



STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

The following Volunteer Management Standards and Procedures set out the requirements and guidelines for the volunteers of Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles (GSGLA). A standard is a measurement of best practices specifically observed by GSGLA. A procedure is established as an official process by which a standard is adhered to. This document does not intend to create a contract between GSGLA and any actual or potential volunteer, nor does it give rise to any legal obligation on the part of GSGLA to any actual or potential volunteer or third person.

All volunteers will be informed of the existence of GSUSA and GSGLA standards and procedures. GSGLA standards and procedures will be made available to all volunteers on GSGLA's website. Every volunteer must agree to abide by the standards and procedures of GSUSA and GSGLA.

1. Inclusiveness Statement

We celebrate and honor every unique individual Girl Scout, adult, volunteer, and staff member, along with the multifaceted experiences that they bring to our council. We believe that embracing our diversity leads to social, emotional, and innovative excellence, and we will continue to actively seek to understand the complex and rich identities of self and others, as well as strive for our programs to reflect the depth of our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access (DEIA).

Vision Statement

To ensure Girl Scouts is an inclusive organization that inherently enlists intentional strategies in culture, program, and service to foster involvement and remove barriers—especially for those that have historically been excluded or marginalized, so girls, families, volunteers, and staff of all backgrounds feel that Girl Scouts is for them.

Mission Statement

We are committed to providing programs, policy, and culture that promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and access through opportunities, relationships, and meaningful experiences that inspire empathetic leadership and cultivate an environment of belonging for the diverse voices and perspectives of our community.

2. Being an Appropriate Role Model

Part of being an effective and responsible Girl Scout adult volunteer includes being an appropriate role model. Girl Scouts learn about leadership and appropriate health and safety standards directly and indirectly from the adults around them, and especially from their leaders.

2A. Procedure – Volunteer Essentials and Blue Book of Basic Documents

Adult volunteers should model the behavior that shows respect for local, state, and federal laws and ordinances. They should also follow the procedures and standards of GSGLA found in Volunteer Essentials and in [GSUSA’s Blue Book of Basic Documents](#) when acting in an official Girl Scout capacity. Adult volunteers should model behavior that shows respect for the well-being of the Girl Scouts and other adults.

3. Membership Conditions

3A. Procedure - Volunteers

All adult volunteers, except those with lifetime memberships or adults serving as temporary advisors or consultants, must be registered members of the Girl Scout Movement and must pay the applicable membership dues on an annual basis and meet GSUSA membership requirements.

3B. Procedure - Short-term and Episodic Volunteers

Short-term (fewer than 30 consecutive days) and episodic (one-day event) volunteers are considered temporary assistants and annual membership dues are optional.

4. Recruitment

4A. Procedure

A position description will be provided for each volunteer position outlining the purpose, accountability, principal duties, and term of service of the position. Prospective volunteers for most positions will need to be approved volunteers*.

5. Becoming a Volunteer

5A. Procedure - Requirements:

Parents and other adults needed for adult-to-girl ratio, driving girls, staying overnight during troop trips, handling troop or service unit money, or bank account signers, must be approved volunteers.

Approved volunteers are registered Girl Scout members who have successfully cleared GSGLA’s background screening process within the last three years, or have completed the GSGLA Live Scan fingerprinting process, and have completed position related training.

In order to ensure the safety and well-being of our members, GSGLA reserves the right to disqualify or restrict the duties of any person who has been charged with, convicted of, pled guilty to, pled no contest to, or received a deferred adjudication on certain crimes, or

who GSGLA, in its sole discretion, based upon the information before it, otherwise deems as not qualified or fit to hold a volunteer position.

The goal of the background screening process is to screen prospective volunteers and place capable and qualified adults in all operational positions. GSGLA reserves the right to conduct a multi-state search, California statewide search, county search, sex offender registry search, as well as an OFAC (Office of Foreign Assets Control) search, and any other necessary search.

Please note the following regarding background screening:

- All volunteers, including lifetime members, who interact with girls must have a background screening on record that dates back no further than three years.
- If the background screening is older than three years, those volunteers must complete submit a new Asurint background screening or complete the Live Scan fingerprinting process.
- GSGLA reserves the right to require updated background screenings or Live Scan for any volunteer at its sole discretion.
- Volunteers who will not be interacting with girls may be required to consent to an Asurint background screening or Live Scan fingerprinting depending on the position.
- GSGLA has sole discretion in requesting background screenings for any volunteer position.

5B. Procedure – Application and Background Screening and/or Fingerprinting

If a person chooses an open volunteer position, via the GSGLA Opportunity Catalog (electronically), this does not guarantee that they will be placed. All volunteers of GSGLA are appointed by a staff member or his/her designee (the service unit manager or day camp director, for example). The staff person or the designee may use many tools to determine the suitability of a volunteer to be placed, including, but not limited to background screening/fingerprinting, reference checks, personal knowledge of the applicant, and an interview.

Potential volunteers must complete the registration process via the GSGLA Opportunity Catalog (electronically) as well as either an Asurint background screening or Live Scan fingerprinting, depending on the position. Providing false information, including all zeros in place of the correct social or other fake social, on the application is grounds for automatic dismissal from participation as a GSGLA volunteer, regardless of the result of the background screening/fingerprinting.

5C. Procedure – Mandated Reporter Training and Live Scan Fingerprinting

Per California Assembly Bill 506 (AB506), which took effect on January 1, 2022, GSGLA must add [mandated reporter training](#) and [Live Scan](#) fingerprinting to our already robust protocols for some, but not all, of our volunteers. Per AB506, those who need to add the mandated reporter training and/or Live Scan fingerprinting are volunteers with direct

contact or supervision of children for more than 16 hours a month, or 32+ hours a year. [Read the full text of the bill.](#)

Roles that require both the mandated reporter training and Live Scan fingerprinting:

Volunteers with specific roles and those wanting to participate in specific activities will be prohibited from the role and/or participation if requirements are not met. At this time, volunteers with the following roles must complete both the [mandated reporter training](#) and the [Live Scan](#) fingerprinting process:

- Troop Leader (and co-leader)
- Troop Chaperone
- Service Unit Manager

Both the [mandated reporter training](#) and the [Live Scan](#) fingerprinting process must be completed within 90 days of starting these roles. **Troop leaders that have not met the requirement** within 90 days of beginning their new role will be suspended from their role as troop leader until the requirement is fulfilled.

