



Policies, Procedures, and Standards (PPS) 2024-2025

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

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INTRODUCTION

The Policies, Procedures, & Standards of Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England (GSSNE) is a publication that brings together all Council-written procedures for easy reference. The PPS are established upon the principle that the direction and success of Girl Scouting rests in the voluntary participation of its adult members. This document is not intended to repeat national policies, but instead clarifies areas for local use and provides reasonable and consistent guidance for our volunteers. The policies and procedures contained herein are reviewed annually to ensure they reflect GSSNE's volunteer management goals, current Girl Scout policies and trends, and current legislative requirements and are subject to change at the discretion of the council leadership.

All members of Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) are responsible for reviewing and adhering to the policies, procedures, and standards in GSUSA's Blue Book of Basic Documents, Volunteer Essentials, and Safety Activity Checkpoints. These documents are published by GSUSA and are used throughout the national organization. Membership with Girl Scouts implies acceptance of all policies and standards of GSUSA and GSSNE.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. (GSUSA)

Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England (GSSNE) is part of a larger organization, Girl Scouts of the U.S.A., headquartered in New York, NY.

420 5th Avenue
New York, NY 10018

Phone: 800-478-7248
Web: www.gsusa.org

Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England (GSSNE)

Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England is the local Council for all of Rhode Island and 14 adjacent communities: Attleboro, Bellingham, Blackstone, Fall River, Millville, North Attleboro, Plainville, Rehoboth, Seekonk, Somerset, Swansea, Westport and Wrentham, MA, and Pawcatuck, CT.

GSSNE's Customer Care Team

GSSNE's Customer Care Team is a group of Council professionals dedicated to answering your Council-related questions and providing resources, direction, and assistance. Representatives are available Monday – Friday 8:30 am – 5:00 pm throughout the year (see our website for announcements about holiday and special circumstance closings). Please reach out to our Customer Care Team via email or phone for the quickest response to your inquiry.

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

Phone: 401-331-4500 / 800-331-0149
Email: Customercare@gssne.org



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linkedin.com/girl-scouts-of-southeastern-new-england/

GSSNE Service Units and Service Unit Teams

Each GSSNE geographical area (service unit) has a committee of volunteers called the service unit team which supports the Girl Scouts in that area, grows membership by connecting the local community and Girl Scouts, provides mentoring to new leaders, and organizes local activities and events. The Service Unit Manager (SUM) is the head volunteer and is the first point of contact for volunteers in need of support for issues, questions, or situations that arise. Council appointment is required for an individual to serve in a service unit role and appointment is at the discretion of GSSNE. Contact GSSNE Customer Care if you'd like to get in touch with a service unit team member.

GIRL SCOUT PROMISE & LAW

At the time Girl Scout memberships are secured, members agree to uphold the Girl Scout Promise and Law at all times.

Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try:
to serve God* and my country,
to help people at all times,
and, to live by the Girl scout Law.

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

Girl Scout Law

I will do my best to be
honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong,
and responsible for what I say and do
and to respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place,
and be a sister to every Girl Scout.

COMMITMENT TO PLURALISM

GSSNE is committed to achieve pluralism through respect for and appreciation of the religious, racial, ethnic, social, and economic diversity of this Country by reflecting that diversity in its membership, leadership, and programming. We believe this commitment is an integral part of all that we do as an organization. Only individuals willing to accept the basic tenet that Girl Scouting is for all girls may serve in volunteer leadership.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

GSSNE maintains a strong policy of equal opportunity. In keeping with [GSUSA's Blue Book of Basic Documents](#); we recruit, train, promote, and dismiss volunteers on the basis of competence and volunteer position performance, without regard to race, creed, color, ethnicity, religion, lineage or citizenship, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, familial status, age, socioeconomic background, source of income, disability, genetic information, predisposing genetic characteristics, carrier status, domestic violence victim status, or any other characteristic protected by law. Furthermore, to assure the membership of GSSNE reflects the diversity of population groups within its jurisdiction; GSSNE is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and outreach in the recruitment, selection, placement, development, and recognition of volunteers and in the extension of Girl Scouting to adults in all communities within its jurisdiction. Volunteers are responsible for making Girl Scouting a place where its members are as safe emotionally as they are physically. Girl Scouts welcomes all girls in grades K-12, regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, family structure, religion, and socioeconomic background. When scheduling, helping plan, and carrying out activities, carefully consider the needs of all involved (e.g. financial constraints, religious holidays, accessibility of appropriate transportation, and meeting places). Any volunteer who engages in or encourages discrimination in any form is subject to release from their volunteer position at the discretion of GSSNE.

STEPS TO BECOME A GIRL SCOUT VOLUNTEER

- 1. Become a member of GSSNE (the cost is \$25.00 for adults)**
To register visit GSSNE.org, click “Volunteer with Us: Get Started”, then click “Sign Me Up”, follow the steps.
 - 2. Authorize and pass a criminal background check (CBC) * - there is no cost to the volunteer**
Once your volunteer registration is complete, you will receive an email from our partner STERLING Volunteers containing a link to the national background screen application. Once processed, your GSSNE membership record will be updated. If you can't find the email, please search all your email inboxes for “STERLING”. If you still can't find it, please try searching from a personal computer (laptop or desktop) instead of a mobile device. If that proves unsuccessful, please contact CustomerCare@gssne.org or call us at 401.331.4500 for assistance.
 - CORI Screening * - there is no cost to the volunteer**
In addition to the national background screening through STERLING, Massachusetts requires a CORI screening for Massachusetts volunteers and non-Massachusetts volunteers working with Massachusetts children. The form can be found on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org
- * All volunteers, regardless of position, will be re-screened on a three-year rotating schedule for a criminal background check (and CORI in MA). GSSNE Staff will be re-screened every three years and CORI screened every 6 months (April and October).*
- 3. Complete Training**
GSSNE will assign volunteers any training required for specific volunteer positions they intend to hold (co-leader, treasurer, cookie coordinator, service unit team member). An email will be sent to the volunteer with instructions on accessing the training.

Criminal Background Screenings

To safeguard the health, safety, and general well-being of the members we serve, and prior to having any contact with youth including access to their personal information or managing Girl Scout funds, each potential volunteer is required to become adult member of GSUSA and complete a criminal background check through Sterling Volunteers. Additionally, potential Massachusetts volunteers are required to submit to a Massachusetts' Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check in accordance with Massachusetts state law Chapter 6 Section 167 (G.L. c. 6 §167). For some volunteer and staff positions, further screening and/or more frequent screening may be required including reference checks. For example, GSSNE staff will be CORI screened every 6 months in April and October annually.

Volunteer candidates whose records indicate a history of child abuse, violent crime, or sexual crimes will be denied a position. At GSSNE's discretion, volunteer candidates may be denied a position due to financial irresponsibility, drug and alcohol related offenses, or other serious offenses or history that is not conducive with the organization's mission, values or the safety and well-being of its members. Volunteers will be required to submit to and complete the online national background screening process through STERLING Volunteers (an online national screening partner) once every three years. Approved volunteers are required to immediately report any arrest or conviction to the Senior Risk & Compliance Manager. Volunteers will be provided with a complete copy of their criminal background check results upon request.

Criminal Background Screening Policy

Where Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) checks and national background screenings through STERLING Volunteers are part of a general background check for employment, volunteer work, or licensing purposes, the following practices and procedures will generally be followed:

- I. CORI checks will only be conducted as authorized by the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS). All applicants will be notified that a CORI check will be conducted and will complete a CORI form. If requested, the applicant will be provided with a copy of the Criminal Background Check Policy.
- II. An online national criminal background check will be completed during the onboarding phase through STERLING Volunteers (online national screening).
- III. An informed review of a criminal record requires adequate training. Accordingly, all personnel authorized to review or access CORI in the decision-making process will be thoroughly familiar with the educational and relevant training materials made available by CJIS.
- IV. Unless otherwise provided by law, a criminal record will not automatically disqualify an applicant. Rather, suitability determinations based on CORI checks and the national background check through STERLING Volunteers will be made consistent with this policy and any applicable law or regulations.
- V. If a criminal record is received from CJIS or STERLING Volunteers (an online national screening), the authorized individual will closely compare the record provided by CJIS with the information on the CORI Form and any other identifying information provided by the applicant to ensure the record belongs to the applicant.
- VI. If GSSNE is inclined to make an adverse decision based on the results of the CORI check, the applicant will be notified within 5 days in writing. The applicant shall be provided a copy of the screening report and GSSNE's Criminal Background Check Policy, advised of the part(s) of the record that makes the individual unsuitable for the position, and given an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the criminal record.
- VII. Applicants challenging the accuracy of the CORI or the national background check record shall be provided a copy of CJIS's Information Concerning the Process in Correcting a Criminal Record. If the CORI record provided does not exactly match the identification information provided by the applicant, Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England will decide based on a comparison of the CORI record and documents provided by the applicant. Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England may contact CJIS and request a detailed search consistent with CJIS policy.
- VIII. If Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England reasonably believes the record belongs to the applicant and is accurate, based on the information as provided in section IV of this policy, then the determination of suitability for the position will be made. Unless otherwise provided by law, factors considered in determining suitability may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Relevance of the crime to the position sought
 - b. The nature of the work to be performed
 - c. Time since the conviction
 - d. Age of the candidate at the time of the offense
 - e. Seriousness and specific circumstances of the offense
 - f. The number of offenses
 - g. Whether the applicant has pending charges
 - h. Any relevant evidence of rehabilitation or lack thereof
 - i. Any information, including information submitted by the candidate or requested by the hiring authority
- IX. GSSNE will notify the applicant of the decision and the basis of the decision in a timely manner.

Volunteer Agreement

Volunteer roles are appointed and may be in effect from one to three year “terms” depending upon the role. Although volunteers should serve in no more than 2 consecutive terms, roles may continue longer if the volunteer and GSSNE agree to it. Volunteer positions are “at will” and agreements may be ended at any time by either party for any reason. By completing Troop Leader Training, volunteers express their agreement to uphold all requirements and expectations of the position. Volunteers appointed to the Service Unit Team will receive a Role Description/Agreement specific to their position that should be reviewed and signed through gsLearn (see “Training & Adult Learning / gsLearn” below).

