

**Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida, Inc.**  
**Volunteer Policies & Procedures**

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## **Introduction**

Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida, known hereafter as GSSEF, subscribes to the mission and purpose as set forth by the Girl Scouts of the United States of America, known hereafter as GSUSA, and strictly adheres to the standards and procedures as set forth in the GSUSA “Blue Book of Basic Documents” and GSUSA “Safety Activity Checkpoints.” These documents, and updates, may be accessed by visiting [www.girlscouts.org](http://www.girlscouts.org). Each Girl Scout member shall model the standards and expectations in these materials and set forth in these policies and procedures. This document, and updates, may be accessed by visiting [www.gssef.org](http://www.gssef.org).

The policies in this document appear in numbered sections 1.0 through 9.0. Many sections have subsections that provide additional, comprehensive information on more complex issues. Procedures are the “how to” for a policy. Procedures appear immediately following the policy to which it pertains. The procedure offers the guidance about “how to” adhere to or execute a policy. Finally, “notes” are provided in order to clarify a policy or a procedure.

## **1.0 MEMBERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION**

- GSSEF is responsible for ensuring membership is reflective of the diverse nature of our population; and that membership is extended to all girls and adults in all geographic areas within our jurisdiction.
- GSSEF has the right and discretion to hold membership recruitment activities and events where they are deemed fit and appropriate.
- Membership recruitment activities and events are not limited by the council's Service Unit boundaries or the Service Unit volunteers in that geographic area. Members are not required to be placed in troops or volunteer positions (etc.) exclusive to the Service Unit territory, in which the activity or event was held.
- Any 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.
- GSSEF reserves the right to restrict participation by non-registered individuals in Girl Scout programs and activities.

### **1.1 Girl Membership**

- GSSEF defines "girl" by the eligible membership age set by GSUSA: Ages 5-17.
- Membership 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 fee which includes dues and Council Service Fee.
- 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.
- A girl must be a registered member in order to participate in any Troop/Group, Service Unit, or Council Program, unless otherwise stated in the Program description, or is designated as a tagalong.

- Based on available funds, financial assistance is available to help girls with expenses for membership and participation in authorized Girl Scout events or activities. Financial assistance is available through an application and approval process.
- A uniform is not required for participation in Girl Scouting. Purchase of a uniform is at the individual's expense and is encouraged. A uniform may be required for certain events or official ceremonies (i.e. flag ceremony).

NOTE: Girl membership eligibility 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.

NOTE: The definition of a tagalong can be found in Section 3.6 of this document. Tagalongs are not affiliated with the Girl Scouts and will not participate in programs or event unless otherwise noted in the description or registration materials.

## **1.2 Adult Membership**

- GSSEF defines "adult" by the age of majority in the State of Florida: Age 18.
- Membership is granted to any person, age 18 or older, who accepts the organization's principles and beliefs as stated in the Preamble of the Constitution of GSUSA; and has paid the annual membership dues.
- An adult who meets, or can meet membership requirements, shall not be denied admission or access to Girl Scout program because of age, race, color, ethnicity, creed, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or disability.
- An adult attending overnight Program, who is counted separate from the required Girl-to-Adult Ratio, must be a registered adult member.
- GSSEF accepts the service of all registered adult members and registered volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the organization. Registered volunteers understand and agree that GSSEF may at any time, for whatever reason, elect to terminate the adult relationship; or to make changes in the nature of the adult's assignment, role or responsibilities.

NOTE: Programs referred to in Section 1.2 include, but are not limited to, troop camping.

NOTE: Adults may be required to satisfactorily complete a background check prior to admittance or program/event participation.

### 1.3 Volunteerism

- GSSEF is committed to an environment in which relationships among volunteers, staff, parents and girls are characterized by dignity, courtesy, respect and equitable treatment. The attitudes, appearance and actions of all volunteers have a direct impact on the lives of girls. A positive female role model is essential for meeting the Girl Scout program goals and purposes.
- Adults, who take responsibility for girls, not related or in their household, are required to be registered volunteers; this includes satisfactory completion of the GSSEF volunteer application and criminal background check, per FL statute and FCRA.
- GSSEF reserves the right to dismiss any registered volunteer, refuse registered volunteer position appointment, or exclude from affiliation, any individual who has been convicted or has been found guilty (regardless of prosecution) of child abuse, child neglect, possession of illegal drugs and /or intent to distribute illegal drugs.
- A uniform is not required for participation in Girl Scouting. Purchase of a uniform is at the individual's expense and is encouraged. A uniform may be required for certain events or official ceremonies (i.e. flag ceremony). Volunteers are encouraged to wear the Girl Scout Membership Pin when they are not in uniform.
- Any volunteer may resign her/his position upon written notification to her/his appointed administrative volunteer or GSSEF staff contact.
- A volunteer can only be released by a GSSEF staff member.
- GSSEF may release a volunteer for any reason, from any and all positions held, at its sole discretion, including but not limited to:
  - Restructuring of volunteer positions
  - Elimination of the volunteer position in which a person serves
  - Inability or failure of the volunteer to complete the requirements for the position
  - Failure to complete training required for the volunteer position
  - Misappropriation of funds
  - Failure to cooperate in any type of financial review of a troop/group or service unit account
  - Failure to pay product sales amount owed
  - Failure to adhere to GSSEF's product sales guidelines
  - Inability or failure to perform to GSSEF's satisfaction
  - Failure to comply with GSSEF or GSUSA policies
  - Failure to support the mission and values of the organization and GSSEF goals

- Membership in an organization whose goals are not compatible with those of GSUSA
- Listed in the sex offender registry of any state or conviction of a sexual or related offense
- Providing false, incomplete, or misleading information on the volunteer application
- Inappropriate behavior including, but not limited to, physical violence, abuse, unauthorized carrying of firearms (see Code of Conduct for more information), stalking, threatening, menacing, lying, harassment, sexual harassment, or falsification of documents
- An unacceptable criminal background check or failure to report arrest or conviction

NOTE: Any registered volunteer who is released from her/his Girl Scout position may continue her/his membership with Girl Scouts unless it is determined that she/he is not able to meet the membership requirement related to accepting the principles and beliefs of the organization or to support the mission and values of the organization.

