



Volunteer Policies

2026-2027 Edition

Approved by the Board of Directors: 09/10/2026

Effective: 10/01/2026

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GSU GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Volunteer Philosophy

Girl Scouts of Utah maintains 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.

Role Models

Girl Scouts recognizes the vital role that dedicated and dynamic female leaders and role models play in helping girls develop their full potential. 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, while men serve as adult troop volunteers, they do so as one of several volunteers in collaboration with female volunteers who provide a powerful framework for developing and fostering leadership in young girls.

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 is 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.

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.

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.

VOLUNTEER POLICIES

Volunteers are defined as an adult 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).

It is important that all GSU Volunteers follow the policies not only to ensure girls' 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 all policies, the purpose of which is not to restrict your rights, but rather to be certain that you understand what is expected and necessary. When each person is aware that they can fully depend upon fellow volunteers to follow policies, then our organization will be a better place to volunteer for everyone.

Volunteer Responsibilities

All GSU volunteers must subscribe to the Girl Scout Promise and Law; be registered members of Girl Scouts of the USA; pass a criminal background check; complete youth protection training, as well as support and function within the framework of the council charter, articles of incorporation, bylaws, policies, goals, and objectives of council. Other responsibilities may apply to specific volunteer roles and will be disclosed once a volunteer role is appointed.

Criminal Background Check

Girl Scouts requires all volunteers to submit and recertify a criminal background check every two (2) years. Without an approved criminal background check, a person cannot serve in or be appointed to a volunteer position with GSU.

As a general matter, the decision whether to exclude or limit prospective or current volunteer 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.

Girl Scouts 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 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.

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 Girl Scouts of Utah within five (5) business days.

Child Abuse & Youth Protection

Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU) has zero tolerance for abuse or mistreatment of youth and will not stand for any such action happening within its program jurisdiction. 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 volunteers to complete Youth Protection Policy Training once every two (2) years as a prevention and protection of the girls in the Girl Scout program and ALL modules in this training MUST be completed PRIOR to working with youth in our organization. This training can be taken online through the gsLearn platform.

Refer to the [Girl Scouts of Utah Youth Protection Addendum](#) for detailed information and processes surrounding the report of child abuse or neglect.

Site Partners

Site partners leading Outreach Programs require a background check and training in Youth Protection. This can be met either through using GSU's process or if a partner facilities equivalent or greater training and background checks, a signed MOU can be accepted alongside naming GSU as an additionally insured.

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. Photos and videos of youth members should be treated as confidential when they are not intended for public release. Such images may only be collected, stored, shared, or used for legitimate Girl Scout purposes in accordance with applicable photo releases, GSU policies, and any restrictions communicated by a parent or guardian.

Failure to comply with this policy 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.

APPOINTMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

In Girl Scouts, volunteers are appointed after a process that includes registration, background checks, and sometimes specific training, depending on the role. Appointments are typically made by GSU staff or an administrative volunteer. Key considerations include the two-volunteer rule, an adult female presence, and alignment with council goals.

Once approved, adults may fill a volunteer position, this includes but is not limited to:

Troop Leader	Fall Product Manager	First Aider	Short-Term
Troop Co-Leader	Cookie Manager	Service Unit Volunteer	Seasonal
Troop Supporter	Driver or Chaperone	Council Trainer	Camp
Troop Treasurer		Council Committee	
Any adult attending overnight trips or sponsored events with girls			

Volunteer Training

Volunteers are provided with the opportunity to develop new skills and enhance existing skills through a variety of training courses and learning paths. Courses are offered in classroom, virtual, and online formats.

- ALL volunteers must complete the Youth Protection Training within 6 weeks of appointment or prior to having contact with girls in the organization.
- New Troop Leaders and Co-Leaders and GSUSA New Leader Onboarding Learning Path within 45 days of assuming a volunteer role.
- Additional training is required for volunteers before engaging in certain activities including but not limited to camping, day & field trips, short & extended overnight trips, and travel.
- At least one approved troop volunteer must have a valid First Aid/CPR certification and accompany troops on any outing (any meeting or activity outside the normal meeting space).

Evaluation & Reappointment of Volunteers

An annual evaluation is conducted each year with volunteers through meetings, documentation, and a self-evaluation survey. This information is documented and reviewed by council staff to ensure volunteers are providing an appropriate and physically/emotionally safe environment for Girl Scouts. Topics to be evaluated include but are not limited to fulfilling requirements of assigned role, conduct and behavior, abiding by all GSUSA & GSU policies and code of conduct.

VOLUNTEER SEPARATION

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.

Voluntary Resignation of Role

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. If the resignation causes the need for a troop to disband, a Disbanding Troop Survey must be completed and followed up by a conversation with council staff to ensure proper procedures are followed in closing the troop.

Involuntary Termination of Volunteer Status

Situations may arise that make it necessary to release an individual from an assigned role, including but not limited to breach of policy, inappropriate conduct, and unresolved financial obligations to council. A written report will be made and include the interviews of all parties involved, actions taken, and final resolution. Council staff will inform the volunteer(s) being terminated of the reasoning for termination along with any other written documentation appropriate to the situation.

GSU CODE OF CONDUCT

The [Girl Scouts of Utah Code of Conduct](#) is a set of guidelines that outlines expected behavior for Girl Scouts and adults involved in Girl Scouting. Adults involved in Girl Scouting, including volunteers and caregivers, are also expected to adhere to this Code of Conduct.

Consequences for violations will depend on the severity and nature of the infraction, consequences for violating the Code of Conduct can range from verbal warnings to being asked to leave an activity or event, and in some cases, may be grounds for dismissal from the program or separation as a volunteer.

Modeling Safe and Respectful Behavior

As a Girl Scout adult volunteer or leader, your actions set the tone for the entire experience. It is essential to consistently role-model behavior that reflects the values of safety, respect, and responsibility.

