



GSSNE

Policies, Procedures,

and Standards

2018-2019

Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England
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*Serving all of Rhode Island and Attleboro, Bellingham, Blackstone, Fall River,
Millville, North Attleboro, Plainville, Rehoboth, Seekonk, Somerset, Swansea,
Westport and Wrentham, MA and Pawcatuck, CT*

Updated January 2019

INTRODUCTION

The GSSNE Policies, Procedures, and Standards (PPS), 2018 - 2019 manual is a publication which brings together all the council written procedures for easy reference. It is updated yearly and is a resource for Service Team members, volunteers, and council staff.

We request that once volunteers complete New Leader Training they review the PPS to familiarize themselves with its contents. Then, revisit this document if questions arise.

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Contact Information

Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England is the local council for all of Rhode Island and thirteen adjacent communities: Attleboro, Bellingham, Blackstone, Fall River, Millville, North Attleboro, Plainville, Rehoboth, Seekonk, Somerset, Swansea, Westport and Wrentham in Massachusetts and Pawcatuck in Connecticut.

You can contact your local council in the following ways:

Girl Scouts Southeastern New England
500 Greenwich Avenue
Warwick, RI 02886

Phone: 401-331-4500
800-331-0149

Fax: 401-421-2937

www.gssne.org

Email: customercare@gssne.org

 facebook.com/gssne

 Instagram @gssne

 @GirlScoutsofSNE,

 youtube.com/gssne

Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.

Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England is part of a larger organization, Girl Scouts of the U.S.A., which has headquarters in New York, New York. You can find information on the national organization at its website: www.girlscouts.org

GSSNE Service Units

Each community in GSSNE has a committee of volunteers called the Service Team which organizes local activities and acts as mentors for new leaders. The head volunteer is called the Service Unit Manager (SUM) and volunteers can contact them through customercare@gssne.org.

What do I need to do to become a Girl Scout Volunteer?

I. Preliminaries

- A. Go to the GSSNE website, www.gssne.org Volunteer tab>Get Started. Follow the list of steps:
 1. Become a member of GSSNE; for adults the cost is \$25.00.
 2. Authorize and pass a criminal background check which is part of the registration process. (In Massachusetts, an additional CORI form is required.)

II. Training

- A. Each troop needs a minimum of two, unrelated, fully trained leaders; more may be required if the troop size is larger. They form the troop leadership team.
- B. For adults who wish to become troop leaders, follow the directions on the website at Volunteers tab>Get Started> Step 3 which lists training requirements and has links to the documents and forms:
 1. **“Girl Scouting 101”** is the GSUSA orientation video for new troop leaders. Verification will be sent to GSSNE electronically by GSUSA.
 2. **Volunteer Essentials: Quickstart Guide** (pages 1-22) is an online review of GSUSA national standards. New leaders are asked to review the opening section and complete a verification form which is forwarded automatically to GSSNE. The remaining document is available for future reference.
 3. **Complete “Troop Leadership” training** in-person or online.
 - a. **Online training:** Step 3 will have links to the online power point presentation with a verification form at the conclusion. The verification form will be automatically forwarded to GSSNE.

OR

 - b. **Face-to-Face training:** Step 3 will also have links to the council calendar with training dates for the face-to-face training. New leaders can register for these classes directly from the council calendar.
 - c. **Either option fulfills the training requirement.**
- C. When a volunteer completes all the training requirements, each will receive an email from the council with additional directions and resources.

III. Forming a NEW Troop

- A. Once a new troop has trained leadership in place, the leaders will be sent a link to the TROOP NUMBER REQUEST form and the council staff will issue them a troop number. The troop will then be listed in the Opportunity Catalog and girls and adults can join through the registration process.
- B. The standard troop size in the GSSNE council is 5-12 Girl Scouts. The number can be increased by submitting the Troop Information Update form.
- C. New leaders will be able to monitor registrations through the Volunteer Toolkit and make arrangements for the initial troop meeting with parents.
- D. Most troops serve one age level, but GSSNE has had great success with multi-level troops. Special standards for troop leadership apply for these larger troops (see below for details).

GSSNE Troop Standards

I. Troop Leadership (Troop Co-Leaders)

A. Each troop’s leadership team consists of a minimum of two unrelated co-leaders. Additional leaders may be required to meet the girl/adult ratio listed below and also in the GSUSA’s Volunteer Essentials.

	Group Meetings	
	<i>Two</i> unrelated volunteers (at least one of whom is female) for every:	<i>One</i> additional volunteer to each additional:
Girl Scout Daisies (grades K–1)	12	1-6
Girl Scout Brownies (grades 2–3)	20	1-8
Girl Scout Juniors (grades 4–5)	25	1-10
Girl Scout Cadettes (grades 6–8)	25	1-12
Girl Scout Seniors (grades 9–10)	30	1-15
Girl Scout Ambassadors (grades 11–12)	30	1-15

B. Each co-leader must be a member of GSSNE and authorize and pass a background check (in Massachusetts, a CORI form is also required).

C. Because the female role model is essential to fulfilling the purpose of Girl Scouting, at least one member of the leadership team must be an adult female.

D. If the adults are related in any way, are married or reside in the same household, a third, unrelated, adult must be present at meetings and activities. This additional adult must be a registered and background screened volunteer.

E. At no time may one leader be alone with one Girl Scout.

F. Each leader must complete New Leader training or its equivalent. Refer above for details of New Leader training or go to the website: www.gssne.org>Volunteers tab>Get Started>Step 3.

To start and maintain a GSSNE troop requires a minimum of two registered, screened and trained leaders; more may be required if the troop has more than 12 girls (refer to the girl/adult ratio chart shown above).

For any given troop meeting, activity or event, a minimum of two registered adult members with current background screenings are required – only one of which needs to be trained as a leader. More vetted adults may be required if indicated in the girl/adult ratio chart shown above.

II. Other adults involved with the troop

A. Any adult involved with the troop or participating in troop activities (such as a Product Sales Coordinator, a member of the troop committee, driver, parent helper, chaperone, etc.) must:

1. Register as a member of Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England
2. Authorize and pass a background screening (this is part of the registration process for adult volunteers).

B. Where adult volunteers have financial responsibilities for the troop treasury or product sales, the troop leadership team should take special care to select reliable and trustworthy individuals. Checking to make sure that deposits are made on time, that accounts are up-to-date and that all checks clear is part of the job of the troop leadership team.

C. All volunteers, regardless of position, will be re-screened on a three-year rotating schedule for a criminal background check (and CORI in MA).

D. Guest “experts” (for example a fireman to explain fire safety procedures) do not need to be registered as Girl Scout adult members or processed as a volunteer as long as the troop leaders supervise all activities/ interactions between the girls and the expert and the girls are never alone with the guest.

III. Types of Troops

A. Standard troops are those with girls all of the same age level. The troop standards above apply to them.

- In the GSSNE council the size of a standard troop is 5-12 girls.
- Troops may be larger in size, but more troop leaders may be required.
- To increase the number of troop members available in the Opportunity Catalog, fill in the Troop Information Update Form (on the council website under the FORMS tab).

B. **Multi-level troops** are those who have girl members from two or more age levels in the same troop. The standards listed above also apply to these troops, but in some cases the situation is more complex.

1. Leadership Standard

- a. There is a minimum of one trained leader for each age level in the troop who is responsible for providing appropriate badge, Journey, and leadership programming. For example, in a Daisy/Brownie troop, one leader would provide Daisy programming and the other would provide Brownie programming.
- b. If the number of girls at any one level is more than six, then additional leaders may be needed to work with these girls in order to provide proper supervision at troop meetings and activities.

