



**Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama
Volunteer Policies and Procedures**

Girl Scout Promise, Law, and Mission

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.

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.

Girl Scout Mission

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

*Girl Scouts of the USA makes no attempt to define or interpret the word "God" in the Girl Scout Promise. It looks to individual members to establish for themselves the nature of their spiritual beliefs. When making the Girl Scout Promise, individuals may substitute wording appropriate to their own spiritual beliefs for the word "God." Note: This disclaimer appears in the National Leadership Journey adult guides, but not in the girls' books. It is included here as a reminder to you, as a volunteer, that it is your responsibility to be sensitive to the spiritual beliefs of the girls and adults in your group and to make sure that everyone in the group feels comfortable and included in Girl Scouting. Please feel free to share this information with girls' families.

Introduction

The Volunteer Policies & Procedures of Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama (GSSA) are established upon the principle that the direction and success of Girl Scouting rests in the voluntary participation of qualified and trained adult members.

This document outlines the policies and guidelines/procedures of GSSA. It is not the intent of this document to repeat national policies, but to adopt specific policies to provide clarification needed to be defined for local use. These policies and procedures are intended to provide the basis for reasonable and consistent guidance for our volunteers. Volunteers are not employees of Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama, and the policies, guidelines, and procedures contained herein do not constitute an employment contract and are subject to change at the discretion of the Board of Directors of Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama.

All members of Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) are responsible for adhering to GSSA's Volunteer Policies and Procedures, as well as policies, practices, procedures, and guidelines 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.

In addition to all the standard volunteer policies for Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama, Board Members have additional policies and standards of conduct that apply to that particular position that are reviewed after election to the Board. A Board Member may not, while serving as a member of the Council Board of Directors, serve in any operational volunteer position for GSSA.

Within this document, the term "GSSA" is used interchangeably with the words "the Council." The term "Volunteer" is defined as any person who is not a paid staff member, who is approved and appointed by GSSA and delivers Girl Scout programming. Their participation affects the health, safety, and/or finances of the girl or adult membership.

These policies and procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect the volunteer management goals GSSA, the current policies and trends in Girl Scouts, as well as current legislative requirements.

Table of Contents

Girl Scout Promise, Law, and Mission

Introduction

Part 1: GSSA Volunteer Policies

Accident Insurance

Adult Volunteers

Background Check

Camping

Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention

Conflict of Interest

Conflict Resolution

Confidentiality

Finance—Financial Accountability

Finance—Troop Bank Account

Finance—Service Unit Bank Account

Finance—Financial Implications of Troop Changes

Finance—Money-Earning Projects

Finance—IRS Compliance

Financial Assistance/Scholarships

Grade Retention

Harassment

Male Caregivers

Product Sales

Property

Public Displays of Affection

Public Relations

Release of Operational Volunteer

Specialized Certifications

Substance Use

Transportation – Private Vehicles

Transportation – Rented, Leased, Chartered, or Loaned Vehicles

Trips – Day Trips

Trips – Overnight

Uniforms

Volunteer Role Reappointment

Waiting List

Weapons

Whistleblower

Part 2: GSSA Policy Guidance and Procedures

Accident Insurance

Adult Volunteers

Background Check

Camping

Child Abuse and Neglect

Conflict of Interest

Confidentiality

Finance—Financial Accountability

Finance—Troop Bank Account

Finance—Service Unit Bank Account

Finance—Financial Implications of Troop Changes

Finance—Money-Earning Projects

Finance—IRS Compliance

Financial Assistance/Scholarships

Grade Retention

Harassment

Male Caregivers

Product Sales

Property

Public Displays of Affection

Public Relations

Release of Operational Volunteer

Specialized Certifications

Substance Use

Transportation—Private Vehicles

Transportation—Rented, Leased, Chartered, or Loaned Vehicles

Trips—Day Trips

Trips—Overnight

Uniforms

Volunteer Role Reappointment

Waiting List

Weapons

Whistleblower

Part 1: GSSA Volunteer Policies

Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama (GSSA) is a nonprofit corporation, chartered by Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA). Policies are established upon the principle that successful accomplishment of goals and objectives is based upon qualified and trained volunteers.

Volunteers sign a Volunteer Position Agreement, which is a promise to follow these policies as they carry out their responsibilities. Volunteers found to be violating GSSA policies may face disciplinary action.

Policies apply to all persons accompanying or participating with individual members, Troops, or groups. Individual members, Troops or groups will collectively be referred to herein as "Troops."

Accident Insurance

All current registered Girl Scout members are protected under Girl Scout Activity Accident Insurance when participating in approved Girl Scout activities. A person is a registered Girl Scout member when her/his registration form and membership fee are both received. Basic Accident Insurance coverage is effective for the duration of the current membership year. This plan provides coverage for accidental medical expenses to registered members traveling to and from, and participating in approved, supervised Girl Scout activities such as Troop outings and Troop meetings. Additional Insurance is required for non-members who are not participating in a Girl Scout-sponsored and supervised activity and/or International travel.

Any serious accident or fatality must be reported immediately to the appropriate authorities, as well as to GSSA.

Adult Volunteers

Adult (age 19 or older, as defined by Alabama law) volunteers are required to sign agreements, and receive an eligible background check result, provided by GSSA's third party vendor, Sterling Volunteers, prior to approval. Adult volunteer approval is based on the ability to perform the volunteer position, volunteer and council need, participation in training, and qualifications for membership in Girl Scouts.

There shall be no discrimination against an otherwise qualified adult volunteer based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, or political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Volunteers who do not comply with the volunteer eligibility process, described above,

will be denied.

Background Check

Caregivers and youth members trust that Girl Scouts is a safe place for them, and Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama takes this trust seriously. GSSA is committed to maintaining policies and procedures that create a safe environment for our members. Criminal background checks are one of the strategies we use to ensure that members are safe. GSSA requires that criminal background checks be completed for all new volunteers, and that they be repeated for all volunteers every three years. GSSA also reserves the right to conduct checks on volunteers regarding abuse and neglect cases. GSSA will not approve an adult who has been convicted of, has pleaded guilty to, has received adjudication for, or has pleaded no contest to the following crimes:

Automatic Disqualification

Registered Sex Offender

Crimes against children

Felony offenses against persons

Felony offenses against a family member

Crimes defined as public indecency

Crimes involving the use of weapons

Any violent crime

Any felony drug-related offense

Any felony conviction within the five (5) year period preceding the background check

Any offense involving driving under the influence, driving while intoxicated or equivalent within the five (5) year period preceding the background check will be automatically disqualified but may be eligible for reversal upon appeal by prospective volunteer

Residing on the same premises as a registered sex offender (may only participate as a caregiver for their own Girl Scout, may not be involved in supervision of other members)

Possible Disqualification

For all other criminal offenses, or felony convictions older than the five-year period, GSSA shall review the applicant's situation on a case-by-case basis. Factors to be considered include, but are not limited to:

The nature and severity of the criminal conduct

The position for which the person seeks to volunteer

The length of time since the criminal conduct occurred

The circumstances under which the crime was committed

The degree of rehabilitation

The likelihood that the person will commit the crime again

The number of crimes committed by the prospective volunteer

If prosecution regarding one of the above-referenced offenses is pending at the time of the volunteer's application, the individual will not be approved until the situation is resolved.

Possible Restrictions May Include

Eligible except cannot hold administrative roles

Eligible except cannot supervise/work with girls

Eligible except cannot drive

Eligible except cannot handle finances

Eligible except cannot meet in the volunteer's home

Not product eligible

Camping

Troops going camping must follow Safety Activity Checkpoints, camping requirements, and adhere to GSSA Trip Policies. Reference Overnight Trip Application.

Requirements for Troop Camping:

- At least one Overnight Essentials certified adult (19+)
- At least one Outdoor Essentials (basic Troop Camping) Certified adult (19+).
- At least one First Aid/CPR/AED certified adult (19+).
- An adult (19+) with certification from an approved organization related to any planned activities (e.g., GSSA Small Watercraft for canoeing/kayaking, GSSA Archery for arching, Red Cross Lifeguarding for swimming, etc.).
- A health form for each youth member and for each adult in attendance.

Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention

GSSA supports and maintains environments that are free of child abuse and neglect as defined by the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act. Volunteers and GSSA Staff members are provided with opportunities to receive Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention training.

All renewing and registering adults, by completing the registration process, agree to abide by Girl Scouts' No Tolerance for abuse policies and procedures.

