ensure that harassment or discrimination is avoided.

Sexual harassment may include anything from overt to subtle behavior. Prohibited behavior includes, but is not limited to offensive sexual flirtations, sexual innuendo, advances, propositions, verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic remarks about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to cause discomfort or humiliate an individual, obscene gestures, physical touching of a sexual nature, or display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures. GSU maintains an environment that encourages any volunteer who believes that they have been the subject of harassment or discrimination to report the incident(s) to either their immediate staff liaison or the CEO.

GSU staff may refuse appointment to a volunteer position or suspend from affiliation with the council any volunteer who, in conducting Girl Scout Program, advocates, solicits, or promotes discrimination or sexuality to create substantial risk that such conduct will be detrimental to the proper role model for members or otherwise violates the terms of this policy.

All Girl Scouts of Utah volunteers will be held equitably accountable for their actions and in their responsibility for adhering to the GSU Volunteer Policies and Code of Conduct. Volunteers found not following these established and approved policies will be subject to reprimand up to and including involuntary termination as a volunteer for GSU.

Questions or concerns regarding GSU Volunteer Policies or Code of Conduct should be directed to the Girl Scouts of Utah, Chief Operating Officer through email: [info@gsutah.org](mailto:info@gsutah.org)

## TROOP MANAGEMENT

### Troop Size

In an effort to make the Troop Pathway to Girl Scouts fun for girls, easier for volunteers, and still meet the goals set by Girl Scouts of the USA, GSU has established a minimum troop size for troops, by program level which are large enough to provide a cooperative learning environment and small enough to allow development of individual girls.

**The following troop sizes are recommended:**

- Girl Scout Daisy (grades K-1): 10-20 girls
- Girl Scout Brownie (grades 2-3): 10-20 girls
- Girl Scout Junior (grades 4-5): 10-25 girls
- Girl Scout Cadette (grades 6-8): 5-25 girls
- Girl Scout Senior (grades 9-10): 5-30 girls
- Girl Scout Ambassador (grades 11-12): 5-30 girls

**Troops must have:**

- A minimum of five (5) registered girls.
- A minimum of two (2) adult leaders, of which at least one is female, who are not related to each other and do not live in the same household.
- If two volunteers are related, (by marriage, partnership, or blood) they must always have another unrelated volunteer present.

Any adults serving in a ratio or volunteer capacity for a troop or attend an activity must be an approved volunteer\*, e.g., troop leaders, co-leaders, troop supporter, drivers, chaperones, product program volunteers, treasurers, first-aiders, camp advisors, etc.

Troops may start with less than the minimum while working in conjunction with the service unit team and GSU staff to meet the minimum standards. We recognize that as girls age out, move, or leave for personal reasons, a troop may fall under the minimum. In these circumstances, the troop simply needs to remain open to new girls joining the troop but may still meet and function as a troop.

*\*Approved volunteers are registered adult members (18 years or older) who have successfully cleared GSU's background check within the last two years, agree to adhere to all abuse prevention policies and procedures as set forth by Girl Scouts of the USA and Girl Scouts of Utah, and completed the required Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and all position trainings.*

### Required Girl to Adult Ratios

Girl Scouts' adult-to-girl ratios show the minimum number of volunteers needed to supervise a specific number of girls during troop meetings. These supervision ratios were devised to ensure the safety and health of all members. In addition to the adult-to-girl ratios, all adults must be approved\* volunteers.

If you are a multi-level troop, consisting of two or more levels (e.g. Brownie and Junior), the ratio should be based on the youngest member of the troop. You are welcome to separate your girls by age group; in which case, each group requires the ratio for their specific age.

#### Adult to Girl Ratios for Troop Meetings

Girl Scout Level/Grade	2 unrelated adults (at least 1 of whom is female) for every:	1 additional adult to each additional:
Daisies (grades K-1)	12 girls	1-6 girls
Brownies (grades 2-3)	20 girls	1-8 girls
Juniors (grades 4-5)	25 girls	1-10 girls
Cadettes (grades 6-8)	25 girls	1-12 girls

Seniors (grades 9-10)	30 girls	1-15 girls
Ambassadors (grades 11-12)	30 girls	1-15 girls

Girls are never to be left alone with any adult who is not an approved volunteer. (Example: a taxicab driver or ski instructor.) Adult supervision for all girls also extends to any online activity. For additional information on online safety, consult:

- The “Computer/Online Use” Safety Activity Checkpoint
- Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge

**Note:** Ratios for events, trips, outings, travel, and camping can be found on page 14 of this document.

*\*Approved volunteers are registered adult members (18 years or older) who have successfully cleared GSU’s background check within the last two years, agree to adhere to all abuse prevention policies and procedures as set forth by Girl Scouts of the USA and Girl Scouts of Utah, and completed the required Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and all position trainings.*

## Troop Safety

### Safety Activity Checkpoints

Safety Activity Checkpoints (available on our [Forms and Documents](#) webpage) provides the standard safety guidelines for GSUSA and council approved activities. In addition to providing volunteers with safety guidelines to ensure the physical and emotional safety of girls, information is also included throughout Safety Activity Checkpoints to ensure equity, diversity, and inclusive thinking when planning Girl Scout activities so all girls with a desire to participate are included.

### First-Aid Kit

You must have a general first-aid kit available at your troop meeting place and it must accompany the troop on any activity, including transportation to and from an activity.

### Accidents

Any serious accident or fatality including girls or adult Girl Scout volunteers must be reported immediately. All volunteers must carry the council emergency information card with procedures and the emergency phone number to use when the council office is closed (see GSU Emergency Procedures for additional information). Girl Scouts of Utah’s emergency phone number is (801) 483-3413.