Additionally, once the mandated reporter training has been completed, the certificate must also be submitted via [the eForm](#) within the same 90 days. If a volunteer has already completed a mandated reporter training that meets the California state requirements, GSGLA will honor that training. Those certificates must also be uploaded via [the eForm](#) for the volunteer to be compliant.

For adults not volunteering in the roles listed above:

- If friends and family members are included in the girl/adult ratio, are supervising Girl Scouts, and/or are included in the ratio for event staffing, handling money, or driving youth members, then background screening (Asurint* or [Live Scan](#)) is required.
- If volunteer hours of direct contact or supervision of children comprise of less than 16 hours a month, or 32+ hours a year, only our standard background screening (Asurint*) is required.
- If volunteer hours of direct contact or supervision of children comprise of more than 16 hours a month, or 32+ hours a year, [mandated reporter training](#) and [Live Scan](#) fingerprinting is required.

*Asurint background screening is initiated through [MyGS](#). Once a volunteer role is selected in [MyGS](#), An email from Asurint with a link to complete the background screening will be sent via email. This link will expire after 72 hours. [Customer care](#) will be able to assist with questions regarding the Asurint process and resending the link if needed.

Additional Live Scan information:

- Live Scans must be done in the state of California to be valid for GSGLA. Manual fingerprint cards will not meet AB506 requirements.

- Live Scans will only need to be done one time, as long as the volunteer maintains an active membership with GSGLA. If the volunteer is inactive for one year or longer, a new Live Scan will be required.
- Volunteers who have completed a Live Scan, and who maintain an active membership with GSGLA, will not need to complete the Asurint background screening to renew volunteer roles with GSGLA.
- Only Live Scans that are completed with GSGLA will be valid. By law, organizations cannot share this data. Therefore, fingerprints that may have been completed with other councils, other volunteer organizations or through employment will not be valid for GSGLA.

Please note - Neither an Asurint background screening nor a Live Scan will be required for adult members as long as they are not:

- Included in the girl/adult ratio.
- Supervising Girl Scouts
- Included in the ratio for event staffing.

This includes attending GSGLA sponsored events, programming, family camping or family overnights, troop or service unit sponsored events, outings, programming, or overnights, (I.E., troop meetings, outings, field trips, overnights, and family camping, etc.).

Live Scan Fingerprinting and Asurint Background Screening Results.

Information obtained through either the Live Scan fingerprinting or Asurint background screening process is shared directly with GSGLA by California reporting agencies. If this information includes anything that may disqualify or limit a volunteer's participation with Girl Scouts, GSGLA will be notified. Further details regarding disqualification are provided throughout the Standards and Procedures chapter of Volunteer Essentials.

Any volunteer who would like to review or contest the information provided through either the Live Scan fingerprinting or Asurint background check process may do so by visiting the following links:

- [Asurint Dispute Form](#)
- [California Record Review](#)

It is the applicant's responsibility to challenge the information received through the Live Scan fingerprinting or Asurint background check and to arrange for any corrections if necessary. GSGLA has no control over the information maintained by any reporting agency and cannot be liable to any person or entity for the information provided, or other reporting agencies, or to its agents, for any action taken by GSGLA in reliance on such information.

GSGLA is entitled to and shall rely upon the information contained in the background screening results until such time as a corrected criminal history transcript has been provided. Even if an applicant submits corrected background information, GSGLA retains exclusive discretion to exclude or limit an applicant's participation.

Some of the standards and procedures outlined in Volunteer Essentials and *Safety Activity Checkpoints* may apply if GSGLA discovers (via fingerprinting, background screening, or otherwise) that a prospective or current volunteer has been charged with, convicted of, pled guilty, received a deferred adjudication, or pled no contest to certain crimes in the past seven years under the laws of the state of California, another state in the United States, or another country. At all times, GSGLA has the discretion to exclude or limit a prospective volunteer's participation as a result of other predating or non-criminal information.

Reminder

Volunteers have an important role in protecting children from abuse and neglect. As a Girl Scout volunteer, our existing volunteer policy and safety guidelines require you to report abuse to council staff. To do so, contact your assigned Membership Specialist directly, or email [customer care](#) to be connected to your assigned Membership Specialist.

6. Disqualification

6A. Procedure - Overview

The criminal offenses that will generally disqualify a person from volunteer participation and the corresponding process used to determine disqualification are discussed below. The decision whether to exclude or limit a prospective volunteer's participation remains at all times within the discretion of GSGLA.

Factors that may be considered in making such determinations include, but are not limited to, the nature and severity of the criminal conduct, length of time since the criminal conduct occurred, and the tasks associated with the desired volunteer position. GSGLA's primary concern is always to safeguard the best interests of its members.

6B. Procedure – Grounds for Disqualification

The following rules generally will apply if GSGLA learns via fingerprinting, background screening, or otherwise) that a prospective or current volunteer has been convicted in the past seven years of one of the following crimes under the laws of the state of California, another state in the United States, or another country.

At all times, GSGLA has the discretion to exclude or limit a prospective volunteer's participation as a result of other pre-dating or non-criminal information.

Grounds for disqualification or limitations:

- Any felony offense, regardless of type
- Misdemeanor crime against a child
- Misdemeanor crime involving use of weapons
- Misdemeanor crime involving violence
- Misdemeanor crime involving arson
- Misdemeanor crime of public indecency
- Misdemeanor DUI, DWI, or possession of any controlled substance

Other misdemeanors - As GSGLA may determine, including but not limited to theft, fraud, forgery, other crimes of dishonesty, or traffic violations. When an adult in any volunteer position with GSGLA has an outstanding debt to or has caused a financial loss to GSGLA or its entities, GSGLA has the right to remove the volunteer from her or his position.