GSSA requires that any person suspected of child abuse or neglect be suspended from all Girl Scout activities until the matter is resolved. GSSA staff and volunteers are required to cooperate fully with investigating authorities and provide all possible

support to the affected girls and their families.

Any volunteer who resides with a convicted child sex offender shall not allow the offender to attend any Girl Scout activity or allow any girl members to be alone with the offender. This includes the offender's presence at any residence and in any vehicle being used for a Girl Scout activity.

In Alabama, the Department of Human Resources is mandated by law to receive and investigate reports of suspected child abuse. All Girl Scout staff and volunteers are required to report child abuse or neglect when reasonable grounds exist to suspect it. These concerns should be documented and reported immediately to the local county Alabama Department of Human Resources office and to Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama through Customer Care.

Conflict of Interest

Volunteers and members of their families, whether acting individually or in representative capacities, are prohibited from using the volunteer's Girl Scouting position, knowledge, or information to obtain personal, professional, political, or financial gain, or advantage for the volunteer or for others. Volunteers may discuss their situation with a council staff representative if there is a question of conflict of interest.

Conflict Resolution

For purposes of this policy, a conflict is defined as any kind of disagreement between two or more people. Conflicts and disagreements are an inevitable part of life, and when handled constructively can enhance communication and relationships. GSSA is committed to providing individuals the right to a safe and neutral process to resolve conflicts. Recognizing that each individual has both a personal interest in and a share of the responsibility for resolving conflicts in which she or he is involved, GSSA uses a progressive conflict resolution process for volunteers.

Confidentiality

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary, privileged, or sensitive information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a staff member, volunteer, member (youth or adult), or other person, or overall GSSA or personal business. Confidential information includes but is not limited to non-public technical, business and financial information and plans, as well as private information about councils, girls, volunteers, customers, suppliers and employees. Information may include names, addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and information that might relate to family health,

circumstances, living arrangements, or financial matters.

Finance – Financial Accountability

Volunteers who oversee Girl Scout funds whether for Troops or Service Units or any other reason, are accountable to GSSA, Girl Scout members, and their families in all financial matters.

The Troop Coordinator is responsible for good management of Troop funds including timely deposits of funds, up-to-date recordkeeping, monthly review of bank statements, responsible management of funds, and submission of timely reports to affected girls, their parents, and GSSA. Although Troop Finances can be managed by any approved, registered adult volunteer in the Troop, the Troop Coordinator will ultimately be responsible for the Troop's finances and the submission of the Annual Finance Report.

Failure to exercise proper management over finances will result in a funds restriction or release from volunteer position. All Troops and Service units are required to submit an annual finance report to GSSA. Any registered Girl Scout and their parents/caregivers will be given access to view financial records upon request.

Volunteers with financial responsibility to Troops, Service Units, or to GSSA will not be reappointed to a position if required financial responsibilities have not been met.

Finance – Troop Bank Account

Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama is a 501(c)(3) organization registered with the Internal Revenue Service of the United States. Each Troop is an extension of Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama, and Troop bank accounts must be opened by and remain accessible to GSSA.

Each Troop is responsible for financing its own Troop program and must maintain a checking account at an insured financial institution. The existence of a Troop's bank account is at the sole discretion of GSSA, and must be approved prior to establishment of the account.

The Troop Coordinator takes responsibility for the management of Troop funds. Additional bank account signers may include a Troop's Meeting Coordinator, Financial Coordinator, Service Unit Team Member, or other registered, trained, and approved volunteer. A minimum of two signers is required to establish a Troop's bank account, and a third signer is strongly encouraged.

Any volunteer who agrees to take responsibility for managing Troop funds must not be related to another signer. Signers may not share a household with one another

Troop funds do not belong to individual girls. Cash-based accounts may not be kept for or distributed to individual girls.

Troop funds are to be used for the sole purpose of delivering Girl Scout programs and service to Girl Scouts.

Finance – Service Unit Bank Account

Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama is a 501(c)(3) organization registered with the Internal Revenue Service of the United States. Each Service Unit is an extension of Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama, and Service Unit bank accounts must be opened by and remain accessible to GSSA.

Each Service Unit is responsible for financing its own Service Unit program. If a Service Unit accepts any income, the Service Unit must maintain a checking account at an insured financial institution. The existence of a Service Unit's bank account is at the sole discretion of GSSA, and must be approved prior to establishment of the account.

The Service Unit Coordinator takes responsibility for the management of Service Unit funds. Additional bank account signers may include a Service Unit Finance Coordinator or other trusted Service Unit team member. A minimum of two signers is required to establish a Service Unit's bank account, and a third signer is highly encouraged.

Any volunteer who agrees to take responsibility for managing Service Unit funds must not be related to another signer. Signers may not share a household with one another. All Service Unit funds are to be used for the sole purpose of delivering Girl Scout programs and service to the girls.

Finance – Financial Implications Due to Troop Changes

Money in a Troop treasury (bank account) does not belong to individual girls. If a Troop undergoes a change in leadership, there may be financial implications to the Troop's funding. GSSA provides direction based on IRS regulations and best practices.

Finance – Money-Earning Projects and Fundraising

The funds earned through Money Earning Activities are to be used for Girl Scout mission-based activities and must be retained by the Troop, Service Unit, or Council, not by individuals. These funds must be accounted for through the required annual

financial reporting.

All money-earning and fundraising (including donations) outside of approved Product Programs must be completed responsibly, ethically, and productively, with activities that align with the mission of GSSA and support girl-led initiatives and must be pre-approved by GSSA.

Girl Scout Gold Award Projects Girls working on their Girl Scout Gold Award project may need additional funds to complete their projects. According to GSUSA's Blue Book of Basic Documents policy: Solicitation of Contributions, girl members may not engage in any direct solicitation for money except for Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors who may solicit donations of cash or in-kind goods for Girl Scout Gold Award projects, provided they have secured prior written permission from GSSA's Chief Development Officer.

Finance – IRS Compliance

Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama is a 501(c)(3) organization registered with the Internal Revenue Service of the United States. Each Troop and Service Unit is an extension of Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama and is therefore subject to the same IRS regulations as the Council.

Financial Assistance/Scholarships

Based on available funds, financial assistance/scholarships may be available to cover fees associated with membership, uniform items, program materials, GSSA events, and activities, including resident camp and Girl Scout Destinations.

Grade Retention

In the case of a youth member whose grade is retained in school, it is the family's decision whether to progress her Girl Scout level forward, or to remain in her current Girl Scout level for an additional year.

Harassment

GSSA is committed to an environment and climate in which relationships are characterized by dignity, respect, courtesy, and equitable treatment, as reflected in the Girl Scout Promise and Law. GSSA will provide all members and GSSA staff with an environment free from all forms of unlawful or unwelcome harassment and hostility, including implied or expressed forms of harassment of any form.

Any form of harassment or hostility made on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including gender, pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity), age, national

origin, disability, marital status, citizenship, ancestry, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law is expressly prohibited. This policy includes, but is not limited to physical violence, intimidation, stalking, coercion, display of weapons, threats, and talking or joking about harassment or hostility whether in person or through some other means of communication (e.g., writing, telephone, text messages, voice mail, electronic mail, or social media).

Male Caregivers

Any adult, regardless of gender, participating in Girl Scout events or activities must be a registered member and have received an eligible background check result.

Male caregivers attending overnight events with Girl Scouts must stay in units separated from unrelated girls/females.

Product Sales

Product Sales Programs (Girl Scout Cookies, Munchies & Mags) teach Girl Scouts lifelong skills and provide funds to support Girl Scout programs and activities. A registered Girl Scout may participate in Product Sales as a member of a Troop, or as an Individually Registered Member.

Troops may elect to participate in Product Sales programs as long as they remain in good financial standing.

Property

Each Troop/Service Unit is responsible for the site, structures, and equipment used during their stay on GSSA property and will be held responsible for any loss or damage. GSSA property also includes, but is not limited to, loaned or rented equipment, such as audio-visual equipment, library books, flags, program boxes, and Troop camp equipment.

Pets, other than trained service animals, are not permitted on GSSA properties, except as authorized by the CEO.

No hunting is allowed on GSSA-owned or operated properties at any time, unless authorized by the GSSA CEO.

Fishing on GSSA-owned or operated properties is limited to program activities in which Troops may participate. Fishing by individuals is strictly limited and may only be done with permission issued by the GSSA CEO. An Alabama State Fishing License is required to fish at Lake Martin, adjoining Kamp Kiwanis.

Public Displays of Affection

Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama prohibit those involved in Girl Scout-related activities of any kind from public displays of affection (including kissing, hugging,

fondling, etc.). Any infraction will be subject to prompt review under council disciplinary guidelines.