GSSNE is committed to the highest ethical standards, and as ambassadors to Girl Scouts, volunteers are expected to act in the best interest of the organization and its mission. This mission demands that we, as stewards, act in an ethical manner to uphold the public trust and the values of responsibility, integrity, openness, honesty, accountability, and respect in all that we do in the name of Girl Scouts. By signing on as a Girl Scout volunteer, you are agreeing to uphold these values and you will:

- Be guided in all actions, by the Girl Scout Promise and Law, at all times.
- Take all required trainings and comply with GSSNE policies, procedures, and safety guidelines.
- Welcome youth and adults from a variety of backgrounds and include them in activities. Make an intentional effort to learn about, experience, and appreciate cultures other than your own.
- Honor the leadership role of the youth and support their decisions.
- Act responsibly when overseeing Girl Scout funds, maintain accurate records, and file required reports. Girl Scout funds are only to be used in direct support of Girl Scout programs and to pay for appropriate Girl Scout expenses.
- Model the behavior that shows respect for local, state, and federal laws and ordinances, as well as follow GSSNE’s Volunteer Policies & Procedures and GSUSA’s Volunteer Essentials, Safety Activity Checkpoints, and Blue Book of Basic Documents.

Training & Adult Learning / gsLearn

GSSNE is committed to setting up our volunteers for success. Therefore, in addition to completing membership and CBC, all GSSNE troop co-leaders are required to complete new leader training and follow Girl Scout troop standards. Once membership is complete and the CBC has cleared, GSSNE will assign training to the volunteer through gsLearn, GSSNE’s online learning platform. Because training is assigned, the volunteer must inform GSSNE of their intention to become a troop leader (CustomerCare@gssne.org) so we can help guide through the onboarding process.

gsLearn, Girl Scouts’ on-demand, online training platform allows GSSNE volunteers to engage in required trainings and enrichment opportunities whenever and wherever it works best for them. gsLearn can be accessed by logging into MYGS at the GSSNE.org homepage. Volunteers who completed leader training prior to 2020 and who were inactive for more than 1 year and wish to re-engage as a 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.

While all training is highly recommended, the following modules are required of volunteers desiring Troop Leader status and should be completed within 30 days of assignment:

- **Volunteer Essentials (read)**
- **Volunteer Essentials Attestation form (e-signature)**
- **Opening a Bank Account with GSSNE (video)**
- **Funding the Fun - Managing Girl Scout Troop Funds (video)**
- **Family Engagement - The Keys to Success (video)**
- **Forming a Troop Committee (video)**

Once all requirements are successfully completed, the volunteer will receive a confirmation email from GSSNE connecting them to their local Service Unit Manager (SUM) and other helpful resources.

Once a volunteer receives their leader confirmation email, they are ready to lead their troop. Some troop leadership positions and activities require further training. Currently registered volunteers should login to MYGS to access gsLearn and see what opportunities await. Some training, like Troop Camp Training, must be conducted in person because they require skills evaluations. Volunteers can register for these types of trainings by visiting the GSSNE Activities calendar at www.GSSNE.org or by Contacting Customer Care to request a training. Volunteers are strongly encouraged to complete First Aid/CPR, camp training, and travel trainings as early as possible to ensure they are prepared for troop adventures.

Each volunteer is required to complete adult learning courses designated for her/his position to ensure they have the knowledge and skills necessary 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. Contact Customer Care if you have questions about training.

TYPE OF TRAINING	ALLOWS VOLUNTEERS TO
<p><u>TROOP LEADER TRAINING</u> (Online)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer Essentials (read) • Volunteer Essentials Attestation form (e-signature) • Opening a Bank Account with GSSNE (video) • Funding the Fun - Managing Girl Scout Troop Funds (video) • Family Engagement - The Keys to Success (video) • Forming a Troop Committee (video) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start a troop • Organize troop meetings • Attend Council-sponsored events • Borrow program materials from Council • Participate in fall and winter product programs
<p><u>TROOP OR SERVICE UNIT TREASURER (Bank Account Signatory)</u> (Online)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer Essentials (read) • Volunteer Essentials Attestation form (e-signature) • Opening a Bank Account with GSSNE (video) • Funding the Fun - Managing Girl Scout Troop Funds (video) 	<p>Act as a signatory on the troop or service unit's bank account</p>
<p><u>ASHI FIRST AID/CPR/AED TRAINING</u> (Approx. 3 hours online + 3 hours in person)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Safety Institute-sponsored training offered by GSSNE • Other organization's cards may be submitted for to GSSNE for consideration. Submit to Customer Care a copy of your valid certification card from the issuing organization. Certification MUST include First Aid and a hands-on CPR practicum. Basic Life Saving (BLS) does NOT include First Aid and will only be considered if accompanied by a supplemental first aid certification or current nursing or advanced medical practitioner license. Acceptance is at GSSNE's discretion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended for all troop leaders • Recommended for all day trips • Required for some activities (see Safety Activity Checkpoints) • Required for troop camping / hiking / backpacking / Wilderness First Aid and all overnights
<p><u>OUTDOOR DAY AT A CAMPSITE</u> (Online)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 194 - Guide To Outdoor Day Adventures: Day Camping Experiences (gsLearn online video training) • First Aid/CPR • Current GS membership & background check 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule a troop Outdoor Day at a GSSNE camp • Hold a troop activity that includes fire-building or cooking
<p><u>TROOP CAMP TRAINING</u> (Online, classroom & overnight; pre-requisite = Getting Girls Outdoors)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary online skills checklist • Classroom session: (3 hours) • Group overnight at GSSNE camp (Saturday to Sunday) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required for camping at GSSNE AND non-GSSNE camp sites
<p><u>WILDERNESS FIRST AID TRAINING (16 hours)</u> (Saturday to Sunday Overnight; pre-requisite=current FA/CPR cert.) The HSI course (Health & Safety Institute) is a 16-hour comprehensive certification covering a wide-range of rescue scenarios. It is taught over a weekend at a GSSNE camp and certification is valid for 2 years.</p>	<p>Required to take a troop hike, a backpacking trip, or to an off-trail camping site which is 30 minutes or more from 911.</p>
<p><u>GRADE LEVEL ESSENTIALS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daisy Grade Level Essentials (online: gsLearn) • Brownie Grade Level Essentials (online: gsLearn) • Junior Grade Level Essentials (online – gsLearn) 	<p>Recommended for all leaders transitioning from one program age level to another.</p>
<p><u>TROOP TRIPS TRAINING (3 hours)</u> (pre-requisite = Getting Girl Scouts Outdoors) (online or in-person)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required for non-campsite overnight trips (including museum overnights) or any activity requiring an Intent-to-Travel • Recommended for Brownie and Junior leaders.
<p><u>ADVANCED TRIPS TRAINING (2-2.5 hours)</u> (pre-requisite = Troop Trips Training) (in person)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Cadette-Ambassador level leaders planning extended trips (3 or more nights) or distant trips (outside of New England) • Helpful for troops planning extensive fund-raising activities.
<p><u>STRIVE FOR SILVER/GO FOR GOLD TRAINING</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A workshop for Girl Scouts (required), caregivers, and leaders explaining how to pursue a Silver/Gold award • The session covers information on prerequisites, typical projects, guidelines, timelines, and standards. Reviews GSSNE paperwork requirements and Council procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required for Cadettes planning to earn their Silver Award and Seniors-Ambassadors planning to earn their Gold award. • Training should be taken before work begins.

Volunteer Policy

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

From a volunteer perspective, nothing in this policy affects the "at-will" nature of the council-volunteer relationship and, in certain instances, immediate release of a volunteer may be determined to be appropriate. This is also true for other unpaid staff and support. In general, any act by a volunteer 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 congressional charter, its federal status as a charitable organization, or its reputation may be cause for disciplinary action up to and including immediate discharge.

Employees, volunteers, and members 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 in the presence of or at Girl Scout events that include Girl Scout youth
- The use of illegal/intoxicating drugs at any Girl Scout event or on company property
- Taking company or personal property of others without expressed permission
- Refusal to follow Council instructions or direction
- Absence without communicating to Council
- 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)
- Engaging in other actions that could be reasonably construed fraudulent or an act of misrepresentation

When infractions occur, the council may follow a system of **progressive discipline**. The council staff person and volunteer discuss specific problems, 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/release

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

- Suspension
- Probationary period
- Change in volunteer position or duties

GSSNE plans to be proactive and positive thinking in our self-improvement structures, and transparent in our decision-making process and timeline. If the volunteer member believes otherwise, the sitting Board Chair will provide the role of ombuds.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

A key aspect of leadership is the ability to work with others and effectively use communication and teamwork to achieve 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. 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:

ADULT 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 Management 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 then bring them together. If you’re 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 all.

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 contact CustomerCare@gssne.org to escalate the conflict for Council intervention. Please note that a conflict may be escalated to GSSNE at any point in the process if necessary.

YOUTH CONFLICT

At the beginning of the Girl Scout year, troop leaders should work with their troop to create a **Troop Agreement** - a document created by the Girl Scout youth members that outlines expected conduct and how issues are addressed if someone breaks the Agreement. Having the Girl Scouts create the Agreement ensures it represents the troop’s desired culture and that youth members are invested in the Agreement. Additionally, troop leadership should consider asking youth and their caregivers to review and sign a [Girl Scout Code of Conduct form](#) *. Once the document is signed, keep a copy with your troop records and provide the family with a copy. If a behavior that goes against the Troop Agreement and/or Girl Scout Code of Conduct comes up while participating in official/supervised Girl Scout activities, events, programs, and/or gatherings, and it cannot be successfully resolved by the Girl Scouts themselves, troop leaders should utilize the [Volunteer Guidance: Youth Conduct & Conflict](#) * to help reach a resolution. Volunteers should always do their best to allow the youth to work as much of it out on their own so they can learn how to resolve problems. When dealing with youth conflict, leaders should only address what is exhibited in Girl Scouts. Unless it finds its way into a Girl Scout meeting/event/activity/trip/program/travel, the organization has no jurisdiction over conflict that occurs outside of Girl Scouts. * *These documents can be found on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org.*

!! Extreme Incidents / Conflict !!

If there is ever an incident caused by Girl Scouts or within Girl Scouts that causes harm or damage to another person or property, 1) find safety for you and the others present, 2) contact 911 for medical and/or safety assistance, and 3) call the GSSNE Crisis Line at 800.476.0293 when it is safe to do so.

First Incident – Correct the behavior / Identify the conflict

- Praise in public, correct in private (never in a room by yourself). This prevents the youth from being embarrassed when you point out any mistakes in front of others.
- Talk with the youth, not at them. Share what troop agreement or expectation was not being followed.
- Document the date, behavior issue, and correction for your own records.
- If it’s a conflict between two or more youths, ask each to explain why they believe the other person is upset. Give each the chance to respond to the other person’s statement and whether it is accurate, somewhat accurate, or not accurate. Then, give each youth the chance to explain their side and how they are feeling. Ask them to come up with a list of possible solutions they could commit to so each person will feel better about the situation. Evaluate the solutions and decide on one or a combination. Each person might not get their way entirely, but the goal is to come to a compromise or understanding so each feels more satisfied. Ask them to commit to the solution. Document the date, involved parties, conflict, and steps taken to remedy.