Additionally, being a registered sex offender or having a registered sex offender living in the home will be an automatic disqualification for a volunteer position with GSGLA.

Unresolved situations - If there is an open warrant for the arrest of the applicant, or there is a pending charge with no disposition, the volunteer cannot be placed until the situation has been satisfactorily resolved and the background screening report updated.

If the applicant has already begun to serve in a volunteer capacity, his or her participation must be suspended pending disposition of the case or resolution of the open warrant.

Other circumstances and general principles - For all other criminal offenses, including traffic violations classified as misdemeanors, self-disclosures of complaints about or arrests for violence or abuse against children, GSGLA shall review the applicant's situation on a case-by-case basis. A prospective volunteer may be disqualified due to non-criminal information, such as negative references, and/or interview.

Additionally, a prospective volunteer may be disqualified for:

- Failure to complete Asurint background screening and/or Live Scan fingerprinting.
- Failure to submit a correct social security number.

6C. Procedure – Failure to disclose

Failure to disclose the following may result in disqualification from a volunteer position:

- Any arrests, allegations, pleadings of “no contest”, dismissals, or convictions of a crime other than a minor traffic offense. (Including DUI's, misdemeanors, or felonies)

- Allegations, complaints, arrests, or reports regarding your involvement in child molestation, violence or abuse against children, or neglect. (Regardless of whether the incident was confirmed or denied)
- If a member of your household is a registered sex offender.
- Any pending criminal charges against you.

6D. Procedure – Final Action

GSGLA reserves the right to permanently deny anyone a volunteer position if GSGLA officials believe the person is inappropriate for that position. There is no appeal process once a final denial decision has been made by GSGLA.

7. Placement

7A. Procedure – Overview

Every attempt will be made to place volunteers in positions that meet both their needs and the needs of GSGLA.

7B. Procedure –Choice of Position

Approved volunteers not placed in positions for which they applied may discuss other positions that may be available with a GSGLA representative or designee.

7C. Procedure – Leadership Team Requirements

If two people in the leadership team of a troop or other membership pathway are related (e.g., spouses, mother and daughter, brother, and sister) or share the same household (e.g., roommates), they must have a third unrelated person, who does not live in the same household as another leader on the leadership team present at all troop meetings and activities. Two of which always must be unrelated adults, and one of whom must be female.

7D. Procedure – Events, Camping, Travel Adult Requirements

For events, travel, and camping trips, two approved, unrelated adult volunteers, who do not live in the same household, and one of whom is female, must be present at all times.

7E. Procedure – Male Leader Additional Requirements

Male leaders must have a female co-leader so that in case of emergency, a female-leader is present at all times, who is unrelated and who does not live in the same household.

8. Appointment

Girl Scout volunteers must be appointed to their position, using the procedures below. It is the responsibility of the prospective volunteer to complete all the required steps. GSGLA reserves the right to limit volunteer involvement until all steps have been completed.

8A. Procedures – Initial Steps:

- The prospective volunteer begins the process by selecting a desired volunteer role through the GSGLA Opportunity Catalog in MyGS and paying the membership dues.
- The prospective volunteer completes the Asurint background screening and/or Live Scan fingerprinting.
- The prospective volunteer may need to provide references if requested by GSGLA staff. These references may be contacted if additional information is necessary.
- If an Asurint background screening is completed, the prospective volunteer will receive a notification that their background screening has been approved or is approved with restrictions via the prospective volunteers MyGS portal.
- If Live Scan fingerprinting is completed, the prospective volunteer will only be notified directly if the fingerprints need to be resubmitted or if there is a potential for disqualification. Otherwise, the volunteer will be added to the weekly SUM report of cleared Live Scans.
- If the position is mutually agreed upon after reviewing the appropriate volunteer position description, the new volunteer accepts the position.
- The new volunteer will complete the training required for their position, as described in the position description.

8B. Procedures – Service Unit Manager and Team

- Appointment of a service unit manager(s) or service unit team members. Service unit managers and service unit team member positions are extremely important. These groups of volunteers directly impact the troop and girl experience.
- Appointment of the service unit manager is done through an interview conducted by the membership specialist and the membership manager. Upon their recommendation for appointment, the appointment is granted by the senior manager of membership.
- The appointment period is Oct. 1 - Sept. 29. Appointment requires an initial three-year commitment which is thereafter confirmed annually by the senior manager of membership and/or the membership manager.
- Appointment of service unit team members is done in partnership with the service unit manager (SUM) and membership specialists. Upon recommendation or recruitment of a team member, the SUM and specialist would confer and agree upon appointment.

Appointment of the service unit manager and of the service unit team members will be conditional upon completion of the requirements.

9. Reappointment

9A. Procedure – Requirements

Troop volunteers, Pathway* volunteers and other volunteers who work directly with girls, such as service unit volunteers, training facilitators, camp, and other GSGLA volunteers, must demonstrate inclusiveness, and knowledge of and commitment to safety issues, in addition to financial responsibility, in order to continue in a volunteer role. Volunteers with financial responsibility to local troops/groups or to GSGLA will not be reappointed to a position if required financial responsibilities have not been met.

* Series, event, camp, travel, and virtual pathways.

9B. Procedures – Review, Agreement, and Training:

Each appointed operational volunteer's performance will be reviewed periodically. If mutually agreeable, the volunteer completes the appropriate volunteer position description/agreement. Continuing operational volunteers agree to complete and/or update training as required for the position.

10. Benefits and Services

Benefits and services to volunteers may include training and other learning opportunities, support from GSGLA staff and other GSGLA volunteers, GSUSA and GSGLA publications and website, tools for recording volunteer experiences, awards and recognitions, and performance evaluations.

