

Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida Council, Inc.
Volunteer Policies & Procedures
Approved by Board of Directors: 8-2-10

INTRODUCTION

Our Council, Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida, subscribes to the mission and purpose as set forth by the Girl Scouts of the USA and strictly adheres to the standards and procedures as set forth in the “Blue Book of Basic Documents” and “Safety-Wise.” These documents, with current updates, may be accessed by visiting www.girlscouts.org. Additionally, each member shall model the standards and expectations of the policies set forth in this document of Council policies and procedures. This document, with current updates, may be accessed by visiting www.gssef.org.

1.0 MEMBERSHIP

The Council is responsible for seeing that membership is reflective of the pluralistic nature of our population and that membership is extended to all girls and adults in all population segments and geographic areas in our jurisdiction. An individual who meets or can meet membership requirements shall not be denied admission or access to Girl Scout program because of race, color, ethnicity, creed, national origin, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation or disability. Reasonable accommodations shall be made for girls and adults with disabilities to ensure that they have access to activities.

1.1 GIRL MEMBERSHIP

- Membership in Girl Scouting is granted to any girl, 5-17 years of age, who makes the Girl Scout Promise and accepts the Girl Scout Law, and has paid the annual membership dues.
- A girl who meets or can meet membership requirements shall not be denied admission or access to Girl Scout program because of race, color, ethnicity, creed, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or disability.
- A girl may not be denied membership because of pregnancy.

NOTE: Girl Membership status may include enrollment in Kindergarten, if this precedes age 5; and continue through September 30 of a girl's 12th Grade enrollment school year, if her 18th birthday precedes this date.

1.2 ADULT MEMBERSHIP

- Membership as a Girl Scout adult is granted to any person who accepts the organization's principles and beliefs as stated in the Preamble of the Constitution of Girl Scouts of the USA, and has paid the annual membership dues.

- There shall be no discrimination against an otherwise qualified adult volunteer by reason of disability or on the basis of age. Furthermore, there shall be no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, creed, national origin, religion, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status.

2.0 ADULT VOLUNTEERS

The Council reserves the right to refuse volunteer appointment, to dismiss, or to exclude from affiliation with the Council any individual who has been convicted or has been found guilty of (regardless of prosecution) of child abuse, child neglect, possession of illegal drugs and or intent to distribute illegal drugs.

2.1 VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

- All new adult volunteers working directly with girls will be required to:
 - a) Complete and submit the Adult Volunteer application
 - b) Complete and submit the Background Screening application with acceptable results
Note: Background screening protocols are established and approved by the Board of Directors [for volunteers and/or student interns], in order to be compliant with related Florida Statute and all regulatory agency requirements.
 - c) Complete training assigned to the position

2.2 VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT

- A trained adult must be present at every troop/group meeting, activity, and trip. A second adult in a troop/group leadership role must be a currently registered Girl Scout and be present at every troop/group meeting, activity and trip.
- There must be at least two independent adults (not related to or married to each other) present at all troop/group meetings, events, trips and troop camping trips. One adult must be female.
- All males participating in overnight activities where girl members are present must use separate sleeping accommodations and restroom areas. In some circumstances, such as a museum, movie, or mall overnight program, with hundreds of girls, this type of accommodation is not possible; therefore men shall not chaperone such events.
- Operational volunteers shall be appointed for a term not to exceed one year.

Procedure:

Failure to submit the Year End Troop Finance Report by the annual deadline may be cause for immediate dismissal from the volunteer position and preclude the troop from re-registering.

3.0 CONDUCT

Council code of conduct requires adherence to the spirit set forth in the Girl Scout Promise and Law. The following behaviors threaten the health and welfare of girls. Adults engaging in such

behavior shall be immediately released, by the Council, from acting in any official Girl Scout capacity.