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.

Harassment & Discrimination

GSU is committed to maintaining an environment that is free of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. Relationships in Girl Scouts should be characterized by dignity, courtesy, respect, and equitable treatment. All volunteers are responsible for helping to ensure that harassment or discrimination is not present in our program.

Any volunteer who believes that they have been the subject of harassment or discrimination should report the incident(s) to the GSU VP of People & Belonging and CEO by emailing sensitiveissues@gsutah.org.

GSU may refuse appointments or separate affiliation with any volunteer or adult who advocates, solicits, or promotes discrimination during Girl Scout programming.

Personal Appearance

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.

During programming, volunteers are expected to dress in casual attire that is appropriate for meeting with girls. Clothing should not include anything that may be deemed offensive by others or make any of the other volunteers or youth uncomfortable. In general clothing and appearance should be neat, clean, fit properly, and be an appropriate representation of GSU. Clothing should not be 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.

Substance Use & Language

- Never use illegal drugs.
- Do not consume alcohol, smoke/vape, or use foul language in the presence of girls.
- Alcohol is prohibited at any troop or service unit function where individuals under 21 are present.
- Tobacco use by adults must be limited to designated areas away from girls. Tobacco use by minors (under 21 in Utah) is illegal and prohibited at all Girl Scout activities.

Weapons & Safety:

- Do not carry firearms or ammunition in the presence of girls unless explicitly authorized by Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU) for approved marksmanship activities.

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.

**Members may substitute for the word God in
accordance with their own spiritual beliefs.*



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 Scouts of Utah Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct

I understand that my attitude and behavior are critical to the success
of this program. By attending this program, I agree to the following:

- I will follow the principles of the Girl Scout Promise and Law as listed on this Code of Conduct.
- I will follow the rules that are made to protect others and myself and to help make sure program activities are safe, fun, and successful.
- I will treat other people, myself, property, and equipment with respect.
- I will uphold my share of daily responsibilities.
- I will be respectful of Girl Scout leaders. I will ask questions calmly and if I am disappointed, I will express my opinion in a respectful manner.
- I will not bully or abuse (including any unwanted contact) my fellow Girl Scouts. I understand that violence will not be tolerated and my parents will be notified as well as the parents of any others involved.
- I will respect that others may have ideas and thoughts different from mine. I understand their ideas are just as important, and I will not make fun of or dismiss them.
- I will use the buddy system at all times and will inform my Girl Scout leaders of where I am going.
- I will take care of my personal wellbeing. This includes, but is not limited to: drinking enough water, wearing sunscreen & appropriate clothing for the weather, eating enough food, getting enough rest, and checking in on my mental health.
- I will stay home and refrain from participation in activities if I am unwell or experiencing symptoms of illness within 48 hours of attendance.
- I will notify my leaders immediately if I begin to feel unwell during the program.
- I will follow all Youth Protection Guidelines including never being in a situation where one youth is alone with an unrelated adult.
- I understand that electronics use may be limited or restricted depending on the program, and I agree to respect those guidelines.
- For overnight or travel programs, I will respect all curfews, quiet hours, and group agreements.

I understand the following are unacceptable and are grounds for dismissal from the program:

- Intimidating, threatening use of verbal or non-verbal language that makes others feel that their safety is at risk.
- Fighting, stealing, damaging property, or endangering the well-being of self or others.
- Inappropriate clothing, jewelry, or items. Clothing should adequately cover the body and be free from logos/references to violence, drugs, or profanity.
- Possession of weapons or look-a-likes, alcohol, tobacco products, cannabis, or illegal substances.
- Leaving the group without permission.
- Engaging in inappropriate conversations, including those involving sexual content, violence, or hate speech.
- Engaging in any form of unwanted or inappropriate physical contact.

Participant Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

If participant is under 18

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Conflicts and disagreements are an inevitable part of life, and, if handled constructively, they show Girl Scouts that they can overcome their differences of opinions, exercise diplomacy, and improve their communication and relationships. Respecting others and being a sister to every Girl Scout means that shouting, verbal abuse, or physical confrontations are never warranted and cannot be tolerated in the Girl Scout environment.

When a conflict arises in your troop, get those involved to sit down together and talk calmly in a nonjudgmental manner, keeping in mind that each party may need some time— a few days or a week— to calm down before being able to do this. Talking in this way might feel uncomfortable and difficult now, but it lays the groundwork for working well together in the future. Whatever you do, do not spread your complaint around to others—that will not help the situation and cause only embarrassment and anger.

If a conflict persists, be sure you explain the matter to your CES. If they cannot resolve the issue, it can be taken to the next level of supervision and to your council if you need extra help.

DOMESTIC CUSTODY MATTERS

Girl Scouts of Utah recognizes that domestic custody issues can be complex and sensitive. As a youth-serving organization, GSU does not intervene in custody disputes or legal matters between guardians unless the situation directly involves a Girl Scout activity, event, or meeting. Our primary concern is the safety and well-being of the child while participating in Girl Scout programming.

In circumstances where a child may be at risk of harm, abuse, or neglect, GSU staff and volunteers are obligated to follow mandated reporting procedures in accordance with state and federal laws. We ask all GSU volunteers to remain neutral and unbiased when custody issues arise. Volunteers should avoid taking sides or making judgments and instead focus on ensuring a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for every Girl Scout.

Any concerns related to custody should be referred to GSU staff for appropriate handling.

GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION

Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU) is committed to fostering a respectful, inclusive, and supportive environment for all members of our community. We believe that many potential conflicts and grievances can be prevented through mutual respect, sensitivity, and open communication. When concerns do arise, GSU encourages individuals to address them promptly and directly with the appropriate parties, with the goal of reaching a resolution that is fair and satisfactory to all involved.