10A. Procedure – No Monetary Compensation

Volunteers recognize their Girl Scout position(s) as a voluntary service and do not expect, receive, or solicit any monetary reimbursement for service.

10B. Procedures – Expenses, Insurance, and Protections for Volunteers

Volunteers are encouraged to keep a record of expenses incurred while doing Girl Scout activities (e.g., cost of uniforms, mileage, etc.). Many of these expenses can be applied as income tax deductions. Volunteers are advised to check with the Internal Revenue Service or a tax consultant regarding volunteer expense tax deductions.

All currently registered members of GSUSA are automatically covered by a supplemental activity accident insurance policy. The plan provides limited coverage for medical expenses due to accidents that occur while participating in approved, supervised Girl Scout activities, including traveling directly to and from the activity. GSGLA cannot guarantee that all claims will be paid.

According to the Nonprofit Risk Management Center, the federal [Volunteer Protection Act of 1997](#) protects volunteers acting in the scope of their responsibilities as defined in the position description.

Under California law, directors and officers of non-profits enjoy limited protection from liability, as do an organization's volunteers. A member, director, trustee, or officer who serves without compensation for a non-profit hospital or association or a charitable organization is immune from civil liability for an act of or omission done in service if they were acting in good faith and within the scope of their duties, with the exception being damage or injury caused by willful or wanton misconduct.

A charitable institution is not liable for the negligence of its officers and employees unless the institution fails to exercise ordinary care in the selection or retention of competent officers and employees.

11. Training

Every adult volunteer shall be selected on the basis of interest, ability to perform the assignment, and agreement to participate in training as required. Training is provided and required for appointment to most positions.

11A. Procedure – Overview

All appointed volunteers will receive an orientation to Girl Scouting and any required training as stated on the position description. All volunteers must complete training within the timeframes established in the position description. Failure to complete training shall be a basis for release or a cause for not being reappointed to a position.

11B. Procedure – Orientation

An orientation to the Girl Scout program should be given for any volunteer position as part of the appointment process.

11C. Procedure – Initial Leader Training

Troop leaders and assistant troop leaders must complete the new leader training requirements prior to beginning work with the troop. The New Leader Orientation is mandatory for every new leader. Additional training may be required as GSGLA or GSUSA updates their programs, policies, or offerings.

11D. Procedure – Non-Leader Training

Each position description will list the minimal training a volunteer must complete prior to beginning work in that position. The position description may also list progressive training that may be taken beyond the minimal requirements.

11E. Procedure – Additional Training

Additional training, annual training, and workshops may be required for any volunteer position. Volunteers not completing the additional training required for their position within a reasonable amount of time may be asked to step down.

11F. Procedure – Class Offerings

Refer to GSGLA’s [event calendar](#) for class offerings. Refer to MyGS for gsLearn course offerings online.

12. Recognitions

GSGLA’s volunteer recognition program is designed to be a valuable component of the volunteer support system. It offers formal and informal recognition on a year-round basis. Formal recognition is for significant service and for completing established requirements. Recognition success is defined by doing it well, doing it often, and making it meaningful.

12A. Procedure – Description

Outstanding service to Girl Scouting will be recognized by GSGLA as outlined on the GSGLA website on the Volunteer Awards page.

12B. Procedure – Council Level Awards

At the council or national level, volunteers can be nominated for:

- Appreciation Pin
- Honor Pin
- Platinum Service Award (GSGLA specific)
- Thanks Badge
- Thanks Badge II

Council level recognitions also include:

- Numeral Guard – 30 years+ as a registered Girl Scout member
- Years of Service – 25 years+ as an adult Girl Scout volunteer

For details on each award, how to qualify and how to nominate, please visit the [Volunteer Recognition page](#) of the GSGLA website.

13. Confidentiality

All information concerning staff, volunteers, financial data, and business records of Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles is confidential. Care shall also be taken to ensure that unauthorized individuals do not overhear any discussion of confidential information and that documents containing confidential information are not left in the open or inadvertently shared.

Information that is sensitive in nature should not be disclosed or discussed with anyone without written authorization from GSGLA. GSGLA relies on volunteers to conform to this

rule of confidentiality. Respecting the privacy of our clients, donors, members, staff, volunteers and of Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles itself is a basic value of Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles.

13A. Procedure – Volunteer Responsibility

Volunteers of GSGLA may be exposed to information which is confidential and/or privileged and proprietary in nature. It is the standard and procedure of GSGLA that such information must be kept confidential both during and after volunteer service.

Volunteers are expected to return materials containing privileged or confidential information at the expiration of service. Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or privileged information is a serious violation of this standard and procedure and will subject the person(s) who made the unauthorized disclosure to appropriate discipline, including removal/dismissal.

13B. Procedure – During and After Volunteer Commitment

Volunteers are asked to comply with all confidentiality procedures. During the course of volunteerism, and after retirement of a volunteer position, sensitive or confidential information shall not be divulged, disclosed, or communicated for any reason.

14. Dismissal

In any organization, situations may arise which make it necessary to consider releasing an individual from their volunteer assignment. An action to release an adult volunteer should receive careful and detailed consideration of the possible implications and consequences for both the individual and GSGLA.

14A. Procedure - Overview

It is always within the discretion of GSGLA to take immediate action, in the appropriate circumstances, to release a volunteer. Grounds for dismissing or restricting the responsibilities of a current volunteer appear below. The decision to release a person from a current volunteer position or from the volunteer ranks of GSGLA could be the result of an evaluation and feedback process or the result of one problematic incident.

Reasons for release may include, but are not limited to, elimination of the position in which the volunteer serves, failure to abide by procedures and standards of GSUSA or GSGLA, refusal to accept and foster the Girl Scout mission and values, or membership in an organization whose goals are not compatible with those of GSUSA.

14B. Procedure – Role Model

GSGLA may release any volunteer who, in conducting the Girl Scout program, advocates, solicits, or promotes a personal lifestyle so as to create a substantial risk that such conduct will be detrimental to being a proper role model for girl members.