Public Relations

Any Girl Scout or volunteer, wearing or displaying identifiable GSUSA/GSSA insignia or participating in Girl Scout activities should consider themselves representatives of the Girl Scout Movement.

All press releases and media appearances must be cleared through the GSSA Marketing and Communications Department. If a Girl Scout member or volunteer is approached to make a media appearance of any kind, they should contact customer-care@girlscoutssa.org for guidance.

The purchase of advertising in any media outlet must be approved by the GSSA Marketing and Communications Department.

Release of Operational Volunteer

GSSA or an adult volunteer may initiate a release from a volunteer role. A volunteer is requested to provide a minimum of two weeks' notice when resigning from their role.

GSSA may release a volunteer from a role due to restructuring of roles, elimination of a volunteer role in which the volunteer serves, the volunteer's inability or failure to complete the requirements of the role, misappropriation of funds, excessive absence or tardiness from required meetings, inappropriate conduct, inappropriate sexual language or conduct, any form of discrimination, any form of harassment, the refusal to comply with GSSA or GSUSA policies, refusal or failure to adhere to financial guidelines of GSSA. This list is not exhaustive.

Information regarding volunteer release and terminations shall be limited to individuals deemed by GSSA to be necessary to have access to such information. If the situation warrants, GSSA will notify and comply with law enforcement.

A record of terminated volunteers will be kept for reference during volunteer selection and appointment.

Specialized Certification

Adult volunteers may be asked to receive specialized certifications for various skills and activities, for example, First Aid/CPR/AED Certification, outdoor trainings such as basic Troop camping, Archery, Zipline, or Small Watercraft Safety, as well as other specialized certifications. GSSA may coordinate training opportunities at a partially

subsidized rate available for volunteers so that the trained volunteers may provide the specialized services to GSSA at the Council, Service Unit, or Troop level.

Substance Use

Possession and use of alcoholic beverages and tobacco (including electronic cigarettes, regardless of nicotine content, and vaping) is strictly prohibited during any activity where girls are present. Possession and use of controlled substances, except legally prescribed medication, is not permitted. Any person who engages in such behavior will be permanently removed from all GSSA activities.

No prescription medication will be given to a girl without documented permission from a primary caregiver. Medication for volunteers and girls should be in the original prescription container, clearly labeled with the patient's name, doctor's name, and the name of the medication, as well as the dosage and kept with the Troop's First Aid/CPR/AED Certified adult in the Troop's first aid kit. Requests to allow a Girl Scout to carry and/or administer her own medication (such as an Epi-Pen or a rescue inhaler) will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Medications should be kept in a secure location.

Over-the-counter medication may only be given to a girl with documented permission from the primary caregiver.

Transportation – Private Vehicles

How families decide to transport girls between their homes and Girl Scout meeting places is each caregiver's individual decision and responsibility.

Qualified drivers are required for Girl Scout trips and activities in which a group will be transported in privately owned vehicles.

Every driver must be a registered adult member with an eligible background check, be at least 21 years old, and have a clear driving record, (more specifically, without driving restrictions) a valid license, and a registered/insured vehicle.

Youth members may never drive other members during activities or field trips.

If a group is traveling in one vehicle, there must be at least two unrelated, registered, background-checked members (approved adult volunteers) in the vehicle, one of whom is female.

If a group is traveling in more than one vehicle, the entire group must consist of at least two unrelated, registered, background-checked members (approved adult volunteers), at least one of whom must be female.

Every girl must be in a seat designed for passengers and must use an age-appropriate safety restraint.

Transportation—Rented, Leased, Chartered or Loaned Vehicles

GSSA must give permission for the rental, lease, charter, or loan of a vehicle for the use of Troop transportation.

All rental, lease, charter, or vehicle loan agreements must be submitted to GSSA's Customer Care for review and approval by a staff representative of GSSA.

All rental, lease, charter, or vehicle loan agreements must be accompanied by proof of insurance for a minimum of Liability and Collision as required by Alabama State Law.

- Automobile \$1,000,000
- Van (7 passenger) \$2,000,000
- Chartered Bus \$5,000,000

The use of 15-passenger vans for Troop transportation is strictly prohibited.

Trips – Day Trips

Girl Scout Day Trips require adherence to Safety Activity Checkpoints and to the Transportation—private vehicles policy and the Transportation—rented, leased, chartered, or loaned vehicles policy.

Permission must be secured from GSSA for any activity that requires special skills, safety precautions, training, or to use any equipment that requires special skills, safety precautions, and/or training. Any activity stating that council approval is required in the Safety Activity Checkpoints must be approved by GSSA.

Trips – Overnight

Overnight Trips require approval from GSSA, whether taking place at a GSSA property or elsewhere.

GSSA may require additional insurance to be purchased for an Overnight Trip. Please see the Activity Insurance policy for further details.

Overnight Trips require the presence of an Overnight Essentials Certified adult, as well as a First Aid/CPR/AED Certified adult. Every adult accompanying the Trip must be a registered member with an eligible background check.

Male caregivers attending overnight events will stay in units separated from the unrelated girls/females. Female adult volunteers must be available to provide overnight supervision of girls housed in separate units from males.

Girl Scout Overnight Trips require adherence to Safety Activity Checkpoints and to the Transportation—private vehicles policy and the Transportation—rented, leased, chartered, or loaned vehicles policy.

Permission must be secured from GSSA for any activity that requires special skills, safety precautions, training, or to use any equipment that requires special skills, safety precautions, and/or training. Any activity stating that council approval is required in the Safety Activity Checkpoints must be approved by GSSA.

Uniforms

A Girl Scout uniform is not required for youth members in most Girl Scout events or activities. GSSA will follow all uniform guidelines within Blue Book of Basic Documents, which may be updated annually by GSUSA. The ability to purchase a uniform should not be a barrier to participation. Financial assistance may be available to youth members for the purchase of uniforms.

A uniform is not required for participation as a volunteer in Girl Scouting. Purchase of a uniform is at the volunteer's expense and is encouraged. Volunteers are encouraged to wear the Girl Scout Membership Pin or other Girl Scout garment when present at a Girl Scout activity or Troop meeting if they are not in uniform.

Volunteer Role Reappointment

An adult volunteer who has accepted a defined Volunteer Role may be evaluated based on their performance in that role at any time throughout the year. A volunteer may choose to renew a previously held role each membership year, or volunteer for a new/additional Volunteer Role when the role becomes available.

Reappointment to an adult volunteer role is based on current membership status, past role performance, adherence to GSSA and GSUSA policies and standards, support of the Girl Scout purpose, values, and GSSA goals, positive relationships with the community, parents, other volunteers, and employed staff, as well as the volunteer needs of GSSA. These standards and expectations will apply to every volunteer who serves in any position in GSSA, including those outside of the defined Volunteer Roles.

Waiting List

GSSA makes every effort to accommodate girls who want to become active members of Girl Scouts. If there is not an existing Troop in the girl's immediate area, the girl's primary caregiver will be asked to consider helping to form a new Troop.

Each girl will be given the opportunity to register as an individual member while waiting to be placed in a Troop. Girl members who are not immediately placed into a Troop will be added to an active waiting list until an opening becomes available and will be offered the opportunity to register as an Individually Registered Member (IRM).

Any youth with an active membership (whether as a member of a Troop or an IRM) will be provided with the opportunity to work on Girl Scout programs and is encouraged to attend GSSA and Service Unit events and activities.

GSSA staff will continue to work to find a place for every girl who would like to participate in a Troop, unless she or her caregiver expresses her preference to remain an Individually Registered Girl.

Weapons

GSSA strictly prohibits volunteers from being in possession of weapons while involved in Girl Scout activities, including the transportation of girls. Under this policy, prohibited weapons include all firearms, even if licensed, illegal knives, or other weapons.

Whistleblower:

Retaliation against any person who has reported a possible or actual violation of any policy is strictly prohibited and, if it occurs, will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Part 2: GSSA Policy Guidance and Procedures

Accident Insurance Guidance/Procedures: Troops are responsible for adhering to the Safety Activity Checkpoints, including safety ratios. Any activities that do not adhere to the Safety Activity Checkpoints will not be covered by the GSUSA accidental insurance policy.

Any serious accident or fatality must be reported immediately to the appropriate authorities, as well as to GSSA, as detailed in the Safety Activity Checkpoints. Reference Volunteer Essentials, on the GSSA site, for the Troop Emergency Action Plan Document as well as an Activity Accident Insurance Claim Form. All claims must be turned into GSSA customer care for processing within 24 hours of the incident.

