



Policies, Procedures & Standards (PPS) Manual Change Document 2022-2023

To view the full 2022-23 GSSNE’s Policies, Procedures, & Standards manual, visit the FORMS page at GSSNE.org or access it through gsLearn.

Document-Wide Changes

- All dates were changed to reflect the 2022/2023 edition of the PPS
- General grammar was improved
- Pages renumbered & Table of Contents updated
- “Senior Director of Finance & Administration” was updated to “Chief Financial Officer (CFO)”
- “Senior Director of Advancement” was updated to “Chief Operating Officer (COO)”
- The stand-alone use of the term “girl” as it relates to Girl Scout members was changed to gender-neutral “troop member”, “member”, “youth”, “Girl Scout”, or “Girl Scout youth” to reflect inclusivity
- The word, “parent(s)” and “guardian(s)” were changed to “caregiver(s)”
- Branding updates as defined by GSUSA branding standards: “Service Unit(s)” was changed to “service unit(s)”; “Council” was changed to “council”; colored fonts were changed to black or white

The following explains the significant updates to topics in the GSSNE PPS 2022-2023:

GSSNE’s New TikTok Channel page 4

Added: Included in social media channels

GSSNE Service Units and Service Unit Teams page 4

Clarified: What a service unit is and what’s its purpose.

Added: Council appointment is required for an individual to serve in a service unit role and appointment is at the discretion of GSSNE.

BECOMING A GIRL SCOUT VOLUNTEER – Membership & Background Screens page 5

Added: Full policy

BECOMING A GIRL SCOUT VOLUNTEER – Training & Adult Learning page 7

Added: Volunteers who completed leader training prior to 2020 and who were inactive for more than 1 year and wish to re-engage as a troop leader, or are taking on a new troop, will be required to complete current leader training requirements. Any volunteer who does not complete required training for the positions held or does not refresh their training when requested by GSSNE may be removed from their volunteer role.

Removed: “Getting Girl Scouts Outdoors” removed from courses required to become a troop co-leader.

Updated: Required Troop Leader Training: Volunteer Essentials, Volunteer Essentials Attestation, Troop Finances.

Added: Volunteers are strongly encouraged to complete First Aid/CPR, camp, and travel trainings as early as possible to ensure they are prepared for troop adventures.

Added: Each volunteer is required to complete adult learning courses designated for her/his position. Adult learning courses will ensure that each volunteer has the knowledge and skills needed to perform successfully in the position for which they have been appointed. Refusal or inability to participate in the required courses can result in a volunteer's release from, or non-appointment to a position.

BECOMING A GIRL SCOUT VOLUNTEER – Types of Training (Chart)

page 8

Moved: From page 30 to page 6

Removed: "Getting Your Girl Scouts Outdoors" removed as a requirement for troop leader training

Updated: Required Troop Leader Training: Volunteer Essentials, Volunteer Essentials Attestation, Troop Finances.

Clarified: Basic Life Saving (BLS) does NOT include First Aid and will only be considered if accompanied by the individual's current nursing or advanced medical license. Reciprocity is at the discretion of GSSNE

BECOMING A GIRL SCOUT VOLUNTEER – Volunteer & Staff Policy

page 10

Added: When work and volunteer performance, behavior, attendance, and/or productivity does not meet the council's standards, it is the council's goal to provide an employee/volunteer with a reasonable opportunity, appropriate to the circumstances, to correct the problem and sustain work performance.

From an employment perspective, nothing in this policy affects the "at-will" nature of the employment relationship and, in certain instances, immediate termination of employment may be determined to be appropriate. This is also true for volunteers and other unpaid staff and support. In general, any act by an employee which the Council believes, in its sole discretion, may result in harm to or interference to the council, its ability to operate effectively and/or efficiently, its business interests, or its reputation, may be cause for disciplinary action up to and including immediate discharge.