While GSU prioritizes informal resolution whenever possible, the organization retains the authority to take immediate and appropriate action to protect the safety and well-being of Girl Scouts. GSU reserves the right to deny reappointment, dismiss, or disaffiliate any volunteer whose conduct is inconsistent with the values of the Girl Scout Movement or who violates the policies and procedures of Girl Scouts of the USA or Girl Scouts of Utah.

To initiate formal action, individuals must submit a completed [GSU Grievance Report Form](#). This form ensures that all relevant information is documented accurately and thoroughly for review. All decisions made by GSU Administration regarding grievance matters are considered final.

TROOP MANAGEMENT

Girl Scout troop management involves organizing, leading, and supporting a group of Girl Scouts. Key aspects include establishing a troop structure, utilizing resources, managing finances, and ensuring a positive and safe environment for girls to develop leadership skills and participate in activities, as well as those outlined below.

The troop size “sweet spot” is large enough to support an interactive and cooperative learning environment and small enough to encourage individual development. Though the ideal troop size is 12 Girl Scouts, we recommend that group membership falls within the below ranges.

- Girl Scout Daisies: 5–12 members
- Girl Scout Brownies: 10–20 members
- Girl Scout Juniors 10–25 members
- Girl Scout Cadettes: 5–25 members
- Girl Scout Seniors: 5–30 members
- Girl Scout Ambassadors: 5–30 member

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 during all troop activities.

Cadette, Senior, and Ambassador troops may be granted an exception to operate under the minimum standard, as long as they remain open on the troop catalog.

Required Girl to Adult Ratios

Girl Scouts’ adult-to-girl ratios are outlined in Volunteer Essentials and show the minimum number of volunteers needed to supervise a specific number of girls during troop meetings, events, trips, outings, travel, and camping. 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 adult ratio for their specific age.

Any adult serving in a ratio or volunteer capacity for a troop or activity must be an approved volunteer*, there must be a minimum of two (2) unrelated adults (one of which is female).

Girls are never to be left alone with any adult who is not an approved volunteer (for example: a taxicab or Uber driver, ski instructor, program partner). The “Rule of Three” (GSU Youth Protection Policy) should always be followed; this also extends to any online activity. For additional information regarding the “Rule of Three or on online safety, consult:

- [GSU Youth Protection Policy Addendum](#)
- The “Computer/Online Use” on page 76 of Safety Activity Checkpoints
- [The Girl Scout Internet Pledge](#)

**Approved volunteers are registered adult members (18 years or older) who have successfully cleared GSU’s background screening process within the last three years and have completed position training.*

Troop Safety

[Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) provides 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.

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.

Troop Meetings in the Home

The safety and protection of GSU members is our top priority. We know girls benefit from a safe environment that allows them to be at their best while developing critical leadership building skills.

There are specific requirements volunteers must complete before holding regularly scheduled troop meetings or activities in their home:

- 1) Complete **Hosting Troop Meetings in Your Home** training on gsLearn
- 2) All household members 18 or older who are not in high school during the membership year must complete and pass a background check with our third-party processor
- 3) Every Girl Scout has a completed and signed annual [Caregiver Permission Form](#) on file.

Compliance with all requirements must be completed at least 30 days before hosting a troop meeting or activity in an approved volunteer's home.

Home sleepovers and backyard campouts are not recommended.

First Aider Information (not covered in Safety Activity Checkpoints)

Volunteers should review [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) for GSU requirements under First Aid (page 16) regarding accidents, being prepared for an emergency, and troop First Aider requirements as well as for EVERY troop activity.

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

- It is recommended but not required 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.

- Remote activities (more than 30 minutes away from Emergency Medical Services), the Girl Scout First Aider is required to have the Wilderness Remote First Aid (WRFA) qualification.

*First aid/CPR/AED training that is available entirely online does **NOT** satisfy Girl Scouts' requirements.*

The First Aider is Responsible for ensuring all current troop permission & health history forms accompany the troop at all times, whether at regular troop meetings, activities, or events. And, is the only person authorized to correctly dispense any over the counter and/or prescription drugs based on the instructions on the original or prescription container.

Approved First-aid/CPR/AED Certifications

Girl Scouts of Utah offers American Red Cross Adult and Child First Aid/CPR/AED certification for volunteers. GSU accepts the following occupational licensing/certification for meeting the minimum first-aid requirement: physician, nurse practitioner, physician's assistant, registered nurse, paramedic, emergency medical technician, dentist, or military medic. GSU will accept first-aid/CPR/AED certificates from the American Red Cross, National Safety Council, Health Safety Institute, American Heart Association, EMP America, National Outdoor Leadership School, and other sponsoring organizations with approval. All certifications must have at least 50% of the class in person.

To seek approval for other organizations, send an email to info@gsutah.org. Include the link to the organization's website that outlines what your course covers.

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.

GSU 24-hour emergency number: (801) 483-3413

An emergency is defined as an incident that involves:

- A fatality or near-fatality
- Any incident that may bring potential media attention
- An incident that brings 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 for the council. As a GSU volunteer, DO NOT give information on your own.

Preparing Girls for an Emergency

Girls need to receive proper instruction on how to care for themselves and others in emergencies. They also need to learn the importance of reporting to adults any accident, 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 about the most relevant information for you to share with girls.
- **Establish and practice procedures for such circumstances as fire evacuation, lost people, 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 GIRL SCOUTS

Travel, in its various forms, offers a unique opportunity for girls to develop confidence, leadership skills, and lifelong friendships while exploring new places and cultures. This policy document provides a framework for safe, girl-led, and enriching travel experiences, ensuring that every Girl Scout can participate in the transformative journey of travel.

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 local field trips and can eventually take longer trips. GSU requires that Overnight Trips, Short Trips, Extended Trips, and International Trips be 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 experiences traveling as a group within the United States before their travel application is approved by Council.

Requirements for each step in the travel progression can be found in [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) and should be reviewed thoroughly before planning a trip or travel experience. When traveling with Girl Scouts, volunteers must follow minimum age-level requirements for the adult to girl ratios. 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.