Optional additional coverage is available for groups of unregistered participants at approved Girl Scout activities at GSSA's discretion (additional cost required). Troops needing to purchase additional Accident Insurance must submit required forms and payment to GSSA at least four weeks in advance. Customer Care will assist in selecting the appropriate policy based on the type of scheduled Troop activity.

Adult Volunteer Guidance/Procedures:

Any adult (19+) wishing to volunteer with Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama is required to meet the following requirements:

- Membership Registration - Adult volunteers (19+) must be registered as members with GSUSA and individually pay the annual membership dues, except those adults who are lifetime members or who are volunteering in an episodic capacity.
- Receive an eligible background check result from GSSA's vendor.
- Agree to the Girl Scout Mission.
- Acceptance of the Girl Scout Promise and Law.
- Possess the time and ability to perform the responsibilities of the position.
- Completion of required training.
- Understand and agree that services are given without payment.
- Acceptance of supervision and feedback.
- Adherence to GSSA's and GSUSA's Volunteer Policies

There shall be no discrimination against an otherwise qualified adult volunteer based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, or political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Volunteers who do not comply with the volunteer eligibility process, described above, will be denied.

Benefits to volunteers include:

- GSSA publications
- Learning opportunities and support from GSSA staff
- Supplementary accident insurance as part of GSUSA membership
- Volunteer experience that may be useful for career development

Adult Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities:

Volunteers are a valuable resource to GSSA, its staff, and members. Volunteers shall be extended the right to be given meaningful assignments, the right to be treated respectfully, the right to effective supervision, the right to full involvement and participation, and the right to appropriate recognition for their efforts.

In return, volunteers shall agree to perform their duties to the best of their abilities, to support the goals, policies, and procedures of GSSA and to ask for assistance and/or guidance from the service team or GSSA staff if they find themselves in a situation that they are unsure of or that may conflict with those goals and policies of GSSA, as detailed in the Conflict Resolution section of this document.

Further, volunteers shall agree that they will not use the Girl Scout name, related activities, publications and/or facilities for public or private promotion of their own views and opinions on topics unrelated to Girl Scouting (including, but not limited to, views on sexual orientation, religion, family situations, politics, etc.)

Background Check Guidance/Procedures:

An adult who registering into a volunteer role (such as a Troop Helper) will generate an automatic background check request from Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama's third party vendor, Sterling Volunteers. The adult will receive an e-mail from theadvocates@sterlingvolunteers.com with a link to complete their background check request. GSSA covers a portion of the cost of this background check, and the adult is asked to pay the remaining portion due. It can take up to 30 days for Sterling Volunteers to return a background check result to GSSA.

When an adult's background check results require review for possible disqualification, a staff member researches the circumstances surrounding the offense, which may include a conversation with the volunteer. The results of the investigation are then presented to a committee of staff members, who are provided with no identifying information about

the individual. A determination is made about the potential volunteer's eligibility to participate and any restrictions on their participation.

Troop and Service Unit leadership is informed only of any restrictions that apply to volunteers, not about the specific charges that led to the restrictions.

Camping Guidance/Procedures:

Any Troop planning an overnight camping trip must submit an Overnight Trip Application at least four weeks (28 days) prior to the event. Late applications are subject to fees or cancellation.

At least two weeks (14 days) prior to the event, a list of all participants (including non-registered siblings) should be submitted to customercare@girlscoutssa.org, as well as an itinerary and the name, address, and phone number of the overnight location if the property is not owned or managed by GSSA. Late submissions may result in fees or cancellation.

Reference Trip Policy- Day Trips and Trip Policy- Overnight Trips for further details on Day and Overnight Trip policies that apply to camping activities.

Requirements for Troop Camping:

- At least one Overnight Essentials certified adult (19+)
- At least one Outdoor Essentials (basic Troop Camping) Certified adult (19+). *
- At least one First Aid/CPR/AED certified adult (19+). *
- An adult (19+) with certification from an approved organization related to any planned activities (e.g., GSSA Small Watercraft for canoeing/kayaking, GSSA Archery for arching, Red Cross Lifeguarding for swimming, etc.).
- A health form for each youth member and for each adult in attendance.
-

Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Guidance/Money-earning Procedures:

All renewing and registering adults, by completing the registration process, agree to abide by Girl Scouts' No Tolerance for Abuse policies and procedures.

Volunteers and GSSA Staff members are provided with opportunities to receive Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention training. "GSUSA Girl Scouts Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Course" is an online training module available to adults in gsLearn.

Child abuse and neglect are unlawful acts, and no adult volunteer, GSSA staff

member, or adult member will be allowed to physically, sexually, mentally, emotionally, or verbally abuse or neglect any youth member. GSSA reserves the right to refuse membership endorsement or reappointment, and to dismiss or to exclude from affiliation with GSSA, any volunteer who is found guilty of child abuse and/or neglect or who has been convicted of child abuse and/or neglect.

We require that any person suspected of child abuse or neglect be suspended from all Girl Scout activities until the matter is resolved. GSSA staff and volunteers are required to cooperate fully with investigating authorities and provide all possible support to the affected girls and their families.

Any volunteer who resides with a convicted child sex offender shall not allow the offender to attend any Girl Scout activity or allow any girl members to be alone with the offender. This includes the offender's presence at any residence and in any vehicle being used for a Girl Scout activity.

In Alabama, the Department of Human Resources is mandated by law to receive and investigate reports of suspected child abuse. All Girl Scout staff and volunteers are required to report child abuse or neglect when reasonable grounds exist to suspect it. These concerns should be documented and reported immediately to the local county's Alabama Department of Human Resources office and to Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama through Customer Care.

Conflict of Interest Guidance/Procedures:

Volunteers shall disclose in writing a full description of any activity, interest, or relationship that might create or appear to create a conflict of interest as soon as practical, prior to the inception of the activity, interest, or relationship.

In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest where a volunteer or family member is expected to gain financially, the volunteer must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all facts to their Service Unit leadership and GSSA staff to consider the proposed transaction or arrangement.

If a volunteer has brought legal action against GSSA or has caused GSSA to initiate legal action, GSSA has the right, at its discretion, to decline to appoint that person to a volunteer position with GSSA, or to remove that volunteer from her or his position if currently in place. Legal action includes any or all remedies of existing federal and state law.

The referenced policy is not intended to apply to gifts and/or similar entertainment of nominal value that clearly are in good keeping with good business ethics and do not obligate the recipient.

Any matter of question or interpretation that arises relating to this policy should be referred to the Chief Executive Officer for decision.

All volunteers are expected to observe the Conflict of Interest Policy.

This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

Confidentiality--Guidance/Procedures: Personal, medical, and/or financial information about any youth or adult member which becomes known to a volunteer must be treated as confidential and may only be shared when necessary and only through established systems or the appropriate GSSA staff member/process. Health or medical information may be disclosed to the extent necessary solely for treatment or emergency purposes.

Names, addresses, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers of members must not be shared with any individual or business outside of Girl Scouting except as required for safety or for emergency purposes. Confidential information about members must not be published through any means including any internet channels or social media. Volunteers should be aware that most e-mails are not necessarily sent through secure channels and must only send content which is not confidential. Steps must be taken to properly secure and protect personal information in possession of volunteers, whether in paper or electronic form. Volunteers must exercise good judgment and care at all times to avoid unauthorized or improper disclosures of confidential information. Conversations in public places should be limited to matters that do not pertain to information of a sensitive or confidential nature. The privacy of all members must be respected and protected.

Any volunteer who belongs to multiple youth serving organizations is expected to protect the confidential information, brand, program pieces, and reputation of Girl Scouts. Using or sharing our information with competing organizations is strictly prohibited and may be a basis for release, suspension, or cause for not being reappointed to a position.

Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in release of the volunteer's relationship

with GSSA. Volunteers in certain key positions may be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement or other similar documents.

Conflict Resolution Guidance/Procedures:

• **Girls in a Troop:**

A member of the Troop's leadership team (Troop or Meeting Coordinator) should address the situation.

The Troop or Meeting Coordinator should work with the girls, parents, and other Troop volunteers to resolve this matter.

If the conflict cannot be resolved at the Troop level, a member of the Service Unit Team should be asked to assist as a mediator for the Troop.

If all steps above have been taken to resolve the conflict informally but the matter has not been resolved, then GSSA staff should be notified through Customer Care so that the appropriate staff members may address the situation.