### First Aider Requirements

A “First Aider” is an approved volunteer who holds a valid Girl Scout-approved First Aid/CPR/AED certification as specified below.

- It is recommended that a First Aider be available at every troop meeting.
- GSU requires that a Girl Scout-approved First Aider be present at any activity outside of the normal meeting place and time.
- The presence of a first aider is required at troop and resident camp.
- For large events, there should be one (1) first-aider for every two hundred (200) participants.
- Additionally, specific activities found in Safety Activity Checkpoints will also specify when a First Aider is required.
- For more remote activities (activities taking place more than 30 minutes travel from Emergency Medical Services), the Girl Scout First Aider is required to have the Wilderness Remote First Aid (WRFA) qualification.

### Approved First-aid/CPR/AED Certification

Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU) offers American Red Cross first-aid/CPR/AED certification for volunteers and older girls. GSU accepts the following occupational licensing/certification for meeting the minimum first-aider requirement: physician, registered nurse, nurse practitioner, physician’s assistant, paramedic, emergency medical technician, dentist, or military medic. GSU

will accept first-aid/CPR/AED certificates from the American Red Cross, National Safety Council, MEDIC First Aid, American Heart Association, and other sponsoring organizations with approval.

**Note:** *These qualifications can **NOT** replace Wilderness Remote First Aid certification. First aid/CPR/AED training that is available entirely online does **NOT** satisfy Girl Scouts' requirements. It is important to understand the differences between a first-aid course and a wilderness-rated course. Although standard first-aid training provides basic incident response, wilderness-rated courses include training on remote-assessment skills, as well as emergency first-aid response, including evacuation techniques, to use when EMS is not readily available.*

## GIRL SCOUTS OF UTAH EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU) provides all volunteers with an [Emergency Information Card](#), which provides a list of the basic procedures to follow in an emergency. Be sure to always carry this card with you during troop meetings and activities.

**The council's 24-hour emergency number is (801) 483-3413.**

An emergency is defined as an incident that involves:

- A fatality
- A near-fatality
- Potential media attention
- An incident that brings a Girl Scouts of Utah policy into question

Should a Girl Scout member have a non-life-threatening accident (i.e., sprain), it is not necessary to call the emergency number. Use the [Accident Report Form](#) and send it to GSU as soon as possible.

**Volunteers should NOT speak to the press regarding any Girl Scout issue. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or their designee will make all official statements as the spokesperson of the council. DO NOT give information on your own.**

### Preparing for Emergency Care

Girls need to receive proper instruction in how to care for themselves and others in emergencies. They also need to learn the importance of reporting to adults any accidents, illnesses, or unusual behaviors during Girl Scout activities.

You can help girls by keeping in mind the following:

- **Know what to report** - See the "Girl Scouts of Utah Emergency Procedures."
- **Establish and practice procedures for weather emergencies.** Know the type of extreme weather to expect in your area, for example tornadoes, hurricanes, and lightning. Consult with council for the most relevant information for you to share with girls.
- **Establish and practice procedures for such circumstances as fire evacuation, lost persons, and building-security issues.** Every girl and adult must know how to act in these situations. For example, you and the girls, with the help of a fire department representative, should design a fire evacuation plan for meeting places used by the group.
- **Assemble a well-stocked first-aid kit that is always accessible.** First-aid administered in the first few minutes can make a significant difference in the severity of an injury.

## TRAVELING WITH GIRLS

### Girl Scouts of Utah Trip/Travel Application and Approval

Consult and comply with Safety Activity Checkpoints (available on our [Forms and Documents](#) webpage) for EACH PLANNED ACTIVITY.

Parent/Caregiver Permission (available on our [Forms and Documents](#) webpage) must be obtained from all participating girls. All forms stay with the troop; GSU does not need or retain copies of forms procured by the troop.

### Activity Approvals

Certain activities that your troop would like to do on your trip require council approval through our GSU Activity Approval Form (available on our [Forms and Documents](#) webpage). Please refer to Safety Activity Checkpoints for all activities that you will be doing on your trip to determine if they need council approval. Examples of activities that need council approval include but are not limited to horseback riding, boating, and skiing.

### Not Permitted

Activities for which GSUSA and GSU do not approve, endorse, or provide safety checkpoints for include the following: Bungee jumping, flying in privately owned planes, helicopters, or blimps, hang gliding, untethered hot-air ballooning, hunting, snowmobiling, riding a motorbike, riding electric scooters, using outdoor trampolines, parachuting, or skydiving, parasailing, paintball tagging, riding all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), stunt skiing, and zorbing.

### Medication Log, Health Exams and Forms

The troop First Aider is responsible for making sure any over the counter and prescription drugs are dispensed correctly. Any time medications are dispensed to girls traveling with the troop, they need to be recorded on the girl's Medication Log.

- Parents/guardians must complete the Girl Scouts of Utah [Medication Log](#) and include all prescription and non-prescription medications which must be in their original containers. The labels on all prescription medication must be prescribed for the girl. **No exceptions!!**
- A recent health exam for girls and adults (within 24 months) and [Health History & Consent Form](#) is required for any activity lasting three (3) consecutive nights or more.

**Note:** All above mentioned forms stay with the troop; GSU does not need copies of these forms.

### Sleeping Arrangements for All Overnight Trips

Adults and girls **never** share a bed. The only exception is for mothers and daughters.

Separate sleeping and bathroom facilities **must** be provided for adult males. In public venue overnights, such as museums or at malls, ask if there is a separate sleeping area and bathrooms for men. If no such area exists, designate an area out of the way or off the side so that men are not sleeping alongside the girls.

Each participant should have their own bed. Parent/guardian permission must be obtained if girls are to share a bed. There is a maximum of two (2) people in a double, queen, or king size bed and only one (1) person in a single/twin-size bed.