Employees and volunteers represent GSSNE and Girl Scouts at large. When representing GSSNE, everyone must observe reasonable standards of conduct and may be disciplined when they do not do so. Some examples of unacceptable conduct include:

- Any form of dishonesty
- Disruption of the workplace
- Failure to comply with a council policy or practice
- Failure to properly safeguard confidential business or customer information
- Use of alcoholic beverages or illegal/intoxicating drugs during work hours or on company premises at any time
- Taking company or personal property of co-workers, visitors, or others without their expressed permission
- Refusal to follow management instructions or direction
- Absence without appropriate notification of, or authorization by your supervisor
- Violation of the company's equal employment or harassment prevention policies
- Refusal to cooperate in an investigation conducted by the company
- Threats, acts of violence, or inciting violence in others
- Sleeping on the job
- Accessing and distributing confidential information (other than in the normal performance of one's job duties)
- Falsifying company or submitting inaccurate time records
- Engaging in other actions that could be reasonably construed fraudulent or an act of misrepresentation

In times when infractions occur, the council may follow a system of **progressive discipline**. The supervisor and employee/volunteer discuss the specific problem, possible solutions, and set a time frame

by which goals must be met to consider improvement acceptable. Failure to maintain sustained improved performance after disciplinary action may result in termination.

The following are examples of various forms of disciplinary action that may be used at the discretion of the council.

- Verbal warning
- Written warning
- Performance improvement plan (may include professional development/ training)
- Termination

In some instances, leadership may choose a more appropriate hybrid model utilizing various components listed above in addition to:

- Suspension with or without pay
- Probationary period
- Change in position, schedule, or duties

It is our plan to be proactive and positive thinking in our self-improvement structures, as well as transparent in our decision-making process and timeline. In a case where the staff or volunteer member feel otherwise, the sitting Board Chair will provide the role of ombuds.

BECOMING A GIRL SCOUT VOLUNTEER – Conflict Resolution Protocol

page 11

Added: One key aspect of leadership is the ability to work with others and effectively use communication and teamwork to achieve the desired goals and outcomes. Differences of opinion, disagreements, and conflicts are natural parts of life and inevitably happen in all relationships. Not all conflict is bad - it can lead to new ideas and approaches, it can bring important issues to light, and it can provide an opportunity for people to come together to create a solution. GSSNE has developed a procedure for resolving conflicts that arise. If there is no clear breach of a Girl Scout policy or guideline, the following conflict management essentials should be favored when resolving a conflict:

STEP 1: Attempt Self-Resolution

If there is no clear breach of a Girl Scout policy or guideline, the individuals involved in the conflict have a face-to-face conversation during which each party expresses their perspective of the conflict and how it impacted them. It is very important and beneficial to address conflict in person – many times, one party is unaware of the concern or how it has impacted the other person. See Conflict Resolution Resources on the Volunteer Resources page at GSSNE.org.

STEP 2: Invite an Unbiased Third Party to Join

Request insight from or invite a service unit manager, or other service unit team member, to join you at the face-to-face discussion. This person may lend new perspective or ask questions not previously explored that may help all parties reach a solution.

If you are mediating between two parties, hear both parties out separately prior to the meeting and then bring them together. If you are one of the parties involved, try to put yourself in the other person's shoes and work together to uncover solutions that could result in mutual gain and have the best possible outcome for everyone.

STEP 3: Decide on a Solution

Explore a mutually agreeable solution to the issue(s) contributing to the conflict. It will be up to the individuals to determine if and how they continue working together.

STEP 4: If GSSNE Needs to Be Involved

If all previous steps above have been taken to resolve the situation informally, but the matter is still not

resolved, the member or volunteer may escalate the conflict to GSSNE for council intervention using the *Conflict Resolution Escalation Form*. Please note that a conflict may be escalated to GSSNE at any point in the process if necessary.

GSSNE TROOP STANDARDS – Troop Size Standards & Girl Scouts with Special Needs **page 11**

Moved: From “GSSNE Program Standards” to “GSSNE Troop Standards”

GSSNE TROOP STANDARDS – Supervision **page 12**

Added: Adult Supervision. The adult supervision rule at Girl Scouts is a strict standard that requires whenever Girl Scouts meet, whether in person or virtually, there must be at least two registered, approved adult volunteers who are unrelated (for example: not a sibling, spouse, domestic partner, parent, child, or anyone who would be considered a family member) and who do not live in the same residence, with a minimum of one who is female. This applies to every Girl Scout gathering including troop meetings (in person and virtual), day trips, camp, sleep away travel, events, activities, and projects. There are no exceptions to this rule.

GSSNE TROOP STANDARDS – The “Buddy System” **page 12**

Added: At no time may one leader/adult be alone with one Girl Scout. There should always be at least two youth with one adult or two adults with one youth.

GSSNE TROOP STANDARDS – Other Adults Involved with the Troop **page 13**

Added: Any adult involved with, regularly interacting with the troop, participating in troop activities. Orr handling troop money (such as a Product Program Coordinator, driver, parent helper, chaperone, attending an overnight, etc.) must have a current GSSNE membership and background screening(s) on file with GSSNE.