• **Adults Within a Troop:**

A member of the Troop's leadership team (Troop or Meeting Coordinator) should address the situation.

The Troop or Meeting Coordinator should mediate with the involved parties.

If the conflict cannot be resolved at the Troop level, a member of the Service Unit Team should be asked to assist as a mediator for the Troop.

If all steps above have been taken to resolve the conflict informally but the matter has not been resolved, then GSSA staff should be notified through Customer Care so that the appropriate staff members may address the situation.

• **Volunteers:**

A member of the Troop's leadership team (Troop or Meeting Coordinator) should address the situation.

The Troop or Meeting Coordinator should mediate with the involved parties.

If the conflict cannot be resolved at the Troop level, a member of the Service Unit Team should be asked to assist as a mediator.

If all steps above have been taken to resolve the conflict informally but the matter has not been resolved, then GSSA staff should be notified through Customer Care so that the appropriate staff members may address the situation.

If GSSA Staff is notified and their help is requested in addressing the situation, GSSA staff will request the following information:

- The name of the person reporting the concern
- The concern
- Who is involved?

- When did the conflict become known?
- Where did the conflict occur?
- What happened?
- What recommendations does the person who is reporting the conflict have toward achieving a resolution?

GSSA staff will continue gathering information regarding the conflict.

The information gathering process may include phone calls, e-mails, and/or in person meetings with involved parties. Please note that gathering information can take a minimum of 10 business days.

All information will be reviewed, and next steps will be determined with full notification to GSSA's CEO. All affected parties will be informed of the final decision within a reasonable time frame.

Finance—Financial Accountability Guidance/Procedures:

Receipts showing how money was spent must document all cash withdrawals. If cash is collected, receipts must be provided to document the reason for the payment.

Any registered Girl Scout and their parents/caregivers will be given access to view financial records upon request.

The Troop Coordinator has access to the Finance Tab on the Volunteer Toolkit and must work together with the Troop's Financial Coordinator (if there is one in place) to submit the finance report annually by the deadline.

Parents/caregivers can view completed Troop Finance Report(s) on the Volunteer Toolkit, therefore it is important to comply with this procedure as financial transparency at all levels of Girl Scouting encourages trust and confidence.

Finance—Money Earning and Fundraising Guidance/Procedures:

Helping girls earn and manage money is an integral part of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. When girls participate in money earning activities, they learn important skills such as goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills, and business ethics. Your Girl Scout group (Troop, Service Unit, etc.) is responsible for planning and financing its own activities. This puts girls in charge (with support from Troop leadership teams and GSSA registered volunteers), giving them the opportunity to cooperatively set goals, manage a budget, spend responsibly, and maintain records, as well as to develop social, marketing, and entrepreneurial skills.

Product Programs The Girl Scout Cookie Program and Munchies & Mags Programs

are the two best opportunities for girls to earn Troop funds. Troops must participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program in order to participate in any additional money earning or fund-raising activities. Consideration will be given to troops that formed after these opportunities have passed.

If a Girl Scout has not participated in the Girl Scout Cookie Program and/or Munchies & Mags Program, she shall not be excluded from any activities due to lack of participation.

Finance—Troop Bank Account Guidance/Procedures:

Troops with a minimum of five youth members and at least two registered, approved adult volunteers from separate households may initiate opening a Troop bank account by submitting a Bank Account Request Form.

GSSA staff will confirm that the Troop meets the requirements to establish a Troop bank account, and then coordinate with the Troop to open an account with a bank approved by Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama.

Once a Troop bank account has been opened, a signer on the account will submit an ACH Authorization Form. This form is required to be submitted for the Troop to be allowed to participate in any Product Programs.

A Financial Activity Spreadsheet is provided for Troop leadership to keep track of income and expenses.

Debit/check cards must not be used to make personal purchases. The cardholder(s) are responsible for obtaining purchase receipts, securing the card(s) and are legally responsible for the transactions posted to the card. Online banking is permitted and encouraged to ensure that funds are appropriately monitored by responsible adults.

The Troop (as a whole) benefits from Product Sales by receiving proceeds, and those proceeds are to be used equitably for the benefit of the entire Troop, even if not every member participated in selling products. In other words, all Troop money belongs equally to girls registered in the Troop and is to be spent on equitable experiences and opportunities for all Troop members.

All Girl Scout funds must be deposited into the Troop or Service Unit bank account.

Itemized receipts should be kept for all deposits and purchases for a period of two years.

Monthly bank statements must be kept on file for a period of two years.

GSSA reserves the right to review Troop and Service Unit bank accounts.

Misappropriation of Troop funds will result in the release of Troop finance volunteers from their Troop role and may also result in personal civil or criminal liability.

Finance—Service Unit Bank Account Guidance/Procedures:

Service Unit Coordinators in Service Units with a minimum of two active Troops may initiate opening a Troop bank account by submitting a Bank Account Request Form.

GSSA staff will confirm that the Service Unit meets the requirements to establish a Service Unit bank account, and then coordinate with the Service Unit Team to open an account with a bank approved by Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama.

Once a Service Unit bank account has been opened, a signer on the account will submit an ACH Authorization Form to GSSA. This form is a requirement.

A Financial Activity Spreadsheet is available for Service Unit Teams to keep track of income and expenses.

Debit/check cards must not be used to make personal purchases. The cardholder(s) are responsible for obtaining purchase receipts, securing the card(s) and are legally responsible for the transactions posted to the card. Online banking is permitted and encouraged to ensure that funds are appropriately monitored by responsible adults.

Information including the Service Unit's bank account balance, how funds are earned and used by the Service Unit, etc. should be shared regularly with Service Unit members.

All Girl Scout funds must be deposited into the Service Unit bank account.

Itemized receipts should be kept for all deposits and purchases for a period of two years.

Monthly bank statements must be kept on file for a period of two years.

GSSA reserves the right to review Service Unit bank accounts.

Misappropriation of Service Unit funds will result in the release of Service Unit volunteers from their Service Unit and/or Troop role(s) and may also result in personal civil or criminal liability

Finance – Financial Implications Due to Troop Changes Guidance/Procedures:

Graduating Girl Scout Ambassador Troops When all girls of a troop graduate, care must be taken with the final expenditure of Troop funds. All Troop money is the property of the Troop, not the individual girls, and the Troop should decide how to spend the money prior to dissolving the Troop and closing the bank account. All decisions concerning the disposition of Troop funds should be made by the Troop, not by the volunteers to “surprise the girls”. Options to consider depending on the remaining amount of Troop funds:

Purchase discounted Lifetime Girl Scout memberships for each graduating girl.

Leave a legacy to Girl Scouts by donating to a fund or program in honor of the Troop.

Take advantage of the last year of girl membership to participate in GSSA planned activities and events.

New Troop Leadership If new Troop leadership has been appointed, all supplies, financial records, and the Troop’s bank records should be turned over to the new Troop Coordinator. The signatures on the bank account must be changed with the bank and with GSSA. Complete the Bank Account Form to request changes to the account signers. Once changes to the account have been made, a new ACH Authorization Form is required to be submitted to GSSA. There is no need to close the account and open a new one.

Troop Leadership Vacancy If new leadership has not been determined, turn all Troop supplies, financial records, and the bank account records over to GSSA.

Troop Merges or Splits If a Troop merges with another Troop, the funds and supplies will be combined for use by all the girls in the newly formed Troop. If a Troop splits, equal portions of the Troop funds and supplies will follow girls to their new Troops.

Girl Transfer Into a New Troop If a Girl Scout transfers from one Troop into another, her new Troop is not owed any funds from her original Troop. However, her original Troop may choose to send a portion of funds to the new Troop as a gesture of good will. If there were 10 girls in the original Troop, they may send up to 1/10 of the Troop funds to the girl’s new Troop.

Troop Disbands If a Troop intends to disband, girls are encouraged to use existing monies for activities before the Troop disbands. If there are remaining funds, girls can

decide to donate to another GSSA Troop, Service Unit, or to the Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama Financial Assistance Fund. If there are funds remaining in a Troop's bank account after disbandment, those funds will be divided fairly between the Service Unit and Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama.

When a Troop disbands, GSSA staff will assist with allocating funds for girls transferring to new Troops. The bank account should be closed and all remaining funds, if any, must be turned in to council, either at a GSSA Service Center or to a designated representative of GSSA (such as a GSSA Staff member, Service Unit Manager, or other trusted representative of GSSA).