Trip Applications & Approval

All overnight travel and trips must be approved by GSU.

A [Overnight/Troop Trip/Camping Application](#) must be turned in and approved by GSU before your trip departure. It is highly recommended to turn in your application as early as possible to allow ample time for review and approval processes. You will receive a notice that your application has been received within 7-10 days.

Application Submission Requirements:

- **One Night** - Troops must submit their trip and trip plan to GSU at least four (4) weeks before their departure date.
- **Two+ Nights** – Troops must have the trip application and driver form approved a minimum of 8 weeks prior to departure.
- **U.S. Travel** requires Exploring the U.S.A. training for the group at least 6 months prior to planning the trip. Applications are due 4 months prior to departure.
- **International Travel** requires International Travel for Leaders training for adults and Exploring the World training for adults and girls 18-24 months prior to planning the trip. Applications are due 18-24 months prior to departure.

Requirements for Daisy Overnight Trips

Daisies may participate in one-night overnights with their troop. Daisies may participate in Council-sponsored camping events, as determined by our Staff and in accordance with GSUSA policies, for a maximum of four nights.

Adult to Girl Ratios for ALL Outings

The ratio for approved volunteers and girls is reduced when moving outside your regular meeting space. Ratios should be based on the youngest member of the troop. Any adult serving in a ratio or volunteer capacity for a troop or activity must be an approved volunteer*, there must be a minimum of two (2) unrelated adults (one of which is female).

Sleeping Arrangements for ALL Overnight Trips

Volunteers and staff members must follow the Overnights section in Safety Activity Checkpoints, in addition to the policies below.

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. An exception is made for family members during events such as adult-girl or family overnights where one family may sleep together in an area specifically designated to accommodate families.

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. When arranging overnight sleeping arrangements, it is highly encouraged to not sleep only two youth in one room/tent to prevent youth to youth incidents. A minimum of three youth is best practice.

It is not mandatory that adults sleep in a tent, cabin, hotel room, or designated area with girls. If staying in a multi-level building, adults should be staying on the same floor as 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.) Exception to this rule is if the only adults and girls in the sleeping are related (e.g., two mom and daughter pairs in a four-person tent at camp).

Activity Approvals

Refer to [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) for **all activities** that you will be doing on your trip to determine if council approval is required, not required, or is not permitted. If an activity is not listed in Safety Activity Checkpoints, email info@gsutah.org with information about the activity to see if it is an approved activity.

If an activity is listed in Safety Activity Checkpoints as “needs council approval”, a [GSU Activity Approval Form](#) must be completed. Troops should submit the form at least 6 weeks prior to the activity. Troops should not participate in activity until approval is received from GSU.

Activities 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 (gas or electric), riding electric scooters, outdoor/home trampoline use, parachuting or skydiving, parasailing, paintball tagging, riding all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), riding jet skis, stunt skiing or stunt snowboarding, and zorbing.

Required Forms & Documents

The troop First Aider is responsible for ensuring all forms are completed and accompanies the troop to all activities. *All forms mentioned in this section stay with the troop; GSU does not need copies of these forms.*

- An Annual Permission Form for every [girl](#) and [adult](#). This form contains an individual's health history and lists any known health related issues, allergies, or devices needed to participate in activities. Updates to health changes must be submitted on a new form within 45 days of diagnosis.
- [Medication Log](#) – Required for any girl or adult bringing any prescription or non-prescription medications. Medications which must be in their original containers. The labels on all prescription medication must be prescribed for the individual. Any time medications are dispensed to girls traveling with the troop, it **must** be recorded on the girl's Medication Log.

GSU Camper Forms and Medications

- All forms for camp are found in [UltraCamp](#) – this includes buddy requests, health forms (EPI-Pen authorization, immunization exemption, etc.), and release forms.
- All campers attending programs that go off-site or have intense high adventure programming must have a [physical exam](#) by a licensed health care professional within the preceding 24 months of camp attendance.

Transporting Girl Scouts

Volunteers and staff members must follow the transportation guidelines as outlined in Safety Activity Checkpoints. These guidelines include transporting girls for Girl Scout field trips and other activities in privately-owned vehicles and in taxis and ride-sharing services, including Uber and Lyft.

Any motor vehicle used to transport Girl Scouts must be duly licensed, insured, safety-tested, and operated by an adult with a valid driver's 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. Children 12 years of age and younger should continue to ride in the back seat. For Girls Scouts over the age of 8, it is even safer to keep them in booster seats until they are 4 feet 9 inches tall, no matter what their age.

How families decide to transport girls between their homes and Girl Scout meeting places is each family'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 also meet the following requirements:

- Obtain caregiver permission for any use of transportation outside the meeting place.
- Review the standards in the **Checklist for Drivers** (pg. 182) and have a plan for safe driving as outlined in [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#).
- Arrange for qualified drivers and ensure they meet all requirements.
- When traveling internationally, consider transportation options available in the host country and accessibility specific to the location.

Drivers

Every driver must be an approved Girl Scout volunteer, 21 years of age or older, have a safe driving record, hold a valid license, use a lawfully registered vehicle, provide proof of personal automobile liability insurance coverage, and follow all state laws.

Volunteers who are renting vehicles and/or driving youth as part of a council-approved overnight trip (1-night or more) must complete a [driver form](#). (Palmer & Cay) Additionally, any drivers over the age of 75, including day trips, must be approved in advance by completing the driver form. Driver forms are valid for the any trips within the same Membership Year.

If traveling in more than one vehicle, each driver must have information about the route and destination in addition to the cell phone numbers of other drivers. Drivers should know what to do in case of a breakdown or accident.

Plan rest breaks every couple of hours. Do not drive when you are tired or taking medication that makes you drowsy. An approved relief driver is required for trips of more than 6 hours. If possible, plan to drive only in daylight hours; this includes relief drivers.