14C. Procedures – Releasing an Operational Volunteer

The release of any volunteer is taken very seriously. Each situation will be investigated objectively to our furthest abilities and will be kept confidential. If the release of the volunteer is under consideration, the appropriate staff will arrange a conference with the volunteer as soon as possible and advise them of the decision. An additional party will be required to attend the discussion. Volunteers will be given the opportunity to resign voluntarily.

If a current Girl Scout volunteer is charged with, convicted of, pled guilty to, received deferred adjudication for, or pled no contest to certain crimes in the Grounds for Dismissal list (see below), GSGLA may ask the volunteer to resign from a position working with Girl Scouts. It is at the discretion of GSGLA whether to allow the volunteer to continue in any capacity, and any adverse action taken will be done so only after a thorough investigation.

Grounds for Dismissal List

- Any felony offense, regardless of type
- Misdemeanor crime against a child
- Misdemeanor crime involving use of weapons
- Misdemeanor crime involving violence
- Misdemeanor crime involving arson
- Misdemeanor crime of public indecency
- Misdemeanor DUI, DWI, or possession of any controlled substance
- Being a registered sex offender or having a registered sex offender living in the home.

GSGLA may determine other misdemeanors not listed above are ground for dismissal. These may include, but are not limited to, theft, fraud, forgery, and other crimes of dishonesty or traffic violations. Additionally, if an adult in any volunteer position holds an outstanding debt to or has caused a financial loss to the Council or its entities, GSGLA has the right to remove the volunteer from their position.

Unresolved Situations

If there is an open warrant for the arrest of the prospective volunteer, or there is a pending charge with no disposition, the volunteer cannot be placed until the situation has been satisfactorily resolved and the background screening report updated.

If the prospective volunteer has already begun to serve in a volunteer capacity, their participation must be suspended pending disposition of the case or resolution of the open warrant.

Other Circumstances and General Principles

For all other criminal offenses, including traffic violations classified as misdemeanors, GSGLA shall review the applicant's situation on a case-by-case basis. A prospective volunteer may be disqualified due to non-criminal information, such as negative references. Failure to disclose any of the above within 10 days to the Membership Department.

Volunteer Misconduct

Adult volunteers are expected to conduct themselves with respect to the Girl Scout Promise and the Girl Scout Law. The following volunteer misconduct situations may result in the dismissal from a volunteer position:

- **Theft:** Any concerns relating to misappropriation or misuse of Girl Scout funds or theft of equipment, materials, or supplies. This includes funds or equipment at the Council, service unit, or troop level.
- **Excessive absenteeism or inability to perform responsibilities:** Not completing the agreed term or service or demonstrating no improvement in performance after being coached multiple times by GSGLA staff or service unit team member.
- **Continuous or malicious slander:** Continuous and malicious gossip or derogatory attacks concerning anyone associated with Girl Scouts. This includes Girl Scout volunteers, parents, and GSGLA staff.
- **Serious behavioral concerns:** This includes the use of drugs or alcohol while participating in Girl Scout activities, threats of violence (personal injury, defamation of character, etc.), physical fighting, arrest and yelling/verbal aggression towards girls, volunteers, or staff.
- **Breach of confidentiality:** Sharing confidential information about girls or volunteers with outside parties that are not privy to said information. This includes the use of Girl Scout contact information and materials for personal use or gain.
- **Refusal:** Actively choosing not to subscribe to or adhere to GSGLA policies, procedures, and program expectations.
- **Failure to cooperate:** Actively failing to cooperate with a financial audit or dispute resolution investigation.
- **Failure to meet position requirements:** This includes, but is not limited to, completing membership registration, Asurint background screening and/or Live Scan fingerprinting or position training when directed by GSGLA.
- **Intentionally providing false or misleading information:** This includes, but is not limited to, the social security number during background screening or fingerprinting.
- Intentionally failing to abide by the duties and responsibilities as outlined in the position description.

The service unit manager responsible for overseeing the volunteer is responsible for notifying their membership specialist at GSGLA if they become aware of a situation

involving one of the above bulleted items. The membership specialist should then notify the membership manager. After reviewing the facts, the team may ask the volunteer to step down from the position.

Asurint background screenings include a time frame of at least seven years; therefore, it is appropriate that the volunteer may be dismissed or put in a position with appropriate restrictions for a minimum of seven years from the disposition of the offense. The length of this time frame and all other considerations related to the volunteer's position are at the sole discretion of GSGLA.

14D. Procedures – Restriction of Activity

If a current Girl Scout leader or assistant leader is charged with, convicted of, has pled guilty to, received a deferred adjudication for, or pled no contest to, certain crimes, they may have restrictions placed on their volunteer activities or responsibilities.

In keeping with the denial guidelines for incoming volunteers, an ongoing volunteer who has been charged with, convicted of, has pled guilty to, received a deferred adjudication for, or pled no contest to, certain crimes, may be asked to step down from their volunteer position and not allowed to become a leader or assistant leader if the incident or knowledge of the incident is within seven years. At the end of this time frame, it is within the sole discretion of GSGLA to determine whether the volunteer can be placed in a leadership position.

Volunteer misconduct as described within the standards and procedures section of Volunteer Essentials may result in restriction of leadership duties.

14E. Procedure – Restriction from Money Handling

If a volunteer has been charged with or convicted of, or has pled guilty to, received a deferred adjudication for, or pled no contest to misdemeanor crimes involving theft, fraud, or forgery, or other crimes of dishonesty in the event that the person is allowed to continue as a volunteer, that person will be restricted from management of Girl Scout money.

14F. Procedure – Current Arrest or Conviction:

Arrests of current volunteers, and current volunteers who have pled guilty or no contest to certain crimes, or who have been placed on probation or deferred adjudication for crimes that are brought to GSGLA's attention, will be handled in a similar manner to open warrants and pending charges for prospective volunteers.

