



Volunteer Policy Manual

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Volunteer Policies

Forward

These Volunteer Policies were adopted by the Board of Directors of the Girl Scouts of the Desert Southwest - Southern New Mexico & West Texas, Inc., here to fore referred to as “the Council”, and supersede all previous policies. No one other than the Board of Directors has the authority to alter, amend or modify the provisions in this handbook.

By the terms of its charter, Girl Scouts of the Desert Southwest – Southern New Mexico & West Texas, Inc. and all its members are required to adhere to the policies of the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. (GSUSA) as stated in the *Blue Book of Basic Documents* and are guided by the standards of the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. as stated in *Safety Activity Checkpoints* and *Volunteer Essentials* adopted by the Council.

A volunteer is any person who, without compensation or expectation of compensation, performs a role under the direction of and on behalf of the Council. A volunteer must be officially accepted and registered by the Council prior to performance of the role. Volunteers shall not be considered as employees of the Council. Any adult who works directly with Girl Scouts, drives Girl Scouts, handles money for a Troop/Group or Service Unit, or supervises Girl Scouts must be a volunteer.

1. Adult Leadership:

- 1.1 All adult volunteers shall be registered members of the Girl Scout Movement and shall individually pay the applicable membership fees.
- 1.2 Each applicant for a volunteer position is required to authorize a criminal background check every three years.
- 1.3 Every volunteer, parent, or individual who wishes to be associated with the Council is required to read and acknowledge the “GSDSW Sexual Abuse & Child Molestation Policy and Procedures.”

2. Volunteer Development:

- 2.1 Training
 - 2.1.1 Volunteers are required to take all training applicable to their position within a designated period of time and renew the training every three calendar years.
- 2.2 Recognition
 - 2.2.1 Formal GSUSA and Council awards for individuals providing outstanding service to Girl Scouting will be recognized by the Council as approved by the Board of Directors.

2.3 Resignation

- 2.3.1 Any volunteer may resign from his or her position upon written notification to the appropriate individual.

2.4 Release

- 2.4.1 The Council may release a volunteer from his or her position including but not limited to restructuring of volunteer positions, the elimination of the volunteer position in which a person serves, the inability or failure to complete the requirements of the position, the refusal to comply with Council or GSUSA policies, the refusal to support the mission and values of the organization and the Council goals, or membership in an organization whose goals are not compatible with those of GSUSA.

- 2.4.2 Adults engaging in the following behaviors will be released from acting in an official Girl Scout capacity:

- 2.4.2.1 Possession, sale or use of illegal drugs.

- 2.4.2.2 Drinking or being under the influence of alcohol during Girl Scout activities where girls are present.

- 2.4.2.3 Misuse of any prescribed or over-the-counter drugs at any Girl Scout activity.

- 2.4.2.4 Child abuse and/or neglect.

- 2.4.2.5 Carrying firearms (guns and ammunition) during Girl Scout activities, except when in possession by a sworn officer of the law, certified firearms instructor or licensed wildlife control personnel, or with approval by the Chief Executive Officer.

- 2.4.2.6 Misuse of Council monies which include, but are not limited to, troop funds, Girl Scout product sales receipts, program event fees, membership registration fees or service unit funds.

- 2.4.2.7 Misuse of social media.

2.5 Conflict Resolution

- 2.5.1 The Council will maintain Conflict Resolution Procedures for all volunteers.

- 2.5.2 The Council strives to resolve any problems informally; however, when this option fails, a volunteer may choose a more formal method, such as the Volunteer Grievance Procedure. The Volunteer Grievance Procedure may be initiated by the volunteer without fear of retaliation.

2.6 Harassment

- 2.6.1 The Council expressly prohibits any form of harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin or disability.
- 2.6.2 The Council is committed to an environment and climate in which relationships are characterized by dignity, respect, courtesy and equitable treatment.
- 2.6.3 The Council is committed to an environment free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as “unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.”
- 2.6.4 Any volunteer who feels that she or he has been subjected to harassment of any type should promptly report the incident to the appropriate employed staff member or board member.