Second Incident – Take a break

- Ask the youth to step aside and take a break away from the group – make sure they are still in a safe space within sight of both troop volunteers/registered adult volunteers.
- Share what troop agreement or expectation was not being followed. This may be done before or after the break, but make sure the individual understands the reason for the discipline.
- Briefly inform the caregiver what happened.

- Document the date, behavior issue, correction, and length of the break for your own records.
- You may repeat this step as needed – as long as it continues to be effective, and the individual is learning/growing.
- If it's conflict between two or more youths, ask them to take a break from the group and ask each of them to explain the conflict from their perspective. If it's a new conflict, follow the guidance noted in "First Incident". If it is the same conflict, give each youth the opportunity to speak about why they believe the conflict is coming up again. Ask them to recognize how the other person may be feeling because of the conflict. Ask them if they can compromise or if they should agree to disagree. If they decide to disagree, tell them it's ok to have different perspectives but they must be respectful even when disagreeing (revisit the Girl Scout Law). Document the date, parties involved, conflict, and steps taken to remedy. Notify caregivers of each Girl Scout.

Third Incident – Meet with the Girl Scout's caregiver(s)

- If the behavior does not improve, set up a time to meet privately with the individual's caregiver(s).
- Remind the family of the Girl Code of Conduct and the troop agreement.
- Describe all incidents that have occurred in sequence.
- Keep the conversation open, calm, honest, and respectful.
- Discuss how you will work together to ensure their child has a positive experience in Girl Scouts:
 - Ask for help from the family – is a caregiver or other trusted adult able to attend meetings with their child until the behavior improves?
 - Ask how the family may help their child recognize the expectations in the Girl Code of Conduct and the troop agreement.
 - Assure the family you look forward to working with their Girl Scout.
 - Assure the family you will keep in touch with them about their child's behavior.
- Document the meeting date, talking points, the family's response to the discussion, and next steps for your records.
- If it's continued or escalated conflict, set up a group meeting with the caregiver(s) of all Girl Scouts involved in the conflict. Describe the incident(s) in their sequence of occurrence. Keep the conversation open, calm, honest, and respectful. Describe actions and facts, not your feelings about what happened. Discuss how you will work together to ensure their children rebound from the incident(s) and enjoy a positive Girl Scout experience:
 - Ask for help from the family – is a caregiver or other trusted adult able to attend meetings with their child until the situation improves?
 - Ask how the family may help their child recognize the expectations of the Girl Scout Law, troop agreement, and code of conduct when dealing with others.
 - Assure the family you look forward to working with their Girl Scout.
 - Assure the family you will keep in touch with them about their children's behavior.
 - Document the meeting date, participants, discussion points, and next steps. Email caregivers the recap.

Fourth Incident / Continued or further escalated conflict – Request support

- Repeat actions for second incident.
- Contact your service unit manager and if appropriate, GSSNE for assistance as needed: CustomerCare@gssne.org or 401.331.4500.
- Contact the parent/guardian(s) to decide the next step of action.

* *If the caregiver(s) is unwilling to meet or address the concerns, contact your Service Unit Manager or GSSNE as needed.*

GSSNE TROOP STANDARDS

Types of Troops

- **Standard troops** are those with members of the same age level (Daisies, Brownies, etc.)
- **Multi-level troops** are those who have youth members from two or more age levels in the same troop (e.g., Brownies and Juniors). The standards listed above also apply to these troops, but in some cases the situation is more complex ([see Youth-Adult Ratios: Multi-Level Troops on page 13 for details](#)).

Forming a New Troop

Most troops serve one age level, but some are multi-level. Special leadership standards apply for larger troops ([see Youth-Adult Ratios: Multi-Level Troops on page 11 for details](#)). Troop leaders can utilize the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) to monitor registrations/the roster, plan troop meetings/activities, confirm adult volunteer background check expiration dates, and communicate with families.

Troop Size Standards

An active standard troop size is 5-12 Girl Scouts. All troops should be open to register at least 12 youth members. That number can be increased by submitting the Troop Status Update form found on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org.

When troop leaders are comfortable leading a larger number of members as they secure the support from additional adult volunteers, the benefit to troop members can be enormous. One benefit is that Girl Scouts can be broken into smaller groups to work on the badges or activities they wish to pursue because there can be choices. When every Girl Scout does the same badge or activity it can be hard for members who find themselves not enjoying what the majority wants. Questions about troop assignments and size should be directed to GSSNE's Customer Care.

Troops with fewer than 5 Girl Scouts are not recognized by GSUSA as an active troop and should work to increase their membership to at least 5 youth members or merge with another troop as soon as possible. Operating with less than 5 youth members has shown to deprive Girl Scouts of the cooperative experiences offered in troops with at least 5 members, may affect product program proceeds and incentives, and may be considered "personal gain" by the IRS which could put a troop and GSSNE at risk of a special IRS audit. If it's not possible to 1) welcome new members or 2) merge with another troop to achieve 5, the Girl Scouts in that troop should be moved to Individually Registered Member (IRM) status.

Girl Scouts 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 Customer Care.

Moving Girl Scouts from Troop Rosters

To help maintain a positive and productive Girl Scout Troop environment, it occasionally becomes necessary to move a Girl Scout youth member from one troop roster to another, or from a troop roster to an Individually Registered Member (IRM). The request to move a Girl Scout can be initiated by a Girl Scout's caregiver, troop leader, or GSSNE for a variety of reasons such as:

- **Relocation** (family moving to a new location)
- **Scheduling conflicts** (meeting times may no longer fit with the Girl Scout's or their family's schedules)
- **Friendships** (youth may have friends in another troop they wish to join)
- **Troop Size** (current troop may be too small or too large, impacting the Girl Scout's experience)
- **Program Focus** (youth may seek a different experience such as more outdoor experiences or more badge work)
- **Personal Comfort** (youth may feel more comfortable/supported in a different troop due to dynamics or personal reasons)
- **Leadership Style** (difference in leadership style or philosophy may prompt a move to a troop that better aligns with the youth's needs and preferences)
- **Attendance** (prolonged non-attendance without communication from the family)
- **Conflict or behavioral issues** (although rare, there may be occasions where behavioral issues or interpersonal conflict cannot be resolved so moving to a different troop is in the best interest of the youths' well-being and personal growth)

Primary Caregiver Initiated

- A primary caregivers can move their Girl Scout from one troop to any available troop at any time by logging into their MYGS household account and making the selection. To become an IRM, the caregiver should email CustomerCare@gssne.org. with the Girl Scout's name and IRM status request. A Membership staff person will make the change.

Troop Leader Initiated

Troop Leaders should follow these 3-steps PRIOR TO submitting a move request. Approved roster moves will be completed by GSSNE:

- **STEP 1:** **Email Caregiver** (after 2 consecutively missed meetings and no communication from caregiver)
- **STEP 2:** **Phone & Email Caregiver (day after third consecutively missed meeting)**
- **STEP 3:** Complete a "[Girl Scout Roster Move](#)" request (a Membership staff person will conduct follow-up and remove the Girl Scout from the roster if deemed appropriate)

Council Follow-up

- GSSNE staff reviews the request
- Contacts troop leaders for additional clarity
- Reaches out to the Girl Scout caregiver via text if possible or via USPS letter letting them know troop leaders have tried to reach them regarding their Girl Scout missing multiple consecutive meetings and that until we hear back from them their Girl Scout will be listed as an Individually Registered Member (IRM)
- Move Girl Scout from troop roster to requested destination or IRM status

ADULT SUPERVISION / LEADERSHIP STANDARDS

The “Buddy System”

As a general rule, Girl Scouts should never go anywhere alone and should always take a buddy along. Additionally, at no time may one leader/adult be alone with one Girl Scout. There should always be at least two youths with one adult or two adults with one youth.

The adult supervision rule at Girl Scouts is a strict standard that requires whenever Girl Scouts gather for a troop meeting, activity, day trips, camp, sleep away travel, or event, whether in person or virtually, there must be at least two registered, approved adult volunteers who are unrelated through blood or marriage, and who do not live in the same household/residence, with a minimum of one who is female. If the co-leaders are related, are married or reside in the same household/residence, a third, unrelated, adult must be present at all meetings and activities. This additional adult must be a registered and background screened volunteer.

There are no exceptions to this rule and more vetted adults may be required if indicated in the youth-adult ratio chart shown below (see page 30 for more details on youth-adult ratios for events, travel, and camping including the definition of a “chaperone”):

Youth-Adult Ratios

Girl Scout Program Level	TROOP MEETINGS <i>Two unrelated volunteers * for up to this number of youths:</i>	TROOP MEETINGS <i>One additional volunteer * for each additional:</i>	OUTINGS, OVERNIGHTS, & TRAVEL <i>Two unrelated volunteers * for up to this number of youths:</i>	OUTINGS, OVERNIGHTS, & TRAVEL <i>One additional volunteer * for each additional:</i>
Daisies (grades K-1)	12	1-6	6	1-4
Brownies (grades 2-3)	20	1-8	12	1-6
Juniors (grades 4-5)	25	1-10	16	1-8
Cadettes (grades 6-8)	25	1-12	20	1-10
Seniors & Ambassadors (grades 9-12)	30	1-15	24	1-12

**Not related by blood or marriage, nor living in the same household/residence and at least one who is female*

Youth-Adult Ratios: Multi-Level Troops

In addition to each troop having a minimum of 2 trained leaders OR 1 trained leader and at least 1 registered troop support volunteer (TSV), GSSNE requires a minimum of 1 registered adult volunteer for each grade level in the troop. The additional volunteers are responsible for providing appropriate badge, Journey, and leadership programming for the specific level they lead. For example, in a Daisy/Brownie troop, one registered volunteer provides Daisy programming and the other provides Brownie programming.

If the number of Girl Scout youth at any one level is more than six, then additional volunteers are required to provide proper supervision at troop meetings and activities. Where this is the case, the number of registered volunteers **may exceed the minimum number required** to meet the GSUSA Youth/Adult Ratio standard. When in doubt, the Youth/Adult ratio should be based on the youngest age level in the troop.

Deciding on the correct number of leaders needed for each troop is more an art than a science, but the objective is to make sure that Girl Scouts at any given age level have enough adult supervision to provide a safe and fulfilling program. If unsure, contact Customer Care for guidance.

Example #1: If a Daisy/Brownie troop had 9 Daisies and 3 Brownies, the troop would require two leaders to work with the Daisies and one to work with the Brownies, for a total of three.