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. To obtain approval, email info@gsutah.org explaining why you are seeking an exception and sharing details about the vehicle you are planning to use, including make, model and year.

In the event a 12-passenger van is approved for use, the following must be observed:

- Pre-approval from GSU must be obtained following the procedures below.
- 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

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).

Approved Transportation

Personally owned private passenger vehicles that are legally registered and insured by approved Girl Scout volunteers with a maximum capacity of **11 or fewer** are acceptable and approved forms for transportation for Girl Scout activities.

Recreational Vehicles, Campers, and Trailers whether privately owned or rented, these may be used if the driver has appropriate training and license for the vehicle.

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 youth or adults may ride in the trailer.

When **renting vehicles**, including vans, familiarize yourself with the vehicle. Drivers must rent in their own names without council staff signature. If you rent a car, read all rental agreements to be sure you comply with their terms. In addition, make sure the car is adequately insured through your personal automobile insurance policy. Liability for the rented vehicle lies with the person who signs the contract with the rental company and is responsible for damage or loss.

For **chartered vehicles**, such as buses, are contracted with a driver or operator for a group's exclusive use. 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.

Taxi and ride sharing services, including Uber and Lyft, may be used when following the specific guidelines outlined in [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#).

Commercial and common-carrier transportation is available to the public. They include buses, trains, airlines, ferries, and similar modes of transportation. In the U.S., these are regulated and are considered safe.

FINANCE POLICIES

Troop Bank Accounts, Tax-Exempt Status, and Financial Practices

The IRS determination letter classifies Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU) as a **501(c)(3) charitable organization**. Service Units and Troops are **not separately classified as charitable organizations** and are **not permitted to use the council's 501(c)(3) determination letter**, except for council-sponsored events. Troops are eligible for tax-exempt reimbursement.

Troops are not separate legal entities and do not possess their own nonprofit or tax-exempt status. As a result, troop bank accounts are established as **business accounts** under the authority of Girl Scouts of Utah and are intended solely for conducting approved Girl Scout business.

Because troop bank accounts do not have independent tax-exempt status, troops must not engage in activities that could be considered operating a business or generating income outside of approved Girl Scout programs and authorized money-earning activities. Activities that create taxable income or sales tax obligations may expose the troop and council to financial and regulatory risk.

To protect troop funds, ensure appropriate financial oversight, and maintain compliance with banking and tax requirements, troops are prohibited from using mobile payment platforms and digital payment systems, including but not limited to:

- Zelle
- Venmo
- PayPal
- Cash App
- Apple Cash
- Google Pay
- Any similar peer-to-peer or digital payment service

These platforms do not provide the ownership controls, oversight, recordkeeping, or succession protections required for managing troop funds and may increase the risk of fraud, unauthorized transactions, account disputes, and ownership complications when troop leadership changes.

Troop Bank Account Information and Deposits

To safeguard troop funds for the benefit of the girls, troop bank account and routing numbers must be treated as confidential financial information.

Troop bank account and routing numbers may only be shared with:

- The Girl Scouts of Utah Finance Department
- Authorized signers on the troop bank account
- The financial institution managing the account
- Parents/caregivers of girls in the troop when necessary to make deposits directly into the troop account for approved troop business (e.g., Cookie Program payments)

Parents/caregivers may make deposits directly into the troop bank account; however, they are authorized to make **deposits only** and are not authorized to access or manage troop funds.

When a parent/caregiver makes a deposit directly into the troop account, they must obtain a copy of the deposit receipt and provide it to the Troop Product Manager (TPM) or designated troop finance volunteer. The TPM will issue an M3 receipt documenting the payment received and attach the deposit receipt to the M3 receipt for recordkeeping purposes.

Troop bank account and routing numbers may not:

- Be connected to or used with any mobile payment platform or digital payment service.
- Be used with Zelle, Venmo, PayPal, Cash App, Apple Cash, Google Pay, or similar services.
- Be provided to vendors for payment purposes.
- Be used to establish ACH, electronic payment, or direct withdrawal arrangements with third parties.
- Be shared with individuals who do not have a legitimate troop business need for the information.

Debit Card Security and Usage Requirements

All purchases and payments made from the troop bank account should be completed using the troop-issued debit card or other payment methods specifically authorized by Girl Scouts of Utah.

To reduce the risk of fraud, unauthorized transactions, accidental charges, and data breaches, troop debit cards and associated card information must remain under the control of authorized account signers.

Troop debit cards may not be:

- Stored in electronic wallets, including Apple Pay, Google Wallet, Samsung Pay, or similar services.
- Saved on personal phones, tablets, computers, browsers, websites, or applications.
- Stored in online retailer accounts for future purchases or one-click checkout.
- Linked to subscription services or recurring billing arrangements.
- Connected to auto-pay, automatic renewal, or recurring payment programs.
- Shared with individuals who are not authorized signers on the troop bank account.

Authorized signers are responsible for safeguarding all debit card information and ensuring that card numbers, security codes, and account credentials are not retained by vendors, websites, applications, or third-party service providers whenever possible.

Financial Transparency

Troops should always maintain transparency with parents and caregivers regarding troop finances. Families should have a clear understanding of troop income, account balances, approved money-earning activities, and how troop funds are used to support the girls and their Girl Scout experience.

Troop leaders are encouraged to provide regular financial updates and be prepared to share information regarding troop expenditures, savings goals, program costs, travel funds, and other troop-related expenses. Open communication promotes accountability, builds trust, and helps ensure that families understand how troop funds are being managed.

All troop funds belong to the girls in the troop and must be used in accordance with Girl Scout policies and for Girl Scout-approved purposes. Transparent financial practices demonstrate responsible stewardship of troop funds and help ensure that all monies are used to benefit the girls in the troop.