Where this is the case, the number of leaders **may exceed the minimum number required** to meet the GSUSA Girl/Adult Ratio standard. When in doubt, the Girl/Adult ratio should be the one for the youngest age level in the troop.

c. Examples:

- (1). If a Daisy/Brownie troop had 9 Daisy scouts and 3 Brownie scouts then the troop would need to have two leaders to work with the Daisy scouts and one to work with the Brownie scouts, for a total of three.
- (2). If a Brownie/Junior/Cadette troop had 6 Brownies, 5 Juniors and 4 Cadettes, the troop would need three leaders – one to work with each age level. The Girl/Adult ratio for a Brownie troop is two leaders for 20 Girl Scouts, but this troop would need three.
- (3). Deciding on the correct number of leaders needed for each troop is more an art than a science, but the main idea is to make sure that Girl Scouts at any given age level have enough adult supervision to provide a safe program. If unsure, please consult customercare@gssne.org for guidance.

2. Program Standard

- a. Troop activities such as service projects or field trips may include girls at all age levels, but Girl Scouts at any age level should be working on their own age level badges, Journey recognitions, and leadership program as part of a fully planned troop program.
 - b. No cross-over badge work is allowed: for example, Brownie scouts work on Brownie badges and recognitions, not on Daisy petals/leaves or Junior badges.
 - c. Older girls may gain leadership experience working with younger girls in the same troop (working as part of the leadership program: Junior Aide, LIA, Program Aide, LIT), but they should also work on age level appropriate program badges and recognitions.
3. Fiscal Standard
- a. Troop money belongs to the troop, not the girl.
 - b. Decisions about money allocation should be developed ahead of time and be fair to every age level.
 - c. Older girls may do separate fund-raising for trips or other big ticket items.

IV. Troop Size Standard:

- A. The GSSNE Opportunity Catalog sets a standard troop size of 5-12.
- B. Troop minimums (5 Girl Scouts) are important as one of our key processes is cooperative learning and this needs a group of at least five to work well.
- C. All GSSNE troops are open to register 12 Girl Scouts. The troop standard is a minimum of 5 and each troop must accept 12 girls; but this is not a maximum number.
- D. If a troops wishes to add more girls, the troop leader can use the Troop Information Update Form on the website (under the FORMS tab). This form is fillable online and will come directly to the council to update the Opportunity Catalog.
- E. GSSNE's goal is to place every registered Girl Scout in a troop (if that is her wish) and expects troop leaders to be open to taking additional girls into their troop as long as there are fewer than 12 girls registered.
- F. GSUSA has established size ranges for Girl Scout troops which list maximum troop sizes (refer to Volunteer Essentials, 2018-2019 for specifics for each age level). These are guidelines for single age level troops and do not apply to multi-level troops.

Questions about troop assignments and size should be referred to Customer Care at customercare@gssne.org or call 401-331-4500 or 800-331-0149.

V. Girls with special needs

Girl Scouts with special needs who receive special education services may be enrolled as a Girl Scout until the age of 21. When questions of appropriate placement arise, GSSNE is committed to maximizing the developmental, educational, emotional and social needs of every Girl Scout. If you have questions, please contact the council through Customer Care.

VI. Girl Scout Participation in Activities with Other Scouting Organizations

The decision by Boy Scouts of America (BSA) to open the Boy Scout program to girls has fundamentally altered the nature of the relationship between BSA and Girl Scouts nationally and locally. Local relationships between BSA and Girl Scout councils that have led to partnerships and joint activities in the past will now expose our membership enrollment and brand to risks.

To protect the integrity of the Girl Scout brand and reinforce our programming as unique, girl-only, and best in class, we must ensure that we take care that the activities in which girls participate are exclusive to the Girl Scout program, are safe and girl led, and are conducted under the appropriate supervision of Girl Scouts.

Therefore all volunteers agree to respect the branding guidelines of GSSNE and GSUSA with respect to program and mission and will not share with Boy Scouts any of our program or training materials.

We believe that Girl Scout participation in Boy Scout activities will create confusion and will contribute to the misperception that Girl Scouts has merged, or is somehow interchangeable, with Boy Scouts. GSSNE strongly discourages this type of arrangement.

Meeting Place Standards

Regular troop meetings or any program or activity organized, sponsored by, or produced by Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England must meet the following site standards:

1. Accessible to all members and their parents/guardians.
2. Large enough for a variety of activities.
3. Accessible by telephone (landline or cell phone).
4. Safe, secure, clean, properly ventilated and heated, free of hazards, and has at least **two exits**.
5. Emergency exits are functioning, easily accessible, adequate, and **well-marked**.
6. Adequately lighted.
7. First Aid equipment is available.
8. Accessible toilets and sanitary facilities, including those designed to accommodate people with disabilities, are available.
9. Pets are restrained and away from meeting area while girls are present. (Check health histories to make sure girls do not have dog/cat/pet allergies.)
10. Any additional requirements as indicated by State Laws.

It is standard practice to avoid using troop funds to rent space for regular troop meetings. Girl Scout troops should seek schools, churches, community centers or other local sites which are free. Local Service Unit members can help new leaders locate such sites.

Permission to hold troop meetings in private homes is seldom given (because the standards listed above apply), but occasionally occurs. Obtaining permission to hold meetings in private homes requires approval from the council staff after a discussion and evaluation of access, security, safety, and acceptable homeowner's liability insurance. Please refer questions about this issue to Customer Care at customercare@gssne.org or call 401-331-4500 or 800-331-0149.

In addition to the trained troop leaders, GSSNE requires that all adults interacting with scouts at a troop meeting be approved volunteers and registered members. If a troop meets in a private home, other adults or siblings residing in the home may encounter the girl scouts during meeting time. GSSNE takes seriously its obligation to provide a zone of safety at troop meetings, so meetings in private homes are not encouraged.

Safety in the Meeting Place

Leaders have a legal obligation to see that Girl Scouts leave the meeting with their custodial parent(s) or their designated alternative. Leaders need written instructions to release a Girl Scout to anyone other than a custodial parent (this includes car pools). GSSNE recommends each troop develop a sign-in/sign-out system supervised by a troop leader at the beginning and ending of each meeting and/or activity to monitor this activity.

Finances

I. Financial Support - Overview

- A. When a girl or adult “registers” as a Girl Scout, the registration fee (\$25) and council service fee (\$10 for girls only) goes directly to GSUSA and GSSNE, respectively, to fund national and state staffing, programs, property maintenance, insurance, and communication.
- B. Girl or adult Scouts may request financial aid by filling out a form and submitting it to the council. Proof of family income and participation in council product sales are factors in determining the amount of the aid award.
- C. Girl Scout troops do not receive any of the fees described above and so they have to build their troop treasury in one of the following ways:
 1. Sharing in the profits from the council sponsored **Product Sales** (fall and winter).
 2. Charging **troop dues**. See “Troop Leadership” manual for a discussion of how to determine troop dues.

These two sources of income usually provide all the money needed to support a full range of troop activities. However, some additional sources are available, if needed, to fund major trips or other big-ticket activities.

Pre-requisites and special requirements are detailed in Section III B below:

3. Brownie troops and all age levels above may hold **additional money-earning events** to fund specific “big-ticket” events or activities.
4. **Donations** from:
 - a. members of the “troop family”.
 - b. “Cookie Share” donations at booth sales.
 - c. troop volunteer organized adult events.
 - d. corporate volunteerism programs.
5. Troops may apply for **grants** to fund troop activities, but they must receive pre-approval from the council.

II. Troop Treasury

A. Legally all money coming into the troop treasury is the property of GSSNE and is not the property of individuals, troops, geographic units, subordinate units, or communities within the GSSNE Council. Every Girl Scout troop should keep their funds in a bank or credit union account which is opened in the name of GSSNE.

B. Banks and credit unions (and GSSNE policies) require an authorization letter from the GSSNE Council’s Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to open a bank account. The “bank letter” specifies the signatories on the account and authorizes it to be opened in the name of GSSNE using the council tax ID number.