#### **1.4 Volunteer Recruitment**

- All new registered volunteers working directly with girls will be required to complete the following process, which includes, but is not limited to: Complete and submit the Adult Volunteer application, complete and submit the Background Screening application, complete training assigned to the position within the required time period. This information is confidential and for internal use only.
- Volunteers must be registered members. A lapse in membership will require re-application and screening for volunteer placement.
- Registered volunteers are appointed for a term not to exceed one year, unless otherwise noted in the volunteer position description.
- GSSEF reserves the right to decline appointment approval if information received through the screening process indicates qualifications are not suitable for the position.

## **2.0 CODE OF CONDUCT**

GSSEF Code of Conduct requires adherence to the spirit set forth in the Girl Scout Promise and Law. All members and participants must abide by Federal, State and local laws. The following behaviors threaten safety, health and welfare, and members engaging in such behavior may be immediately released, by GSSEF, from acting in any official Girl Scout capacity.

- Abuse, which includes emotional maltreatment, including nonverbal and verbal abuse and/or verbal attacks; physical neglect, including failure to provide safety measures, care, and supervision in relation to Girl Scout activities; and physically abusive behavior including bodily contact. An adult suspected of 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).
- Sexual harassment and/or overt displays of sexual activity.
- 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.

NOTE: Per H.R. 218, the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act (LEOSA), active and retired law enforcement are exempt from this policy, and must be able to provide proper identification upon request.

- Disclosure or use of any confidential GSSEF information that is available solely as a result of the registered volunteer's affiliation with GSSEF.
- Hostile acts, malicious gossip, harassment or derogatory attacks concerning anyone associated with the GSSEF; including girls, registered volunteers, parents of members and/or employed staff.
- The use of Girl Scouts as a basis for initiating or perpetuating personal disagreements.
- Misappropriation of GSSEF funds, including but not limited to: co-mingling of GSSEF, Service Unit and/or troop/group funds with personal funds or debt incurred to the GSSEF, Service Unit or troop/group.
- 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. Authorize the use of or use for the benefit or advantage of any person, the name, emblem, endorsement, services, or property of GSSEF, except in conformance with GSSEF policy.

- Entering into a contract or agreement with any agency, on behalf of GSSEF, without approval from the CEO or CEO designee.
- Disregard of the code of conduct, volunteer policies and procedures, and Girl Scout Promise and Law while using social media accounts for the purpose of Girl Scout activities.

### **3.0 GENERAL POLICIES**

#### **3.1 GSSEF Finances**

- All money raised or earned, and other assets acquired or received in the name of and for the benefit of Girl Scouting must be authorized by GSSEF and used for the purposes of Girl Scouting. Such monies and other assets are the property of and are administered by GSSEF. Such assets are not the property of individuals, Service Units, or communities within GSSEF.

#### **3.2 Individual Debt**

- GSSEF reserves the right to refuse membership or restrict participation of any person who owes money to the organization, Service Unit, troop/group or girl. Future consideration for any volunteer position will be possible only after the debt is satisfied.
- Individual adult members who have previously satisfied a debt to GSSEF and who incur a subsequent debt will be removed from all current registered volunteer positions and will be precluded from future volunteer position placement.
- Any person with an outstanding debt to GSSEF may be restricted from future program registration, retail purchases, etc.
- Any parent/guardian of a registered girl member owing money to a troop/group may be restricted from future girl program registration, retail purchases, etc., and will be subject to the collection procedures outlined below. Once the debt is satisfied any restriction on participation will be lifted.

##### Procedures for individual debt collection:

- Returned checks are sent from the bank to a debt collection agency that will immediately proceed with collection efforts on behalf of GSSEF.
- When a check is returned by the bank a second time, GSSEF reserves the right to require payment by cash or certified funds.



- Any individual who owes a debt to GSSEF will be subject to the following collection process:
  - A request for payment will be made by GSSEF following bank notification.
  - After 30 days a letter will be mailed to the adult individual as a reminder of the amount past due and requesting payment within 15 days of receipt of the letter.
  - After 45 days a certified letter will be mailed to the adult individual restating the amount past due and requesting immediate payment upon receipt of the letter.
  - In the event the amount due remains unpaid following the previous steps, GSSEF will seek any and 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.

### **3.3 Activities and Programs**

- GSSEF sponsored programs and events will include in its description, the specific audience for whom the event is planned (e.g. detailed information, girl member grade-level, family friendly, bring-a-friend, recruitment, etc., including membership requirements for attendance.)

### **3.4 Reporting of abuse, neglect or abandonment**

Our primary concern is the health, safety, and well-being of all members. Florida state law requires any individual who suspects that a child or vulnerable adult has been abused, neglected or abandoned by any person to report that to the Florida Abuse Hotline. Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida strictly adheres to Florida Statute 39 regulated by the Florida Department of Children and Families, and it is therefore a requirement of our volunteers to adhere to the Statute as well.