Example #2: If a Brownie/Junior/Cadette troop had 6 Brownies, 7 Juniors and 4 Cadettes, the troop would need four leaders – one to work with Brownies, 2 to work with Juniors, and 1 to work with Cadettes.

Other Adults Involved with the Troop

Any adult regularly interacting with the troop, participating in troop activities, or handling troop money (such as a Product Program Coordinator, driver, parent helper, chaperone, etc.,) must have a current GSSNE membership and background screening(s) on file with GSSNE ([see Steps to Becoming a Girl Scout Volunteer on pg. 5 for details](#)).

Where adult volunteers have financial responsibilities for the troop treasury or product programs, the troop leadership team should take special care to select reliable and trustworthy individuals. Troop leadership is responsible for making sure deposits are made on time, that all checks clear, and receipts and records are balanced and accurate.

Guest “experts” (for example a firefighter to explain fire safety procedures) do not need to be registered as Girl Scout adult members or processed as a volunteer if the troop leaders supervise all activities / interactions between the Girl Scouts, and the expert and leaders ensure Girl Scout youth are never alone with the adult.

PROGRAM STANDARDS

Troop activities such as service projects or field trips may include Girl Scouts at all age levels, but each age level should be working on their own age level badges, Journey recognitions, and leadership program as part of a fully planned troop program. **No cross-over badge work is allowed:** for example, Brownie Girl Scouts work on Brownie badges and recognitions, not on Daisy petals or Junior badges.

Older Girl Scouts may gain leadership experience working with younger Girl Scouts in the same troop (working as part of the leadership program: Junior Aide, Leadership in Action (LIA), Program Aide, Leader in Training (LIT), but they should also work on age-level appropriate program badges and recognitions.

Girl Scout Participation in Activities with Other Scouting Organizations

The decision by Scouts BSA (formerly Boy Scouts of America) 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 and best-in-class, we must ensure that activities in which Girl Scouts participate are exclusive to the Girl Scout program, are safe and Girl Scout-led, and are conducted under the appropriate supervision of GSSNE.

Therefore, by becoming a member of Girl Scouts, volunteers agree to respect the program and mission branding guidelines of GSSNE and GSUSA with respect to program and mission and will not share with Boy Scouts or any other organization any GSUSA/GSSNE program or training materials.

GSSNE Dress Guidance

Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England (GSSNE) values individuality and believes personal choice is important in creating a vibrant and diverse community. Council is committed to supporting an environment where personal expression is respected and valued and where individuals feel encouraged and welcome to make their own attire choices.

GSSNE does not discriminate based on clothing choices. All members, regardless of their attire, are treated with equal respect and consideration. This guidance was written in a manner that does not reinforce stereotypes. It emphasizes respect for individual choices while maintaining a respectful and inclusive environment that does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group.

Personal Choice & Respect

While members are free to choose their attire, it is important to consider the impact on the community. Clothing should contribute to a respectful and inclusive atmosphere, free from discrimination or offense. GSSNE expects that attire while representing Girl Scouts or attending a Girl Scout function/event/activity/trip/meeting/gathering/camp:

- does not interfere with the health or safety of any member,
- does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for anyone,
- all clothing must be worn in a way that covers an individual’s genitals, buttocks, breasts, and nipples with solid, non-transparent fabric,
- enforcement of the guidance does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any individual based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income, or body type/size

Safety & Activity Appropriateness

For safety and practicality, certain activities may require specific attire. Members are expected to adhere to these requirements to ensure their safety and the safety of others.

- When traveling, Girl Scouts will research and respect the local cultures concerning dress decorum.
- Girl Scout tradition dictates the official uniform be worn by members in certain instances. The policy adopted by Girl Scout's National Board of Directors states:

“Girl Scouts at each level will have one official uniform item (e.g. tunic, vest, sash) for the display of official pins and awards. This uniform item will be required when girls participate in ceremonies or officially represent the Girl Scout Movement.” Furthermore, GSUSA supports youth wearing their “sash, vest, or tunic over official Girl Scout gear or over a white shirt and khaki pants or skirt. Depending on grade level, official uniform items may be blue, brown, green, or khaki. The adult member uniform includes an official Girl Scout scarf, tie, or vest worn with official membership pins along with navy blue business attire (when participating in ceremonies or officially representing Girl Scouts). For casual events, such as troop meetings, adults can wear the vest paired with casual attire.” ([SOURCE](#)).

In Support of an Inclusive, Respectful, and Welcoming Environment, Girl Scouts Should NOT Wear:

- Violent language or images
- Images or language depicting drugs, alcohol, or any other illegal item or activity
- Hate speech, profanity, pornography
- Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class or consistently marginalized groups
- Clothing that reveals undergarments
While these guidelines aim to prevent inappropriate exposure of undergarments, visible bra straps, when not excessive or provocative, are considered an acceptable exception because of their practicality, evolving nature of fashion, and inclusivity of women, some non-binary, and transgender individuals.
- Swimsuits except as required at an activity/event/camp
- Accessories that could be considered dangerous or could be used as a weapon
- Any item that obscures the face (except as a religious observance)

Guidance & Support

Although the ultimate responsibility for attire choices rests with the member and/or their family, Troop leaders and /or Service Unit Managers will guide attire choices to youth and adult members when necessary, ensuring that all members understand the importance of maintaining a respectful and inclusive environment.

Addressing Concerns

Any concerns regarding attire should be addressed respectfully and constructively. Members are encouraged to communicate openly with leaders/SUMs if they feel their choices are being unfairly criticized.

Review & Feedback

This guidance is reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant and supportive of members' needs and expressions.

MEETING PLACE STANDARDS

Meeting Sites

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:

- Accessible to all members and their caregivers
- Large enough for a variety of activities
- Accessible by telephone (landline or cell phone)
- Safe, secure, clean, properly ventilated and heated, free of hazards, and has at least **two exits**
- Emergency exits are functioning, easily accessible, adequate, and **well-marked**
- Adequately lighted
- First Aid equipment is available
- Have accessible toilets and sanitary facilities, including those designed to accommodate people with disabilities
- Pets are restrained and away from meeting area while Girl Scouts are present (check health history forms for allergies)
- Any additional requirements as indicated by state laws

Troops should avoid using troop funds to rent space for regular troop meetings. Girl Scout troops should seek schools, churches, community centers, or other local public spaces that are free and can accommodate the various physical abilities of the troop's membership. Local service unit members can help new leaders locate such sites.

Meeting in Homes

Whenever possible, Girl Scout troop meetings should take place in safe community settings that are accessible to all members. To support troops who cannot find a public meeting space, GSSNE may grant permission for in-home Girl Scout

meetings to those who meet the criteria. For guidelines/permission to meet at home, please use the MEETING IN HOMES link on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org.

Safety in the Meeting Place

Leaders have a legal obligation to see that Girl Scouts leave the meeting with their custodial caregiver(s) or their designated alternative. Leaders must have written instructions to release a Girl Scout to anyone other than a custodial caregiver (this includes carpools). GSSNE recommends each troop develops a sign-in/sign-out system supervised by a troop leader at the beginning and ending of each meeting and/or activity to monitor the drop-off/pick-up process at each Girl Scout event.

FISCAL STANDARDS

Financial Support – Overview

When a youth or adult registers as a Girl Scout, the registration fee (\$25) and Council service fee (\$10 for youth only) goes directly to GSUSA and GSSNE respectively, to fund national and state staffing, programs, property maintenance, insurance, and communication.

Girl Scout troops do not receive any of the fees described above so they should build their troop treasury in one of the following ways:

- Sharing in the profits from Council-sponsored **Product Programs** (fall and winter)
- Charging **troop dues**

Troop/Service Unit Banking

Every Girl Scout troop and service unit should keep funds in a NO-FEE, NON-PROFIT BUSINESS CHECKING ACCOUNT which is opened with GSSNE permission at a federally insured bank or credit union under GSSNE's federal tax ID. Troop leaders/service unit managers and treasurers (bank account signatories) should take all measures possible to limit liability, ensure full transparency, and verify that all signatories are currently registered volunteers. Service Units or troops who have savings accounts should contact GSSNE for guidance on transferring funds from the savings account to a non-profit business checking account. All funds received by a Girl Scout troop/service unit should pass through the bank account for transparency and proper record-keeping; Girl Scout funds should NEVER be kept in a personal account or at a residence. Girl Scout bank accounts opened under GSSNE's Federal Tax ID are the council's legal responsibility and all funds received by Girl Scout troops/service units legally belong to GSSNE, not to individuals, troops, geographic units, subordinate units, or communities within the council.

Banks, credit unions, and GSSNE policies require an authorization letter (bank letter) from GSSNE's Chief Financial Officer to open a new checking account or make changes to an existing CHECKING ACCOUNT (savings account are NOT permitted). The bank letter identifies the signatories on the account (those with permission to access the account and account information) and authorizes the account to be opened in the name of GSSNE using the council tax ID number and the **primary signatory's** (the volunteer to whom the bank sends monthly statements and communications) home mailing address. Troop CHECKING accounts should never be opened in an individual's name or with GSSNE's mailing address.

Council will issue a bank letter to troop/service unit leaders under the following conditions:

- The troop meets the council troop leader standard of a minimum of two registered, background screened, and fully trained troop leaders OR 1 troop trained leader and at least 1 registered troop volunteer and, if necessary, additional leaders as required by the youth/adult ratio chart.
- Volunteers request the bank letter using the online Bank Letter Request form on the GSSNE website on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org
- There must always be a minimum of 2 but no more than 3 signatories on the CHECKING account. One of the signatories must be a Troop co-leader (or SUM if service unit) and the other(s) may be a co-leader or a support volunteer who is active with the troop/service unit. Although rare, exceptions to the maximum of 3 signatories may be granted at GSSNE's discretion.
- Keeping with the troop standard for adult leadership, the (1) and (2) signatories on the account may not be related in any way or reside in the same household. If two volunteers on the bank account are related in any way or live in the same household, an additional adult volunteer actively affiliated with the troop / service unit is required to be the third bank account signatory. Statements must be mailed to this third volunteer who is unrelated to the other two and doesn't live in the same household.