The Council will issue a bank letter to troop leaders under the following conditions:

1. The troop meets the council standard of a minimum of two registered, background screened and fully trained troop leaders and, if necessary, additional as required by the Girl/Adult ratio chart.
2. If an existing troop, the council has a Troop Annual Finance Report, submitted through the Finance tab of the VTK online, for the previous troop year which includes the most recent bank statement.
3. Leaders should request the “bank letter” using the Bank Letter Request form on the council website>FORMS. It will come directly to the council.
 - a. Signatories of the troop bank account should be:
 - (1) Co-Leader
 - (2) The other Co-Leader or another Troop Volunteer.
 - b. Troop Co-Leaders may be signatories on no more than **two** troop/service unit accounts.
 - c. Keeping with the Troop Standard on adult leadership, the (1) and (2) signatories on the account may not be related in any way or reside in the same household.

III. Troop Income

- A. Troops can build their individual treasury in the following ways:
 1. Sharing in the profits from council sponsored **PRODUCT SALES**.
 - a. At GSSNE there is a fall magazine, candy, and nut sale and in the winter, there is the traditional GS Cookie sale. Troops receive a percentage of the product sales. The exact amount is described in the product sales training materials distributed before each sale.
 - b. Troop leaders need to present the Product Sales materials to all troop families and explain how important the sale is to support the council programs and troop finances. If a family chooses not to participate, that is their option, but each troop needs to make the effort to support the council in this way.
 2. Charging **troop dues**. Consult the Troop Leadership manual for details on how to determine troop dues.

B. Additional Sources of Income for Troops

1. Sometimes troops require **additional money-earning** opportunities to fund “big ticket” items such as museum overnights, major trips or participation in program activities. GSSNE troops may do so if they meet the following requirements:
 - a. The troop should participate in the council money-earning events: fall product sale and cookie sale before requesting permission for additional money-earning activities.
 - b. **The participation standard for 2018-2019 is:**

Fall Product Sale: The per-registered girl average for the troop should be:
 Sale of any five (5) items AND submission of 15 valid online email addresses
OR Sale of any fifteen (15) items

Cookie Sale: the per-registered girl troop average should be 125 packages or more (the council average was 160+ boxes in the 2018 sale)

c. The troop must apply in advance to the council for permission and approval (use the Money Earning Project Application on the website > FORMS). Activities where the girls contribute time or skills are encouraged; games of chance are not allowed.

d. Certain black-out periods apply; troop money-earning projects should not overlap with council product sale seasons. Blackout dates for the 2018-2019 troop year are:

Fall Product Sale: Sept. 4 – Oct. 26, 2018

Cookie Sale: Dec. 22, 2018 – March 29, 2019

If the troop would like to hold a money-earning project which falls within these blackout dates, please contact the Fund Development Department to discuss the issue. Exceptions can be made in special cases.

e. Girls participate voluntarily and with parent/guardian permission. Permission slips are kept on file.

f. Girls have a full understanding of why the money is needed and how it will help them achieve a troop goal.

g. Girls participate in money raising activities which are age appropriate and meet all safety requirements. Daisy Girl Scouts are not permitted to participate in additional money earning events.

h. A full report of the activity and the amount of money raised is submitted to the council after the event.

2. Troops may also receive occasional **donations** from outside donors. The following apply:

a. Eligibility requirements:

1) The troop must participate in the council fundraising events: fall product sale and cookie sale before requesting permission for additional money earning activities.

2) **The participation standard for 2018-2019 is:**

Fall Product Sale: The per-registered girl average for the troop must be:
Sale of any five (5) items AND submission of 15 valid online email addresses.
OR Sale of any fifteen (15) items.

Cookie Sale: the per-registered girl troop average must be 125 packages or more. (The council average was 150+ boxes in the 2017 sale.)

- 3) The troop must have filed the Troop Annual Finance Report through the Finance tab of the VTK for the previous troop year.
- b. Reporting requirements:
 - 1) Donations under \$250 may be deposited directly to the troop's bank account. This money is reported on the end of the year report.
 - 2) IRS rules require that donations over \$250 must be processed through the Council office. The check should be clearly labeled with a troop's number. These donations are tax-deductible.
- c. Troops may receive donations from members of the **"troop family."**
 - 1) Only adults may ask for donations or in-kind gifts; girls may explain what they plan to use donations for but may not do the actual asking.
- d. At cookie booth sales, donations may be accepted for the **"Cookie Share"** program to support US troops overseas.
 - 1) A troop "tip" jar is not allowed.
- e. Donations from **troop volunteer organized events.**

Where troop leadership or troop volunteers organize an adult event to raise money for the troop and the event does not or cannot include Girl Scouts, the following guidelines apply:

 - 1) The money should come into the troop treasury as a donation (and the usual rules about donations apply).
 - 2) Because it does not include Girl Scout participation, an application to the council for the event is not necessary.
 - 3) **The Girl Scout logo, branding or sponsorship cannot be included in the promotion of the event, nor can it be publicized on troop websites, service unit websites or calendars. It can be promoted through personal emails, Facebook pages or flyers, but the Girl Scout name cannot be used.**
- f. Donations from **corporate volunteerism programs.**
 - 1) IRS rules require all corporate volunteerism donations be processed through the GSSNE accounting department.
 - 2) The check must be accompanied by a copy of the donor corporation's policy guidelines. If the donor corporation has no restrictions on the donation and gives permission for the volunteer to designate its use, then the volunteer can direct the council to disperse the money, as long as it conforms to the IRS rules outlined in #3) below. If the donor corporation has restrictions or directions on the donation, the council will follow its guidelines exactly.
 - 3) If the corporation allows, the volunteer may designate the allocation of the money, keeping these parameters in mind:
 - (a) The volunteer may assign the funds to specific accounts administered by the council

(b) The volunteer may assign part of the funds to a specific troop (as long as the troop has met the “full participation” in council product sales standard listed in section III/B above and has a Troop Annual Finance report from the previous year on file through the Finance tab of the VTK)) or to a local service unit following these rules:

- The first \$250 may go directly to the troop or Service Unit.
- The remainder of the grant must be allocated between the troop or service unit and the Council up to a maximum of \$250.00 per registered girl member of the troop or service unit (as of the time of allocation) up to a maximum of \$5,000, in aggregate, to the troop or service unit, including the first \$250.

(c) Donations in excess of the maximum limits remain with the Council.

(d) The maximum allocation limits are annual limits.

4) If the volunteer has not designated how the allocation should be used, the full amount will be designated as GSSNE general operating funds.

3. Grants

a. Troops may look for **grants** from outside sources to supplement event and trip budgets.

b. Troops applying for grants must meet the “full participation” standard in council product sales listed in section III/B above.

c. Troops applying for grants must have the previous year’s Troop Annual Finance Report (submitted through the Finance tab of the VTK) on file with the council.

d. All grant applications for outside funding must first be submitted to, reviewed, and approved by GSSNE. Please send a copy of the grant proposal to customercare@gssne.org before submission to the granting organization.

e. Grants under \$250 may be deposited directly in the troop bank account and reported on the Troop Annual Finance Report.

f. Grants over \$250 must be processed through the GSSNE accounting office and must also be reported on the Troop Annual Finance Report.

IV. Records and Reporting for Troop Accounts

A. Either the Troop Co-Leaders or another designated member of the troop committee should keep good records of income and expenditures with accompanying receipts. Because the troop bank account cannot be the leader’s personal account but instead must be a council account, troop financial records and bank account information are not confidential and are shared with troop parents/guardians through the Finance tab on the VTK. Records of troop expenditures should be kept for seven years.

B. The Finance tab on the VTK provides an up-to-date, point-in-time, financial picture of the troop for leaders, volunteers and parents/guardians. It provides them with a look at current troop finances and diminishes the need for regular financial updates.

C. GSSNE recommends that each troop and Service Unit keep a comprehensive spreadsheet detailing income and expenses for the entire troop year so as to provide a comprehensive record of troop finances over the course of the troop year and provide information needed for future budgeting.