- **Children**
  - According to Florida Statute 39, a child is defined as an unmarried person less than 18 years old who has not been emancipated by order of the court.
  - Abuse on a child 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 person's physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired.
  - Neglect on a child 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 where 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.

- **Adults**
  - A vulnerable adult is defined as a person 18 years of age or older whose ability to perform the normal activities of daily living or to provide for his or her own care or protection is impaired due to disability, brain damage, or the infirmities of aging.
  - Abuse on an adult is defined by Florida law as any willful act or threatened act by a relative, caregiver, or household member which causes or is likely to cause significant impairment to a vulnerable adult's physical, mental, or emotional health. Abuse includes acts and omissions.
  - Neglect on an adult is defined by Florida law as the failure or omission on the part of the caregiver or vulnerable adult to provide the care, supervision, and services necessary to maintain the physical and mental health of the vulnerable adult, including, but not limited to, food, clothing, medicine, shelter, supervision, and medical services, which a prudent person would consider essential for the well-being of a vulnerable adult. The term "neglect" also means the failure of a caregiver or vulnerable adult to make a reasonable effort to protect a vulnerable adult from abuse, neglect, or exploitation by others.
- **When should a report be made?**
  - Any person, including professionally mandatory reporters, should contact the Florida Abuse Hotline when they know or have reasonable cause to suspect that a child or vulnerable adult has been abused, abandoned, neglected, or exploited.
  - If you do not feel comfortable making the report, you may contact the CEO or their designee to make the report for you.
  - *The Florida Abuse Hotline accepts reports 24 hours a day and 7 days a week; an Abuse Hotline Counselor will determine if the information provided meets legal requirements to accept or report for investigation.*
- **How to make a report**
  - There are four ways to make a report:
    - Call the FLORIDA ABUSE HOTLINE 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873) and be prepared to provide the following:
      - 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.
- Report online at <https://reportabuse.dcf.state.fl.us/>
- Florida Relay 711 or TTY 800-453-5145
- Fax your report to 800-914-0004
- When reporting a suspected case of abuse, neglect or abandonment, unless you are a professionally mandated reporter, you do not have to give your name, but it is helpful to give your name in case more information is needed. The names of reporters are held confidential, and under Florida State Statutory requirements, should not be released to the individuals the report is about.
- It is also customary to notify the CEO designee of the report as an additional level of support, and for the Council to mitigate any potential risks that may be involved.

### **3.5 Social Media Policy**

- Troops/groups and service units may create a website and/or use social media to promote Girl Scouting or communicate with members. When creating websites or using other forms of social media, including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, Tumblr, at least one adult GSSEF volunteer must be an “owner” of the accounts and/or website.
- Troops/groups and service units using social media must adhere to the age requirements established by social media sites. All minor Girl Scouts must obtain parental permission to use the troop/group website or social media accounts.
- Girl family members/guardians must be invited to become members of all troop/group and service unit social media accounts and given links to any troop/group websites.
- All volunteer and/or girl created social media accounts should be clearly identified as belonging to a particular troop/group or service unit and state they are maintained by volunteer(s) and/or girl(s) and are not the official site of GSSEF.

### **3.6 Tagalong Policy**

- Tagalong(s) must be chaperoned by a minimum of one adult at all times during Council-sponsored meetings, programs, events, learning sessions, etc., who is dedicated to this group exclusively. The adult chaperone will not be counted as part of the required adult-to-girl ratio for registered Girl Scouts to attend or participate in meetings, programs, events, etc.

- The adult chaperone is required to physically stay present with the tagalong(s) at all times. This adult will be considered responsible and liable for the tagalong(s). This adult chaperone will ensure tagalongs do not disrupt or interfere with the programs/events, etc.
- Adult chaperones for tagalongs must adhere to the following adult-to-child ratios at all times: 1 adult to 1 child under the age of 24 months. 1 adult to 2 children ages 2 – 5 years. 2 adults to 3-4 children ages 2-5 years. 3 adults to 5 or more children ages 2-5 years. 1 adult for every 3 children ages 6-17.
- Adult tagalongs (defined here as, “any person over the age of 18 who is not affiliated with Girl Scouts, but who is along for the activity.”) may request to attend any Council-sponsored activity in advance.
- Adult chaperones and adult tagalongs may be required to submit a background check prior to admittance based on the type of activity offered; this is at the discretion of CEO designee.

NOTE: Tagalongs are defined by GSUSA and GSSEF as: “people not officially affiliated with Girl Scouts, but who are along for the activity.” Tagalongs include any children under the age of 5 or children under the age of 18 years who are not registered Girl Scouts.

NOTE: GSSEF reserves the right to prohibit tagalongs from attending any Council-sponsored meeting, program, event, etc. by adding this distinction to the program description or registration materials.

NOTE: Prices to attend Council-sponsored meetings, program, events, adult learning, etc. will be set based on each individual activity. If there is no charge for tagalongs stated in the program description then there will be no planned activities or supplies for the tagalongs. Adult chaperones should ensure the tagalongs have activities of their own.

NOTE: Troops and Service Units may be held financially responsible for additional insurance coverage costs for tagalongs.