Money may never be given to individual girls or adults. Disbanded troops are required to submit a Disbanding/Merging Troop Notification Form. Remaining funds need to be turned over to GSSA. If troop money was turned in to GSSA at the time of disbandment and the Troop or Individual Member rejoins within the fiscal year, the member may work with GSSA Staff to request some funds be transferred to a new Troop. In the event of returning members within the same fiscal year, arrangements can be made to disburse a portion of funds on a case-by-case basis.

Finance – Money-Earning Projects and Fund-raising Guidance/Procedures:

Money-earning activities are implemented by Girl Scouts to supplement monies raised through the Girl Scout Product Programs (the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Munchies & Mags). Other money earning projects are arranged by Troops and Service Units and can include raking leaves, walking pets, car washes, etc. The funds earned through Money-Earning Activities are to be used for Girl Scout mission-based activities and must be retained by the Troop or Service Unit, not by individuals. These funds must be accounted for through the required annual financial reporting.

Girl Scouts may not participate in other money earning projects during the Girl Scout Cookie Program or Munchies & Mags seasons.

An Application for Troop Money-Earning Project should be submitted to customer-care@girlscoutssa.org at least four weeks before beginning (or publicizing) a money earning activity.

Troops must have participated in BOTH the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program to engage in additional money earning projects. It is encouraged, but not required, for 100% of Troop members to have participated.

Money earning should not exceed the amount the troop needs for their proposed activity(ies).

The activity should be age appropriate.

Participation is voluntary.

The Girl Scout's primary caregiver must give written permission for her to participate. Funds from money earning must be spent during the membership year they are earned. If funds are being raised for an activity in a future year, it must be pre-approved by GSSA.

Local ordinances and health and safety laws related to involvement of children in money earning must be observed.

Arrangements must be made for safeguarding money during money earning.

Troops must follow GSSA Volunteer Policies & Procedures, Volunteer Essentials, and Safety Activity Checkpoints to ensure girl safety, including appropriate girl-to-adult ratios of approved Girl Scout volunteers.

If a Girl Scout has not participated in the Girl Scout Cookie Program and/or Munchies & Mags Program, she shall not be excluded from any activities due to lack of participation.

Girl Scouts are not allowed to solicit money on behalf of another organization (such as Relay for Life, March of Dimes, etc.) when identifying themselves as Girl Scouts by wearing a uniform, a sash or vest, official pins, and so on. This includes participating in a walkathon or telethon while in uniform. However, a Troop can support another organization through Take Action projects. Girl Scouts as individuals are able to participate in whatever events they choose as long as they are not wearing anything that officially identifies them as "Girl Scouts."

Non-Girl-Scout Related Opportunities Girls with regular jobs may choose to donate their earnings to their troop or Girl Scout Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award projects. They should not wear their Girl Scout uniform or act as a Girl Scout representative when they are working their regular job. Once the money is given to the Troop, it becomes Troop funds and belongs to the Troop, not to the individual who donated it.

Troop Dues If Troop dues are collected, no Girl Scout shall be excluded from any activities regardless of their ability to pay Troop dues.

Money Earning and Fund-Raising Group Agreement It is important to understand

that all Troop money belongs equally to girls registered in the Troop.

Fund-Raising Fund-raising involves adults asking businesses, organizations, or individuals for money or in-kind contributions to support Troop activities.

Girls are not allowed to fund-raise unless they are working on their Girl Scout Gold Award.

Sponsors, such as local businesses and organizations, can help ensure that all girls in the community have an opportunity to participate in Girl Scouting. Periodically, Troops and service units may plan activities that require larger than usual budgets (e.g., Destinations such as a trip to Juliette Gordon Low's home). In addition, community organizations, businesses, faith-based organizations, and individuals may become sponsors by providing group meeting places, providing activity materials, loaning equipment, or donating money. They may even volunteer their time and talent. Donations of goods and services are called "in-kind" contributions.

Before Contacting a Potential Sponsor Before working with a potential sponsor, please contact GSSA's Chief Development Officer. GSSA may already be working with the business or organization on a council-wide donation, and it is important that this work be done together. GSSA can also provide guidance on the availability of some sponsors and other tips that could strengthen your ask. GSSA has relationships with many organizations and may also know of reasons not to connect with certain organizations. When collaborating with other organizations, keep these guidelines in mind:

Avoid Fund Raising for Other Organizations Girl Scouts are not allowed to solicit money on behalf of another organization when identifying themselves as Girl Scouts by wearing a uniform, a sash or vest, official pins, and so on. This includes participating in a walkathon or telethon while in uniform. However, a Troop or individual Girl Scout member can support another organization through Take Action projects. Girl Scouts as individuals are able to participate in any event they choose as long as they're not wearing anything that officially identifies them as "Girl Scouts."

Steer Clear of Political Fundraisers When in an official Girl Scout capacity or in any way identifying yourselves as Girl Scouts, your group may not participate, directly or indirectly, in any political campaign or work on behalf of or in opposition to a candidate for public office. Letter-writing campaigns are not allowed, nor is participating in a political rally, circulating a petition, or carrying a political banner.

Be Respectful When Collaborating with Religious Organizations Girl Scout groups must respect the opinions and practices of religious partners, but no girl should be required to take part in any religious observance or practice of the sponsoring group.

Financial Contributions Businesses and organizations may donate up to \$500 per year to GSSA to benefit individual Troops or Service Units. Donations from up to four (4) businesses and organizations may be secured on behalf of the Troop or Service Unit per year. GSSA will ensure the sponsor receives a thank you letter meeting IRS requirements. The Troop may also show their appreciation by sending thank you cards, inviting the sponsor to a meeting or ceremony, or working together on a Take Action project. All donation checks must be made payable to: Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama (GSSA).

Financial contributions must be spent in the fiscal year in which they were received, unless preapproved by GSSA. In rare cases, the GSSA Chief Executive Officer may pre-approve contributions of more than \$500 up to a total of \$2,000 per year. Sums over \$500 are typically pre-approved only for extended Troop travel.

In-Kind Contributions In-kind donations are goods or services, other than cash, that are to be used by Troops for Girl Scout mission-based activities. Examples of in-kind gifts include space for a meeting or event, program supplies, food, camping equipment.

In order to properly document an in-kind contribution, the [Gift In Kind Donation form](#) should be submitted to GSSA's Fund Development Department. GSSA will ensure the sponsor receives a thank you letter meeting IRS requirements. The contribution can also be recognized locally by having the girls send thank-you cards, inviting the sponsor to a meeting or ceremony, or working together on a Take Action project.

Girl Scout Gold Award Projects Girls working on their Girl Scout Gold Award project may need additional funds to complete their projects. According to GSUSA's Blue Book of Basic Documents policy: Solicitation of Contributions, girl members may not engage in any direct solicitation for money except for Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors who may solicit donations of cash or in-kind goods for Girl Scout Gold Award projects, provided they have secured prior written permission from GSSA's Chief Development Officer.

In addition, girls must abide by all GSSA policies and procedures with regard to Gold Award fund raising.

Girl Scouts may not participate in other money earning projects during the Girl Scout Cookie Program or Munchies & Mags seasons.

An Application for Troop Money-Earning Project should be submitted to Customer Care at least four weeks before beginning (or publicizing) a money earning activity. Troops must have participated in BOTH the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program in order to engage in additional money earning projects. It is encouraged, not required, for 100% of Troop members to have participated.

Money earning should not exceed the amount the troop needs for their proposed activity(ies).

The activity should be age appropriate.

Participation is voluntary.

The Girl Scout's primary caregiver must provide documented permission for her to participate.

Funds from money earning must be spent during the membership year they are earned. If funds are being raised for an activity in a future year, it must be pre-approved by GSSA.

Local ordinances and health and safety laws related to involvement of children in money earning must be observed.

Arrangements must be made for safeguarding money during money earning.

Troops must follow all guidelines and policies set forth in this document, Volunteer Essentials, and Safety Activity Checkpoints to ensure girl safety, including appropriate girl-to-adult ratios of approved Girl Scout volunteers.

If a Girl Scout has not participated in the Girl Scout Cookie Program and/or Munchies & Mags Program, she shall not be excluded from any activities due to lack of participation.

Money Earning May Not:

- Include having girls or volunteers asking for cash donations.
- Involve games of chance such as raffles, drawings, or silent auctions. The Internal Revenue Service does not allow girls to participate in these activities.

- Involve the endorsement of “commercial products” (e.g., Thirty One, Tupperware, Candle Light, etc.). “Commercial products” is any product sold at a retail location or that benefits a for-profit organization. Since 1939, girls and volunteers have not been allowed to endorse, provide a testimonial for, or sell such products. Girl Scouts does not allow product demonstration parties where the use of the Girl Scout trademark increases revenue for another business. Any business using the Girl Scout trademark must seek authorization from GSUSA.