E. The Finance tab on the VTK was activated in April, 2018 and the reporting categories have changed from those previously used on the Troop Annual Finance Report. For the 2018-2019 troop year, troops and Service Units should set up a spreadsheet based on these new reporting categories.

E. At the end of the troop year (September – June), submit the Annual Troop Finance Report from the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) Finance tab site (accessed from the MYGS tab on the council website). Include a copy of the most recent bank statement. If the report and accompanying bank statement are not submitted at the end of the troop year (June), troop leaders are not eligible to be appointed troop leaders the following year.

F. At the end of the Troop Annual Finance Report, there are a series of questions about the status of the troop adult leadership team for the next troop year. If troop leaders have not re-registered for the following troop membership year by June 30th, they will lose access to the VTK (and the finance tab) starting on July 1st. Access will be restored once the volunteer has re-registered.

G. Service Units that have bank accounts must also file an end of the year report. SUMs are responsible for filing the report for the Service Unit bank account. Please use the Service Unit Annual Finance Report form from the website.

V. Problem Troop Accounts

A. If GSSNE determines that an account has not been maintained in accordance with the council financial standards, it has been abandoned, or if the authorized signatories on the account are no longer the leaders of the troop, then the CEO or CFO may direct the pertinent bank or credit unit to either

1. Close the account and return the funds to GSSNE **OR**
2. Change the signatories on the account.

VI. Disbanded Troop Treasury

When troops disband, the troop bank account is closed and the money reverts to the council, but it can be re-distributed under certain conditions:

A. If the troop disbands but some girls transfer to other troops, their portion of the treasury follows them to their new troop. For example, if the treasury of a disbanded troop was \$100.00 and it had 10 Girl Scouts, the girls moving to new troops would each take \$10.00 with them to the new troop. The remaining treasury balance remains with the council.

B. If, in the previous example, Girl Scouts decide to re-register but not with a specific troop, they could use their \$10.00 for program registration fees or travel credit. To access the money the scout must request it through Customer Care at customercare@gssne.org or call 401-331-4500 or 800-331-0149.

C. If Girl Scouts leave a troop to create a new troop or join another troop, but the original troop remains, the question of what happens to the money in the troop treasury depends on several factors: whether the troop was saving for some later trip or event and whether there was a lot of money in the treasury (documented in the Troop Annual Finance Report). In general, a troop treasury is not allocated per person, but is a collective entity owned by the entire troop. However, being “honest and fair” requires that some distribution should occur. Where there is a disagreement on dispersal and/or division of funds, SUMs should consult with the Senior Director of Customer Experience.

D. When the money from a disbanded troop comes into the council and no distribution is requested by girls from the disbanded troop, then the money goes into a special account for one year (in case a late request by a former Girl Scout is made); after that it reverts back to the Council to support other Girl Scout activities.

VII. Bad Debt Policy

A. In instances of bad checks or unpaid debt GSSNE will make every effort to contact the person involved and develop a payment plan. (The CFO must approve payment plans.) Where this is unsuccessful referrals will be made to a collection agency or local police. In these cases:

1. The Service Unit SUM will be notified the adult is under a restriction on handling money for a minimum of one year.
2. Volunteer status will be changed to “suspended” in the database.
3. Financial aid will not be available to the adult or girl member until the debt is paid in full.
4. Cookie credits cannot be applied for the girl member until the debt is paid in full.
5. Neither the adult nor the girl will be allowed to register for programs or training until the debt is paid or a payment plan is in process.
6. No shop purchases are allowed until the debt is paid or a payment plan is in process.

B. When debt recovery occurs, accounting will notify all departments; the Customer Experience Department will notify applicable Service Team members. In the case of troop cookie credit, when the debt is paid in full, the troop will receive the money owed.

VIII. Tax-Exempt Status for Troops

As a non-profit organization, GSSNE is tax-exempt. Troop leaders can take advantage of this exemption when purchasing items for troop activities in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. New troop leaders receive a copy of the tax-exempt forms at the conclusion of their training. Replacement forms can be requested from Customer Care at customercare@gssne.org or by calling 401-331-4500 or 800-331-0149.

Safety Activity Checkpoints (SAC)

A. GSUSA has prepared a series of documents listing safety standards for Girl Scout activities. They can be found on the gssne.org>FORMS. They are updated each year in August. **Leaders must check them each time they plan an activity with their troop to make sure that all requirements are met.**

B. If an activity is not listed in SAC, check with the Council Girl Experience Department **before** making any definite plans. Send your request to from Customer Care at customercare@gssne.org or by calling 401-331-4500 or 800-331-0149. Some activities have age eligibility standards and certain activities are discouraged. Details on specific activities are listed on the SAC entry on the website.

Permission Slips

There are many occasions where permission slips are needed:

1. Each time a group **meets at a time and location different from the regular group meeting**. Please refer to the Travel Section for details on permission slips for travel.
2. To participate in **product sales**. These forms are provided with the Be a Reader and Cookie Sale materials.
3. For girls to have their **pictures** on a troop website page or other social media sites.
4. For girls to participate in troop additional **money earning activities**.
5. Troop discussion involving a **“sensitive” topic** (ex: bullying, drugs, puberty, and breast cancer awareness)

Social Media

When using social media in conjunction with Girl Scout affairs the following procedures and standards apply:

A. Girl Scouts under 13 years of age cannot receive emails to a personal address; all communication must be sent to an adult address or to a family address.

B. Girl Scouts older than 13 may, with permission from their parent or guardian, receive communications at a personal email address.

C. Permission to post:

1. As part of the registration process to become a member of Girl Scouts, parents/guardians may give GSSNE permission to use photos of their child on its website/Facebook page or in its publications. If they do not give permission, that is honored. The same rule applies to Girl Scout camp registrations in the summer.
2. An additional permission slip from parents/guardians is required for girls to have information and/or photos posted on a TROOP or SERVICE UNIT website/Facebook page. A sample Social Media Release form is found on the council website: gssne.org>FORMS.
3. If a troop or Service Unit does not have a troop website/Facebook page but wants to post photos of a troop trip or activity on any form of social media, parents/guardians must give specific permission for this. It can be included on the trip permission slip or may be a separate form.

D. A Troop or Service Unit website/Facebook page may be created following these requirements:

1. The troop leader, SUM (or adult designee) is the site administrator and they are responsible for the posting of all information and pictures. Make a private group.
2. On any troop website/Facebook page or other GSSNE related social media sites, the site administrator should avoid the use of personal information of any type.
3. GSUSA has strict standards and guidelines on computer and social media use. Consult the Safety Activity Checkpoint, "Computer/Online Use" before setting up any site.

E. Special protections are in place for activities associated with the Cookie Sale. Please use the Internet Safety Pledge and other standards in the Cookie/Fall sale training materials.

F. On any social media site, Girl Scout volunteers should be socially responsible and adhere to the highest standards of good taste and civility. Because volunteers are role models for Girl Scouts, the responsible and friendly use of social media creates a wonderful example for the girls. Make the Girl Scout Law your guide.

Insurance

I. Member Accident Insurance

A. Every registered Girl Scout (girl and adult) is automatically covered by accident insurance through Mutual of Omaha during normal, supervised program activities, except those events lasting more than two consecutive nights. Coverage is automatic for all girls and adults upon member registration and payment of the registration fee.

B. Allowable medical expenses up to \$130 are covered. When \$130 in benefits has been paid for covered medical or dental expense, any subsequent benefits for the same accident will be payable only for covered expenses that exceed the limit of benefits available under other forms of insurance or health care programs, up to the specified maximum.

C. Please note that sickness is not covered. Only medical expenses arising out of accidents during an approved, supervised activity are covered.