The activities of the volunteer will be restricted while GSGLA researches the matter. It is at the discretion of GSGLA to determine whether the person should be suspended from all volunteer positions or be allowed to continue.

14G. Procedures – Service Unit Manager or Team Member or Leader

There are occasions where current service unit managers or current service unit team members are not reappointed or are removed from their current service unit positions.

This may occur after the following:

- A thorough review of position performance based on the position description, and observable documented information.
- A review of records of attendance and participation in formal and informal training sessions and meetings.
- A personal interview with the volunteer at the earliest opportunity. The volunteer will be told of the specific performance areas(s) that is not satisfactory.
- Efforts are made to help the volunteer achieve satisfactory job performance within a specific time period.
- If a satisfactory level of position performance is not achieved within the designated time period, official notice of release from the volunteer position will be communicated to the volunteer.
- The health, safety, or welfare of girl members, other volunteers, or staff is endangered.

Note: Volunteers are released from their volunteer position only; this does not cancel their membership with Girl Scouts. All circumstances, including all written documentation and communication concerning release from a volunteer position, are strictly confidential and will be protected.

In addition to the items listed in the procedure for releasing an operational volunteer, a service unit manager or a service unit team member may be removed or not reappointed for the following reasons:

- Persistent or continual refusal to support and promote council initiatives.
- Persistent or continual negative and disparaging communications about the Girl Scout organization, "Council", staff, or other volunteers.
- Failure to adhere to compliance requirements as designated in the position description
- Failure or refusal to follow GSGLA and GSUSA policies, standards, and procedures.
- Failure or refusal to communicate/return calls or emails from staff or other volunteers in a timely manner.
- Failure to stay current with GSGLA and GSUSA communications.
- Failure or refusal to partner/cooperate with council staff.

15. Resignation

In order to maintain professionalism in our volunteer organization, a person having reason(s) to resign is provided with appropriate channels to follow.

15A. Procedure - Volunteer Action

A volunteer may resign from their position at any time. Written notification to a GSGLA staff member or designee is encouraged. Membership fees are non-refundable.

15B. Procedures - Staff Action

Reason(s) for desiring to resign should be discussed immediately with the person to whom the volunteer is accountable to, prior to making a final decision. Any resignation submitted will be acknowledged by a GSGLA membership specialist or membership manager.

If notice of resignation has not been submitted, but GSGLA staff have attempted to reach out to the volunteer on several documented occasions without success, the volunteer may be deemed to have resigned.

16. Dispute Resolution

Conflicts and disagreements are an inevitable part of life, and when handled constructively can actually enhance communication and relationships. At the very least, Girl Scouts are expected to practice self-control and diplomacy so that conflicts do not erupt into regrettable incidents. Shouting, verbal abuse, or physical confrontations are never warranted and cannot be tolerated in the Girl Scout environment.

When a conflict arises between girls or a girl and a volunteer, get those involved to sit down together and talk calmly and in a nonjudgmental manner. (Each party may need some time—a few days or a week—to calm down before being able to do this.) Although talking in this way can be uncomfortable and difficult, it does lay the groundwork for working well together in the future. Whatever you do, do not share your complaint with others—this causes the situation to escalate.

When difficulties arise with a girl or girls at a troop, within the community or during a Council activity, it is best to discuss the situation calmly and objectively with the girls first. Make sure your conversation is in the presence of another adult – not one on one. It is important for a Girl Scout's parent/guardian to be informed of the situation and to be involved in its resolution. Consult with your troop mentor for advice and support. It is appropriate to ask the parent/guardian to meet with the troop leadership team to discuss the girl's behavior and ask them to help the leadership find a reasonable solution to the problem.

Assessing the Conflict

1. Fact find; listen actively to all persons involved. This may require an investment of your time, one-on-one meetings or group meetings may be necessary.
2. Take notes.
3. Don't act upon emotion – many problems are emotion-based, and emotions are not logical.

4. Watch for the implied meaning of words.
5. Don't make moral judgments.
6. Don't jump to conclusions.
7. Consider each person's point of view.
8. Take a break and come back fresh.

Tips for Resolving Conflict

1. Create a clear framework for all involved; set time limits on meetings or discussions.
2. Setting clear expectations is critical. Determine what the desired outcome/solution is for each person.
3. Diffuse anger by stating how you feel, but use "I" messages.
4. Don't launch a personal attack.
5. Speak up. Don't let resentment build and reach a boiling point.
6. Don't expect an apology.
7. Ask open-ended questions.
8. Check your ego at the door.

If a conflict persists, be sure you explain the matter to your service unit manager. If the service unit manager (SUM) cannot help you resolve the issues satisfactorily (or if the problem involves the SUM), contact GSGLA membership staff for additional guidance; GSGLA membership staff will make the final decision on the resolution of the matter.

The needs of all the Girl Scouts affected by the situation should always be considered. As a Council, we make every effort to place and keep a girl in the troop she and her parent/guardian desires, however, it is not always possible to do. When the adults involved cannot reach a resolution or do not follow through with the agreed upon actions to resolve the issue, it may be necessary to find another solution; this may result in the removal of a volunteer, leader, parent, or girl.

Again, in all situations, the needs of the girls should come first. If, for any reason, a conflict or dispute arises between individuals and cannot be resolved through discussion with each other, the dispute resolution procedures outlined in this section 16. Dispute Resolution will be followed until the conflict or dispute is resolved.

16A. Procedures - Description:

A grievance may arise when:

- An individual believes that policies, standards, or procedures related to their position in Girl Scouting are not being properly administered.
- There is a disagreement of any kind between two or more volunteers, or between volunteers and parents, or between volunteers and staff, or volunteers and community members.

- There is a dispute over the interpretation of one or more GSGLA procedures and standards. In order to present the best possible Girl Scout experience to all members, non-Girl Scout conflicts or issues should not be addressed, discussed, or brought forth within a Girl Scout setting, to include meetings, events, trips, social media, or electronic communication, etc.