GSSNE TROOP STANDARDS – Types of Troops **page 13**

Added: Be sure you are following proper youth-to-adult ratios based on grade level when increasing the size of your troop.

LEADERSHIP STANDARDS **page 13**

Added: Each troop requires a minimum of two fully trained, un-related, adult co-leaders (one of whom is female)
Clarified: Example #2 clarified to show a multi-level troop with more than 6 older girls and the number of adults needed

PROGRAM STANDARDS – Girl Scout Participation in Activities with Other Scouting Organizations **page 14**

Removed: We believe that Girl Scout participation in Boy Scout activities creates confusion and contributes 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 – Meeting in Homes **page 15**

Added: For the most up-to-date information and guidelines pertaining to this, please visit GSSNE.org > Our Council > Covid-19 Information

FISCAL STANDARDS – Financial Support Overview **page 15**

Moved: From “Program Standards” to “FISCAL STANDARDS / Troop Treasury”

Added: Youth and/or adults may request a membership scholarship by completing an online application and submitting it to GSSNE. Proof of family income and participation in council product programs are factors in determining the amount awarded.

FISCAL STANDARDS – Troop Treasury

page 15

Added: GSSNE is legally responsible for all Girl Scout banking within its jurisdiction. 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 federally insured bank or credit union account which is opened in the name of GSSNE. Money earned by Girl Scout troops should be shared between the girls in that troop. Decisions about money allocation should be developed ahead of time, with girl input, and should be fair to every age level. With council permission, older girls may take part in separate money-earning activities to help fund trips or other big ticket items.

Added: Within 14-days of the bank account being opened, troop leaders must register the bank account with GSSNE using the Register Your Bank Account form found on the found on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org.

FISCAL STANDARDS – ADDITIONAL Sources of Income

page 16

Updated: **COUNCIL PRODUCT PROGRAM PARTICIPATION STANDARD:**
Fall Product Program: The per-registered-Girl Scout troop average should be:
Sale of any five (5) items AND submission of fifteen (15) valid online email addresses, **OR**
Sale of any twenty (20) items

Cookie Program: the per-registered-Girl Scout troop average should be 180 packages or more (2022's council average sold was 246+ boxes)

Updated: **Money-Earning Activities**

Blackout dates for the 2022-2023 troop year are:

Fall Product Program: September 15, 2022 – October 28, 2022

Cookie Sale: December 17, 2022 – March 26, 2023

FISCAL STANDARDS – Records & Reporting for Troop & Service Unit Accounts

page 18

Clarified: By June 30, all troops must submit their Annual Finance Report using the Finance tab in the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) which is accessed from the "MYGS" tab on the council website. A report should be filed whether there were financial transactions that year. All submissions should include a copy of the most recent bank statement (this is usually May's statement if submitted on time). Troops and their leaders who miss the June 30 deadline without a council-approved 2-week extension may be subject to temporary deactivation, will be unable to claim their Early Bird incentives, and will not be approved for money-earning or travel requests until the report is received.

Added: All service units should have a bank account and must also file an end of the year report whether or not they had any financial transactions. SUMs are responsible for filing the report for the service unit. Please use the SERVICE UNIT FINANCIAL REPORT found on the FORMS page of GSSNE.org. Service Unit Managers of service units who miss the June 30 submission deadline without a council-approved 2-week extension may be subject to temporary deactivation until the report is received.

FISCAL STANDARDS – Disbanded Troop Treasury

page 19

Clarified: Whenever a troop is disbanding, they must complete and submit to GSSNE a Troop Disbandment form (found on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org). Within 30 days of submitting a Disbandment form and prior to 9/30 of that year, the following steps must be taken:

- A signatory on the account withdraws the remaining funds in the form of:

- Cashier's check
- Personal check
- Money order
- Troop account is closed, and leader obtains proof of account closure from the bank
- The following items must be submitted to GSSNE within 10 days of closing the account:
 - Withdrawn money (check or money order)
 - Final bank statement showing the last withdrawal and zero balance
 - Proof of account closure from bank
 - End-of-year finance report showing all transactions up to closing the account

Clarified: In general, a troop treasury is not allocated per person, but is 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 GSSNE's CFO or a member of GSSNE's leadership team.