D. CLAIMS Leaders of girls who have accidents requiring medical treatment during a Girl Scout activity, or adults who have accidents themselves during a Girl Scout activity, should report them promptly to the council office. The forms used can be found on the website: www.gssne.org >FORMS tab/in the search box type in: Confidential Crisis Report This form must be filled out and returned to the council. A claim form for reimbursement is available in English and Spanish (www.gssne.org >FORMS tab/in the search box type in: GSUSA Claim form – either English or Spanish). Our insurer, Mutual of Omaha, requires the that GSSNE process the forms.

E. Refer to www.gssne.org for Insurance FAQs for more details. (www.gssne.org >FORMS/In the search box put: Mutual of Omaha Insurance Brochure – English or Mutual of Omaha Insurance Brochure – Spanish).

F. **For trips of more than two consecutive nights** or for overseas trips, troops need to obtain additional insurance. The cost is nominal and can cover both accident and illness. Please submit the form Mutual of Omaha Purchase of Additional Insurance form from the council website to request additional coverage. The form needs to be submitted at least three weeks before the trip.

II. Non-Registered Participant Insurance

A. At a Girl Scout event where non-registered members are present (such as a bridging ceremony or a “Bring-a-Friend” event), troops may purchase additional liability insurance from Mutual of Omaha. In general, a \$5.00 minimum payment covers 45 non-GSSNE registered members. Higher numbers of attendees would increase the cost.

B. Please submit the form Mutual of Omaha Purchase of Additional Insurance form from the council website to request additional coverage. The form needs to be submitted at least three weeks before the event.

III. Siblings/Tagalongs

A. For tagalongs (brothers, sisters, friends) to be present at a Girl Scout meeting or troop event on a continuing basis, the following conditions must be met:

1. A designated adult must be assigned to their supervision and care during the meeting time. This adult may NOT be involved in conducting the Girl Scout meeting, but must be solely involved with the tagalongs.
2. Both the adult and the tagalong(s) must be covered by GSSNE accident insurance. Apply for this insurance at GSSNE. The request for insurance must be made BEFORE the meetings are held and GSSNE needs at least 10 business days to process the request. The cost for this insurance must be paid for by the troop. The adult must also register as a Girl Scout member.

B. If a tagalong is a registered member of a different troop but not of the proper age for the activity and is not participating as part of a service project, there is no coverage.

1. For example, a registered Daisy tagging along with the parent who is leading a Cadette troop has no automatic coverage for the event.
2. On the other hand, a Cadette assisting at a Daisy meeting does have coverage if they have successfully completed Program Aide training or received the LIA Award and are assisting as part of a leadership development program.

C. Tagalongs are NOT permitted at any Girl Scout PROGRAM (those listed in the Program Catalog) unless specified “bring a friend”.

IV. Other types of Insurance

A. Personally Owned Vehicles

1. Only owner-insured cars should be used for troop/group activities. We recommend that you review your personal automobile liability limits.
 - a. Rhode Island law requires \$25,000 per person and \$50,000 per accident.
 - b. Massachusetts requires \$20,000 per person and \$40,000 per accident.
 - c. GSSNE recommends coverage beyond these minimums.

B. Under certain circumstances, if an accident occurs when the driver is on official Girl Scout business, GSSNE’s umbrella policy may provide excess liability coverage when needed, once the owner’s liability limits are exhausted.

C. Senior/Ambassador Scouts with a current driver’s license may drive themselves and siblings to troop meetings and activities. They may not drive other Girl Scouts.

B. Vehicle Rentals

1. The loan, rental or chartering of a bus or van to transport girls for Girl Scout program activities by a troop, group or service unit **must have council pre-approval**. Please refer to GSUSA Volunteer Essentials 2017-2018 manual for standards on TRANSPORTING GIRLS.
2. Bus companies should have a certificate of insurance on file with the council office. Please contact Customer Care at customercare@gssne.org or by calling 401-331-4500 or 800-331-0149 to confirm whether such a certificate is on file.
3. Car rentals for troop transportation do not need advance approval by the council.

C. Facility Rentals

1. If a troop or Service Unit rents a facility (other than the regular troop/group meeting facility) for a troop event or activity, they must have council pre-approval.
2. A certificate of liability insurance for the site may be required by the council. This applies to camping sites, as well as hotel/motel accommodations.

D. Certificates of Insurance

1. When GSSNE troop meetings, events or activities are held at locations not owned by GSSNE, the owner often wants proof that GSSNE carries liability insurance. If you need such a certificate of liability, please fill in the Certificate of Liability Insurance form found at gssne.org>FORMS and the certificate will be sent to you.
2. When applying for certificates of liability requested by a facility a troop is renting, please allow at least **three weeks** for the paperwork to be processed.

Working with Children

Child Abuse Reporting Procedures

Unfortunately child abuse is a problem in every community and Girl Scout volunteers need to be informed about current laws and council procedures. Girl Scout volunteers are mandated reporters just like school teachers and coaches. Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Connecticut each have slightly different regulations:

I. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR REPORTING:

In Rhode Island this is the standard:

ALL persons in Rhode Island are required by law (RIGL 40-11-3) to report known or suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to the Department of Children, Youth, and Families within 24 hours of becoming aware of such abuse/neglect.

Call the Hotline at 1-800-RI-CHILD (1-800-742-4453) to report child abuse and/or neglect! http://www.dcyf.ri.gov/child_welfare/reporting.php

In Massachusetts this is the standard:

When you suspect that a child is being abused and/or neglected, you should immediately telephone the local DCF Area Office and ask for the Screening Unit. You will find a directory of the DCF Area Offices at the end of this Guide and on the DCF web site. Offices are staffed between 9 am and 5 pm weekdays. To make a report at any other time, including after 5 pm and on weekends and holidays, please call the Child-At-Risk Hotline at 800-792-5200.

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dcf/can-mandated-reporters-guide.pdf>

In Connecticut this is the standard:

Mandated reporters must report orally to the Department of Children and Families' (DCF) Careline or a law enforcement agency within 12 hours of suspecting that a child has been abused or neglected and must submit a written report (DCF-136) to DCF within 48 hours of making the oral report.

When the Mandated reporter is a member of the staff of a public or private institution or facility that provides care for children or a member of a public or private school, they must also provide written notification to the head of the facility or institution where the alleged victim is enrolled or registered. DCF is required to tape record all reports to the Careline.

The Department has a single point of contact statewide for the reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect. This Child Abuse and Neglect Careline operates 24 hours a day and seven days a week. Anyone who suspects that a child has been abused or neglected or is in danger of abuse or neglect is strongly encouraged to call the Careline 1-800-842-2288.

II. GSSNE PROCEDURES:

A. Girl Scout volunteers should report any suspected abuse following the guidelines for their state and IMMEDIATELY contact GSSNE through the council crisis line (401-603-8429). The CEO or a Senior Director will contact you for information and to provide support.

B. Senior Management will review the information and in the event the reported incident involves a program volunteer, employed staff, or GSSNE member, the CEO will immediately, without exception, suspend the volunteer or staff person until an investigation is complete.

C. The parents or legal guardian of the child or children involved in the alleged incident will be promptly notified in accordance with the directions of the relevant state or local agency. If more than one set of parents is involved (e.g., child-on-child abuse), GSSNE's responsibility is to keep the names and contact information of those involved confidential. People may learn that information some other way, such as through other children, but staff and volunteers should not provide it. GSSNE needs to protect itself from disclosing information on a minor.

D. GSSNE will make a report in accordance with relevant state or local child abuse reporting requirements and will cooperate to the extent of the law with any legal authority involved.

E. Reinstatement of the program volunteer, employed staff, or GSSNE member will occur only after all allegations have been cleared to the satisfaction of the CEO or designate.

F. All staff and volunteers must be sensitive to the need for confidentiality in handling this information and therefore should discuss the incident only with the CEO or designate.

III. DEFINITIONS AND TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE:

There are many types of child abuse. Girl Scout volunteers are mandated reporters. Volunteers need to be aware of the following kinds of abuse:

A. Physical: An injury or pattern of injuries that happens to a child that is not accidental. These injuries may include beatings, burns, bruises, bites, welts, strangulation, broken bones, or death.