3. Membership / Troop/ Service Unit Organization

- 3.1 Membership shall be extended to all girls and adults regardless of socio-economic status, racial, ethnic, cultural or religious background or disability.
- 3.2 To register a troop, there must be at least five (5) girls registering from more than one immediate family unit. Exceptions may be made in extenuating circumstances due to the girl population of the area. This decision will be made by the CEO or designee.
- 3.3 *Volunteer Essentials* and *Safety Activity Checkpoints* adult-to-girl ratio must be met at all times.
- 3.4 At least two (2) adult volunteers are required to register with each troop and be present at every troop meeting and activity. At least one registered adult must be female and not related to the other adults or living in the same household.
- 3.5 Service Unit Team members must be adult volunteers.

4. Camping and Traveling

- 4.1 Troops planning trips, camping events, or other activities will conform to current standards and procedures as outlined by *Volunteer Essentials* and *Safety Activity Checkpoints*.
 - 4.1.1 All troops/groups taking girls outside the normal meeting place must take applicable Trips and Travel training beforehand.
- 4.2 All trips outside the Council's geographic jurisdiction and/or overnight in length must be approved by the authorized Council personnel according to Council procedures prior to the trip or activity event. If timelines and guidelines are not adhered to, the trip will be postponed. If a trip or activity/event is denied and a trip taken, all insurance is void and the leader's position will be in jeopardy. Activities and events are not approved until troop representative signature and authorized Council signatures are obtained.

- 4.3 Activities and event forms submitted during non business hours will not be recognized as submitted until the next business day.
- 4.4 All drivers must be over the age of 21 and must conform to current standards and procedures as outlined by *Volunteer Essentials* and *Safety Activity Checkpoints*.
- 4.5 Adult volunteers may not be considered for the adult-to-girl ratio if they have a tagalong with them.
 - 4.5.1 A tagalong is defined as any person not registered with Girl Scouts. Tagalongs will not be permitted to participate in Girl Scout troop/group trips or activities unless clearly stipulated. Tagalongs are not covered by the Girl Scout insurance and thus create an uninsured risk of liability for the Council and its members.

5. Money Management / Money-Earning

5.1 Troop/Group/Service Unit Funds

- 5.1.1 Troop/group/service unit funds are solely for the benefit of the girls within the troop/group/service unit with input from the girls into its use.
- 5.1.2 Personal use of troop/group/service unit funds at any time is illegal. Personal funds and troop/group/service unit funds cannot be co-mingled.
 - 5.1.2.1 If personal use of troop/group/service unit monies occurs, the Council will begin collection procedures, taking legal action if necessary.

5.2 Bank Accounts

- 5.2.1 All troop/group/service unit bank accounts must be in their local communities, addressed to their local program center or an adult signer on the account, and in the name of "Girl Scouts of the Desert Southwest", "Girl Scout troop/group/service unit # _____". The bank statements will be distributed to their respective troop/group/service unit. All troop bank accounts require two (2) authorized signers, not from the same family or household. Three (3) authorized signers on a signature card are recommended. Authorized signers must be adult volunteers registered with the troop/group/service unit.
- 5.2.2 Service units/troops/groups must submit an annual year-end financial report to the Council by the fourth Thursday of June. Failure to submit report will result in financial auditing and possible release from his or her volunteer position.
 - 5.2.2.1 Copies of all receipts or invoices for money transactions, including but not limited to cash withdrawal must be submitted with the end of year financial paperwork.
 - 5.2.2.2 Copies of all financial records must be retained by troop/group/service unit leadership for 3 years.
- 5.2.3 In the event a troop / group disbands, money raised, earned, or received in the name of Girl Scouting becomes the property of the Council.