## **4.0 SERVICE UNIT POLICIES**

### **4.1 Service Unit Volunteer Structure**

- To maintain Service Unit viability, including adult development and girl program offerings, the following Service Unit volunteer positions are required:
  - Service Unit Volunteer Manager (SUVM)
  - Assistant Service Unit Volunteer Manager (ASUVM)
  - Service Unit Registrar
  - Service Unit Program Manager
  - Service Unit Recruiter
  - SU Product Sale(s) Manager

NOTE: The position of Service Unit Recruiter has three individual/seasonal position descriptions for fall, spring, and summer – but may be filled by one (or more) registered volunteers who are willing to serve in more than one role. The position of Service Unit Product Sale Manager has two individual position descriptions for the Fall Product Sale and Cookie Sale, but may be filled by one registered volunteer willing to serve in both roles. Individuals may be considered for up to two positions within the Service Unit Volunteer Structure.

#### Procedure for placement in Service Unit volunteer positions:

All requisite Service Unit volunteer positions are required to be filled by August 1 (annually), with the exception of the Service Unit Product Sale(s) Manager for the Fall Product Sale, which must be filled by June 1 (annually).

### **4.2 Service Unit Finances**

#### **4.2.1 Sales Tax Exemption**

- In accordance with Florida State Statutes, the Florida Department of Revenue and the Florida Administrative Code, GSSEF's exemption from Sales and Use Tax does not extend to the Troop or Service Unit components of GSSEF.

#### **4.2.2 Service Unit Bank Accounts**

- All monies used by and for the Service Units must be kept in a bank account at an accredited financial institution chosen by GSSEF for tracking/documentation purposes. All bank accounts are required to have a minimum of two unrelated, registered volunteers as authorized signers.

- A GSSEF staff member CEO designee is required to be a signer on all Service Unit bank accounts.
- All requests to open or close a Service Unit bank account, or make changes to an existing account (such as, adding or removing account signers) must be processed by GSSEF.

#### Procedure for Changing Signers on Service Unit Bank Accounts

All requests to open or close a SU bank account, or to add or remove account signers must be initiated by the Service Unit Volunteer Manager. Requests for changes must be communicated in writing to the CEO designee for review, approval and processing.

- GSSEF requires the address of record with the banking institution be the mailing address of one of the account signers; the mailing address of record may not be either Service Center address.
- The Service Unit Volunteer Manager or designated Service Unit Leadership Team member will be accountable for any bank charges incurred due to checks written on closed accounts, overdraft fees, etc.
- A financial report is required to reconcile all Service Unit bank accounts by August 31 (annually) to cover all activity in the account for the previous year ending June 30.
- An allocation of funds to the Service Units is subject to availability within the GSSEF operating budget. These funds are designated for Service Unit activities that advance the GSSEF agenda, including recruitment, volunteer recognition and girl program.
- Checks made payable to GSSEF and/or GSUSA and received by the Service Unit must be submitted to GSSEF (e.g. any Service Center or any individual staff member) within 45 days of the check date. Should any check submitted within the required timeframe be returned, GSSEF will take the responsibility for initiating the collection of insufficient funds and fees. If the Service Unit holds any check beyond 45 days, the Service Unit may be held responsible for face-value of the check and all applicable bank service fees.

#### **4.2.3 Service Unit Money Earning**

- Service Units (i.e. its registered volunteer or member representatives) are permitted to solicit in-kind goods and services up to a value of \$250.00 per gift.
- Service Unit money-earning activities are prohibited during the Council sponsored product sales.

Procedure for Service Unit Money Earning:

All Service Unit money earning projects must be approved by the CEO designee prior to starting.

- The Service Unit must obtain written approval from the CEO designee at least six weeks prior to the proposed money earning project date(s).

### **4.3 Service Unit Boundaries**

- Geographic boundaries for “cookie booth” selling locations are not limited by the council’s Service Unit boundaries. Geographic boundaries related to “cookie booth” selling locations will be set annually, by the CEO or her designee in the Product Sale department, in order to best meet the interest of girls/troops/groups wishing to take part in the program, potential/available “cookie booth” locations and public demand for product.

Procedure for temporary modification to Service Unit boundaries:

The Service Unit Volunteer Manager (SUV) and Service Unit Product Sale Manager(s) will be informed of modifications made to the Service Unit’s regular geographic boundaries, in regard to the annual Cookie Sale Program, via email with a minimum of 45 days prior to the first date of the approved sales period.

### **4.4 Use of the Girl Scout Brand**

The Girl Scout brand is a system of easily recognizable, well-thought out graphics, colors, layout schemes and more that helps support our brand story and unify our communications. The guidelines provided by Girl Scouts of the USA and upheld by Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida promote a consistent brand voice across the Movement to create a sense of sisterhood, leadership and accessibility for members everywhere.

- All volunteers are expected to comply with the GSUSA brand standards when creating any items with the Girl Scout servicemark (GS logo), profiles (trefoil with girls’ faces) or trefoil on it. Examples of this include, but are not limited to, Service Unit banners for parades, patches for camporees and troop t-shirts.

Procedure for use of the Girl Scout brand:

A GSUSA licensed vendor should be used for any item with the Girl Scout brand on it that is being sold or included as part of a fee-based program or event.

A non-licensed vendor of your choice may be used for any item with the Girl Scout brand on it that is not for resale or is given away. Examples include, but are not limited to awards, promotional items for recruitment and gifts.

In order to ensure compliance with the brand standards, all designs must be emailed to marcomm@gsef.org to be approved by the CEO designee, at least two weeks prior to production.