It is not mandatory that adults sleep in a tent, cabin, hotel room, or designated area with the girls. If volunteers are sharing a sleeping area with girls, there **must** be at least two female volunteers and/or staff members who are unrelated and do not live in the same residence and the volunteers and/or staff members must sleep in an area out of the way or off the side of where the girls are sleeping (not mixed in among the girls.)

### Travel Progression

Everything in Girl Scouts is about progression. The opportunity to travel is made available to girls as they get older and progress through Girl Scouts. Girls start with day trips and can eventually take international trips. Girl Scouts of Utah requires that Extended Overnight Trips, National Trips, and International Trips are taken in sequential order to ensure adequate travel experience. This means that when the troop decides to take an International Trip, they must have prior

experience traveling as a group within the United States before their travel application is approved by Council.

When traveling with Girl Scouts, volunteers must follow minimum age-level requirements. When moving up to the next step, consider each Girl Scout's independence, ability to work well in groups, flexibility, and experience with cultures other than their own.

### **Requirements for each step in the travel progression:**

- **Local Field Trips - Daisies, Brownies, Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors**  
Visit a nearby spot, possibly during your regular meeting time. This could be a walk to the nearby garden or a short ride by car or public transportation to the firehouse or courthouse.  
*Minimum Age: Daisy*  
*Recommended Age: Daisy, Brownie*
- **Day Trips - Daisies, Brownies, Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors**  
Plan an all-day trip. Try a council event or local attraction. This could be an all-day visit to a point of historical or natural interest (bringing their own lunch) or a day-long trip to a nearby city (stopping at a restaurant for a meal)—younger girls can select locations and do much of the trip-planning, while never being too far from home.  
*Minimum Age: Daisy*  
*Recommended Age: Daisy, Brownie, Junior*
- **Overnight Trips - Daisies, Brownies, Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors**  
One night away to a council event or camp, a state or national park, historic city, or nearby city for sightseeing, staying in a hotel, motel, or campground. For Brownies, these trips are just long enough to whet their appetites, but not so long as to generate homesickness.  
*Minimum Age: Daisy (when following the additional guidelines outlined below)*  
*Recommended Age: Brownie, Junior*
- **Short Trips - Brownies, Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors**  
Spend two to three nights camping or a stay in a hotel, motel, or hostel within Mountain West Region (Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming) that is up to a six-hour drive away from home. Girl Scouts can help plan the budget and schedule for these trips.  
*Minimum Age: Brownie (with Overnight Trip experience in Girl Scouting)*  
*Recommended Age: Junior, Cadette*
- **Extended Trips - Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors**  
Travel anywhere in the country on trips lasting four nights or more OR that take place more than a six-hour drive from home. Try to avoid trips girls might take with their families and consider those that offer some educational and/or community service/Take Action component—this can incorporate some incredible cities, historic sites, and museums around the country.  
*Minimum Age: Junior (with Short Trip experience in Girl Scouting)*  
*Recommended Age: Cadette, Senior, Ambassador*
- **International trips - Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors**  
Travel to countries around the world. These life-changing trips usually take two to three years to save for, plan, and prepare. International trips require additional training and paperwork in order to be approved by council.  
*Minimum Age: Cadette (with Extended Trip experience in Girl Scouting)*  
*Recommended Age: Cadette, Senior, Ambassador*



**Note:** For more information, refer to the GSU Travel Progression Checklist provided during all travel training.

## Overnight Trips

- **One Night** - Notification of all trips of one (1) night **must be submitted to your service unit at least two (2) weeks before the departure date.**
- **Two+ Nights** - All trips of two (2) nights or more must be approved by Council and require the submission of a completed Troop Trip Application (available on our [Forms and Documents](#) webpage) and [Driver Form](#) a minimum of eight (8) weeks prior to departure.
- GSU will notify the Girl Scout volunteer who signed the travel application of the status of their application. Contact the program department at [info@gsutah.org](mailto:info@gsutah.org) for more information about the troop trip application or driver form.

## Requirements for Daisy Overnight Trips

At Girl Scouts of Utah, Daisies **may** participate in travel and camping experiences of **one night or less** when **all** the following conditions are met:

- Girl has completed Kindergarten.
- Location for overnight experience is within 60 miles of home and is within GSU boundaries.
- Adult volunteer to girl ratios are followed.
- Girl has followed a travel and camping progression by successfully completing a field trip and day trip prior to participating in an overnight experience.
- Girl demonstrates emotional and physical maturity consistent with the activity.

## Camping

In addition to the requirements listed for trips and travel, camping, and outdoor related events must also follow these policies:

- At least one (1) adult volunteer who is traveling with the troop must have completed the required and appropriate trip/travel training within the last two years including CPR/First Aid.
- Troop camping on your own may take place at a National Forest Service campground, Girl Scout camp, state campground, or primitive site.
- In addition to meeting the progression requirements girls are also required to experience Outdoor Programs through progressive experiences.

**Note:** Daisies may participate in Council-sponsored camping events, as determined by our Camp Staff and in accordance with GSUSA policies, for a maximum of four nights.