- Child Abuse, which includes emotional maltreatment of girls, including nonverbal and verbal abuse and/or verbal attacks; physical neglect of girl members, including failure to provide safety measures, care, and supervision in relation to Girl Scout activities; and physically abusive behavior including bodily contact. A volunteer member suspected of child abuse will be suspended from volunteer responsibilities until the case is resolved.
- Exhibitionism, voyeurism, and/or involvement in child pornography.
- Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind (including displays or demonstrations of sexual activities) between employed staff or volunteers and girl members.
- Sexual harassment and/or overt displays of sexual activity between girls, employed staff and/or volunteers.
- Abuse (improper use of) of prescription drugs, over the counter drugs or alcohol. Possession and/or use of illegal drugs. Improper use of prescription drugs, over the counter drugs, illegal drugs or alcohol directly before or during Girl Scout activities.
- Carrying firearms; guns and ammunition are prohibited during Girl Scout activities.
- Gambling, during program activities on trips or during other Girl Scout activities.
- Hostile acts, malicious gossip, harassment or derogatory attacks concerning anyone associated with the Council; including girls, volunteers, parents of members and/or employed staff.
- The use of Girl Scouts as a basis for initiating or perpetuating personal disagreements.
- Misuse of Council, Service Unit and/or Troop funds and/or Girl Scout bank accounts.
- Fundraising, money earning, and/or soliciting money to benefit an individual, organization (other than Girl Scouts), event or company, in an official Girl Scout capacity.

Procedure For Reporting Suspected Cases of Child Abuse or Neglect:

GSSEF believes that one of our primary concerns is the health, safety, and well-being of the girls. Florida state law requires employees and volunteers to report suspected cases of child abuse. According to Florida law, an abused or neglected child is any born, unmarried person less than 18 years old who has not been emancipated by order of the court.

Abuse is defined by Florida law as any willful or threatened act or omission that results in any physical, mental, or sexual injury or harm that causes or is likely to cause the child's physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired.

Neglect is defined by Florida law as any act or omission where a child is deprived of, or allowed to be deprived of necessary supervision, food, clothing, shelter, or medical treatment, or a child is permitted to live in an environment when such deprivation or environment causes the child's physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired or to be in danger of being significantly impaired.

ANY PERSON WHO SUSPECTS THAT A CHILD HAS BEEN ABUSED OR NEGLECTED MUST MAKE A COMPLAINT. TO REPORT A SUSPECTED CASE OF CHILD ABUSE, DO THE FOLLOWING:

Call the FLORIDA ABUSE HOTLINE 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873). Be prepared to provide:

- *Victim name, address or location, approximate age, race and gender;*
- *Physical, mental, or behavioral indications that the person is infirm or disabled;*
- *Signs or indications of harm or injury including a physical description if possible*
- *Relationship of the alleged perpetrator to the victim, if possible. If the relationship is unknown, a report will still be taken if other reporting criteria are met;*

When reporting a suspected case of child abuse, you do not have to give your name, but it is helpful to give your name in case more information is needed.

Note:

GSSEF reserves the right to refuse membership, to dismiss, or to exclude from affiliation with the council any volunteer implementing Girl Scout program who has been convicted or has been found guilty (regardless of prosecution) of child abuse or neglect.

4.0 FINANCES

4.1 COUNCIL FINANCES

- All money raised or earned, and other assets received in the name of and for the benefit of Girl Scouting should be authorized by the Council and used for the purposes of Girl Scouting. Such monies and other assets are the property of and are administered by the Council. Such assets are not the property of individuals, Service Units, or communities within the Council.
- All money-earning projects (including solicitation for funds) other than Council sponsored product sales must be approved by the CEO designated department prior to starting. This includes any request for funds or merchandise or donations to support troop/group or Service Unit activities.

Procedure:

Contact the Membership Manager of the Service Unit or the GSSEF Director of Membership for more information.

4.2 DEBT TO COUNCIL

INDIVIDUAL DEBT

- An individual who owes a debt to Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida for more than 30 days will be removed from all adult volunteer positions currently held.

TROOP/GROUP DEBT

- Troop/group Leadership and all signers on the troop/group bank account are accountable for all funds generated by the troop/group (i.e. troop/group dues, product sale proceeds, money earning proceeds, etc.)