GSGLA encourages volunteers and staff to take positive actions to resolve conflicts quickly. We believe a personal phone call or meeting to be the most effective and positive action step. Due to potential escalation of conflicts, email, texting, instant messaging, social media, or any other exchange that does not promote person-to-person resolution is not recommended by GSGLA.

If, for any reason, a conflict or dispute arises between individuals and cannot be resolved through discussion with each other, the dispute resolution procedures outlined in the dispute resolution section of Volunteer Essentials will be followed until the conflict or dispute is resolved.

16B. Procedures – Steps for Resolving the Dispute

The most effective way to resolve a dispute is by calm and open discussion between the persons involved. A problem-solving tone should be adopted during these discussions. If a solution is not resolved privately between the two parties involved, the next step is for one or both or all individuals to email their concern to their membership specialist. They may also contact [customer care](#) to be directed to their membership specialist.

The correct protocol for seeking assistance with dispute management is in the following order:

1. Affected parties and the troop leader, if the troop leader is not a source of the conflict.
2. Service unit manager if the service unit manager is not a source of the conflict.
3. Membership specialist
4. Membership manager
5. Senior manager, membership

The email should include the results of the first attempt(s) at resolution, including dates, times, individuals involved, proposed resolution, and explanation why the proposed resolution did not/will not resolve the grievance.

If there is any reason why a volunteer cannot communicate their issue to the next immediate person in this chain of command, the person holding the next position in this hierarchy should be contacted.

Within two weeks after receiving the email, the appropriate membership staff person will investigate the situation and may call a conference of the parties involved with the purpose of mediating and resolving the conflict or dispute.

A written summary of the meeting will be distributed to all parties involved. As a Council, we make every effort to place and keep a girl in the troop she and her parent/guardian desires, however, it is not always possible to do. When the adults involved cannot reach a

resolution or do not follow through with the agreed upon actions to resolve the issue, it may be necessary to find another solution; this may result in the removal of a volunteer, leader, parent, or girl. GSGLA Senior Manager of Volunteer Relations and Compliance will make the final decision on the resolution of the matter.

In some situations, it may be necessary to form an ad hoc group. This is at the sole discretion of GSGLA. If a solution is still not reached, an ad hoc group may be formed and may consist of operational volunteers and GSGLA staff, to reach a final decision.

17. Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest exists when the interests or concerns of any GSGLA volunteer or any member of his/her immediate family, or any party, group, or organization in which said volunteer is actively involved, may be seen as adverse to, or in competition with the interests or concerns of GSGLA. This standard and procedure is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

In conducting the affairs of GSGLA, a conflict of interest shall be defined as a volunteer, or a member of his/her family who could expect financial gain of \$150.00 or greater from a particular troop, service unit, or GSGLA decision or transaction. The purpose of the conflict-of-interest standard and procedure is to protect the GSGLA's constituents when volunteers are contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of a volunteer or family member holding a leadership position over Girl Scout members or other volunteers. Volunteers are prohibited from soliciting directly or indirectly any Girl Scout member or their families for any business relationship, charitable organization, or vendor relationship that may be perceived as a conflict of interest.

17A. Procedure – Overview

A volunteer or any member of his/her immediate family shall not engage in conduct or activities which constitute a conflict of interest. The following transactions constitute examples of conflicts of interest prohibited by this standard and procedure:

- Financial gain of \$150.00 or greater from a troop, service unit, or GSGLA decision, or transaction.
- Utilizing their position as a volunteer for personal, professional, political, or monetary gain (acting individually on behalf of any group, organization, or business to which she/he has allegiance).
- Using for personal advantage or for the advantage of any other person or organization the confidential information or material of GSGLA (such as rosters, mailing lists, donor lists, etc.)

17B. Procedure – Disclosure and Subsequent Steps

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 practicable, 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 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 membership managers to consider the proposed transaction or arrangement.

If the proposed transaction may cause a potential financial gain of less than \$150.00 (aggregated throughout the membership year), the membership manager will determine if a conflict of interest exists.

If the proposed transaction may cause a potential financial gain greater than \$150.00 (aggregated throughout the membership year), the service unit leadership should contact the membership manager, who shall consult with the Manager of Volunteer Relations and Compliance for review in determining if a conflict of interest exists.

18. Uniforms

18A. Procedure – Girl Uniform

The official Girl Scout uniform for girls is a white shirt (either their own or the official Girl Scout polo shirt for their program level), their own khaki pants or skirt, and the official program level tunic, vest, or sash for displaying official pins and awards.

Girl Scout Daisies and Brownies may wear the khaki and white uniform or choose to wear other official Girl Scout uniform components for their program level, such as the Daisy or Brownie beanie, and other official components offered. As a link with Girl Guides and Girl Scouts from other WAGGGS member countries, all Girl Scouts have an official, neckerchief-style scarf to wear with their uniform, too.

Dress code for all Girl Scouts include the following:

- Girls should always wear shirts with sleeves that cover at least the top of the shoulder. This prevents sunburns and hides straps for older girls. The shirt should go below the waist so no midriff shows.
- Shorts should come to mid-thigh or at least be long enough to provide full bottom coverage.
- Socks should cover the ankles, especially in outdoor settings.
- Closed toed shoes should be worn at all times.

18B. Procedure – Adult Uniform

The recommended uniform for Girl Scout adults is their own navy business attire, worn with an official Girl Scout scarf for women or official Girl Scout tie for men, and the Girl Scout Membership Pin and World Trefoil Pin.

18C. Procedure – When to Wear

Girl Scout adults are encouraged to wear the official uniform at ceremonies and when they are representing the Girl Scout Movement (meeting with community leaders, for example). Having a uniform is not required for Girl Scout membership, but wearing the uniform may be required for participating in certain events for both adults and girls.