## Adult Volunteer to Girl Ratios for Events, Trips, Travel, Outings, and Camping

Girl Scout Level/Grade	2 unrelated adults (at least 1 of whom is female) for every:	1 additional adult to each additional:
<b>Daisies (grades K-1)</b>	6 girls	1-4 girls
<b>Brownies (grades 2-3)</b>	12 girls	1-6 girls
<b>Juniors (grades 4-5)</b>	16 girls	1-8 girls
<b>Cadettes (grades 6-8)</b>	20 girls	1-10 girls
<b>Seniors (grades 9-10)</b>	24 girls	1-12 girls
<b>Ambassadors (grades 11-12)</b>	24 girls	1-12 girls

*\*Troops must have a minimum of five girl membership to participate in any troop trip.*



## Transporting Girls

How parents decide to transport girls between their homes and Girl Scout meeting places is each parent's individual decision and responsibility. For planned Girl Scout field trips and other activities (outside the normal meeting place) in which the group will be transported in private vehicles, troops must meet the following requirements:

- Obtain parent/caregiver permission (available on our [Forms and Documents](#) webpage) for any use of transportation outside of the meeting place.
- Every driver must:
  - be an approved Girl Scout volunteer,
  - be 21 years of age or older,
  - have a good driving record,
  - hold a valid license, appropriate to the vehicle,
  - use a lawfully registered vehicle,
  - Provide proof of personal automobile liability insurance coverage, and
  - follow all state laws.
- Girls never drive other girls.
- **If a group is traveling in one vehicle**, there must be at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers in the vehicle, one of whom is female. In addition, the required girl-volunteer ratios (listed in this document) must be followed.
- **If a group is traveling in more than one vehicle**, the entire group must consist of at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers, one of whom is female, and the girl-volunteer ratios listed in this document must be followed. Care should be taken so that a single car is not separated from the group for an extended length of time.
- Vans Designed for 12 and 15 Passengers
  - Maximum capacity of personally owned private passenger vehicle used by volunteer driver must be less than 12-passenger, except in limited cases with pre-approval from GSU.
  - In the event a 12-passenger van is approved for use, the following must be observed:
    - Driver must be a minimum of 25 years of age.
    - No towing of trailers or loading of anything on top of van.
    - Limited night driving
    - Daily checks of all vital components, which are then recorded
    - Seatbelt use is mandatory for all occupants, regardless of state law.
  - Girl Scouts of Utah's policy **prohibits the use of 15 passenger vans** in transporting girls to/from Girl Scout activities. However, riding in a 15+ passenger van is permitted **IF** the van is a professionally operated commercial vehicle (i.e., airport shuttles).
  - Anyone who is driving a vehicle with more than 12 passengers must be a professional driver who possesses a commercial driver's license (CDL).
- Any adult should drive no more than six hours in one day, with rest breaks every two hours.
- There must be a relief driver for trips of more than six hours. The relief driver must hold a valid operator's license for that vehicle and have their driving record checked.
- If possible, plan to drive only in daylight hours; this includes relief drivers.
- If a trailer is used, it must be with a vehicle of less than 12-passengers and follow all state, local, and federal regulations for the areas of travel.
  - The assigned driver must be experienced in pulling a trailer.
  - No girls or adults may ride in the trailer.

- Caravanning is **NOT** allowed; each driver must have information about route and destination in addition to cell-phone numbers of other drivers.
- Any motor vehicle used to transport Girl Scouts must be duly licensed, insured, safety-tested, and operated by an adult with a valid driver license.
- Vehicles must also carry appropriate insurance as required by Utah state law.
- Each passenger must have their own seat and use a seat belt and adhere to all state laws regarding booster seats and requirements for children in rear seats.
- According to Utah law, children must ride in booster seats until age 8. It is even safer to keep them in boosters until they are 4 feet 9 inches tall, no matter their age.
  - After age 8, children should always wear a seat belt.
  - Children 12 years of age and younger should continue to ride in the back seat.

### **Renting, Chartering, and Rideshare**

Even though written agreements are required when renting or chartering, you are NOT authorized to sign an agreement or contract, except for rental car agreements, even if there is no cost associated with the rental. Such agreements must be signed by the council-designated staff person. If renting a car, read all rental agreements to be sure you comply with their terms and avoid surprises. For example, in many cases the minimum age of drivers is 25, and the maximum age is often under 70. In addition, make sure the car is adequately insured and you know who is responsible for damage to, or loss of, the vehicle. Finally, ensure you have a good paper trail that shows the vehicle rental is Girl Scout– related.

For chartered buses or rented vehicles, always ensure the possession of safety credentials and commercial driving licenses, and the use of seat belts. Make certain proper insurance is in place by requesting a certificate of insurance with a minimum of \$1 million in auto liability coverage.

Taxis and ride sharing services, including Uber and Lyft, may be used with these guidelines:

- An adult should ride in each vehicle with Girl Scout members when multiple vehicles are being used.
- Wait for your ride in a safe place. For taxis, when possible, call (or ask your hotel to call), rather than hailing from the street. Use a taxi stand at airports. Stand away from traffic while waiting.
- For taxis, check that the taxi is appropriately marked.
- For ride-sharing services:
  - Check that the vehicle’s license plate, make and model match what is shown in the app.
  - Compare the app’s photo with the driver. Ask for their name and be sure it matches the app.
  - Ask, “who are you here to pick up?” They should have your first name, but no other information about you.
  - If you feel uncomfortable for any reason, do not get in the vehicle. If you become uncomfortable, end the ride. Report your experience to the taxi service or ride-sharing app.
  - Send your in-town trip contact the name of the driver and your destination. Most apps have a sharing feature for this purpose.
  - Do not share information about the group or where you are staying with any strangers.
  - Each passenger must wear a seat belt.
  - Enter and exit curbside.

**Note:** *In foreign countries, consult a local expert about how best to call for taxis or rides as reputable practices vary.*

### **Activity Accident Insurance**

Activity accident insurance is supplemental health insurance that protects registered Girl Scout members. Registered members are automatically covered under activity accident insurance when participating in all Girl Scout events and activities. Invited non-member participants are also

covered. When planning extended trips, always consult with your Girl Scout council to see if extra activity accident insurance is needed or recommended. International trips always require Activity Accident Insurance Plan 3PI.

Extra Insurance Forms (available on our [Forms and Documents](#) webpage) must be submitted to GSU at least four (4) weeks (one month) in advance of departure date.