Procedure:

Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida requires the address of record with the banking institution be the mailing address of one of two account signatories. The mailing address of record may not be recorded with either Service Center address.

- Troop/group Leadership and all signers on the troop bank account of a troop that owes a debt to Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida for more than 30 days, will be removed from all adult volunteer positions currently held.

Procedure:

Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida re-deposits returned checks automatically and without notice. A \$10 processing fee will be charged for checks returned by the bank for non-sufficient funds (NSF checks) and closed accounts. When a check is returned by the bank a second time, the Council reserves the right to require payment by cash or certified funds.

Any individual or troop/group who owes a debt to the Council will be subject to the following collection process:

- *After 30 days a letter will be mailed to the individual or troop/group as a reminder of the amount past due and requesting payment within 15 days of receipt of the letter.*
- *After 45 days a second letter will be mailed to the individual or troop/group restating the amount past due and requesting immediate payment upon receipt of the letter.*
- *After 60 days a certified letter will be mailed to the individual or troop/group requiring immediate payment of the amount past due.*
- *In the event the amount due remains unpaid after the previous steps have been taken, the Council will seek any/all remedies considered necessary to recover the funds; including assignment to a collection agency, legal action or notification and action with the State Attorney's Office.*

4.3 SERVICE UNIT FINANCES

- In accordance with the Council's risk management plan, all monies used by and for the Service Units should be kept in a bank account at an accredited financial institution for tracking/documentation purposes. The only signers on those accounts may be the Service Unit Volunteer Manager or designated Service Unit Leadership Team member and Staff member designated by the CEO. Checks for \$500 or more must have both signatures.
- The Service Unit Volunteer Manager or designated Service Unit Leadership Team member will be accountable for any bank charges incurred due to bounced checks or non-sufficient funds.
- A financial report on the bank account is required in July of each year to cover all activity in the account for the previous year ending June 30. All funds not budgeted in excess of \$1,000 must be returned to the general fund by July 31.
- Money budgeted for the Service Units in the Council's operating budget is money available for their use if needed for Service Unit activities that advance the Council goals. All money raised or earned in the name of and for the benefit of Girl Scouting is the property of the Council.
- Checks made payable to GSSEF and/or GSUSA and submitted via the Service Unit (example: registration dues) must be submitted to the Council (Service Center or individual staff member) within 45 days of the check date. Should any check submitted within the required timeframe be returned (example: non-sufficient funds), the Council will take the responsibility for initiating the collection of insufficient funds and fees. If the Service Unit holds any check beyond 45 days, and the check is returned, the Service Unit may be held responsible for face-value of the check and all applicable fees.

Note:

If Service Units opt not to hold monies in a Council Account held in the Service Unit (in a local bank), the funds will remain in the Council account for allocation.

4.4 TROOP/GROUP FINANCES

TROOP/GROUP MONEY-EARNING:

- All money-earning projects other than Council sponsored product sales must be approved by the CEO designated department prior to starting. This includes any request for funds or merchandise or donations to support troop/group activities.
- Troops/groups must participate in both Council sponsored product sales in order to be considered eligible to submit an application to conduct a money-earning project. Troop/group leaders must obtain written approval from their Service Unit Volunteer Manager and the CEO designated department no less than six weeks prior to the proposed money-earning project.

- Troop money earning projects may not be conducted during the sale dates for the Girl Scout Cookie Sale.

Procedure:

Approval may be granted for money earning project to be conducted during the Fall Product Sale, provided that the troop has met the following requirements:

- *The Troop must be participating or have completed participation in the Fall Product Sale.*
- *The project must in no way conflict with products offered during the Fall Product Sale (including packaged food products, magazines or music).*

To view and/or print the Money-Earning Application go to www.gssef.org Or contact a staff member at the GSSEF service centers.

- Girl members may not engage in any direct solicitation for money.