Troop Finances

Setting Up and Managing a Troop Bank Account

As stewards of the troop money, volunteers have a wonderful opportunity to teach Girl Scouts life skills about business and financial literacy. Troops are expected to plan and finance their own activities, coaching troop members as they earn and manage troop funds.

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

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

- The Troop Leadership must contact Girl Scouts of Utah for the procedure in opening a troop bank account.
- The bank account must have two (2) unrelated signatures (unrelated must not be of the same family or household) and is limited to two (2) signatures on the account.
- Each signer must submit the necessary forms separately as instructed by the Finance Dept. before an account can be established.
- Each signer will receive a debit card for the troop account which should only be used for Girl Scout troop supplies, activities, and necessities.
- Individuals listed on accounts are responsible for all account activity including but not limited to account maintenance, accurate record keeping, retaining receipts, and any overdraft fees.
- No current GSU staff member, board member, or board committee member may be a signer on troop bank accounts.
- Contact GSU Finance at info@gsutah.org with any account related questions.

Troop Funds

"Troop funds" refers to any money earned by members of a Girl Scout troop. In accordance with IRS regulations, funds raised in the name of Girl Scouting are considered to be held for the benefit of the group and the organization's mission, not for the personal benefit of any individual. All troop funds belong to the whole troop, even if one or a few members raised all or most of the funds from the Cookie or Fall Product Programs, or any other means of fundraising or donation. Funds must be used for the purpose of Girl Scouting activities only. When a troop ends or dissolves (disbands) or its membership changes (e.g., members leaving, two or more troops merging into one, or one existing troop splitting into two or more), there are often many questions about what to do with troop funds. The troop decides together, within GSU policies, how the money is used, including how it is distributed if something changes.

- Troop funds exceeding \$50.00 must be placed in the troop account.
- **No cash withdrawals over \$500 are permitted from a troop account** without prior written approval from the Girl Scouts of Utah CFO, finance@gsutah.org. This is to reduce the risk of fraud on accounts.
- Only debit cards may be used in conjunction with troop accounts.
- Credit cards may **not** be issued to or used with troop accounts.
- If a volunteer is being reimbursed, one of the other signers should process the reimbursement.

Girls Changing Troops

- If a girl/family 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. However, 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.
- All transfers are completed by the GSU Finance Dept.

[Calculation: funds in account divided by the # 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.

- **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 financials. If requested, volunteers must provide monthly bank statements, and receipts for expenses for the given audit period. Troops should retain receipts and documentation for a minimum of 3 years.

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.

[Calculation: funds in account divided by the # of girls in the troop = per girl amount]

- 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 to be utilized for all girls within the troop.

Closing a Troop Bank Account

If a troop does not register for the membership year or by Sep. 30, GSU will pull all funds from the account until it is determined if the troop is renewing or disbanding.

When closing a troop account, be sure all debits have cleared the account before closing. All remaining funds will be removed by electronic fund transaction by GSU.

Disbanding troops must file a final Troop Financial Report via the VTK within 30 days of the troop account being closed and must include the final bank account statement showing a zero balance and all receipts.

Troop Money-Earning Requirements

Troops are encouraged to participate in Girl Scout Product Programs as their primary money-earning activity; any additional troop money-earning projects should not compete with the council's Product Programs.

There are specific guidelines for **all** troop money-earning projects, including Girl Scout Product Program sales and additional troop money-earning projects, which ensure legal and financial integrity for the council (some policies are required by the Internal Revenue Service):

- The Girl Scout Product Programs are considered troop money-earning projects.
- Troops wanting to complete additional troop money-earning projects **must participate in both** the previous Fall Product Program and the Cookie Program.
- Troop volunteers must receive written permission from a girl's caregiver before she participates in any money-earning project; this includes the Girl Scout Product Programs.
- Individual participation in money-earning programs, activities, or projects is voluntary and therefore optional.

Guidelines for additional troop money-earning projects (outside of GSU Product Programs):

- Additional troop money-earning projects may not be conducted during the council's Girl Scout Product Programs (from scheduled order taking through delivery/booth time).
- Additional troop money-earning projects may be conducted only when there is need for additional income for a specific program activity such as travel, troop camp experiences, etc., and should not exceed what the troop needs to support its planned activities or projects.
- 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 troop money-earning projects in addition to the Product Programs.
- Specialty troops, identified as Travel, Mariner, Trailblazer, and STEM are eligible for additional troop money-earning projects. The specialty troop must participate in the council Product Programs as explained above 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.

Examples of Permitted Money-Earning Projects:

- Babysitting
- Badge Workshop
- Flower or plant sale
- Garage Sale
- Gift wrapping booth
- Girl-Made-Goods Sale (not involving food)
- Pet Walking

Examples of Money-Earning Projects not allowed:

- Games of chance (e.g., raffles, bingo, card games, etc.)
- Car Washes
- Direct solicitation for cash
- Endorsement/sale of a non-Girl Scout commercial product
- Demonstration parties like Mary-Kay, Tupperware
- Troops may not earn money for other organizations. This includes participating in a walkathon or telethon while in uniform, clothing donation services, restaurant fundraisers, and the like (girl members may support other organizations through Take Action projects).
- 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.

Additional troop money-earning projects must meet Utah state laws and GSU approval. Additional troop money-earning projects need to be suited to the age and abilities of the girls and consistent with the principles of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Girls must be able to demonstrate a clear understanding of how the additional troop money-earning project also benefits their growth and development as defined by the Girl Scout mission statement. Troop leaders must define these benefits during the approval process with their Service Unit Manager (see below written approval process).