**Note:** *Neither GSU nor GSUSA assume responsibility for insuring members' personal effects, including vehicles.*

## FINANCE POLICIES

### Girl Scouts of Utah Tax-Exempt Status

The 501(c)(3) IRS determination letter classifies Girl Scouts of Utah as a “charitable institution.” Service Unit/troops/groups are NOT classified in this category and are not permitted to use the council’s 501(c)(3) letter as generated by the IRS, except for council-sponsored events/day camps.

### Troop Finances

#### Setting Up and Managing a Troop Bank Account

Any volunteer accepting responsibility for handling troop money must be a registered member of GSUSA, pass a GSU criminal background check (CBC), accept legal accountability up to and including prosecution for the proper use and safekeeping of troop money.

The bank account must have at least two unrelated signatures (not be of the same family or household) of other signatures on the account. Each signer will receive a debit card for the troop account which should only be used for Girl Scout troop supplies, activities, and necessities.

When opening a troop checking account, the following steps need to be completed:

- Troops must establish the bank accounts through the Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU) Finance Dept. The GSU identification number must be used when a Troop bank account is opened.
- Check and respond to correspondence received from the Council to complete account setup.
- Contact GSU Finance at [info@gsutah.org](mailto:info@gsutah.org) with any questions.

Girl Scouts of Utah Banking Information:

- Accounts set up through GSU will be held at Wells Fargo Bank.
- No monthly fees are associated with the account.
- Debit cards may be used in conjunction with troop or service unit accounts.
- Credit cards may **NOT** be used or issued to troop or service unit accounts.
- Volunteers must never sign blank checks.
- If a volunteer is being reimbursed, someone else should process the reimbursement.
- GSU cautions the use of online/electronic payment platforms. Troops are responsible for any fees associated with the use of the applications.
  - **Approved:** PayPal, Square, Zelle - Troop accounts can accept payments or transfer funds into the account. However, troop accounts are **NOT** permitted to transfer money out of the account.
  - **NOT Approved: Venmo** - Venmo is **NOT** to be used as a method of making or receiving payments, except through GSUSA approved payment platforms such as Digital Cookie.

#### Troop Funds

Troop funds are not the property of any individual member of the troop. No current GSU staff member, board member, or board committee member may be a signer on troop bank accounts.

- Troop funds exceeding \$50.00 must be placed in an account in the name of Girl Scouts of Utah Troop [####].
- If a girl chooses to transfer to another troop, funds within the troop account remain with the original troop, including any monies raised by fundraisers for troop specific activities such as travel and trips.
- If it is agreeable with all parties, calculated funds may be transferred to the new troop.
- If a girl is asked to leave the troop by the troop leader and then joins another troop, a percentage of the troop funds will be calculated and transferred to the new troop by council.

*Calculation: funds in account / # of girls in the troop = per girl amount*

### **Troop Finance Reports**

The troop finance report recaps all expenses and income during the membership year and **MUST** be submitted annually or within 30 days if there is a change in leadership.

- Expenses consist of the cost of events, supplies, service projects, trips, camping outings, etc.
- Income consists of money obtained from sponsors, troop dues, Product Program, money-earning, donations, etc.
- **Troop Finance Reports are due to the council by June 30th of each year.**
- Finance reports are to be submitted through the Volunteer Toolkit Finance Tab.

**Note:** *For stewardship purposes, GSU may perform representative audits of troop and service unit financials. If requested, troop adult volunteers must provide monthly bank statements, cancelled checks, and/or receipts for expenses reported for the given audit period.*

### **Disbanding Troops**

Disbanded troop funds will be held by GSU in the name of the troop for a period of one year.

- If the troop is reactivated during that time frame, the funds will be returned to the troop.
- If a troop divides, forming two troops, the funds will be prorated according to the number of currently registered girls in the original troop and disbursed to the troops involved in the division.
- If the troop does not reform, all unused funds default to Girl Scouts of Utah and are diverted to the Girl Scout Outreach Program.
- If one troop merges with another troop, funds will be combined and are considered troop funds and utilized for all girls within the troop.

### **Closing a Troop Bank Account**

When closing a troop account, be sure all checks and other debits have cleared the account before closing. All remaining funds will be removed by electronic fund transaction by GSU. A final Troop Financial Report must be submitted via the VTK within 30 days of the troop account being closed and must include the final bank account statement showing a zero balance. For any questions, contact the GSU Finance Team at [finance@gsutah.org](mailto:finance@gsutah.org)

**Note:** *Volunteers may need to close the account in person if the account is established at any other bank than Wells Fargo. Turn all remaining funds over to a council staff member along with your final Troop Financial Report and final bank statement.*

### **Troop Money-Earning Requirements**

Troops are encouraged to participate in Girl Scout Product Programs as their primary money-earning activity; any additional money-earning should not compete with the council Product Programs. **Money-earning projects may not be conducted during the council Girl Scout Product Programs** (from scheduled order taking through delivery/booth time).

There are specific guidelines—some required by the Internal Revenue Service—that ensure that sales are conducted with legal and financial integrity:

- The Girl Scout Product Programs are considered *troop* money-earning projects.
- Individual participation in money-earning programs, activities, or projects is voluntary and therefore optional.
- Troop money-earning projects may *not* be conducted solely for the benefit of individual girls or individual adults, and money earned may not be directly donated to individual girls or individual adults.
- Troop volunteers must receive written permission from a girl's parent or guardian before she participates in any money-earning project; this includes the Girl Scout Product Programs.
- Girl Scout Daisy and Brownie troops may not participate in additional money-earning projects beyond the council-sponsored Product Programs.
- Girl Scout Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors may have a maximum of two annual money-earning projects in addition to the Product Programs.
- Specialty troops, identified as Travel, Mariner, Trailblazer, and STEM are eligible for money-earning projects. The specialty troop must participate in the council Product Programs to be eligible for additional money-earning projects. The specialty troop must be designated as a girl's primary troop to earn funds for that troop.
- Money raised, earned, or received by a Girl Scout troop becomes the property of the troop and is not the property of any individual troop member. None of these proceeds follow a girl if she leaves a troop.
- All rewards earned by girls through the product programs activities must support Girl Scout program experiences (such as camp, travel, and program events, but not scholarships or financial credit toward outside organizations).
- Product Program rewards are based on sales ranges set by councils and may not be based on a dollar-per-dollar calculation.