TROOP/GROUP BANK ACCOUNTS:

- All troop/group funds must be held in a troop/group bank account. Each bank account established and managed by registered Girl Scout volunteers must have at least two signatories.
- No two persons from the same family or household may be considered signatories on a Girl Scout bank account.
- A complete financial report must be submitted to the CEO designated department staff member no later than the deadline date indicated on the troop/group financial form.

Procedure:

The deadline for submission of the completed Year End Troop Finance Report is June 30, annually. Troops that do not submit the completed Year End Troop Finance Report will not be permitted to participate in Girl Scout Membership re-registration until this form is submitted.

- Any money left by a disbanded troop/group shall be transferred to the Council's general operating fund and used for financial assistance to girls. The funds do not become the property of any individual, girl or adult.

5.0 MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE

5.1 TROOP/GROUP SIZE

- A troop/group must consist of at least 5 girls from more than one family. It is recommended that troop/group sizes be as follows:

Grade Level	Age Level	Size
K – Grade 1	Daisies	5 – 15 Girls
Grades 2 & 3	Brownies	5 – 25 Girls
Grades 4 & 5	Juniors	5 – 30 Girls
Grades 6, 7 & 8	Cadettes	5 – 30 Girls
Grades 9 & 10	Seniors	5 – 30 Girls
Grades 11 & 12	Ambassadors	5 – 30 Girls

Procedure:

A troop/group's regular meeting location determines the Service Unit area in which it must be registered.

5.2 ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

TROOP/GROUP CAMPING:

- The proper girl/adult ratio must be maintained for a troop/group to participate in any overnight camping experience, additionally:
 - a) Two adults are required (in addition to the girl/adult ratio)
 - b) One person with the appropriate level of Council camp training
 - c) One person with certified First Aid training (this person cannot be the camp trained volunteer)

NOTE: Person with the appropriate level of Council camp training may be age 16 or older. One person with certified First Aid training may be age 18 or older.

ACTIVITIES, TRIPS & TRAVEL:

- All troop/group travel and activities must be approved by the appropriate person assigned by the CEO to protect girls and adults participating and to meet insurance requirements. The proper girl/adult ratio must be maintained for a troop/group to participate in programs, activities and travel.

Procedure:

Troops/Groups will complete the Travel Application form and submit as noted in the following table.

Type of Travel	Description of Travel	Requirements and Authorization
Day Trip (any daytime excursions not at regular meeting location/time)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change of meeting location Troop field trip Participation in Service Unit activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed parent/guardian permission slip Submit names of girls and adults attending, where activity taking place, date, and time of activity to Membership Manager within 48-hours of activity
Day Trips Including SWIMMING, WATER, HORSES, or other safety equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water park Community or private swimming pool Horseback riding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed travel application within 48-hours of travel Signed parent/guardian permission slip
Overnight Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camping at park Any other non-council-sponsored overnight travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed travel application 14-days prior for instate travel Completed travel application 30-days prior for out of state travel Additional Girl Scout Insurance (if longer than 3-days/2-nights) Signed parent/guardian permission slip
International Travel and Outside of Continental United States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any overnight travel outside the Continental United States 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed travel application 90-days prior to travel Additional Girl Scout Insurance Signed parent/guardian permission slip

Note:

Adult volunteers should consult both *Volunteer Essentials* and the *Safety Activity Checkpoints* prior to planning a day trip or travel to ensure proper activity/program safety requirements and ratios are met.

- Troop and Service Unit program and events held on all GSSEF properties may not include: any children under the age of 5 or children under the age of 18 years who are not registered Girl Scouts.

Note: Exceptions may be considered, on a case by case basis for programs and events that are specially designed and marketed for families or recruitment. Such requests for exceptions are required in writing with the original property registration documents. Troops and Service Units may be held fiscally responsible for additional insurance coverage costs for such programs/events. An estimate of costs may be requested prior to reservation.

GSSEF council-sponsored programs and events held on any GSSEF property will include in its description, the specific audience for whom the event is planned, i.e. detailed information, girl

member grade-level, family friendly, bring-a-friend, recruitment, etc. including membership requirements for attendance.