Added: If a troop or group decides to spend the remaining troop funds before closing the bank account, the expenses MUST be:

- Decided by the troop members
- Directly tied to the Girl Scout experience including but not limited to:
 - campouts, end-of-year celebrations, awards ceremonies, lifetime memberships, Girl Scout regalia or shop items, field trip, or service unit events
- Spent by September 30 of the year troop disbanded
- Noted on the end-of-year finance report

FISCAL STANDARDS – Bad Debt Policy

page 20

Clarified: A debt is defined as: insufficient fund fees for any withdrawal from a financial institution, unpaid product program funds to the organization or the troop/group, non-payment of fees promised, or any other amounts owed to the organization for products or services. Debts to GSSNE or debts incurred in the name of the troop to outside vendors, banks, or for services rendered which become past due will be processed for collection. Unpaid funds collected for product sales, events, or misuse of troop/group/service unit/the organization's funds are considered mishandled funds.

When a debt is incurred, individuals may be released from volunteer positions and/or subject to legal action, including but not limited to potential criminal prosecution, for misappropriation of funds. A volunteer who repays a past due debt may be re-appointed as a volunteer but will not be allowed to hold a money handling or leadership position.

In instances of bad checks or unpaid debt, GSSNE will make every effort to contact the person/troop involved and collect payment and/or develop a payment plan. All payment plans need to be approved by the CFO.

- The SUM will be notified the adult/troop is under restriction on handling money for a minimum of one year. Release date will be one year after debt is paid off.
- Volunteer status will be restricted in salesforce with a restriction of "cannot handle finances" and "not product eligible". If troop, restrictions will be applied to all registered troop co-leaders.
- Scholarships will not be available to the adult(s) or girl member(s) until the debt is paid in full.
- Camp Cookie Credits cannot be applied for the girl member(s) until the debt is paid in full.
- Neither the adult(s) or girl member(s) will be allowed to register for programs or training until the debt is paid in full or a payment plan in in process and up to date with payments.
- Additional troop money-earning requests will not be approved
- Intent to travel requests will not be approved

When debt recovery occurs, accounting will notify all departments and the Mission Delivery Department will notify applicable Service Team members. In the case of troop camp cookie credit, when the debt is paid in full, the troop will receive the camp cookie credit.

FISCAL STANDARDS – Financial Accountability Overview **page 21**

Added: Those assuming responsibility or oversight of any Girl Scout monies within GSSNE are accountable to GSSNE for those funds. All adults handling money must be registered members of GSSNE and have valid background screenings on file including the national background check and the CORI screening for Massachusetts residents and volunteers. Volunteers are responsible for complying with all financial, fund raising and money-earning policies and procedures including those related to, but not limited to:

- Money handling
- Banking
- Record keeping
- Timely reporting
- Money-earning activities
- End of the year financial reporting

FISCAL STANDARDS – Financial Reporting Policy **page 21**

Added: GSSNE staff or authorized volunteers have the right to conduct a mid-year financial review of any troop/group or service unit accounts to ensure that they are on track to meet their financial year-end goals. In addition, each troop/group and service unit is required to submit an Annual Troop Financial Report / Annual Service Unit Financial Report and a copy of the most recent bank statement to GSSNE no later than June 30. GSSNE may require, at its sole discretion, troop/groups and service units provide more frequent financial reporting on demand. Troops/groups and service units who miss the June 30 finance report submission deadline without a council-approved extension will be subject to temporary deactivation until the report is received.

SAFETY ACTIVITY CHECKPOINTS **page 21**

Clarified: Leaders must check the document each time they plan a troop activity and **throughout their event planning process** to make sure all requirements are met.

PERMISSION SLIPS **page 22**

Added: Permission to dispense medication. (NOTE: Medications must always be locked with the exception of emergency lifesaving medications: epi pens, diabetic medications, inhalers, Benadryl, etc.)

INSURANCE - Certificates of Liability **page 25**

Changed: Allow at least 10 business days for processing.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN – General Guidelines for Showing Affection to Children **page 25**

Added: At no time may one leader/adult be alone with one Girl Scout. There should always be at least two youth with one adult or two adults with one youth.

GSSNE TRAVEL STANDARDS - Girl Scout Identification **page 28**

Clarified: Full Legal Name (versus preferred name)

- Updated: Formatted for consistency and readability
- Added: Special Permissions form as determined by the SAC
- Updated: Troop Leadership Training or Basic Trips is a pre-requisite for Troop Trips and Troop Camp Training