Finance—IRS Compliance and Troop/Service Unit Account Guidance and Procedures

GSSA has no ability to control, change, or influence IRS requirements. Non-compliance with IRS requirements is a risk management issue that may affect the tax-exempt status of this council and the tax-exempt status of other Girl Scout councils nationwide.

Program Credits are issued with an expiration date set following IRS and GSUSA guidelines and must be used by that expiration date.

Once money is received into the Troop treasury (bank account), it no longer belongs to individual girls.

Cash-based accounts may not be kept for or distributed to individual girls.

All benefits provided should relate back to supporting the Girl Scout mission; decisions should be based on our tax-supported philosophy regarding what is mission-related. For example, camp, travel, and Girl Scout events are mission related. Scholarships to an outside organization are not mission related.

A business or individual may not receive a tax deduction for money given directly to Troops or to an individual Girl Scout, as they are not considered a charitable nonprofit organization. Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama’s Tax ID number may not be used by these businesses or individuals.

Donations made to GSSA may include a restriction for Troop use when the donation is made. GSSA will make an ACH deposit into the designated Troop’s bank account. Troops may receive up to \$500/donor. Up to four \$500 donations may be accepted per year.

All funds must be spent in the fiscal year they are received (October 1-September 30)

Troop monies cannot follow a girl if she leaves the Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama council.

Money follows an individual girl within the GSSA Council. The amount of money is not calculated dollar for dollar.

The IRS prohibits funds from following an individual girl dollar for dollar. We understand that this could cause concern if Troops split up or for girls who participate in Troop money-earning activities. Here are some common scenarios:

If a **Troop disbands**, girls are encouraged to use existing monies for activities before the troop disbands. If there are remaining funds, girls can decide to donate to another GSSA Troop or to the Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama Financial Assistance fund.

If a Troop merges with another Troop, the funds will be combined for use by all the girls in the newly formed Troop.

If a **Troop splits**, equal portions of the Troop funds will follow girls to their new Troops. For example, if there are 10 girls involved, each girl gets 1/10 of the Troop funds.

Girl Scout Transfers into a new Troop: If a girl(s) leaves a Troop due to family changes or unforeseen circumstances (e.g., moving homes, changing schools, etc.) and joins another Troop, her new Troop is not owed any funds from her original Troop. However, her original Troop may choose to send a portion of funds to the new Troop as a gesture of good will. If there are 10 girls in the original Troop, the original Troop may send up to 1/10 of the Troop funds to the transferring girl's new Troop.

GSSA does not generally become involved in moving funds between Troops. For additional guidance, please consult the Finance—Financial Implications Due to Troop Changes Policy and accompanying Guidance and Procedures.

Individually Registered Members (IRM or Juliette) will not have access to cash proceeds from Product Sales.

Gifts or donations, including those from family members, are not considered proceeds from money earning or fund-raising. Please keep in mind that a gift or donation deposited into a Troop bank account associated with the Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama is subject to IRS requirements.

Third Party Payment Processing Software Applications-- Troops or Service Units are

cautioned against using a third party payment processing software application such as PayPal, Venmo, CashApp, etc. that uses an individual's personal information including social security number to register the software. This is per our national organization's (GSUSA) legal advice. These accounts cannot be legally connected to council and carry a greater financial risk and potential income tax liabilities for the individual that opens the account.

Financial Assistance/Scholarships Guidance and Procedures:

Financial assistance for adult memberships will be considered for volunteers interested in participating in a leadership role, such as a Troop Coordinator or Meeting Coordinator. Financial assistance for membership fees must be requested during the registration process.

Financial assistance for non-membership or event-related expenses may be requested by contacting customercare@girlscoutssa.org.

Financial assistance for youth and adult memberships are subject to the availability of funds within GSSA's operating budget.

Grade Retention Guidance/Procedures:

If a Girl Scout is retained in a previous grade in school, whether for academic or developmental reasons, and the Troop or Girl Scout's family is seeking guidance on whether the Girl Scout will need to be retained in her Girl Scout level as well, there are some factors to take into consideration:

- Girl Scout programming is designed to supplement and reinforce common core curriculum taught in public schools by grade level.
- Girl Scouts is also a very social program, and if the family and girl prefer that she progress along with her friends in the Troop, she will certainly be permitted to do so.
-

If the family prefers that the girl's school grade corresponds to her Girl Scout level, then the girl's account in the system should be updated to reflect her correct school grade.

If the family prefers that the girl progress along with her fellow Troop members, then the system will automatically progress her grade level each year, and no changes to her grade need to be made in the system.

Harassment—Guidance and Procedures:

Any youth or adult member, or GSSA staff member who perceives that they have been subjected to or witnessed any harassment or hostility of any type (whether by another member, GSSA staff member, or other individual in the context of Girl Scouts) is asked

to report the incident to customercare@girlscoutssa.org and to follow the Guidance and Procedures for the [Conflict Resolution Policy](#).

Retaliation against any person who has reported a possible or actual violation of this policy is strictly prohibited and, if it occurs, will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. See the [Whistleblower Policy](#).

If law enforcement becomes involved in a report of harassment, GSSA staff and members are required to cooperate fully with investigating authorities and provide all possible support to the affected parties.

Male Caregiver Guidance/Procedures:

No volunteer should be left alone with any youth member, whether male or female, per the Standard Safety Guidelines found in the [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#).

Male volunteers are welcome to participate in leadership roles, including as Troop or Meeting Coordinators, as long as he is a part of a leadership team with at least one unrelated female volunteer.

Men cannot take girls on overnight trips or events without two female volunteers in attendance. Males attending or participating in an overnight event must stay in a unit separated from unrelated girls/females with access to male-only designated bathroom and shower facilities.

Female adult volunteers must be available to provide overnight supervision of girls housed in separate units from males.

A male caregiver with full or shared custody of a girl may share sleeping arrangements with his own girl/family in a designated area separate from other girls.

Troops may from time to time designate an activity as an all-female activity (i.e. a mother/daughter event), as long as this arrangement does not exclude any girl from participation, e.g. a daughter whose father has full or shared custody.

Product Sales Guidance and Procedures:

Training is provided to volunteers in Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama who wish to participate in the Product Sales Program.

The Troop Coordinator, Troop Cookie Coordinator and Troop Munchies & Mags Coordinator who sign Product Program Position Descriptions will be held responsible

for (1) the prompt deposit of sales monies in the appropriate account(s), (2) the completion of all paperwork pertaining to the sale and (3) the reporting of delinquent accounts.

All Troop monies owed to GSSA must be paid in full. If monies due to GSSA are not deposited by the deadline, action will be taken to secure outstanding debt. If the debt is not paid in full or arrangements to pay the debt are not made, the debtor may be removed from any adult volunteer role currently held.

To participate in the GSSA-sponsored Girl Scout Product Sales Programs, a girl must be registered as a current member of GSSA.

Product Sales benefit a Troop by generating proceeds. Those proceeds are to be used equitably for the benefit of the entire Troop, even if not every member of the Troop participated in selling products. In other words, all Troop money belongs equally to girls registered in the Troop and is to be spent on equitable experiences and opportunities for all Troop members.

An Individually Registered Member benefits from Product Sales by receiving program incentives, which may include Program Credits, but may not receive a cash incentive, per IRS regulations. All proceeds from Product Sales made by an Individually Registered Member are retained by Council.

Delinquent Account Forms should be submitted to GSSA for any parent debts that result from product sales programs. The collection of delinquent account forms is the responsibility of the Troop Coordinator and Troop Product Program Coordinator and must be completed to avoid personal financial liability. The Delinquent Account Form must be completed with appropriate required documentation and submitted to GSSA if a Troop has any outstanding debt.

Any parent debt not reported to GSSA on the Delinquent Account Form submitted with the Troop's final paperwork will become the financial responsibility of the Troop Product Program Coordinator.

If GSSA has proof that a Troop began their product sale before the published start date, the Troop will face a financial penalty of 20% of their proceeds.

If a Girl Scout's family has any outstanding debt from previous product sales activities, the girl and members of the household where the girl resides may not participate in any handling of the Troop's money, which includes taking orders for products and any

delivery and collecting of money. The Girl Scout may participate in product sales through Troop-sponsored cookie booths, Troop goal setting, poster making, and product sales training for the Troop.

Property – Guidance and Procedures

Reservations for individual Troop use or Service Unit use of GSSA-owned or operated property will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis. Individual property information, including fees, deposits, facilities, and services, are located on our website, www.girlscoutssa.org.