Troops should obtain written approval from their Service Unit Manager before conducting an additional money-earning project. Written requests should be submitted to the Service Unit Team for **approval at least four (4) weeks before the project begins** for the approval process. Once approved by the service unit, a description and explanation of the troop money-earning project should be submitted for approval to the GSU Development Dept. ([info@gsutah.org](mailto:info@gsutah.org)) before conducting any additional money-earning project.

- Money-earning activities/projects must meet Utah state laws. Games of chance (e.g., raffles, bingo, card games, etc.), direct solicitation for cash, or endorsement/sale of a non-Girl Scout commercial product are not permitted.
- Girl Scouts prohibits product demonstration parties where the use of the Girl Scout trademark increases revenue for another business (For example: In home product parties).
- Group money-earning activities need to be suited to the age and abilities of the girls and consistent with the principles of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.
- Troop members must be able to demonstrate a clear understanding of how the money-earning projects also benefit their growth and development as defined by the Girl Scout mission statement and must define these benefits during the approval process with their Service Unit.
- Money-earning activities/projects may be conducted only when there is need for additional income for a specific program activity and should not exceed what the troop needs to support its planned activities or projects.
- Money earned is for Girl Scout activities and is not to be retained by individuals. Girls can, however, be awarded incentives and/or may earn credits from their Girl Scout product program participation.
- Funds acquired through group money-earning projects must be reported and accounted for by the group, while following council finance procedures.

## Troop Sponsors

Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU) is a non-profit organization and receives tax-deductible donations according to this designation. In accordance with IRS regulations, troops and service units operate under the Girl Scouts umbrella but cannot receive donations directly into their checking account if the donor would like to use the contribution as a tax-deduction. Any donation to a troop or service unit of \$250 or more must be received by Girl Scouts of Utah, regardless of whether the donor requests a tax-deduction.

The companies, foundations, and individuals found on the GSU Community Partners list provide support for Girl Scouting on a statewide level. Their support and impact span the council's jurisdiction. Almost all of the foundations and corporations on this list require a complex proposal process, as well as reports on the use of their donations. Therefore, it has been determined that the council is the best entity for making contact with and requesting support from the current list of partners. If you have an interest in any of the organizations or individuals on this list, please discuss this with the Development Dept. before making contact.

Community organizations, businesses, religious organizations, and individuals may be sponsors and may provide group meeting places, volunteer time, activity materials, equipment, or financial support for troops. A signed Facility Use Agreement or Sponsorship Agreement is highly recommended, listing the details of the sponsorship. If a sponsorship involves financial support, the donation must be used for troop programs and activities and be entered on the troop annual financial report. If a signed agreement is requested by a sponsor, it must be approved by the Girl Scouts of Utah Development Dept.

- When a sponsor submits a donation, they **must include a notation of the troop that should receive the funds**. To ensure compliance with IRS regulations, GSUSA strongly discourages accepting donations where the gift appears to be primarily for the benefit of a single individual.
- If troop adults hold a money-earning project for the benefit of the Girl Scout troop, the project will be considered a troop money-earning project and must follow all council money-earning policies.
- Girl Scouts may **not** earn money for other organizations. This includes participating in a walkathon or telethon while in uniform, clothing donation services and the like.
- **All money raised in the name of Girl Scouts must be used in the Girl Scout organization.**
- Girl members may support other organizations through Take Action projects, service projects or a donation from their troop money.
- Donations from corporations generated by matching cookie sales may only be distributed at the Service Unit level. These funds must be used only for girl programs at the Service Unit level.
- Since 1939, girls and volunteers have **not** been allowed to sell, endorse, and/or provide a testimonial for commercial products (any product that is sold at retail).

**Note:** GSU may ask for an explanation outlining how the troop will spend the funds. GSU will acknowledge the tax-deductible contribution to the donor for tax purposes and forward the full donation to the troop [IRS Section 170(f)(8)].

## Other Collaboration with Outside Organizations

### In-Kind Donations

An in-kind contribution is when a corporation, foundation, or individual contributes a good or service in lieu of providing cash. In-kind contributions support the programs or daily operations of Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU). Such contributions include products, supplies and equipment, the use of corporate services or facilities, and professional services or expertise. If your troop/group



would like to solicit an entity for an in-kind gift that is valued at more than \$100, please contact Girl Scouts of Utah Development Dept. ([info@gsutah.org](mailto:info@gsutah.org)).

In-kind donations build relationships within an organization as the donor can support the mission and programs without investing cash. Keeping a donor informed of what is done with their donation encourages them to take on a greater role in programs. In-kind gifts reduce budget expenditures and help sustain nonprofit organizations. We welcome partnerships and outside support.

### **Political Fundraisers**

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

## **Service Unit Finances**

Service unit funds can be instrumental in helping a service unit experience membership growth and retention, offer exciting program opportunities, and introduce Girl Scouts to the broader community. Funds must be properly tracked and used for the legitimate purposes of supporting leadership development and training of its volunteers, providing support to troop and girls in need, providing service to the community, and facilitating fun events and activities that engage girls, their families, and community members.