GSSNE Preferred Banking

As part of GSSNE's ongoing efforts to streamline our processes and enhance customer service and volunteer support, GSSNE is establishing preferred relationships with select local banks and credit unions. Beginning in the fall of 2024, volunteers will be able to open fee-free non-profit business checking accounts exclusively through our Preferred Banks. The change is designed to ensure that our volunteers benefit from optimized service and support including:

- An extra layer of protection for hard-earned Girl Scout funds
- Additional support for banking questions and issues
- A simplified and streamlined annual finance report process
- Ability for GSSNE to work directly with the bank to resolve troop/service unit account issues on volunteers' behalf

Bank Account Registration

Upon opening a new or changing information on an existing bank account, volunteers must immediately confirm with GSSNE that the bank completed the request (using the ACH Registration form). This information allows Council to 1) send refunds and payments directly to the troop/service unit bank account (paper checks are no longer issued), 2) report on the number of accounts open under GSSNE's tax ID, 3) support volunteers should the bank reach out to Council directly about the account, and 4) ensure signatory information is current. Bank account registration is required before any special permission requests are approved. Beginning 10/1/2024, GSSNE bank letters will include a section to be completed by the banker confirming the requested action was completed. Before leaving the branch, volunteers must ensure the banker completes and emails the form to GSSNE. This eliminates the need for the volunteer to complete the ACH Registration.

Troop Income

As stated above, troops can build their individual treasury in the following ways:

- GSSNE's council-sponsored **PRODUCT PROGRAMS**
Fall product program (magazines, candy, and nuts) and the traditional Girl Scout Cookie product program. Troops receive a percentage of the funds they generate during each program. The exact amount is described in the product program training materials distributed before each program begins. Troop leaders should present the product program materials to all troop families and explain how important the sale is to support Council programs and troop finances. If a family chooses not to participate, that is their option, but each troop must make the effort to support Council in this way.
- Charging **TROOP DUES**. Dues should be determined by the troop/their families and the ability to pay should never exclude a Girl Scout from participating in troop activities.
- **Additional Sources of Income** (see below)

Additional Sources of Income / Council Participation Standard

The two sources of income outlined above usually provide all the money needed to support a full range of troop activities. However, if needed to fund major trips or other big-ticket activities, additional sources of income are available through **MONEY-EARNING ACTIVITIES, DONATIONS, AND GRANTS**. Brownie Troops and age levels above, as well as service units may apply to Council for participation approval (per GSUSA standards, Daisy troops are not eligible to participate). Troops/service units must meet the **Council Product Program Participation Standard** in order to apply for additional sources of income and participation will be a factor in the review process:

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 (2024's Council average sold was 270 packages)

Money-Earning Activities

A money-earning activity is one where the Girl Scouts perform a **service / do the work necessary to make the activity happen**. The proposed money earning project should be a good match for the age of the Girl Scouts participating, should be related to the skills they have already developed through Girl Scouting activities, and must be pre-approved by GSSNE (use the Additional Money-Earning Request application on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org).

NOT ALLOWED / NOT MONEY EARNING ACTIVITIES:

- Games of chance
- restaurant fundraisers where Girl Scouts promote a restaurant for a particular date and subsequently receive a portion of the sale proceeds.

Troops/service units seeking to participate in a money-earning activity must apply in advance to GSSNE for approval (allow 10 business days for processing). Because Girl Scout product programs provide critical funding for Council programs, camp upkeep, financial scholarships, camperships, volunteer training, and more, additional money earning projects should not overlap with Council product program seasons. Blackout dates for the 2024-2025 troop year are:

Fall Product Program: September 12, 2024-October 27, 2024

Cookie Program: December 21, 2024 – March 30, 2025

While exceptions to this policy are infrequently granted, requests will be considered.

GSSNE troops may apply for a proposed money-earning activity if they meet the following guidelines:

- Troop/service unit meets participation standards in Council product programs (listed above)
- Troop/service unit must be in good standing with all GSUSA and GSSNE policies, guidelines, and standards (including but not limited to troops having a GSSNE-registered bank account and a minimum of 5 registered Girl Scout youth members)
- Troop/service unit has a dedicated checking account (account must meet all fiscal standards including being having an updated Registration on file with GSSNE and an Annual Troop Finance Report filed for the previous year)
- Troop/service unit members participate voluntarily with signed guardian permission form (troop leaders keep signed permission slips on file with their finance records)
- Troop/service unit members have a full understanding of why the money is needed and how it will help them achieve a goal
- Troop/service unit members participate in money-earning activities which are age-appropriate and meet all safety guidelines
- Troop/service unit submits a Money-Earning Report to Council within 14 days of the activity. The form can be found on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org

Donations

Since GSSNE is the federally recognized non-profit charity (not the troops or service units within Council jurisdiction), only monetary and in-kind donations that are made to and directly benefit the council can be acknowledged as a donation for tax reporting purposes.

Additionally, service units and troops are NOT allowed to make cash/gift card gifts to individuals or other non-profit organizations. Girl Scouts may purchase supplies and/or make items to give/donate in lieu of giving cash.

For fiscal bookkeeping purposes, service units or troops who wish to donate their extra or remaining funds to another GSSNE troop or service unit MUST send the funds to GSSNE who will then allocate the funds as requested.

From Friends & Family

Troops/service units may receive occasional **donations** from outside sources such as “troop family” or corporate volunteer programs. To be eligible to receive donations, the troop/service unit must meet the following requirements:

- Troop/service unit meets participation standards in Council product programs (listed above)
- Troop/service unit has a dedicated CHECKING ACCOUNT (account must meet all fiscal standards including being registered with GSSNE)
- Troop/service unit filed the Annual Troop Finance Report for the previous year (if applicable)
- While troop members may explain what they plan to use donations for, only adults may do the actual asking for donations or in-kind gifts

From Cookie Booths

All donations received at a cookie booth are exclusively for the COOKIE SHARE program. Troops may have a donation jar clearly labeled for the “COOKIE SHARE” program. Donations may not be used for any other purpose.

From Troop Volunteer-Organized Events

Where troop/service unit 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:

- The money should come into the troop/service unit bank account as a donation (and usual donation rules apply)
- Because it does not include Girl Scout participation, an application to the council for approval is not required
- 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 may be promoted through personal social media accounts or fliers, but the Girl Scout name cannot be used.

From Corporate Volunteer Programs

When corporate volunteer donations are above levels the IRS consider de minimis (a \$250 threshold), what the proceeds are used for will be subject to heightened IRS scrutiny. Particular attention has already been paid by the IRS to the specific use of funds to underwrite a trip involving the volunteer's family members, and the US Tax Court held that such use constituted a private benefit. In worst case scenario, there could be unfortunate consequences of an adverse IRS determination, including taxable income to the volunteer, loss of the charitable donation for the donor, and even jeopardy to the tax-exempt status of the council.

As a result, on December 19, 2016, the GSSNE Board of Directors approved a policy to address the allocation of grants made to GSSNE from corporate volunteerism programs, effective January 1, 2017.

Donations from corporate volunteerism programs must meet the following requirements:

- IRS rules require all corporate volunteerism donations be processed through GSSNE's finance department – representing the 501©(3) entity. If the donation check is sent to a volunteer, the volunteer must send it to GSSNE for processing and allocation.
- The funds will be allocated by Council to general operating purposes unless the volunteer, for whose generosity the funds were contributed to Council, requests to be involved in the allocation process. If the volunteer wishes to guide the allocation of the funds, the following options could be considered:
 - General Operating fund
 - Camperships
 - Membership assistance
 - Camp Hoffman endowment
 - Camp operations
 - Capital projects
 - Troop program assistance (newly established)
- If the corporation's volunteer program allows, and the volunteer wishes to request funds be allocated to a particular troop or service unit, the volunteer **MUST** submit a copy of the donor corporation's volunteerism program. 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 Council to disperse the money, as long as it conforms to the IRS rules outlined in the following section (designation parameters). If the donor corporation has restrictions or directions on the donation, Council will follow its guidelines exactly.

Designation Parameters

If the corporation allows, the volunteer may designate the allocation of the money, keeping these parameters in mind:

- The volunteer may assign the funds to specific accounts administered by Council
- The volunteer may assign part of the funds to a specific troop (as long as the troop has met Council's Product Program Participation Standard [as listed on page 17](#), owes no debt to Council, and has the most recent year's Annual Troop Finance Report on file with GSSNE) 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 an annual maximum from all grants equaling \$250.00 per registered Girl Scout 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. Annual Maximums are calculated for the Girl Scout year (October 1 through September 30 of any given year).
 - Donations in excess of the maximum limits remain with the council
 - The maximum allocation limits are annual limits
 - If the volunteer has not designated how the allocation should be used, the full amount will be designated as GSSNE general operating funds

Grants

Troops/service units may apply for **grants** to fund troop activities, but they must receive pre-approval from GSSNE. To begin the pre-approval process, **please send a copy of the grant proposal to** Customer Care **before submitting to the granting organization.** To have your grant proposal reviewed and considered for approval, troops must meet the following requirements:

- Troop meets the "full participation" standard in Council product programs
- Troops/service units must follow GSUSA/GSSNE standards, policies, and guidelines (including having the previous year's Annual Finance Report on file with Council)
- If grant money is received by a troop, grant awards under \$250 may be deposited directly in the troop bank account and reported on the Annual Troop Finance Report. Grants \$250 or more must be processed through the GSSNE accounting office and must also be reported on the Annual Troop Finance Report

Financial Accountability Overview

Volunteers assuming responsibility or oversight for any Girl Scout monies, assets, and/or bank accounts within GSSNE (including all bank account signatories and troop leaders of a troop account, and SUMS and account signatories if service unit account) are accountable to GSSNE for those monies, assets, and/or bank accounts and as of October 1, 2023, must complete GSSNE Finance Training. 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

Financial Records and Reporting for Troop & Service Unit Accounts

Troop co-leaders/SUMS/treasurers should keep accurate and current financial records with accompanying receipts. GSSNE recommends authorized volunteers record income and expenses using a comprehensive spreadsheet matched to the Annual Finance Report categories (a spreadsheet template can be found in gsLearn). All finance records and receipts **should be kept for three years.**

Because the account must be a Council account, not an adult volunteer's personal account, troop financial records and bank account information are not confidential and should be shared with troop caregivers/service unit volunteers openly and regularly.

By September 30 each year, all troops and service units must submit their Annual Finance Report using the report link on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org. A report should be filed whether or not there were financial transactions that year. Beginning 10/1/2024, finance reports will require the last 12 months of bank statements. If a troop/service unit has properly opened a checking account at a GSSNE Preferred Bank (a new program being rolled out by GSSNE), no bank statements may be required in support of the finance report. Troops and service units who miss the September 30 deadline may not be allowed to claim product program incentives, nor will they be approved for money-earning, travel, or special permission requests until the report is received.

Financial Reporting Policy

GSSNE staff or GSSNE-authorized volunteers have the right to conduct a mid-year financial review of any troop/service finances to ensure that they are on track to meet their financial year-end goals. In addition, each troop/service unit is required to submit a Financial Report and bank statements to GSSNE no later than September 30 annually. GSSNE may require, at its sole discretion, troop/service units provide more frequent financial reporting on demand. Troops/service units who miss the September 30 finance report deadline may be subject to temporary deactivation/restrictions until the report is received.