## 5.0 TROOP/GROUP POLICIES

### 5.1 Troop/Group Leadership

- Troop/group volunteer leadership must include a minimum of two unrelated registered volunteers. Additional registered volunteers may be required to meet adult to girl ratios. (See "Volunteer Essentials" Chapter 4 on "Knowing How Many Adults You Need.")
- Each troop/group must have at least one female registered volunteer Leader who is at least 18 years of age, has completed a satisfactory criminal background check, and agrees to meet the training requirements for the position.
- Male registered volunteers may serve in a troop/group; which includes being designated as the Leader with a minimum of one unrelated female adult volunteer who serves the same troop/group as Co-Leader.
- Male registered volunteers may participate and/or accompany girl members on overnight activities (e.g. trips, travel, programs, etc.) provided separate sleeping and restroom/bathing accommodations are assured, with a minimum of two unrelated female registered volunteers.
- Parental level of involvement in Troop operations/activities is at the discretion of the Troop Leader.
- Troop leaders may not discriminate or deny any girl membership into their troops.

### 5.2 Troop/Group Size

- A troop/group must consist of at least 12 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	12– 15 Girls
Grades 2 & 3	Brownies	12– 25 Girls
Grades 4 & 5	Juniors	12– 30 Girls
Grades 6, 7 & 8	Cadettes	12– 30 Girls
Grades 9 & 10	Seniors	12– 30 Girls
Grades 11 & 12	Ambassadors	12– 30 Girls



### **5.3 Troop/Group Meeting Location**

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

Procedure for maintaining a current record of the troop meeting location:

Troop Leaders are required to supply the address for the regular and permanent meeting location within 60 days of troop formation/troop number assignment. Troop Leaders are required to update the Council in writing, with changes in the troop's regular and permanent meeting location within 14 days of the change. The information is also required as part of the Troop/Group End of Year Report. The deadline for submission of the completed Troop/Group End of Year Report is July 31 (annually).

- Troops with a regular and permanent meeting location, at an approved GSSEF operated property, will be assigned to one Service Unit at the discretion of the CEO designee in the council's membership registration department.

### **5.4 Girl Placement into Troops**

- Volunteers and Council membership staff work together to place girls in troops. Possibilities include forming new troops and placing girls in current troops. Volunteers and Council membership staff will examine troop sizes to see where girls can be added to current troops to meet the troop size recommendations.
- Troop availability should be listed in the Opportunity Catalog.

### **5.5 Sales Tax Exemption**

- In accordance with Florida State Statutes, the Florida Department of Revenue and the Florida Administrative Code, GSSEF's exemption from Sales and Use Tax does not extend to the Troop or Service Unit components of GSSEF.

### **5.6 Troop/Group Bank Accounts**

- All troop/group funds must be held in a troop/group bank account. Bank accounts will be established and managed by registered volunteers and are required to have at least two unrelated signers (e.g. no existing familial relationship by birth or by marriage); only one signature is required for transactions.
- Adults responsible for troop/group finances must be registered volunteers.

- Two registered volunteers from the same family or household are not permitted to be signers on a bank account.
- GSSEF requires the address of record with the banking institution be the mailing address of one of the account signers; the mailing address of record may not be either Service Center address.
- Disbanding or disbanded troops/groups are required to transfer any remaining funds in the bank account to the GSSEF general operating fund; funds do not become the property of any individual, girl or adult.
- A complete financial report must be submitted to the CEO designee no later than the deadline date indicated on the troop/group financial form.

Procedure for submitting the troop/group End of Year Reports:

The deadline for submission of the completed Troop/Group End of Year Report is July 31<sup>st</sup> (annually) to cover all activity in the account for the previous year ending June 30th. Troop bank account procedures and forms can be found in the Forms and Documents page at [www.gssef.org](http://www.gssef.org). Contact the CEO designee for more information.

Procedure for disbanding troop/group finances:

The signers on the bank account must close the account and immediately submit a Troop/Group End of Year Report with the bank check for the proceeds from the closed account to the GSSEF Finance Department. Contact the CEO designee for more information.

NOTE: Failure to complete the Troop End of Year Report, by the deadline indicated may result in, but is not limited to disbanding of the Troop or dismissal of the Leader.

NOTE: GSSEF strongly recommends adult troop/group registered volunteers utilize the funds held in the troop/group bank account to re-register all girl members, during the annual "Early Bird" re-registration period.

## **5.7 Troop/Group Money Earning**

- Girl members may not engage in any direct solicitation for money in an official Girl Scout capacity, including as a troop/group. Direct solicitation includes, but is not limited to, raising funds for other charities such as walk-a-thons benefiting non-profit organizations or the selling of third-party goods and services (e.g. PartyLite, AVON, Pampered Chef, Tupperware, etc.)

- All girl member money-earning projects, other than GSSEF sponsored product sales must be approved by the CEO designee, prior to starting. This includes any request for funds or merchandise or in-kind donations to support troop/group activities.
- In order to be considered eligible to submit an application to conduct a money-earning project proposal, a troop/group is required to participate in its two most recent, consecutive GSSEF sponsored product sales, based on the date of the project proposal. Exceptions shall be made if the girl member(s) or troop/group was not registered in GSSEF.
- Troop/group registered volunteers (e.g. Leader, Co-Leader, etc.) Must obtain written approval from the CEO designee at least six weeks prior to the proposed money-earning project date(s).
- Troop/group money earning projects may not be conducted during the sale dates for the GSSEF Cookie Sale program.