B. Neglect: Neglect occurs when adults responsible for the well-being of a child fail to provide for or protect the child. Neglect may include not giving food, clothing, or shelter, failing to keep children clean, lack of supervision, and withholding medical care.

C. Emotional: Any chronic and persistent act by an adult that endangers the mental health or emotional development of a child including rejecting, ignoring, terrorizing, corrupting, constantly criticizing, making mean remarks, insulting; and giving little or no love, guidance, or support.

D. Sexual: Sexual abuse is the sexual assault or sexual exploitation of children. Sexual abuse may consist of numerous acts over a long period or a single incident. Children can be victimized from infancy through adolescence. Sexual abuse includes rape, incest, sodomy, fondling, exposing oneself, oral copulation, penetration of the genital or anal openings, as well as forcing children to view or appear in pornography. The perpetrator keeps the child from disclosing through intimidation, threats, and rewards.

General Guidelines for Showing Affection to Children

Girl Scouts encourages staff/volunteers that interact with children to be affectionate with those children in a manner that is safe for both the children and the adult.

Guideline 1: Child Initiated

A child may choose to do something that a staff/volunteer person never would. In some circumstances, that makes the behavior acceptable. Examples include a child choosing to hold hands with the staff/volunteer or climbing into a staff /volunteer's lap. Other circumstances remain unacceptable. An older child spontaneously kissing a staff/volunteer, for example, is to be discouraged, and staff/volunteer should respond only briefly (although warmly) to full frontal hugs. Forcing affectionate behavior on a child is never acceptable. Even asking for a hug can be considered force when you are discussing young children who are easily influenced by adult expectations.

Guideline 2: Age Appropriate

Consider the age and developmental stage of the child involved. Is this behavior typical of that group or cause for concern? Children who display over-affectionate or inappropriate touching behavior may be victims of child abuse.

Guideline 3: Gentle Limits

Gentle yet firm limits are the way to make children's spontaneous affectionate behavior safe for you. There are many natural ways to move on to another activity without making the child feel rejected. For instance, after a minute of hand holding or lap sitting, ask the child to sit next to you, distract the child with something to do, or encourage him or her to return to an interrupted activity.

Guideline 4: Have Witnesses

When a situation merits having unusual physical contact with a child, make sure that you have witnesses to verify your appropriate actions and responses. This circumstance comes up frequently when a young child needs help with clothing or in programs where physical contact is part of the instruction, like aquatics, youth fitness, gymnastics, and other selected sports. The key here is to balance your need for corroboration with the child's need for dignity in front of an audience.

Touching Policy

Touching should be in response to the need of the child and not the need of the adult.

- Touching should be with the child’s permission; resistance from the child should be respected.
- Touching should avoid breasts, buttocks, and groin.
- Touching should be open and not secretive.
- Touching or other physical contact should be governed by the age and developmental stage of the child.

Appropriate	
Pat on the shoulder	Definitely—a great way to show affection
Hugging	Use a sideways hug if you initiate
High fives	A great way to be affectionate at work
Secret handshake	Great team builder if used wisely
Resting head on your shoulder	Use guidelines 1, 2, and 4. (Guidelines for ...)
Squeezed together on a couch	Use guideline 1 and think about safety
Applying sunscreen to a child	Only if you have parent’s permission (and only in areas described in training; let child apply sunscreen elsewhere)
Inappropriate	
Caressing	Too intimate
Kiss (on the cheek, mouth, top of head)	Tell child, “Kisses are for family”
Piggyback rides	Too much contact and favoritism
Back rub	Too intimate
Wrestling or roughhousing	It’s not safe
Playing mercy or uncle	Games that injure are not fun
Carrying a child on your hip	Too much contact and favoritism
Shoulder rides	Too much contact and favoritism
Touching where swimsuits cover	Too intimate
Spider swing	Too much contact and favoritism
Child hanging on your body	Unsafe; you need to be able to move in a crisis
Playing airplane	Unsafe

GSSNE Travel Standards

Trips are a worthwhile extension of activities done within the regular troop program. A Girl Scout trip is an opportunity for girls to have fun, to experience adventure, and to enrich the ongoing Girl Scout program. The decision to take a trip, to establish a budget and to finalize plans should be made by leaders and girls in consultation with parents and GSSNE.

I. Travel Notification

A. Whenever a troop is NOT meeting at its regular time and place, one of the troop leaders needs to notify the local Service Unit Manager (SUM) in advance. Permission slips are required for any such activity. Additional paperwork and sometimes council pre-approval may also be required.

B. One exception to this rule is a Meeting Time “Walk Out” where the troop leaves their meeting site and walks to an adjacent park, playground or facility and then returns to their regular meeting site. Since the activity begins and ends at the regular meeting site and time, it is covered by the Parent Consent form which parents sign when their daughter first joins Girl Scouting. If doing a “Walk Out” activity, notify your SUM before the meeting and leave a sign on the meeting place door stating destination and return time.

II. Readiness and Destination

A. Taking trips, either day or overnight, is an exciting and rewarding experience for girls and sharpens their skills in planning and evaluating. Trips of progressively greater distance and length keep girls interested and involved. Starting small with short, local day trips and progressing to weeks long international travel is all part of the Girl Scout travel pathway. GSSNE follows the national standards on progression in travel:

- 1. Short trips to local points of interest (Daisies and older):** A walk to the nearby garden or a short ride by car or public transportation to the firehouse or courthouse is a great first step for Daisies. GSSNE encourages any type of local trip or travel to council events (the standard is a maximum of one hour car drive from meeting site to activity location).
- 2. Day trip (Brownies and older):** 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. GSSNE’s distance standard for Brownie troops is the destination must be within 100 miles of the troop meeting site.
- 3. Overnight Camping for Daisy Scouts:**
 - Day Camp/Resident Camp experiences:**
Daisies who have completed kindergarten may independently participate at day camp and in resident camp experiences lasting up to three nights. Daisies who have completed first grade may independently participate in resident camp experiences

lasting four or more nights.

Daisy Troop Camping

Daisy Girl Scouts are allowed to have troop overnights, as supported by both the Daisy Buddy Camper badge and the GSUSA Safety Activity Checkpoint for Camping. GSSNE recommends the following steps be followed:

- The troop has had a progression of successful trips and activities of increasing length and distance from home. For example, day participation in a community camping event or council program events.
- The troop leadership believes the Daisies are mature enough to handle an overnight away from their families.
- All GSUSA Safety Activity Checkpoints are followed, with particular attention to required girl/adult ratios (6 Daisies: 2 adults)
- All participants understand that GSUSA standards require separate sleeping accommodations for adults and girls.
- For each overnight, the two pre-camping steps of the Buddy Camper badge are followed: Daisies help plan a camping trip and help pack for the trip.
- GSSNE's distance standard states the overnight site should be no farther away than a one-hour car drive.

4. Overnight trips (Brownies and older): One (or possibly two) nights away to a state or national park, historic city, or nearby city for sightseeing, staying in a hotel, motel, or campground. These short trips are just long enough to whet their appetites, but not long enough to generate homesickness. GSSNE's distance standard for Brownie troops is the destination must be within 100 miles of the troop meeting site. Troops requesting trips at the maximum distance must have a record of previous successful overnight trips.

5. Extended overnight trips (Juniors and older): Three or four nights camping or a stay in a hotel, motel, or hostel within the girls' home region (for example, New England, the Upper Midwest, the Southeast, the Pacific Northwest, and so on). Planning a trip to a large museum—and many offer unique opportunities for girls to actually spend the night on museum grounds—makes for an exciting experience for girls. GSSNE's standard is within 150 miles of their community, but all locations within New England and adjacent New York State are usually approved. Troops requesting trips at the maximum distance must have a record of previous successful overnight trips.