Delinquent Bank Accounts

When troop accounts are delinquent, banks may reach out to GSSNE instead of the volunteer signatories. Due to privacy laws, their communication will limit information making it difficult or impossible for GSSNE to identify the account in question. To remedy this, all GSSNE troops and service units must register their bank accounts with GSSNE upon opening a troop account or after making changes to an account. GSSNE reserves the right to take ownership of an account suspected of fraud or at risk of being closed by the bank.

Bad Debt Policy

A debt is defined as:

- insufficient funds fee for any withdrawal from a financial institution
- unpaid product program funds to the organization or the troop/group
- non-payment of fees promised
- any 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 may be processed for collection. Unpaid funds collected for product sales, events, or misuse of troop/group/service/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 must be approved by the CFO. If after three months of attempting to collect a debt, an individual is unresponsive, GSSNE will take the following actions:

- 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/or “not product eligible”. If a troop, restrictions will be applied to all registered troop co-leaders.
- Scholarships will not be available to the adult(s) and may not be available to youth member(s) until the debt is paid in full.
- Camp Cookie Credits may not be applied for the youth member(s) until the debt is paid in full.
- Adult(s) or youth member(s) may not be allowed to register for programs or training until the debt is paid in full or a payment plan is 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.
- The individual(s) may be sent to collection and/or legal charges may be filed.

When debt recovery occurs, the office of GSSNE’s Chief Financial Officer will notify appropriate departments and applicable service team members. In the case of camp cookie credit, when the debt is paid in full, the troop/individual will receive the cookie credits.

Donating Funds from One Girl Scout Service Unit or Troop to Another

Funds being passed from one GSSNE service unit or troop account to another MUST come to GSSNE for allocation. Service units and troops should NOT allocate funds to the recipient themselves nor should funds from a GSSNE service unit or troop be passed to a Girl Scout group outside the GSSNE council.

Splitting Troops

If Girl Scout youth leave a troop (with or without their leaders) to create a new troop or join another troop, there is no requirement that a portion of the funds from the original troop follow individuals to the new troop. Any funds transferred to the new troop is a courtesy decided by the Girl Scouts of the existing troop. In general, a troop treasury is not allocated per person, but being “honest and fair” suggests that some distribution should occur. Where there is a disagreement on dispersal and/or division of funds, leaders should contact their service unit manager or GSSNE’s Customer Care for assistance. NOTE: Any funds being given to another troop MUST be indicated on the TROOP STATUS UPDATE FORM and MUST come to GSSNE for allocation. Troops should NOT allocate the funds themselves.

Disbanded Troop Treasury

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

- One of the troop’s bank signatories submits to GSSNE a CLOSE BANK ACCOUNT REQUEST (found on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org). In turn, GSSNE will issue the signatories a letter giving the bank permission to and instructions on closing the account. One of the signatories takes this letter to the bank in person.
- That signatory 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). GSSNE will hold the funds for 1 year in case any Girl Scout youth from that troop decides to continue with another troop. After that, the funds will be used to support other Girl Scouts.
 - Final bank statement showing the last withdrawal and zero balance
 - Proof of account closure from bank / CLOSE ACCOUNT letter with banker’s section completed
 - End-of-year finance report showing all transactions up to closing the account

The remaining money can be re-distributed by Council under certain conditions and should be indicated on the TROOP STATUS UPDATE form (step #1 in the disbandment process):

- The troop properly completes all required disbanding steps. If GSSNE must disband the troop and/or close the bank account, Council may consider that “abandonment” in which case any funds remaining in the troop bank account or funds owed to the troop may remain with GSSNE to be used at their discretion to support other Girl Scout activities. GSSNE will not transfer funds to troops who leave the GSSNE Council.

- If youth members from a disbanded troop transfer to other troops within the GSSNE council, the remaining funds are divided equally between the number of youth members that were in the troop at the time of disbandment, and that share is given to the troop of the transferring Girl Scouts. Troop leaders should advise the youths' caregivers that to access the funds, they must contact Customer Care to request the fund transfer to the new troop. For example: the treasury of a disbanded troop was \$100.00, it had 10 Girl Scouts; Council would transfer \$10.00 for each Girl Scout youth transferring to the new troop. The remaining treasury balance stays with Council to fund other Girl Scout activities.
- If Girl Scouts decide to re-register as an Individually Registered Member (IRM), they could use their \$10.00 for program or camp registration fees, or travel credit. To access the money, the Girl Scout / caregiver must request it through Customer Care.

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

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

Tax-Exempt Status for Troops / Service Units

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.

SAFETY ACTIVITY CHECKPOINTS (SAC)

GSUSA's Safety Activity Checkpoints (SAC) document lists safety standards for Girl Scout activities. Updated annually, it can be found on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org. Leaders must check the document each time they plan a Girl Scout activity and throughout their event planning process to ensure all requirements are met. If an activity requires Council approval or falls outside the troop's grade level, volunteers must submit a "Special Permissions" form to GSSNE for approval to participate (on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org.) Some activities have age eligibility standards and certain activities are discouraged. Details on specific activities are listed in the Safety Activity Checkpoints. If an activity is not listed in the SAC, check with Customer Care.

EXPOSURE TO WILD ANIMALS

Girl Scouts are encouraged to follow the [Outdoor Progression](#) to experience nature, learn how to become stewards for the environment, and experience increasingly more advanced outdoor activities. Whenever outside, there is a possibility of encountering wild animals, depending on where you are, the time of day, and the activity in which you are participating. Proper planning and preparation are important parts of successful outdoor excursions and when done correctly, increase the possibility of everyone having a fun and safe experience.

Planned interaction with animals is a popular and desired activity for many Girl Scouts, from petting zoos to therapy dogs and rescue animals. Through these activities Girl Scouts can learn about animals and have memorable experiences.

Unplanned interaction with animals can occur during other activities, such as hiking or an outdoor overnight. To reduce your risk of wild animal threat, follow these steps (ALWAYS refer to the Safety Activity Checkpoints before embarking on any Girl Scout adventure or activity):

- Learn about the animals that live in the area you frequent or will visit.
- Research how to react when encountering that type of wildlife and practice scenarios before the adventure.
- Never approach wild animals. Generally, animals will not attack or bite if left alone.
- Back away if you come across baby animals and assume that there is a protective mother nearby. Backing away protects you and the babies.
- Never feed wild animals.
- Store food away from tents or cabins and out of the reach of animals. If the site is in bear country, check with local authorities on precautions to take, and ask if a bear-proof canister is required for food.

- Report animals that appear sick or behave strangely to the authorities.
- Take special care in snake country:
 - Do not stick your hand or foot in places you can't see.
 - Wear closed-toed shoes.
 - Use a flashlight when walking at night to avoid stepping on a snake.
 - Do not handle snakes, even if you think they are dead.
 - Back away slowly if you encounter a snake.

Always wash hands after contact with / handling any animal. If bitten by an animal, administer first aid, begin washing the wound with soap and water for 10-15 minutes in attempt to kill the potential rabies virus, and seek professional medical treatment. IF POSSIBLE, bring the animal or insect with you to the Dept. of Health / ER, or obtain contact information for the animal's owner.

Any animal bite is reportable to the Department of Health for the state where the incident occurred:

- RI Dept. of Health (401-222-2577)
- MA Dept. of Public Health (617-624-6000)
- CT Department of Public Health (860) 509-8000)

The Department of Health will assess the type of the animal for the risk of rabies (high risk "Vector", low risk, or no risk).

Rabies vector (high risk) species:

- bats
- racoons
- skunks
- groundhogs / woodchuck
- fox / coyotes

Animals rated low risk (*monitored if there is a bite or scratch):

- cats
- dogs
- ferrets
- farm animals
- rabbits
- possums

Rarely have rabies:

- small rodents
- squirrels
- Mice
- Rats
- chipmunks

Don't carry rabies:

- birds (may carry other diseases, so do not handle)
- reptiles
- fish

As of the date of this manual, there has not been a human case of rabies in RI since 1940.

Rabies must work its way through the body to the brain before the infected animal dies. Small animals will die quickly if infected, so the risk of transmission is lower in small animals. Larger animals are more likely to transmit rabies since it takes a longer time to work its way through the body to the brain which leads to death.

Rabies is transmitted through saliva even if outside the body of the animal, however the virus dies within 30 minutes once it's off the host animal.

Bats are unique and of particular concern because proximity to a bat can determine "exposure". Breathing air where rabies infected bats colonize may be considered exposure. Also, bat bites are small and most people don't even realize they were bitten. That is why if someone awakes with a bat flying overhead, they are eligible for post-exposure prophylaxis if the bat cannot be identified or captured for testing.

PERMISSION SLIPS

There are many occasions where permission slips are needed:

- Each time a group **meets at a time and location different from the regular group meeting**
- For travel (please refer to the Travel Section for details on permission slips for travel)
- To participate in **Council product programs** (permission slips are provided with the product program materials)
- For Girl Scout youth or adults to have their **pictures** on any social media, electronic, or print publications

- For Girl Scouts to participate in troop **money earning activities** (the guardian permission slip will be attached to your money-earning approval)
- Troop discussion involving a **“sensitive” topic** (ex: bullying, drugs, puberty, suicide, or breast cancer awareness for example) – permission slips should be created and maintained by troop leadership
- Permission to dispense medication (NOTE: medication must always be locked up with the exception of emergency lifesaving medication like epi pens, diabetic medication, inhalers, Benadryl, etc.,)

SOCIAL MEDIA

GSSNE aims to create a safe and secure online environment for children therefore, adults (aged 18 and older) and youth using email or social media for Girl Scouts must read and accept the [Girl Scouts Internet Safety Pledge](#). In Girl Scouts, adults/volunteers are not permitted to make one-to-one / private / direct contact with youth members. This also applies to social media and electronic/online communications such as e-mail, text, IM, chat, etc. There should always be at least one other supervising adult or parent involved when contacting troop members.

Permission to Post

On any social media site, Girl Scout volunteers should be socially responsible and adhere to the highest standards of good taste, civility, and honor. Because volunteers are role models for Girl Scouts, the responsible and friendly use of social media creates a wonderful example for Girl Scout youth. Girl Scouts, whether adults or youth, should always use the Girl Scout Law as their guide.

- As part of the registration process to become a member of Girl Scouts, caregivers may give GSSNE permission to use photos of their child on its social media, electronic, or print publications.
- If they do not give permission, that is honored. The same rule applies to Girl Scout camp registrations in the summer.
- An additional permission slip from guardians is required for Girl Scout youth to have information and/or photos posted on a troop or service unit website/Facebook page. A sample [Social Media Release form](#) can be found on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org.
- If a troop or service unit does not have a website/Facebook page but wants to post photos of a troop trip or activity on any form of social media, guardians must give specific permission for this. It can be included on the trip permission slip or may be a separate form.