- *For trips longer than three days and two nights and all international travel, troops/groups must secure additional Girl Scout insurance*

TRANSPORTATION:

- **Privately Owned or Borrowed Vehicles:** Parents/guardians must be notified in writing of the specific type of vehicle used to transport girls including the passenger capacity of the vehicle and whether the vehicle is privately owned or borrowed.
- **Rental/Chartered Vehicles, Vessels or Aircraft:** Adult volunteers are not authorized to sign agreements or contracts for renting or chartering vehicles, vessels and/or aircraft. A written agreement is required even when there is no cost. All contracts and agreements must be submitted to the Council to be signed by CEO or her designee.

6.0 VOLUNTEER GRIEVANCE

A grievance is a complaint related to a volunteer's position not being properly administered. The grievance procedure is a systematic process to ensure the objective hearing and orderly handling of a volunteer grievance. All volunteers may use the grievance procedure. Every volunteer may expect a fair resolution of her/his grievance without fear of jeopardizing her/his volunteer status. The council also maintains an open-door policy regarding volunteer concerns. Volunteers are encouraged to keep open communication in an effort to resolve problems as they arise.

Grievance may be avoided with clear communication and information at the time of volunteer placement, including structure, roles/responsibilities, policy, procedures, guidelines and expectation. Many grievances may be resolved when brought to the immediate attention of the volunteer's supervisor(s). An attempt should be made to resolve grievances through informal conferences and communication.

If a volunteer has contacted her/his supervisor and is unable to resolve the grievance, the following steps can be taken. The initiation of the grievance procedure will not restrict council staff from taking appropriate action with respect to each volunteer and situation. **A grievance must be filed within 30 days of the alleged incident/violation.**

Step 1: The volunteer initiates the process by completing the grievance form and requests a conference with her/his supervisor. The volunteer cites the policy or procedure that has allegedly been misapplied, misinterpreted, and/or violated. The conference is to take place within 10 business days from receipt of the grievance form.

If the supervisor is not a council staff member, the appropriate staff member is informed of the complaint and the date of the conference prior to the meeting. The council staff member informs her/his supervisor of the complaint and conference prior to the date of the meeting. The CEO is also informed of the complaint and the scheduled meeting date.

Following the meeting, the disposition of the grievance is documented on the grievance form by

the supervisor.

Step 2: If the conflict is not resolved in Step 1, the council staff member or, if appropriate, the council staff member's supervisor will meet with the volunteer within 10 business days following the initial conference. The CEO is informed of the follow-up meeting and the status of the grievance. Following this second meeting, the disposition of the grievance is documented on the grievance form by the supervisor.

Step 3: In the event the dispute is not resolved in Step 2, the council staff member or her/his supervisor, as appropriate, prepares a written report on the situation, including recommendations, and sends a copy to the CEO within 10 business days from the second meeting date.

Additionally, in the event the dispute is not resolved in Step 2, the staff supervisor and the CEO decide on what additional action to take, using one or more of the following options within 10 business days, from the second meeting date:

- Accept the council staff member's report and recommendations.
- CEO meets with the volunteer to hear the grievance and resolve the grievance.
- CEO appoints a Grievance Review Team to meet with the volunteer and resolve the grievance.

The Grievance Review Team is comprised of:

- A management representative (i.e. adult volunteer currently serving in supervisory role/position or a current board member);
- An council staff member not involved in the conflict resolution process; and
- A council adult volunteer selected by the complainant.

Procedure for Grievance Review Team

The Grievance Review Team will review the documentation on file and meet with the individuals involved. The Grievance Review Team may seek additional information, if necessary, to aid it in making a final decision. The Grievance Review Team shall meet within 10 business days of request to serve. The Grievance Review Team will provide the CEO with a written report of its findings and recommendations within 10 business days of the review hearing. This recommendation of the Grievance Review Team shall serve as the council's final decision. The CEO will communicate the final decision from the Grievance Review Team to the volunteer and implement the decision.