Funds acquired through additional troop money-earning projects must be reported and accounted for by the troop in their annual financial report. **Written approval MUST be obtained from GSU's Fund Development department before a troop conducts an additional money-earning project:**

- Troops must obtain written approval from their Service Unit Manager at least six (6) weeks before the additional money-earning project begins, using the [Troop Money-earning Project Approval Form](#).
- Upon their approval, Service Unit Managers must submit the request to GSU's Fund Development department at info@gsutah.org at least four (4) weeks before the additional money-earning project begins.
- If the Troop Money-Earning Project Approval form meets all criteria specified herein, the Development Manager will approve the request and return the form to the Service Unit Manager, thereby allowing the troop to proceed with their project.

Troop Solicitation of Contributions

Adult members in their Girl Scout capacities may not solicit financial contributions for purposes other than Girl Scouting. Adults may engage in combined fundraising efforts authorized by the Girl Scout council and in which the local council is a beneficiary.

Girl members may not engage in any direct solicitation for money except for Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors, who may solicit philanthropic donations to their councils of cash or in-kind goods for Girl Scout Gold Award projects, provided they have secured prior written permission from their council's Chief Executive Officer, Director of Development, or their designee.

Community organizations, businesses, religious organizations, and individuals may contribute directly to a troop by providing group meeting places, volunteer time, in-kind donations (activity materials, supplies, or equipment), or monetary support. A signed [Troop Contributor Agreement](#) is required for in-kind or monetary donations, which will list the details of the donation to be approved by GSU's Fund Development department. If a contribution does involve monetary support for the troop, the donation must follow the Troop Passthrough policies described below, and all funds must be used by the troop for the purposes of Girl Scouting.

In accordance with IRS regulations, troops and service units operate under the Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU) umbrella but cannot receive donations directly into their checking account if

the donor would like to use the contribution as a tax-deduction. Because GSU is classified as a 501c3 non-profit organization by the IRS, the council is able to receive and issue tax-deductible troop passthrough donations to troop checking accounts (monetary passthrough donations are not allowed for Service Units). **Additionally, any donation to a troop of \$250 or greater MUST be received by Girl Scouts of Utah at the council's office, regardless of whether the donor requests a charitable tax deduction receipt.**

GSU has several [Community Partners](#) organizations or individuals whose support benefits Girl Scouting across the council jurisdiction. Troops wishing to solicit funds from Foundations or Corporations (whether identified on our website or not) needs approval from the Development Director prior to approaching the organization. Each monetary donation must follow the Troop Passthrough Monetary Donations policies and be accompanied by a **GSU Troop Passthrough Form** (see below).

GSU may ask for further explanation outlining how the troop will spend monetary donations for the purposes of Girl Scouting at any time. If policy and Troop Passthrough Form compliance are deemed adequate, GSU will acknowledge the monetary donation to the donor for tax purposes [IRS Section 170(8)(B)] and forward the full donation to the troop's bank account.

In-Kind Donations

An in-kind contribution is when an organization or individual contributes a good or service in lieu of providing cash. Such contributions include products, supplies and equipment, the use of corporate services or facilities, and professional services or expertise. In-kind gifts are beneficial because they reduce budget expenditures and support programs and operations.

In-kind donations at the troop level can build beneficial relationships by allowing a donor to support Girl Scouting without investing cash. If a troop would like to solicit an entity for an in-kind gift that is valued at more than \$100, the troop leader must contact GSU's Fund Development department for approval before soliciting the donation at info@gsutah.org.

Troop leaders should acknowledge in-kind donors with thanks and inform them of what is done with their donation to encourage further support or take on a greater role.

Troop Passthrough Monetary Donations

A troop passthrough is a donation made to Girl Scouts of Utah that is "passed through" back to a troop for the purposes of Girl Scouting. **Service units are not eligible for passthrough donations.**

All troop passthrough donations will be subject to a 10% administrative fee for a maximum fee of \$25 (i.e., any donation amount above \$250 will be subject to a maximum \$25 fee) that will be deducted from the donation by the GSU Finance Department. These fees are retained for ACH bank transfer fees and internal administrative work at the council for processing the donation).

Troops are limited to \$500 in passthrough donations by a single individual or organization each membership year. Any donation(s) from a single individual or organization above \$500 in a membership year will be retained by the council as an unrestricted donation for the purposes of our mission.

Troops are eligible for a passthrough monetary donation if the following criteria are met:

- The troop must participate in both the previous Fall Product Program and the Cookie Program.
- The troop does not have any outstanding money owed to GSU. For troops with outstanding funds owed for Product Programs, the passthrough donation will be automatically applied to that debt. Any remaining balance of the passthrough will be sent to the troop.
- The troop has submitted an annual Troop Financial Report for the previous membership year.
- GSU's [Troop Passthrough Form](#) is completed in full and submitted to the Fund Development department prior to or with the gift being received by the council. *Any passthrough donation that is not accompanied by GSU's Troop Passthrough Form will be retained by the council as an unrestricted donation for the purposes of our mission.*

Note: *As explained by the donor on the GSU Troop Passthrough Form, the monetary donation must be necessary for the troop's planned activities in Girl Scouting. GSU reserves the right to audit the use of passthrough donations at any time. For any donation that is not appropriately used by the troop for the purpose defined by the donor, GSU may remove the donation deposit from the troop's bank account and retain the monies as an unrestricted donation for the purposes of our mission.*

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 troops and girls in need, providing service to the community, and facilitating fun events and activities that engage girls, their families, and community members.

Setting Up a Service Unit Bank Account

- Service Unit Manager or Finance Rep must contact Girl Scouts of Utah for procedure in opening a bank account.
- The bank account must have two (2) unrelated signatures (not be of the same family or household) and is limited to three (3) signatures on the account.
- Each signer must submit the necessary forms as instructed by the Finance Dept. before an account can be established.
- Each signer will receive a debit card for the troop account which should only be used for Girl Scout troop supplies, activities, and necessities.
- Contact GSU Finance at info@gsutah.org with any questions.