6. National trips (Cadettes and older): Travel anywhere in the country, often lasting a week or more. Try to steer clear of ordinary recreational trips girls might take with their families and consider those that offer some educational component such as incredible cities, historic sites, and museums around the country. Troops requesting trips where the destination is outside of the region must have a record of previous successful overnight trips.

7. International trips (Cadettes and older): Travel around the world, often requiring one or two years of preparation. International trips are available to Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors who have successfully participated in a progression of overnight trips with Girl Scouting. GSSNE troops requesting international trips must have a record of previous successful

overnight trips, with some previous travel experience of trips of more than three nights.

B. GSUSA has developed a [Troop Travel Guide for US Trips](#) available on the Resource tab of the VTK. It has a lot of information about how to assess readiness for travel and age appropriate options.

III. Leader Training

Preparing a troop to travel involves additional leader training. At least one member of the troop leadership team must have the training described below in order for the troop to travel.

Type of Trip	Training required
Day trip (not at a campsite)	New leader training
Day trip to a camp site	New Leader training, Outdoor Day training, First Aid/CPR
Overnight (not camping)	Troop Trips II, First Aid/CPR
Overnight - camping at GSSNE sites	Troop Camp Training, First Aid/CPR
Overnight – camping at a non-GSSNE site	Troop Trips II, Troop Camp Training, First Aid/CPR
Overnight – off trail camping	Troop Camp Training, Wilderness First Aid, Hiking Curriculum or equivalent.

IV. Paperwork

A. In general, day trips do not require advance approval, as long as the leader checks the applicable Safety Activity Checkpoints. SUMs need to be notified of the troop's plans **in advance** of the trip.

B. Overnights require reservations and paperwork, depending on the location, duration and destination:

1. Overnights at Museums: reservations are made through the organizing institution, for example - Mystic Aquarium, Roger Williams Park Zoo, etc. (However, the Museum of Science, Boston reservations are processed through GSSNE online program reservation system.) Leaders need to notify SUMs of their travel dates.

2. Other Non-Camping overnights – for example, a trip to New York city or a YMCA local lock-in require council pre-approval which is done by filing the Intent to Travel form (fillable online). (SUMs are copied on the approval email so leaders do not have to notify the SUM themselves.)

3. Camping overnights at a GSSNE camp – reservations made through the Property Rentals tab on the council website. The troop leader needs to notify the SUM of their travel plans.

4. Camping overnights at a NON-GSSNE site – for example use of a campsite in Vermont - requires council pre-approval which is done by filing the Intent to Travel form (fillable online). (SUMs are copied on the approval email so leaders do not have to notify the SUM themselves.)

V. Permission Slips

- A. Every trip requires a signed permission slip from the parent/guardian in order for the girl to attend.
- B. A sample permission slip form is available at gssne.org>FORMS, but you may want to create your own. Permission slips for trips should contain the following information:

- Troop number & Age level (ex: Junior troop 123)
- Date & Time of the activity
- Place of the activity
- Travel plans, including type of transportation and who arranges it (family or troop)
- General agenda or topic of activity
- Cell phone or contact number where the leader can be reached during the activity
- Telephone numbers (as many as can be listed) for parents/guardians where they can be reached **during the time of the activity**
- Additional emergency contact information (neighbor, friend, relative).
- **PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE AND DATE**

- C. You may also want to include:
1. Recommended amount of spending money (especially for older girls)
 2. If you have a troop Facebook page or other type of social media contact system, permission to take and publish photos and/or videos of the scout at the activity.

VI. Leader Travel Kit

- A. The troop leader should carry a **Travel Kit** on all trips, excursions, or events. For each girl (and adult) on the trip, one of the leaders is responsible for carrying
- 1. Troop Roster** with contact information for everyone on the trip.
 - 2. For each girl and adult on the trip:**
 - a. Health History Form** –If any of the scouts has a special medical condition requiring monitoring or supervision, request additional information from the family. This form is on the GSSNE website under Forms.
 - b. Medications** in original containers to be dispensed by the leader. Parents must sign the Permission to Dispense Medication form and submit it with the meds container. EXCEPTIONS: Inhalers, Epi-pens and diabetic meds may be carried and administered by the girl. This form is on the GSSNE website under Forms.
 - c. A signed Permission Slip** for each youth participant.
 - 3. Confidential Crisis sheet** from GSSNE. Download from website>Forms tab. Reporting an incident must be done online using the council form, but a paper copy can be carried by the leader to fill in at the time of the incident when the details are fresh.
 - 4. Insurance forms:** Mutual of Omaha claim form. These forms are on the GSSNE website >Forms.
 - 5. Copy of Passports**, if going outside the country.
 - 6. A complete itinerary** for the trip including contact information for hotels/campsites, restaurants, museums, other activity locations – as specific as possible. A preliminary

itinerary should be part of the Intent to Travel submission; a final itinerary should be submitted before the trip.

7. Printed driving directions. Although most adults have a GPS, be prepared if batteries die or service does not work at all times.

B. If traveling in a several cars, the driver of each car must carry copies of the roster, contact information and health forms for people in their car, plus driving directions.

C. It is recommended that all the above information be copied and a set be carried by another adult chaperone and a third set be left at home with the contact person (this information could be sent to the leader if other copies are lost or misplaced).

VII. Transportation

A. Girl Scout troops have two different ways to provide transportation to troop activities. **In either case, a full description of the transportation mode must be included in the permission slip.**

Option 1: FAMILY TRANSPORTATION The troop asks each family to provide transportation for their Girl Scout to and from the activity location. For efficiency, families may form carpools, but the troop leadership team does NOT make these arrangements. Once Girl Scouts are delivered to the activity site, the troop leader assumes responsibility for the Girl Scouts in the troop. The permission slip should clearly state that transportation is provided by the families.

Option 2: TROOP CARPOOLS In this option, the troop leadership arranges carpools to and from a troop activity. The permission slip should clearly state that transportation is arranged by the troop. GSUSA requires that drivers of troop arranged carpools must meet the following standard:

1. Be 21 years old
2. Hold a current, valid driver's license
3. Have insurance on the car they will be using which at least meets these minimum amounts:
 - In Rhode Island, \$25,000 per person and \$50,000 per accident
 - In Massachusetts, \$20,000 per person and \$40,000 per accident
 - (GSSNE recommends coverage beyond these minimums.)
4. Have a clear driving record

GSSNE, through the background check required of all volunteers, takes care of # 4, but the troop leaders are responsible for checking for items 1, 2 and 3. This should be done anytime the troop arranges the transportation of girls for a day trip or an overnight activity. If the activity requires an Intent-to-Travel form, one of the check-off items at the end asks if the troop has met GSSNE's

transportation requirement. Checking for age, license and insurance is what this means.

B. Senior/Ambassador Girl Scouts with a valid driver’s license may drive themselves and siblings to Girl Scout activities, but they may not drive other Girl scouts.

VI. Adults on the Trip

The number of adults required on a trip is governed by the Girl/Adult ratio chart for

Events, Travel and Camping.

	Events, Travel, and Camping	
	<i>Two</i> unrelated volunteers (at least one of whom is female) for this number of girls:	<i>One</i> additional volunteer to each additional:
Girl Scout Daisies (grades K–1)	6	1-4
Girl Scout Brownies (grades 2–3)	12	1-6
Girl Scout Juniors (grades 4–5)	16	1-8
Girl Scout Cadettes (grades 6–8)	20	1-10
Girl Scout Seniors (grades 9–10)	24	1-12
Girl Scout Ambassadors (grades 11–12)	24	1-12

In addition to the troop leaders, additional adults may be required. Each of the chaperones must be a registered and vetted member of GSSNE.

Troop leaders should make sure that every chaperone is familiar with Girl Scout safety requirements and fully understand their role as a troop volunteer.