Creating a Troop or Service Unit Facebook Group

A troop or service unit Facebook group may be created following these requirements:

- It is a private group
- The troop leader, SUM, or adult designee is the site administrator and responsible for posting all information and pictures, and ensuring that members/participants are current
- On any troop website/Facebook page or other GSSNE-related social media sites, the site administrator must avoid the use of personal information of any kind
- 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. If you have questions, please reach out to customercare@gssne.org.

GSSNE Product Program

Special protections are in place for activities associated with the Fall & Cookie Product Programs. Please use the Internet Safety Pledge and other guiding standards in the Cookie/Fall product program training materials.

INSURANCE

To read more about insurance coverage offered to Girl Scouts by Mutual of Omaha, visit the [FORMS page](#) at GSSNE.org and scroll to the Insurance Section at the bottom of the page. For assistance in selecting proper additional insurance for your situation, contact GSSNE’s Customer Care. For questions about an existing claim, contact Mutual of Omaha directly at 1-800-524-2324 between the hours of 8am to 4:30pm Central time.

Coverage

Every registered Girl Scout (youth and adult) is automatically covered by accident insurance through Mutual of Omaha’s Basic Plan 1 (included with membership fee) when injured during any approved and supervised program activity. Coverage is automatic for all youth and adults upon member registration and payment of the registration fee. The Basic Plan 1 also covers travel directly to and from the covered activity (See Coverage Update below for more information).

Sickness is not covered in Basic Plan 1. Only medical expenses arising from accidents during an approved, supervised activity are covered. Sickness is covered when purchasing additional insurance for domestic or international trips.

Coverage Update

Effective October 1, 2023 – additional insurance for non-members and/or overnight trips (within the USA), will no longer be required. The coverage enhancement will be automatic in two scenarios:

- **Non-Registered Participant**
A non-member participant is any person invited to attend or participate in a Girl Scout approved/supervised event. Adults who have regular interaction with Girl Scouts, who travel with Girl Scouts, attend an overnight event, or travel with Girl Scouts must be currently registered Girl Scout volunteers.
- **Trips longer than two overnight stays.** All domestic trips within the USA, regardless of time duration, are automatically covered under Basic Plan 1. There is no longer a time element involved.

Siblings/Tagalongs

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

- 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 tagalong(s).
- The non-members are automatically covered by Mutual of Omaha's Basic Plan 1 if they are at the troop meeting or event (not on a playground nearby for example).
- Tagalongs are NOT permitted to participate in any troop/service unit event/activity unless it's open to families.

Travel Insurance

The purchase of additional insurance for domestic travel is optional but required for international trips (outside the contiguous USA) and covers accidents and illness. At least three weeks before the trip, please submit the Mutual of Omaha Purchase of Additional Insurance form found at the bottom of the FORMS page at GSSNE.org. Mutual of Omaha's Basic Plan 1 covers accidents for all domestic trips regardless of duration. To obtain optional accident & sickness insurance for domestic travel, please select Plan 3E & 3P. To obtain required accident and sickness insurance for international travel, please select Plan 3PI.

Member Claims

- Accidents during an adult-supervised Girl Scout activity that require medical treatment must be promptly reported to Council by troop/service unit leadership using the Confidential Crisis Report form found on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org.
- A claim form for medical reimbursement is available in [English](#) / [Spanish](#) on the FORMS page at GSSNE. Scroll to the "Insurance" section of the bottom of the page to find "GSUSA Claim form". The claimant must complete their portion of the form before sending it to GSSNE for signature. GSSNE will send it back to the claimant for submission to Mutual of Omaha.
- When injuries result in medical treatment, the insurance company will pay for expenses incurred that are medically necessary. * When the \$140 deductible in benefits has been paid for covered accident medical or dental expenses, any subsequent benefits for the same accident will be payable only for expenses incurred that are not compensable under any other insurance policy or service contract.

* See *Activity Accident Insurance brochure* ([English brochure](#) / [Spanish brochure](#)) for exact and full explanations of coverage.

Other Types of Insurance (personally owned vehicles, vehicle rentals, certificates of insurance)

- **Personally Owned Vehicles**
Only owner-insured cars should be used for troop/group activities. GSSNE recommends drivers review their personal automobile liability limits to ensure the minimum coverage required by GSUSA:
 - Rhode Island law requires \$25,000 per person and \$50,000 per accident
 - Massachusetts requires \$20,000 per person and \$40,000 per accident
 - GSSNE recommends coverage beyond these minimums

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.

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.

- **Vehicle Rentals**
There are times when you may wish to rent a car or minivan to transport Girl Scouts for troop, group, or service unit events or activities. **Council pre-approval is not required.** Please refer to GSUSA's Safety Activity Checkpoints for standards on TRANSPORTING GIRL SCOUTS. Please see GSUSA's Safety Activity Checkpoints for guidance on 15 passenger vans.

Bus companies should have a certificate of insurance on file with the council office. Please contact Customer Care to confirm whether such a certificate is on file.

- **Certificates of Liability**

When GSSNE troop meetings, events, or activities are held at locations not owned by GSSNE, the facility owner often wants proof that GSSNE carries liability insurance. To request a certificate of liability, submit a request using the Certificate of Liability Insurance request found on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org. Allow at least 10 business days for processing.

If a troop or service unit rents/uses a facility for a troop event or activity (other than the regular troop/group meeting facility), a certificate of liability insurance for the site may be required by Council. This applies to camping sites, as well as hotel/motel accommodations.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Definitions and Types of Child Abuse

Girl Scout volunteers are mandated reporters **and MUST** be aware of the following kinds of abuse:

- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Sexual:** 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.

Child Abuse Reporting Procedures

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

Legal Requirements for Reporting:

- **Rhode Island**
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. To report, call the Hotline at 1-800-RI-CHILD (1-800-742-4453) or visit their [website](#) for more information.
- **Massachusetts**
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 1-800-792-5200. View their [brochure](#) for more details.
- **Connecticut**
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 should be strongly encouraged to call the Careline at 1-800-842-2288.

GSSNE Procedures

- Girl Scout volunteers should report any suspected abuse following the guidelines for their state and IMMEDIATELY contact GSSNE through the council crisis line (212-903-4472 / 800-476-0293). The CEO or COO will contact you for information and to provide support.

- 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.
- The caregivers of the child(ren) 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 caregivers 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 must protect itself from disclosing information on a minor.
- 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.
- 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.
- **All staff and volunteers must be sensitive to the need for confidentiality in handling this type of information and therefore should discuss the incident only with the CEO or designate.**

General Guidelines for Showing Affection to Children

Girl Scouts encourages staff/volunteers who interact with children to be affectionate in a manner that is safe for the children and the adult. And remember, 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.

Guideline 1: Child Initiated

A child may choose to do something that a staff person/volunteer 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 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're discussing young children who are easily influenced by adult expectations.

Guideline 2: Age Appropriate

Consider the age and developmental stage of the child. Is this behavior typical of that group or cause for concern? Children who display overly 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 spontaneously affectionate behavior safe for you. There are many 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 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 is to balance your need for corroboration with the child's need for dignity.

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/physical contact should be governed by the age and developmental stage of the child

GSSNE TOUCHING POLICY

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
Squeezed together on a couch	Use guideline 1 and think about safety
Applying sunscreen to a child	Only with 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. Trips are an opportunity for Girl Scouts to have fun, experience adventure, and enrich the ongoing Girl Scout program. The decision to travel, establish a budget, and finalize plans should be made by leaders and troop members in consultation with caregivers and GSSNE.

Notification

Whenever a troop is NOT meeting at its regular time and place, one of the troop leaders must notify the local Service Unit Manager (SUM) in advance. Permission slips signed by caregivers are required for these types of activities. Additional paperwork, and sometimes Council pre-approval, may also be required.

Readiness and Destination

Taking day or overnight trips is an exciting and rewarding experience for Girl Scouts and sharpens their skills in planning and evaluating. Trips of progressively greater distance and length keep members interested and involved. Starting with short, local day trips and progressing to week(s)-long international travel is part of the Girl Scout travel pathway. GSSNE follows the national standards on progression in travel and has developed the Troop Travel Guide for US Trips to help volunteers assess Girl Scout travel readiness and identify age-appropriate travel options. The guide is available on the VTK’s Resource tab.

Day Trips

- **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. GSSNE’s distance standard is a maximum of one-hour car drive from meeting site to activity location.
- **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 Girl Scouts 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 within 100 miles of the troop meeting site.

Daisy Independent & Troop Camping

- 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 Girl Scouts may have **troop** overnights, as supported by 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.
- Troop leadership believes Daisies are mature enough to handle an overnight away from family
- All GSUSA Safety Activity Checkpoints are followed, with particular attention to required youth-adult ratios ([see Youth-to-Adult Ratios: Events, Travel, Camping on pg. 30](#))
- All participants understand that GSUSA standards require separate sleeping accommodations for adults and youth; and male volunteers must have separate sleeping accommodations and restroom from all females
- 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

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 within 100 miles of the troop meeting site. Troops requesting trips at the maximum distance must have a record of previous successful overnight trips.

Extended Overnight Trips (Juniors and Older): Three- or four-night camping or a staying in a hotel, motel, or hostel within the Girl Scouts' home region (for example, New England, the Upper Midwest, the Southeast, the Pacific Northwest, and so on). Many large museums offer unique opportunities for Girl Scouts to spend the night on museum grounds which makes for an exciting experience. 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.

National Trips (Cadettes and Older): Travel anywhere in the country, often lasting a week or more. Try to steer clear of ordinary recreational trips Girl Scouts 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.

International Trips (Cadettes and Older): Travel to other parts of the world often requires one-two years of preparation. International trips are available to Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors who have a record of previous, successful overnight Girl Scout trips, some of more than three nights.

Leader Training – Troop Travel

Preparing a troop to travel involves additional leader training. At least one member of the troop leadership team must have the training described below 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/Troop Camp Training, First Aid, CPR recommended
Overnight (not camping) 1-2 nights within New England	Basic Trips Training, Troop Trips Training, First Aid/CPR
Overnight – camping at GSSNE sites	Basic Trips Training, Troop Camp Training, First Aid/CPR
Overnight – camping at a non-GSSNE site	Troop Trips Training, Troop Camp Training, First Aid/CPR
Overnight – off trail camping	Troop Camp Training, Wilderness First Aid Training, Hiking or equivalent, First Aid/CPR
Overnights (not camping) 3+ nights or for geographically distant trips (outside of New England) within the contiguous US	Troop Trips Training, Advanced Trips Domestic Training, First Aid/CPR
Overnight (not camping) 3+ nights outside of the United States or to a non-contiguous US state (Hawaii, Alaska) or overseas or on a cruise	Troop Trips Training, Advanced Trips International Training, First Aid/CPR

Paperwork

In general, day trips do not require advance approval if the leader checks the applicable Safety Activity Checkpoints. SUMs, however, must be notified of the troop's plans before the trip.