### **Service Unit Bank Account & Funds**

- Service units must establish bank accounts through the Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU) Finance Dept. (the GSU identification number must be used when a Service Unit bank account is opened).
- The Service Unit account is established by Girl Scouts of Utah in the name of [NAME] Service Unit.
- Accounts set up through GSU will be held at Wells Fargo Bank. Service Units with Wells Fargo accounts enjoy free checking and a dedicated Girl Scout customer support team.
  - Establishing a bank account at a bank other than Wells Fargo requires prior approval from the GSU Chief Executive Officer.
- A minimum of two people must be authorized to sign on each service unit account. These individuals must be registered members of GSUSA who have passed their criminal background checks and cannot be of the same family or household.
- Service unit funds exceeding \$50.00 must be placed in the bank account.
- Service unit funds are earned through the Cookie Program, a percentage of the per sale price is allocated to each service unit and is based on the number of packages sold by the girls within the service unit.
- Service units do not conduct or seek out money-earning opportunities beyond the needs of programming and activities facilitated by the service unit.
- Funds for service units that do not have key administrative volunteers will be held by the council for use by the troops service unit to conduct group (multiple troop) activities.

### **Service Unit Annual Appeal**

Service Units are encouraged to raise funds during each membership year to benefit Girl Scouts across the state of Utah through the GSU Annual Giving Campaign (aka. Service Unit Appeal). This investment in our girls keeps the cost of camp affordable, subsidizes membership and program fees, and eliminates the financial barrier some families may experience.

In support of the Service Unit Annual Appeal, each service unit is asked to set a goal at the beginning of the membership year to support this council-wide initiative. Service Units may hold annual events to obtain contributions for the GSU Service Unit Annual Appeal Campaign; all funds



must be generated by adults in the community. Fundraising or fund development to support the Girl Scout Program is the responsibility of adults; this responsibility may not be placed with girls.

Service Units that raise funds for this campaign must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Prior to asking a corporation or individual for a donation, service units must first check the “Community Partners” list.
- If an entity is listed on the Community Partners list, they should not be approached for any type of donation for any reason. If you have an interest in any of the organizations or individuals on this list, please discuss this with the Development Dept. before making contact.
- Service unit fundraising projects must meet Utah state laws. Games of chance (e.g., raffles, bingo, card games) or endorsement/sale of a non-Girl Scout commercial product is not permitted.
- Direct cash solicitation is permitted only for the GSU Service Unit Annual Appeal. A “request for approval” for annual fundraising events or direct solicitations must be:
  - Completed and submitted to GSU Development by the Service Unit Manager,
  - In compliance with council fundraising procedures and as approved by Audit & Compliance Committee and Board of Directors,
  - Sent to the GSU Development Team for approval 4 weeks (1 month) in advance of the special fundraising event/direct solicitation.
  - Approval, denial, and/or next steps of the funding request with rationale will be communicated back to the Service Unit Manager within 2 weeks.
- Donations to the service unit of \$250 or greater must be received by GSU on behalf of the service unit and may ask for an explanation outlining how the service unit will spend the funds.
- GSU will acknowledge the tax-deductible contribution to the donor for tax purposes and forward the full donation to the Service Unit [IRS Section 170(f)(8)].

***Note:*** Any adult with an outstanding debt to Girl Scouts will not be eligible for appointment or able to continue in a volunteer position. Volunteers with debts that are not paid in full will be released from the volunteer position at the time that debt is given to a collection agency. Future consideration for any volunteer position will be possible only after the debt is paid in full.

### **Service Unit Finance Report**

**An annual Service Unit Financial Report must be filed with GSU along with a copy of the most recent bank statement by June 30 of each year to: [info@gsutah.org](mailto:info@gsutah.org)**

- The report must be signed by the Service Unit Finance Representative & Service Unit Manager.
- The finance report covers all expenses and income during the membership year.
- Expenses consist of the cost of events, supplies, service projects, trips, camping outings, etc.
- Income consists of money obtained from sponsors, troop dues, Product Programs, money-earning, donations, etc.
- Direct donations from corporations generated by matching product program funds may only be distributed at the service unit level.
- These funds must be used only for girl programs at the service unit level.
- Product Program proceeds may be withheld if the service unit does not submit an annual financial report to the council by each year.
- Failure to file annual financial reports may also impact eligibility to participate in Product Programs.

**Note:** For stewardship purposes, GSU may perform representative audits of troop and service unit financials. If requested, adult volunteers must provide monthly bank statements, cancelled checks and/or receipts for expenses for the given audit period.

## PRODUCT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Girl Scout Product Programs are council-sponsored programs. Girls' participation in both council-sponsored product program activities and money-earning projects is based upon the following:

- Voluntary participation, meaning participation is optional.
- Written permission of each girl's parent or guardian.
- An understanding of (and ability to explain clearly to others) why the funds are needed.
- An understanding that money-earning should not exceed what the troop needs to support activities.
- Observance of local ordinances related to involvement of children in money-earning activities, as well as health and safety laws.
- Vigilance in protecting the personal safety of each girl.
- Arrangement for safeguarding the money.

### Product Program Requirements

Volunteers should carefully read and comply with the Money-Earning requirements explained in the Finance section of this document, in addition to the Product Program specific requirements as explained below:

- Girls wishing to participate in product programs must be registered members of GSUSA prior to taking any orders.
- Volunteers serving as Product Managers must be a registered member of GSUSA and have a current criminal background check on record that does not expire during the product season.
- New troops that begin in January may participate in the Cookie Program at the discretion of the Service Unit Product Program Rep and the council Membership Support Specialist based upon experience and training of new troop volunteers.
- **Parent/guardian permission** must be obtained in writing before a girl participates in the council Product Program.
- **Safety Activity Checkpoints:** Special safety checkpoints are provided for the Girl Scout Product Programs and must be followed.
- **Buddy System:** Girls must be accompanied by a buddy at all times. Adults must accompany Girl Scout Daisies, Brownies, and Juniors when selling door-to-door. Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors are supervised by adults when selling door-to-door, but adults need not stay by the girls' sides.
- **Outstanding Debt:** If a girl and/or her family has an outstanding debt to Girl Scouts of Utah, they will not be eligible to participate in the annual Product Programs (including booths) or receive activity credits and/or activity scholarships until the debt is paid in full.