VII. Girl identification

Each girl must carry **on her person** at all times an **identification card**. If possible, these should be laminated or carried in a plastic name tag holder; wristbands are also an option. The information on each should include:

1. Full Name
2. Girl Scout Council and Troop #
3. Telephone contacts
 - Leader cell phone(s)
 - GSSNE crisis line number
4. Pertinent medical information such as allergies.

Travel Chart

Age Level of Troop	Type of Trip	Screenings/ Training(s)	Notifications/ Approvals	Forms	Timeline	Adults
D/B/J/C/S/A	DAY TRIPS -To a council Sponsored Event -To any site within the distance requirement for the age level.	Leaders: -New Leader Training -FA/CPR recommended Other Adults -Registered -Drivers (for troop arranged carpools) checked for age, license, insurance.	1. SUM or PC notified in advance.			1. Leaders and chaperones must be registered volunteers. 2. The number of adults must conform to girl/adult ratio guidelines.
D/B/J/C/S/A	OUTDOOR DAY AT CAMPSITE	Same as above + 1. Outdoor Day training	1. Reservation through Property Rentals tab on the council website 2. Notify SUM.	1. Sign off documents at Property Rentals site.	1. At least two weeks in advance.	Same as above.
1 st grade Daisy scouts, B/J/C/S/A	OVERNIGHTS -lock-ins (YMCA) -hotels -motels	Leaders: -New Leader Training -Troop Trips II training -FA/CPR Recommended Other Adults -Registered -Drivers (for troop arranged carpools) checked for age, license, insurance.	1. Intent-to-Travel form	1. Intent-to-Travel form	1. At least two months in advance.	Same as above.
B/J/C/S/A	-For trips of 3+ nights	Advanced Trips Other Adults -Registered -Drivers (for troop arranged carpools) checked for age, license, insurance.				
1 st grade Daisy scouts, B/J/C/S/A	OVERNIGHTS -Boston Museum of Science -Storrs, CT.	Same as above.	1. Notify SUM.	1. GSSNE council registration form	1. At least one month in advance.	Same as above.

	-Buttonwoods Zoo					
1 st grade Daisy scouts, B/J/C/S/A	OVERNIGHTS: -Other Museums, e.g. Roger Williams Zoo, Mystic -Lock-ins at YMCAs	Same as above	1. Intent-to-Travel form 2. Notify SUM	1. Intent-to-Travel form	1. At least one month in advance.	Same as above.
Age Level of Troop	Type of Trip	Screenings/ Training(s)	Notifications/ Approvals	Forms	Timeline	Adults
1 st grade Daisy scouts, B/J/C/S/A	OVERNIGHTS: Camping at NON-GSSNE sites -backyard sleepovers -other Girl Scout council camps -commercial camp sites	Leaders: -New Leader Training -Troop Trips II training -Troop Camp Training -FA/CPR Other Adults -Registered -Drivers (for troop arranged carpools) checked for age, license, insurance.	1. Intent-to-Travel form .	1. Intent-to-Travel form.	At least one month in advance.	1. Leaders and chaperones must be registered volunteers. 2. The number of adults must conform to girl/adult ratio guidelines. 3. The Troop Camp trained adult can be any registered adult volunteer who successfully completed Troop Camp Training. 4. The FA/CPR trained adult can be any registered Adult Volunteer who is certified.
1 st grade Daisy scouts, B/J/C/S/A	OVERNIGHTS: Camping at a GSSNE site.	Leaders: -New Leader Training -Troop Camp Training -FA/CPR Other Adults -Registered -Drivers (for troop arranged carpools) checked for age, license, insurance.	1. Reservation through Property Rentals tab on the council website 2. Notify SUM.	1. Sign off documents at Property Rentals site.	1. At least one month in advance.	1. Leaders and chaperones must be registered volunteers. 2. The number of adults must conform to girl/adult ratio guidelines. 3. The Troop Camp trained adult can be any registered Adult Volunteer who successfully completed Troop Camp Training. 4. The FA/CPR trained adult can be registered Adult Volunteer who is certified.

J/C/S/A	OVERNIGHTS: Off-Trail Camping or Backpacking	Same as above + 1. GSSNE Hiking/Backpackin g course or equivalent	1. Intent-to- Travel form	1. Intent-to- Travel form	At least one month in advance	1, 2 & 4 same as above. 3. The Troop Camp Trained or Hiking/Backpacking certified adult can be any registered Adult Volunteer.
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Adult Training for Volunteers

Once you complete New Leader Training you will be all set to have a fun and successful troop experience. However, some positions and activities require further training.

Times and dates for all trainings are listed on the council website Events Calendar. Clicking on the name of the training will take you to a registration site.

TYPE OF TRAINING	NOW VOLUNTEERS CAN:
<p>1. <u>Volunteer, New Troop Leaders</u></p> <p>Module 1: Online training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GSUSA Girl Scouting 101 video <p>Module 2: Self Study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer Essentials Quick Start <p>Module 3: Online or in-person</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Troop Leadership 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Start a troop Organize troop meetings Buy badges, recognitions Attend Council sponsored events Borrow program materials from Council Participate in Council fall and winter product sales Call on Council staff for support and information.
<p>2. Outdoor Day training</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule a troop Outdoor Day at a GSSNE camp. Hold a troop activity that includes fire-building.
<p>3. <u>First Aid/CPR + AED training</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Safety and Health Institute (ASHI) sponsored training is offered by GSSNE Online training plus 2-hour practicum for CPR + AED training <p>Other certifying organization's cards are also accepted</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended for all troop leaders Recommended for all troop trips Required by Safety Activity Checkpoints for some activities Required for troop camping

<p>4. <u>Backpacking/Hiking Series</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops with classroom sessions and hikes. • The first sessions are listed in the Program Guide and may be taken by troops and/or just adult leaders • The final workshop is a Backpacking/Hiking week-end just for adults/Ambassador Scouts • Organized by the Camping Committee 	<p>1. Qualifies troop leaders to take troops on hiking and backpacking trips</p>
<p>5. <u>Troop Camp Training</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary online training and Skills Checklist • Classroom session: 3 hours • Overnight at a GSSNE camp – Saturday to Sunday 	<p>1. Required for camping at GSSNE sites</p> <p>2. Required for camping at non-GSSNE sites</p>
<p>6. <u>Troop Camp Refresher Course</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom review of GSSNE camp standards (2.5 hours) 	<p>1. For troop leaders whose Troop Camp Training was more than five years ago.</p> <p>2. For experienced leaders who transferred into GSSNE from another council where they received TCT.</p>
<p>7. <u>Age Level Change workshops</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daisy to Brownie: face to face session (2 hours) • Brownie to Junior: online, fall 2018. 	<p>Required for all leaders transitioning from one age level program to another.</p>
<p>8. <u>Troop Trips II</u> (2.5 hours)</p>	<p>1. Required for all overnight trips (including museum overnights) or any activity requiring an Intent-to-Travel form</p> <p>2. Recommended for Brownie and Junior leaders</p>

<p>9. <u>Advanced Trips</u> (2.5 hours)</p> <p>Offered annually in April</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For Cadette, Senior and Ambassador level leaders who are planning extended trips (3+ nights) or geographically distant trips. 2. Especially helpful for troops planning on extensive fund-raising activities.
<p>10. Bronze Award Workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council workshop for leaders on how to prepare a troop for the Bronze Award project 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepares Junior Scouts to pursue a Highest Award.
<p>11. <u>Strive for Silver/Go for Gold</u> workshops for Leaders, Girls, and Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An interactive workshop explaining how to pursue a Silver/Gold award. <p>The session covers information on prerequisites, typical projects, guidelines, timelines, and standards.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepares Cadette, Senior, and Ambassador scouts to pursue a Higher Award. 2. Reviews the GSSNE paperwork requirements and GSSNE council procedures. 3. Every girl should attend; parents/guardians and troop leaders are also encouraged to attend.