Procedure for troop/group money-earning applications:

The Troop/Group Money-Earning Application can be found in the Forms and Documents page [www.gssef.org](http://www.gssef.org) or contact a staff member at one of the GSSEF service centers. Money-Earning Applications should be submitted to the CEO designee for evaluation and approval.

## **5.8 Troop/Group Donation Solicitation**

- Activities related to soliciting cash gifts or in-kind donations (e.g. merchandise, goods, services, etc.) by a troop/group with a value of \$250.00 or more must be approved by the CEO designee prior to solicitation or request.
- All donations made to a troop or group, in any amount or value, must be recorded on the Troop End of Year Report.

Procedure for soliciting cash or in-kind donations:

Request for permission to solicit donations must be submitted to the CEO designee in writing, via email. This correspondence must include: troop number; name of the registered volunteer submitting the request, day phone number, email address, name of potential donor sponsor, type of gift being requested, approximate value (if known) and the intended use of donation. Upon approval, the troop must submit a Troop/Group Sponsorship Agreement Form, which can be found on the Forms and Documents page at [www.gssef.org](http://www.gssef.org).

- Adult members who are employed by a company offering a matching gift/company-sponsored grant program (for employees or spouses) benefiting nonprofit organizations may apply for such funds on behalf of a troop/group. After completing the individual company's application process, the adult member must submit the Matching Gift/Company-Sponsored Volunteer Grant Designation Form to the CEO designee.

Procedure for matching gift/company-sponsored volunteer grant:

The Matching Gift/Company Sponsored Volunteer Grant Designation Form must be submitted to the CEO designee, via email, within 7 days of the request. Include the company's application, if available. The Matching Gift/Company Sponsored Volunteer Grant Designation Form, can be found on the Forms and Documents page at [www.gssef.org](http://www.gssef.org).

- Troop/group and adult members may not submit letters of intent or grant proposals to private foundations, corporate foundations or public/governmental funders on behalf of Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida, or contact such staff directly for solicitation of support.
- Requests for special consideration to solicit support through grant funding may be submitted in writing, prior to the request, to the CEO designee.

Procedure to request special consideration for grant funding:

A request for consideration to solicit a grant proposal must be received a minimum of 60 days prior to a grant deadline. Requests may be sent to the CEO designee, via email, with the troop number, name of the registered volunteer submitting the request, day phone number, email address, name of potential grantor, type of gift being requested, approximate value (if known) and the intended use of donation.

NOTE: Examples of requests for special consideration of grant funding may include, but are not limited to: approved Gold Award projects, approved Silver Award projects or large-scale community service projects.

NOTE: Failure to comply with the policies for the solicitation of matching gifts, sponsorships, grants or in-kind donations may result in, but is not limited to dismissal of the Leader and/or repayment or return of the donation.

## **5.9 Use of the Girl Scout Brand**

The Girl Scout brand is a system of easily recognizable, well-thought out graphics, colors, layout schemes and more that helps support our brand story and unify our communications. The guidelines provided by Girl Scouts of the USA and upheld by Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida promote a consistent brand voice across the Movement to create a sense of sisterhood, leadership and accessibility for members everywhere.

- All volunteers are expected to comply with the GSUSA brand standards when creating any items with the Girl Scout servicemark (GS logo), profiles (trefoil with girls' faces) or trefoil on it. Examples of this include, but are not limited to, Service Unit banners for parades, patches for camporees and troop t-shirts.

Procedure for use of the Girl Scout brand:

A GSUSA licensed vendor should be used for any item with the Girl Scout brand on it that is being sold or included as part of a fee-based program or event.

A non-licensed vendor of your choice may be used for any item with the Girl Scout brand on it that is not for resale or is given away. Examples include, but are not limited to awards, promotional items for recruitment and gifts.

In order to ensure compliance with the brand standards, all designs must be emailed to marcomm@gsef.org to be approved by the CEO designee, at least two weeks prior to production.

## **5.10 Troop/Group Debt**

- Troop/group registered volunteers 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.)
- Troop/group leaders are responsible for troop debt incurred to GSSEF and may be released from all volunteer leadership positions held if the troop/group debt is not satisfied.
- Any troop/group with an outstanding debt to GSSEF may be restricted from future program registration, retail purchases, etc.
- Any parent debt not reported to the Council will become the sole responsibility of the troop to collect.

Procedures for troop/group debt collection:

It is the responsibility of the troop/group Leader to properly balance bank accounts. It is the responsibility of the account signers to contact the GSSEF Finance Department immediately upon receiving a debt notice, in order to settle the matter and avoid further action.

A troop leader who owes a debt to GSSEF will be subject to the following collection process:

- A request for payment will be made by GSSEF following bank notification.
- After 30 days a letter will be mailed to the registered volunteer Leader(s) of the 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 certified letter will be mailed to the registered volunteer Leader(s) of the troop/group restating the amount past due and requesting immediate payment upon receipt of the letter.
- In the event the amount due remains unpaid following the previous steps, GSSEF will seek any and 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.

### **5.11 Accident Reporting**

- In the event of accident or injury, the incident must be reported immediately and the required accident report must be submitted to the CEO designee within 48 hours. The Girl Scout Activity insurance is available only to registered members engaged in approved Girl Scout activities.

Procedure for accident reporting:

Accident report forms can be found in the Forms and Documents page at [www.gssef.org](http://www.gssef.org). Reports of accident/injury to girl and adult members are to be submitted to the CEO designee indicated on the accident report form.