- 5.2.3.1 If members of a disbanded troop / group join other troop(s) within the Council, the funds will be apportioned and disbursed to their new troop(s).
 - 5.2.3.2 If no members join another troop, the funds will be designated for Council financial assistance and support of girl programs after a period of one year.
 - 5.2.4 In the event a troop / group/service unit disbands, equipment purchased with money raised, earned, or received in the name of Girl Scouting becomes the property of the Council for distribution to other Council troops / groups/service units.
- 5.3 Sponsorships
 - 5.3.1 Sponsorships assist troops/groups in many ways. A sponsor may provide a meeting place, books, uniforms, or financial assistance.
 - 5.3.1.1 A troop/group/service unit may accept a sponsorship of no more than \$1,000 per year in cash. Exceptions may be made in extenuating circumstances. The decision will be made by the CEO or designee.
 - 5.3.1.2 Cash sponsorships should be made out to Girl Scouts of the Desert Southwest and submitted to the Council for processing, after which a check will be sent to the troop /group/ service unit.
 - 5.3.1.3 Finding a sponsor is adult driven; girls do not participate in soliciting a sponsor.
 - 5.3.1.4 A "Troop Sponsorship Agreement Form" must be completed and submitted to the Council.
- 5.4 Money-Earning
 - 5.4.1 Girl Scout troops/groups are financed by dues, money-earning activities, and a share of money earned through Council-sponsored product sale programs (Refer to *Volunteer Essentials*).
 - 5.4.2 Service unit/troop/group financing and money-earning activities must conform to the standards and finance practices as in *Volunteer Essentials*.
 - 5.4.3 All registered Girl Scouts shall be allowed to participate in the product sales program of the Council provided they adhere to the Council's Product Sales guidelines.
 - 5.4.4 The troop earnings portion of the Fall Product and Cookie Programs sold by individual girl members will be managed by the Council.
 - 5.4.5 Money-earning projects are valuable program activities for girls. Planning and participating in money-earning projects gives girls the opportunity to learn

important skills, such as budgeting, goal setting, good business practices, and public relations.

- 5.4.5.1 Raffles, drawings, games of chance, the direct solicitation of cash, and the sale or endorsement of commercial products are examples of inappropriate money-earning activities (Refer to *Volunteer Essentials*).
- 5.4.5.2 Profit sharing in which a troop/group/service unit receives a direct share of the profits when collaborating with another entity is not allowed.
- 5.4.6 Service units / troops/groups may not conduct any money-earning project other than the Fall Product and Cookie Programs, unless it is to support planned special projects, such as an extended trip, community service project, etc.
 - 5.4.6.1 All girls participating in money-earning projects must be registered members of the Council.
 - 5.4.6.2 Troops must participate in Fall Product and Cookie Sales Programs to be considered for any other money-earning project.
- 5.4.7 A "Troop Money-Earning Project Request" form must be submitted to the Fund Development Department for review and approval at least three (3) weeks before the money-earning event.
 - 5.4.7.1 The Council will take into consideration Council fundraising activities such as Product Sale Programs or other Council Campaigns.
 - 5.4.7.2 The event may not coincide with a local United Way campaign black-out period.
 - 5.4.7.3 Incomplete applications or applications submitted past the deadline will be denied. Applications may be resubmitted in accordance with the above policies.

6. Child Abuse

- 6.1 A person who suspects child abuse can be held criminally liable in the state of New Mexico and the state of Texas if he or she fails to report such information to the local authorities.
- 6.2 Girl Scouts of the Desert Southwest requires all volunteers and staff to immediately report suspected cases of child abuse to the Chief Executive Officer or the Board Chair and the local law enforcement agency in which the child resides within 24 hours of receipt of the information.

The New Mexico Abuse Hotline is 1-855-333-7233

The Texas Abuse Hotline is 1-800-252-5400

- 6.3 If the abuse occurred during a Girl Scout activity, an incident report must be filed with the Council.