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

- **Overnights at Museums:** reservations are made through the organizing institution, for example - Mystic Aquarium, Roger Williams Park Zoo, etc. Leaders must notify SUMs of their travel dates.
- **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.

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

Travel Permission Slips

Every trip requires a caregiver-signed permission slip for the Girl Scout to attend. A sample permission slip is available on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org (“Parent/Guardian form for Girl Scouts”), but you may create your own. Trip permission slips should include:

- 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
- Caregiver telephone numbers (as many as can be listed) where they can be reached **during the activity time**
- Additional emergency contact information (neighbor, friend, relative)
- Permission to dispense medication (NOTE: Medications must always be locked with the exception of emergency, lifesaving medications: epi pens, diabetic medications, inhalers, Benadryl, etc.)
- **PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE AND DATE**

You may also want to include:

- Recommended amount of spending money (especially for older Girl Scouts)
- If you have a troop Facebook group or other type of social media contact system, permission to take and publish photos and/or videos of the Girl Scout at the activity

Leader Travel Kit

The troop leader should carry a **Travel Kit** on all trips, excursions, or events which should include the items listed below. It’s recommended that a second set be carried by another adult chaperone attending the trip, and a third set be left at home with the contact person so the information can be sent to the leader if other copies are lost or misplaced. 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:

- **Troop Roster** with contact information for everyone on the trip
- **Health History Form** for anyone on the trip who has a special medical condition requiring monitoring or supervision, the family should complete the HEALTH HISTORY form which can be found on the FORMS page at GSSNE.org. Once there, use the search box to find the document name.
- **Medications (except emergency, life-saving meds)** should remain locked-up and out of reach of children. All meds should be in their original containers to be dispensed by the leader or assigned adult. Caregivers must sign the PERMISSION TO DISPENSE MEDICATION form and submit it with the medication container and a doctor’s note/action plan in a plastic bag with the Girl Scout’s name on it. **EXCEPTIONS:** Self-administered lifesaving medications like Inhalers, Epi-pens, and diabetic medications may be carried and administered by the Girl Scout.
- **Permission Slip** (parent/guardian signed) for each youth participant
- **GSSNE Confidential Crisis sheet.** Download from the FORMS page at GSSNE.org. Incident reporting must be done online using the council form, but leader should carry a paper copy to complete in real time when details are fresh.
- **Mutual of Omaha insurance claim form.** Download from the FORMS page at GSSNE.org.
- **Passport copies for all attendees** if going outside the country
- **Trip Itinerary** details including transportation contact information, accommodations, and activity locations, room assignments, car/driver assignments if transporting by automobile. Be as specific as possible. A preliminary itinerary should be part of the Intent to Travel submission to Council; a final itinerary should be submitted to Council before the trip.
- **Driving directions** Although most adults have GPS, be prepared if batteries die or service is poor

Transportation

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.

- **FAMILY TRANSPORTATION** - Troop leadership 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 the 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. NOTE: 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.

- **TROOP CARPOOLS** - Troop leadership arranges carpools to and from the troop activity. The permission slip should clearly state that transportation is arranged by the troop. GSUSA requires that drivers of troop-arranged carpools meet the following standards (troop leaders are responsible for ensuring the first 3 items for each driver):
 - Be 21 years old
 - Hold a current, valid driver’s license
 - 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)
 - Have a clear driving record (Volunteer background check includes this)

Youth-Adult Ratios for Events, Travel, and Camping

The number of adults required for these activities is governed by the chart below (see page 13 for youth-adult ratios for meetings).

Girl Scout Program Grade Level	OUTINGS & OVERNIGHTS <i>Two unrelated volunteers * for this number of Girl Scouts:</i>	OUTINGS & OVERNIGHTS <i>One additional volunteer * for each additional:</i>
Daisies (grades K-1)	6	1-4
Brownies (grades 2-3)	12	1-6
Juniors (grades 4-5)	16	1-8
Cadettes (grades 6-8)	20	1-10
Seniors (grades 9-10)	24	1-12
Ambassadors (grades 11-12)	24	1-12

**Not related by blood or marriage, do not live in the same household/residence and at least one who is female*

Chaperones

In addition to troop leaders, additional adults may be required as chaperones. Chaperones are registered Girl Scout adult volunteers who are actively supervising and engaging with the group to ensure safety and proper behavior. The chaperone provides guidance, enforces rules, and handles issues that arise. Troop leaders are responsible for ensuring that every chaperone is familiar with Girl Scout safety requirements, fully understands their role and responsibilities as a chaperone, and ensures adults who are invited to be chaperones accept the responsibility knowing they are there for the Girl Scout youth - not going on “vacation”. The number of adults on a Girl Scout trip/outing should not exceed the number of Girl Scouts unless the trip is a “family trip” in which case, Girl Scout funds should be restricted to pay for the Girl Scout.

Girl Scout Identification

When traveling, each Girl Scout must always carry an identification card with them. When possible, identification cards should be laminated or carried in a plastic name tag holder; wristbands are also an option. It’s best to have identification cards on the inside of a jacket or shirt so personal information is not public. The information on each should include:

- Full Legal Name (versus preferred name)
- Girl Scout Council and troop #
- Telephone contacts
 - Leaders’ cell phone(s)
 - GSSNE crisis line number
- Pertinent medical information such as allergies

TRAVEL CHART

Grade Level	Type of Trip	Screenings/Trainings	Notifications/Approvals	Forms	Timeline	Adults
Daisy Brownie Junior Cadette Senior Ambassador	DAY TRIPS A Council-sponsored event Any site within approved age-level distance: Daisy+ = 1 hour Brownie+ = 100 miles Junior+ = 150 Miles Senior+ = domestic or intr'l	LEADERS • Troop Leader Training • First Aid/CPR OTHER ADULTS • Current GS membership & background check • Drivers (troop-arranged carpools) checked for age, license, and insurance minimums	SUM notified in advance	Special Permissions form as determined by the SAC		• Number of adults must conform to youth/adult ratio guidelines
Daisy Brownie Junior Cadette Senior Ambassador	OUTDOOR DAY AT CAMPSITE	• 194 - Guide To Outdoor Day Adventures: Day Camping Experiences (gsLearn online video training) • First Aid/CPR • Current GS membership & background check	• Reservation through Property Rentals tab on the council website • SUM notified in advance	• Sign-off documents at Property Rentals site • Special Permissions form as determined by the SAC	At least two weeks in advance	Same as above plus: • Trained adult can be any support volunteer who successfully completes these requirements • The FA/CPR trained adult can be any troop support volunteer who is nationally certified; valid certification must be on file with GSSNE
Daisy (1 st grade) Brownie Junior Cadette Senior Ambassador	NON-CAMPSITE OVERNIGHTS (1-2 nights) Lock-ins, hotels, motels, museums (including Council-sponsored events), zoo overnights NON-CAMPSITE OVERNIGHTS (3 or more) (NOT AT A CAMPSITE)	LEADERS • Troop Leader Training / Basic Trips • Troop Trips training • First Aid/CPR OTHER ADULTS • Current GS membership & background check • Drivers (troop-arranged carpools) checked for age, license, insurance LEADERS • Advanced Trips Training OTHER ADULTS • Current GS membership & background check • Drivers (troop-arranged carpools) checked for age, license, insurance	• Intent-to-Travel form • SUM notified in advance TRAVEL OPTIONAL for Domestic Travel: Mutual of Omaha Accident & Sickness Insurance REQUIRED for International Travel: Mutual of Omaha Accident & Sickness Insurance	• Intent-to-Travel form • Special Permissions form as determined by the SAC	At least two months in advance	• Number of adults must conform to youth/adult ratio guidelines • Trips trained adult can be any support volunteer who successfully completes GSSNE's Troop Trips Training (or Advanced Trips Training) • The FA/CPR trained adult can be any troop support volunteer who is nationally certified; valid certification must be on file with GSSNE
Daisy (1 st grade) Brownie Junior Cadette Senior Ambassador	OVERNIGHT CAMPING At NON-GSSNE sites (backyard sleepovers, other Girl Scout Council camps, commercial camp sites)	LEADERS • New Leader Training / Basic Trips • Troop Trips Training • Troop Camp Training (TCT) • First Aid/CPR OTHER ADULTS • Current GS membership & background check • Drivers (troop-arranged carpools) checked for age, license, insurance	• Intent-to-Travel form	• Intent-to-Travel form • Special Permissions form as determined by the SAC	At least one month in advance	• Number of adults must conform to youth/adult ratio guidelines • Trips trained adult can be any support volunteer who successfully completes GSSNE's Troop Trips Training • Camp trained adult can be any support volunteer who successfully completes GSSNE's Troop Camp Training • FA/CPR trained adult can be any troop support volunteer nationally certified; certification must be on file with GSSNE

TRAVEL CHART

Grade Level	Type of Trip	Screenings/Trainings	Notifications/Approvals	Forms	Timeline	Adults
Daisy (1 st grade) Brownie Junior Cadette Senior Ambassador	OVERNIGHT CAMPING At a GSSNE campsite	LEADERS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Leader training / Basic Trips • Troop Camp training • First Aid/CPR OTHER ADULTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current GS membership & background check • Drivers (troop-arranged carpools) checked for age, license, insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reservation through Property Rentals tab on the council website • SUM notified in advance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign-off documents at Property Rentals site • Special Permissions form as determined by the SAC 	At least one month in advance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of adults must conform to youth/adult ratio guidelines • Camp trained adult can be any support volunteer who successfully completes GSSNE's Troop Camp Training • FA/CPR trained adult can be any troop support volunteer nationally certified; certification must be on file with GSSNE
Junior Cadette Senior Ambassador	OVERNIGHTS: Off-Trail Camping or Backpacking	Same as above plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSSNE Hiking/Backpacking course or equivalent 	Intent-to-Travel form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intent-to-Travel form • Special Permissions form as determined by the SAC 	At least one month in advance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of adults must conform to youth/adult ratio guidelines • Camp trained or hiking/backpacking certified adult can be any support volunteer who successfully completed GSSNE training • FA/CPR trained adult can be any troop support volunteer nationally certified; certification must be on file with GSSNE