Service Unit Funds

- Service unit funds exceeding \$50.00 must be placed in the bank account.
- Service unit funds are earned through the Cookie Program; this is a calculated percentage of the sale which is calculated and allocated to each service unit based on the number of packages sold by the girls within the service unit.
- No cash withdrawals over \$500 are permitted from a service unit account without prior written approval from the Girl Scouts of Utah CFO, finance@gsutah.org. This is to reduce the risk of fraud on accounts.
- Individuals listed on accounts are responsible for all account activity including but not limited to account maintenance, accurate record keeping, retaining receipts, and

any overdraft fees.

- Service units **may not** conduct or seek out additional money-earning opportunities.
- The recommended service unit allocation of funds can be found in the [Service Unit Guide](#) and is a representation of how funds should be used by the service unit.
- Service units should share the details of their service unit checking account finances at least quarterly to maintain transparency.
- 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 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 finance@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.
- Product Program proceeds may be withheld if the service unit does not submit an annual financial report to the council by each year.

***Note:** For stewardship purposes, GSU may perform representative audits of service unit financials. If requested, volunteers must provide monthly bank statements and receipts for expenses for the given audit period. Service units should retain receipts and documentation for a minimum of 3 years.*

PRODUCT PROGRAMS

The Girl Scout Product Programs are council-sponsored money-earning programs.

Participation in both council-sponsored product program activities is based upon the following:

- Voluntary participation, meaning participation is optional.
- Written permission from each Girl Scouts caregiver.
- Observance of local ordinances related to involvement of children in money-earning activities, as well as health and safety laws.
- Money earned by troops from Product Program rewards are based on sales ranges set by councils and may not be based on a dollar-per-dollar calculation.
- Vigilance in protecting the personal safety of each Girl Scout.
- Arrangements for safeguarding the money collected for the sale of products through the product programs.

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. Additional money-earning projects may not be conducted during the initial order period for the Fall Product Program, and they may not be conducted during the Cookie Program from the scheduled order taking through distribution and/or booth sales.

Product Program Requirements

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. 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 Troop 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 council Community Engagement Manager and Product Program Manager based upon experience and training of new troop volunteers.
- Caregiver permission must be obtained in writing before a girl participates in the council Product Programs.
- Specific Safety Activity Checkpoints are provided for the Girl Scout Product Programs and must be followed.

Adult Training

Adults serving as Troop Product Managers must attend GSU Product Program training course as outlined by council, which is not limited to online training only.

Cookie Booths

Troops may participate in optional council secured Cookie Booths during the Cookie Sale. Troop secured booths must be approved by the council Product Program Department.

To request a Troop Secured Booth, troops need to submit a completed [GSU Cookie Booth Agreement Form](#) to GSU Product Programs Department at info@gsutah.org. Site approval can only be granted after receipt of the agreement form is documented and the booth location is entered into Smart Cookie.

Booth Participation Requirements

- All participating girls, and adults handling money at troop Cookie Booths, must be registered Girl Scouts.
- At troop booths there must be at least two (2) unrelated adults that must supervise the booth at all times. One adult must be registered and one who is female, must be present.
- For a girl/caregiver booth, at least one (1) caregiver must supervise their Girl Scout at all times. There may be an additional Girl Scout(s) at the booth but only if they have the same caregiver. No unrelated girls may participate in a girl/caregiver booth
- No combined cookie orders
- Cookie orders may **not** be shared or combined in any manner for a Girl Scout to qualify for recognition or awards.
- Only cookies ordered for booths may be distributed among girls within the same troop who participated in the booth.

Buddy System:

- Girls must be accompanied by a Girl Scout 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' side.

Outstanding Debt to Council

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 booth sales) and girls will not receive Activity Credits, program rewards, and/or activity scholarships until the debt is paid in full.

If the troop is not paid in full, Activity Credits and rewards will be held by council until amount is paid in full. Additionally, a TPM's Girl Scout(s) will not be eligible to receive the same until the debt is paid in full.

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.

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 caregiver(s) the freedom to choose how to participate in Girl Scout programming. Adult leaders/advisors, do not 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 earn Activity Credits based upon the number of packages they sell.
- Activity Credits expire approximately one year after issuance, referring to the actual Activity Credits for the expiration date. The CFO 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, overnight and troop camping, and GSUSA-sponsored Destinations.
- Pay for merchandise at GSU camp trading posts.
- Pay for girl membership registration fees and for new non-Girl Scout registration fees.
- Pay for merchandise at the Council Resource Center in Salt Lake City and retail pop-up events throughout the council, they may be used for the following uniform components:
 - Vest or Sash
 - American Flag Patch
 - Girl Scouts of Utah Council Identification set
 - Troop Numerals

- Troop Crest
- Membership stars and discs
- Insignia Tab
- World Trefoil Pin
- Girl Scout Membership Pin
- GSUSA earned Badges
- Be transferred between girls who are currently registered members of Girl Scouts of Utah.
- Be used to pay for programs, camp, events, trips, & travel prior to any activity scholarships being awarded, including 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.

Activity Credits cannot:

- Be used to order directly from GSUSA Girl Scout merchandise catalog.
- Be used for merchandise in the Girl Scouts of Utah retail shop or retail pop-up events throughout the council, except for the uniform components listed above.
- 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 extended, international, or GSUSA Destination trip if they are registered as Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors, or Ambassadors (grades 6-12) at the time of the planned trip. Eligible troop trips must be for extended or international trips 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 approved by council. Girl Scouts may participate in the trip as individuals or as a member of the troop.

The [Activity Credit Redemption form](#) 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.

The policies contained in this document have been reviewed and approved by the Girl Scouts of Utah Board of Directors. Policy changes and updates can be submitted by members, volunteers, or council staff for considerations 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, Attn: Office of the CEO

All Girl Scouts of Utah volunteers will be held equally accountable for their actions and in their responsibility for adhering to the GSU Volunteer Policies. Volunteers who do not follow approved policies will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including removal from volunteer duties.