## **6.0 TRIPS AND TRAVEL**

- All troop/group travel and activities must be approved by the CEO designee to protect girls and registered volunteers 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.
- For trips longer than three days and two nights and all international travel, troops/groups must secure additional Girl Scout insurance.

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

- A volunteer certified in CPR/First Aid ("First Aid-er") is required to attend all troop trips.

## Procedure for Trip Approval:

### **Temporary Change of Meeting Location**

Defined as an activity taking place at a time or location different from the regular troop meeting location/time. Notification is required to confirm the activity is Girl Scout related so that the Girl Scout Insurance is available to members in the event of an accident during the meeting.

A temporary change of meeting notification form must be submitted **prior to the start** of the meeting.

NOTE: A separate form will need to be submitted for each meeting change occurrence. If you need to update your troop record with a new regular/permanent meeting location, please notify your Member Support Specialist.

### **Day Trip**

Defined as an activity that takes place in one day and does not take the place of a regularly scheduled Troop Meeting (ex. Visiting the fire station, participating in a beach clean-up).

Submit all documentation listed below a minimum of **14 days** prior to the date of the day activity or trip:

- Day Trip Travel Application

### **Overnight Troop Travel**

#### **Simple Overnight Trip**

2 consecutive nights or less (3 consecutive nights, when one of the nights is a federal holiday, such as Memorial or Labor Day).

Submit all documentation listed below a minimum of **3 weeks** in advance of trip:

- Overnight Troop Travel Application

#### **Extended Trip**

If the trip is longer than 2 consecutive nights, (3 consecutive nights, when one of the nights is a federal holiday, such as Memorial or Labor Day).

Submit all documentation listed below a minimum of **6 weeks** in advance of trip:

- Overnight Troop Travel Application
- GSSEF Enrollment Request for **Extended Girl Scout Insurance** (with payment)

### **International trip**

Includes cruises and troop trips overseas.

Submit all documentation listed below a minimum of **90 days** in advance of trip:

- Overnight Troop Travel Application
- GSSEF Enrollment Request for Extended Girl Scout Insurance (with payment)
- Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida Permission to Travel Form for Minors (must be Notarized prior to submission)
- GSSEF Hold Harmless Agreement
- International Troop Trip Roster

### **6.1 Accident Reporting**

- In the event of accident or injury, the incident must be reported immediately and the required accident report must be submitted to the CEO designee within 48 hours. The Girl Scout Activity insurance is available only to registered members engaged in approved Girl Scout activities.

Procedure for accident reporting:

Accident report forms can be found in the Forms and Documents page at [www.gssef.org](http://www.gssef.org). Reports of accident/injury to girl and adult members are to be submitted to the CEO designee indicated on the accident report form.

## **7.0 CAMPING POLICIES**

### **7.1 Troop/Group**

- The proper girl/adult ratio, as outlined in the GSUSA "Safety Activity Checkpoints" must be maintained for a troop/group to participate in any overnight camping experience, additionally:
- Two registered volunteers are required. Girl/adult ratios must be maintained at all times.
- One registered volunteer with the appropriate level of GSSEF outdoor skills training (i.e. "camp trained" adult)
- One registered volunteer who is First Aid trained and certified (note: this person cannot be the same person as the "camp trained" adult)

NOTE: One person with the appropriate level of GSSEF outdoor skills training must be age 18 or older. One person with certified First Aid training must be age 18 or older.



NOTE: Proper registered volunteer coverage, including required training and certifications as specified above, is required at each separate site or all Service Unit and troop/group programs held on any camp property. Programs include, but are not limited to camporees.

## **7.2 Service Unit (Camporee/In-gathering)**

- Service Units holding camporees will designate two volunteers to attend all sessions of required annual camporee training. Service Units that do not attend camporee training will not be permitted to host camporees or in-gatherings.
- Girl/adult ratios must be maintained at all times.
- One registered volunteer with the appropriate level of GSSEF outdoor skills training (i.e. "camp trained" adult) per site used.
- One registered volunteer who is First Aid trained and certified (note: this person cannot be the same person as the "camp trained" adult) per site used.
- Space and facilities designated for disabled individuals will be used as needed and requested.
- Failure to accommodate individuals with disabilities will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from and all appointed leadership volunteer positions held.

NOTE: One person with the appropriate level of GSSEF outdoor skills training must be age 18 or older. One person with certified CPR/First Aid training must be age 18 or older.

NOTE: Proper registered volunteer coverage, including required training and certifications as specified above, is required at each separate site or all Service Unit and troop/group programs held on any camp property.

## **7.3 Accident Reporting**

- In the event of accident or injury, the incident must be reported immediately and the required accident report must be submitted to the CEO designee within 48 hours. The Girl Scout Activity insurance is available only to registered members engaged in approved Girl Scout activities.

Procedure for accident reporting:

Accident report forms can be found in the Forms and Documents page at [www.gssef.org](http://www.gssef.org). Reports of accident/injury to girl and adult members are to be submitted to the CEO designee indicated on the accident report form.

#### **7.4 Property Use**

Commercial kitchens are inspected by local health departments and have requirements and equipment that create unique training needs and additional costs to operate.

Therefore:

- No one under the age of 18 may be present in the kitchen.
- The adult-in-charge in the kitchen must have a current Serve Safe Kitchen Manager Certification.
- The adult-in-charge must attend on-site kitchen orientation (scheduled individually) with camp staff prior to the event.