A Camporee Reservation is for exclusive use of a GSSA property for 2 days. In addition to securing the reservation with a payment, a Camporee reservation requires an additional Overnight Application to be submitted at least 8 weeks prior to the event. A Camporee Reservation also requires submission of an itinerary and a list of expected participants, including all adults. Adult volunteers with specialized certifications who are expected to facilitate activities for the event should be noted, along with their certifications.

An Overnight Reservation that is not for a Camporee (for example, a Troop camping trip) requires an Overnight Application to be submitted at least 4 weeks prior to the event along with an itinerary and a list of expected participants, including all adults. Adult volunteers with specialized certifications who are expected to facilitate activities for the event should be noted, along with their specific certifications.

A Day Use Reservation does not require an Overnight Application, but does require submission of an itinerary, and an expected list of participants. Adult volunteers with specialized certifications who are expected to facilitate activities for the event should be noted, along with their specific certifications.

Public Displays of Affection Guidance and Procedures:

Girl Scouts should be directed to private spaces which are provided at GSSA properties to change clothes, shower, and use the restroom at GSSA camp properties. There is no place for romantic or sexual affection in the context of Girl Scouts.

Public Relations – Guidance and Procedures:

All promotional materials or items using GSUSA/GSSA logo, service marks, and brand assets created must adhere to the GSUSA brand guidelines available in the Blue Book of Basic Documents. “Brand Ambassador 101 for Volunteers” training module is available in gsLearn.

Members have the option to complete a photo release, which states that Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama may use any audio and images, moving or still, taken of youth members and/or volunteers for publicity purposes. This release is available each membership year during the registration or renewal process.

Release of Operational Volunteer—Guidance and Procedures:

Documented reason(s) for involuntary release of an operational volunteer should be decided by a member of GSSA’s Leadership team and discussed with the CEO prior to making a final decision.

Upon reaching a decision to involuntarily release a volunteer, written notification must be given to the volunteer as soon as possible.

Any resignation or involuntary release of a volunteer will be acknowledged by the immediate supervisor.

In the event of a resignation, exit interviews, when possible, should be conducted with the volunteer. The interviewer should ascertain why the volunteer is leaving the position, and solicit suggestions the volunteer may have toward improving the position.

Specialized Certification—Guidance and Procedures:

GSSA offers periodic training opportunities related to certain specialized certifications, including archery, axe throwing, basic Troop camping, first aid/CPR/AED, small watercraft activities, Youth Mental Health First Aid, and ziplining. Often, there is pre-requisite work required prior to completion of an in-person training opportunity. These trainings may be conducted by instructors who are GSSA staff members, or volunteers who meet the appropriate criteria to be considered an instructor.

National certifications are also accepted for archery (e.g., NASP, USA Archery, Easton), first aid/CPR/AED (e.g., American Heart Association, American Red Cross, Health Safety Institute), small watercraft (e.g., American Canoe Association). A volunteer may submit proof of certification from a nationally recognized certifying organization in order to have a specialized certification role added to their GSSA volunteer profile.

Substance Use—Guidance and Procedures:

Documentation from a primary caregiver must be provided to give any medication (prescription or over-the-counter) to a youth member.

Prescription medications should be in the original prescription container, clearly labeled with the patient's name, doctor's name, and the name of the medication, as well as the dosage.

Certain lifesaving medications, such as an Epi-Pen or asthma rescue inhaler, may need to remain with the Girl Scout to whom it is prescribed at all times. This is a notable exception to the policy that states that medications should be kept in a secure location, and which must be made on a case-by-case basis.

Transportation—Private Vehicles Guidance and Procedures:

Volunteers should review the Checklist for Drivers in Safety Activity Checkpoints.

Each driver should keep a copy of the Troop's health records in a sealed envelope in their vehicle in case of emergency. Drivers should return the sealed envelope to the Troop leadership team after the trip.

Transportation—Rented, Leased, Chartered or Loaned Vehicles Guidance and Procedures:

GSSA must give permission for the rental, lease, charter, or loan of a vehicle for the use of Troop transportation. A Troop may request permission by contacting customercare@girlscoutssa.org.

All rental, lease, charter, or vehicle loan agreements must be submitted to GSSA's Customer Care for review and approval by a staff representative of GSSA.

All rental, lease, charter, or vehicle loan agreements must be accompanied by proof of insurance for a minimum of Liability and Collision as required by Alabama State Law.

- Automobile \$1,000,000
- Van (7 passenger) \$2,000,000
- Chartered Bus \$5,000,000

The use of 15-passenger vans for Troop transportation is strictly prohibited.

Volunteers should review the Checklist for Drivers in Safety Activity Checkpoints.

Each driver should keep a copy of the Troop's health records in a sealed envelope in their vehicle in case of emergency. Drivers should return the sealed envelope to the Troop leadership team after the trip.

Trips—Day Trips Guidance and Procedures:

There is a clear progression system in Girl Scouting that helps members to gain travel experience and confidence in herself and others that she will be safe and secure. The Travel/Trips Checkpoints found in the Safety Activity Checkpoints is an excellent resource for volunteers planning a trip of any length.

Each driver should keep a copy of the Troop's health records in a sealed envelope in their vehicle in case of emergency. Drivers should return the sealed envelope to the Troop leadership team after the trip.

A Troop planning a day trip must have a First Aid/CPR/AED Certified adult present.

Trips—Overnight Guidance and Procedures:

There is a clear progression system in Girl Scouting that helps members to gain travel experience and confidence in herself and others that she will be safe and secure. The Travel/Trips Checkpoints found in the Safety Activity Checkpoints is an excellent resource for volunteers planning a trip of any length.

Troops planning an Overnight Trip should submit an Overnight Application at least 28 days (4 weeks) prior to the trip.

Each driver should keep a copy of the Troop's health records in a sealed envelope in their vehicle in case of emergency. Drivers should return the sealed envelope to the Troop leadership team after the trip.

The Overnight Essentials Certified adult and the First Aid/CPR/AED Certified adult should NOT be the same person. This is to facilitate the ability for the First Aider to leave the activity, if need be, in an emergency and still allow the rest of the Troop to be supervised by an adult holding Overnight Essentials Certification. The remaining certifications may be held either by a single adult or multiple adults in attendance.

Uniforms – Guidance and Procedures:

Financial assistance may be available to youth member's families for the purchase of uniforms and uniform pieces. A caregiver or volunteer may request uniform financial assistance for a Girl Scout by emailing customercare@girlscoutssa.org.

A uniform diagram is provided [here](#) for help in placing badges, pins, awards, and other insignia.

Volunteer Role Reappointment—Guidance and Procedures:

Volunteers in a Troop leadership or Troop helper position may choose to renew their

leadership role annually during the registration/renewal process.

Volunteers who hold specialized certification roles will need to renew their certifications and then GSSA staff will extend the role through the updated certification expiration date.

Volunteers in a product coordinator role may not renew their role automatically. Each year, they will be asked to attend training (either virtually or in-person) and complete a position agreement to have the role added to their profile.

Waiting List Guidance and Procedures:

GSSA staff will regularly review the waiting list and attempt to place Girl Scouts on this list in a Troop that works for her family.

If no existing Troop fits the girl's needs, GSSA staff will ask the Girl Scout's primary caregiver if they would be willing to help form a new Troop.

Girl Scouts with existing memberships will be connected with their local Service Unit so that they can be kept informed about Service Unit events and activities.

The families of Girl Scouts with existing memberships will receive a monthly email with details about GSSA council events and activities.

Weapons Guidance and Procedures:

Any GSSA employee or volunteer who knows, or reasonably believes, that a volunteer is in possession of a weapon in violation of this policy should immediately notify GSSA. If a volunteer is found to have violated this policy, immediate and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including the involvement of appropriate law enforcement authorities, as needed.

Exceptions to this policy may be made only in performance of specific responsibilities for the council. Any such exception will be made in advance and in writing by the CEO.

Whistleblower Guidance and Procedures:

Any youth, adult member, or GSSA staff member who perceives that they have been subjected to or witnessed retaliation against a person who has reported a possible or actual violation of any policy (whether by another member, GSSA staff member, or other individual in the context of Girl Scouts) is asked to report the incident to customercare@girlscoutssa.org and to follow the Guidance and Procedures for the

Conflict Resolution Policy.

If law enforcement becomes involved in a report, GSSA staff and members are required to cooperate fully with investigating authorities and provide all possible support to the affected parties.