**Note:** Any adult with an outstanding debt to Girl Scouts will not be eligible for appointment or able to continue in a volunteer position. Volunteers with debts that are not paid in full will be released from the volunteer position at the time that debt is given to a collection agency. Future consideration for any volunteer position will be possible only after the debt is paid in full.

### Cookie Booths:

Troops may participate in optional Cookie Booths, which must be approved by the council Product Programs Department. To begin the approval process, troops need to submit a completed Girl Scout Cookie Booth Agreement form to GSU Product Programs Department at [info@gsutah.org](mailto:info@gsutah.org).

All participating girls, and adults handling money, must be registered Girl Scouts. At least two (2) unrelated adults, one of whom is registered and one who is female, must be present and always supervise the booth.

#### No Combined Cookie Orders:

Cookie orders may not be shared or combined in any manner to qualify for recognitions or awards.

Only cookies ordered for booths may be distributed among girls within the same troop who participated in the booth sale activities.

#### **Adult Training**

Adults serving as Product Managers must attend a GSU Product Program training given by an authorized council representative a minimum of one week prior to the beginning date of the Product Program (see below under “Product Manager Responsibility”).

#### **Money-Earning**

Money-earning refers to activities following a planned budget and carried out by girls and adults, in partnership to earn money for the troop treasury. Participation in the Product Programs is considered a group money-earning activity and must therefore comply with the requirements listed and explained in the Finance section of this document.

- Council sponsored Product Programs are council-wide sales of authorized products, such as Girl Scout Cookies, nuts, and chocolate in which members participate.
- Anyone participating in these programs must adhere to the requirements explained under the Money-Earning section of the Finance section of this document.
- Other non-Girl Scout Product Program money-earning projects may not be conducted during the council Girl Scout Product Programs, from scheduled order taking through distribution and/or booth sales.

#### **Activity Credits**

A girl who is a currently registered member of GSUSA and is supervised by a council trained adult can participate in the Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU) Cookie Program and may earn activity credits based upon the number of packages she sells. GSU activity credits are an incentive to participate in the Cookie Program. Activity credits give girls and their parents/guardians the freedom to choose how to reward girls for their hard work. A girl and her parents/guardians, not the adult leaders/advisors, decide how their activity credits will be utilized.

- Activity credits are **not** earned for participating in the Fall Product Program.
- Girls participating in the Cookie Program may earn activity credits based upon the number of packages they sell.
- Activity credits expire approximately one year after issuance, refer to the actual activity credits for the expiration date. The CEO may adjust the expiration date as necessary due to specific circumstances.
- Activity credits will not be re-issued if lost or stolen.

Activity Credits can:

- Pay for council-sponsored program activities, minicamps, resident and troop camping, and GSUSA-sponsored destinations.
- Pay for shop merchandise at the Utah Girl Scout Shops and Girl Scouts of Southern Nevada.
- Pay for special order items at Girl Scouts of Utah’s shop.
- Pay for merchandise at resident camp trading posts.
- Pay for girl membership registration fees and for new non-Girl Scout registration fees.
- Be transferred between girls who are currently registered members of Girl Scouts of Utah.
- Pay for program, camp, and/or events prior to any activity scholarships being awarded.

Activity Credits cannot:

- Be used at other Girl Scout councils (except Girl Scouts of Southern Nevada).
- Be used to purchase council sponsored product programs items or products.
- Be used to order directly from GSUSA Girl Scout merchandise catalog.
- Be replaced or reissued if lost or stolen.
- Be exchanged for cash.
- Be transferred to adults and/or used to pay for adult membership registration fees, adult program fees, and any other adult expenses.
- Be used to pay for individual scholarships.
- Be used in making on-line payments.

### Activity Credits for Travel

Girl Scouts may use activity credits toward trip expenses for a GSUSA, council, or troop-sponsored trip. Eligible troop trips must be for two or more nights and must turn in the appropriate paperwork to be approved by GSU. Girl Scouts may start turning in activity credits towards troop trips after a Trip Application has been received by council. Girl Scouts may participate in the trip as individuals or as a member of the troop.

The Activity Credit Redemption form (available on our [Forms and Documents](#) webpage) must be submitted to GSU with the activity credits to be applied toward travel expenses before the activity credits expire (expiration date is printed on the activity credits). Please see the Trips and Travel section of this document for more information.

**Note:** Activity credits can be used to pay for programs, camp, or events that take place after the activity credits have expired; however, payment must be submitted to GSU prior to the expiration date printed on the activity credits.

The policies contained in this document have been reviewed and approved by the Girl Scouts of Utah Audit & Compliance Committee and Board of Directors. Policy changes and updates can be submitted by members, volunteers, or council staff for consideration and should contain rationale as to why the change is being recommended. Submissions should be received no later than June 30 in order to prepare for review and consideration by Girl Scouts of Utah Audit & Compliance Committee and the Board of Directors.

Send policy change submissions to Girl Scouts of Utah, 445 E. 4500 S., #125, Salt Lake City, UT 84107 or [info@gsutah.org](mailto:info@gsutah.org), attn.: Chief Operating Officer

No policy or provision in this resource is intended to create an employment relationship.