#### **8.0 TRANSPORTATION**

- Adults transporting girls, in vehicles, must be registered volunteers.
- Drivers must be age twenty-five or older.
- Drivers are responsible for the safe operation of their vehicle.
- No driver will be permitted to operate a motor vehicle when alertness is considered impaired, through such ailments as fatigue, illness, etc. as to make operating a vehicle unsafe for the driver or passengers.
- Safety belts (i.e. seat belts) must be used and worn properly, at all times, by both the driver and all occupants of the vehicle.
- One safety belt for each occupant/passenger is required.
- Drivers will follow all FL laws regarding child restraint requirements.
- When a troop/group is traveling in one vehicle, there must be at least two unrelated, registered volunteers in the vehicle, one of whom is female. The girl/adult ratios must be followed.

- When a troop/group is traveling in more than one vehicle, the entire group must consist of at least two unrelated, registered adult volunteers, one of whom is female. The girl-volunteer ratios must be followed. Care should be taken so that a single car (with a single adult driver) is not separated from the group for an extended length of time.
- Drivers are not permitted to use a hand-held cellular device while transporting girls, per FL State Statute, 316.305, Wireless communications devices; prohibition.
- Drivers are not permitted to smoke while transporting girls.
- Parking and traffic fines incurred while utilizing vehicles during a Girl Scout activity are the sole responsibility of the driver and will not be paid (or reimbursed) by GSSEF or through use of troop/group funds.
- Parents/guardians must be notified in writing of the specific type of vehicle, privately owned or borrowed vehicles, used to transport girls; including the passenger capacity of the vehicle and whether the vehicle is privately owned or borrowed.
- Anyone who is driving a vehicle with 12 or more passengers must be a professional driver who possesses a commercial driver's license (CDL).

NOTE: Drivers who operate commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) with passengers are required to possess the proper endorsement according to the regulations of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). In the State of Florida a CDL Class C license, with Passenger (P) endorsement, and no restrictions, is required to transport passengers.

- Fifteen (15) passenger vans are deemed unsafe and strictly prohibited. Fifteen (15) passenger vans may never be used to transport girls.
- Drivers are required to report all accidents occurring while engaged in Girl Scout activities within 24 hours; required documentation includes police reports.
- Registered volunteers may be restricted/prohibited from transporting girl members for instances including, but not limited to, involvement in multiple traffic accidents, demonstrated disregard for the safety of the public/passengers, excessive speeding, reckless driving, driving under the influence, driving with suspended/revoked driver's license or failure to report an accident.

NOTE: All drivers must be background checked (i.e. registered volunteers), and over the age of 25 in order to transport children.

Procedure for reporting a vehicle accident:

- Registered volunteer is responsible for contacting the CEO designee to report the incident within 24 hours.
- All documentation must be completed, along with police report and given to the CEO designee within 24 hours of the incident.
- Failure to comply may be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to membership dismissal.

## **8.1 Accident Reporting**

- In the event of accident or injury, the incident must be reported immediately and the required accident report must be submitted to the CEO designee within 48 hours. The Girl Scout Activity insurance is available only to registered members engaged in approved Girl Scout activities.

Procedure for accident reporting:

Accident report forms can be found in the Forms and Documents page at [www.gssef.org](http://www.gssef.org). Reports of accident/injury to girl and adult members are to be submitted to the CEO designee indicated on the accident report form.

## **9.0 CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND GRIEVANCE POLICY**

GSSEF makes all attempts to communicate with registered volunteers and affiliated adults to resolve conflicts and disputes as they arise. When these attempts cannot satisfactorily meet the involved parties' needs the issue is deemed a grievance.

- A grievance is a dispute over the interpretation or application of a GSSEF policy, practice or procedure by a registered volunteer, affiliated adult, or staff member to document a failure to comply with the GSSEF "Volunteer Policies and Procedures."
- Based on the result of the investigation of a grievance, disciplinary action, up to and including separation from volunteer service, may be taken.

Procedure for submitting a volunteer grievance:

If a registered volunteer has contacted her/his supervisor and is unable to resolve the grievance through conflict resolution as outlined in "Volunteer Essentials," - the following steps can be taken. The initiation of the grievance procedure will not restrict GSSEF 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 registered volunteer initiates the process by completing the grievance form and requesting a conference with her/his supervisor. Grievance forms are available upon

request. The registered 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 GSSEF staff member, the appropriate staff member is informed of the complaint and the date of the conference prior to the meeting. The GSSEF 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 GSSEF staff member or, if appropriate, the GSSEF staff member's supervisor will meet with the registered 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 GSSEF 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 GSSEF staff member's report and recommendations, or, CEO meets with the registered volunteer to hear the grievance and resolve the grievance, or, CEO appoints a Grievance Review Team to meet with the registered volunteer and resolve the grievance.

The Grievance Review Team is comprised of:

A management representative (i.e. registered volunteer currently serving in supervisory role/position or a current board member); A GSSEF staff member not involved in the conflict resolution process; and a registered 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 GSSEF's final decision. The CEO will communicate the final decision from the Grievance Review Team to the registered volunteer and implement the decision.

Procedure for Volunteer Release/Dismissal:

In the event it is deemed necessary to dismiss a volunteer, the following shall occur:

- The registered volunteer being released from a position shall be fully informed of the reasons for release.
- Staff will take reasonable measures to preserve the confidentiality of the parties through the release process, but shall have the right to share information with appropriate staff, advisors, and affected volunteers and parents on a need to know basis.