19. Contracts and Agreements

There is a wide variety of contracts and agreements associated with volunteer-led events and services. Each time a location reservation is made, a community space is requested for troop meetings, a sleepover, field trip, or camping excursion is planned, or a volunteer is obligating themselves and the council to the terms of the written document.

Take care to read each contract carefully and understand what is being agreed upon. Does it say what you want? Are prices, dates, and other details in line with your event and clearly defined? When planning your events, you are the first proofreader of any written agreement. Follow council guidelines to obtain approval for any GSGLA activity, offering only documents that you have thoroughly read and understand before signing. Send your request and questions to [the risk management team](#). Please allow a minimum of 10 business days for processing.

19A. Procedure – Signature

Contracts or agreements for events or services obligating any GSGLA entity will be signed by the event organizer, and must represent rules, terms, and conditions established by the council. They will be considered supported by the council only when entered into with vetted parties or approved vendors.

19B. Procedure – Requirements

Contracts or agreements signed on behalf of GSGLA will uphold council values and be protective of the council, its resources, and its membership.

19C. Procedure - Request for GSGLA Documents

Requests for GSGLA documents should be in writing. Written requirements for council documents will be found in the event's contract or rules and regulations from the venue. If the only written version of the request of council documents is on the venue's website, please provide the link or print out of that specific webpage.

20. Troop Treasury

20A. Procedure - Source

Troops should be self-supporting. Troop funds should not be solely reliant on money collected from parents.

20B. Procedure - Money Earned and Collected Belongs to the Troop

Troop funds include dues and money earned by the girls to support their program plans; they may also include donations made to the troop. Troop funds do not belong to individual girls – they belong to the Girl Scout troop as a whole. Each Girl Scout’s family should receive a written or electronic Troop Finance Report in the troop’s June year-end reports.

20C. Procedure - Troop splits or Disbands

When a troop splits or disbands, the remaining troop funds will be distributed at the discretion of the membership specialist. In most cases, if the troop splits, funds are divided equally between both troops. However, in no instance does the money become the property of an individual member. The final Troop Finance Report and disband notice must indicate how the funds were distributed. The signed report is submitted to the service unit manager.

21. Private Inurement/Private Benefit

21A. Procedure - Description

To ensure council compliance with IRS regulations and to protect GSGLA’s 501(c)3 tax exempt status with the IRS, GSGLA does not allow troops or other Pathways to create reserve funds or earmark funds or financial disbursement for individual Girl Scouts.

21B. Procedure - Gifts to an Individual

GSGLA does not accept tax deductible donations where the gift appears to be primarily for the benefit of a single individual.

21C. Procedure - Funds Remain with the Troop/Group

All benefits to Girl Scouts from troop or other pathway accounts must support the Girl Scout Mission. Funds from troop or other pathway accounts remain with the group and do not follow the Girl Scout(s) when they leave the group.

22. Debt Collection

22A. Procedure - Description

When an adult in any volunteer position with GSGLA has a personal outstanding debt to GSGLA, GSGLA has the right, at its discretion, to remove the volunteer from her or his position and not reinstate the volunteer. Misappropriation of funds could result in legal action.

23. Social Media

23A. Procedure – Troops/Groups and Service Units

Girl Scout troops/groups and service units may create a website or use social media to promote or communicate with members regarding Girl Scout activities. When forming a troop/service unit Facebook, Twitter account, website, or other form of social media you must have a GSGLA volunteer/adult member as part of your group and the group must follow the computer/online [Safety Activity Checkpoint](#).

23B. Procedure – Age of the Girl

Websites or online service directed to children under 13 that collects personal information from children must comply with the [Children's Online Privacy Protection Act](#), which indicates what a web operator must include in a privacy policy, when and how to seek verifiable consent from a parent and what responsibilities an operator has to protect children's privacy and safety online.

Girl Scout troops/groups and service units using social media must meet the age requirement established by social media channels, and all minor Girl Scouts must have a photo release form on file at their troop and/or service unit. We also recommend all troops/service units obtain parental permission for girls to participate.

23C. Procedure – Media Contact

If contacted by a member of the media through social media and asked to comment on a Girl Scout related issue, please ask them to contact the marketing and communications team or call customer care at (213) 213-0123, and they can route the call to the correct person.

23D. Procedure – Safety

When representing Girl Scouts on social media channels, safety is a priority. Make sure the privacy standards settings ensure the safety of each Girl Scout.

23E. Procedure – Maintain Girl Scout Positions and Common Sense

Practice diligence to ensure that groups you are joining or linking to have standards consistent with Girl Scouts and make sure that the messages you post do not conflict with Girl Scouts' positions. If unsure of the Girl Scout position on a matter, contact your membership specialist or [customer care](#) at (213) 213-0123. Use good judgment and common sense - do not write or post anything that would embarrass or upset Girl Scout members and volunteers or reflect badly on the organization.

23F. Procedure – Monitor Posts

Treat others as you want to be treated; do not use the internet to harass, attack, or abuse any individual, group, race, gender, religion, political group, etc. Profane language or derogatory remarks against any individual or group used in any of the context posted will not be tolerated and could result in automatic dismissal. Careful monitoring of social media is important in maintaining a positive image of Girl Scouting.

Remember that what you post online will be around for a long time, and realize that when you release something on-line, that it can be released for the world to see. Use discretion and think twice before you post something. Respect other’s privacy and your own personal boundaries by using discretion when posting photos, comments, etc.

23G. Procedure – Graphic Guidelines / Social Media and Photography

Registered troop leaders may use Girl Scout graphic images provided by GSGLA in the annual Volunteer Marketing Toolkit for production print materials. In the production of print or online materials, Girl Scout graphics must maintain their original design, may not be altered in any way (color, shape, etc.) and must be presented in adherence to usage guidelines provided. When appropriate, have a parent’s or caregiver’s written permission before using pictures of girls on any print or electronic materials—including social media.

Do not tag or attach personal identifying information—girls’ full names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, school locations, etc. Follow the guidelines found in the computer/online [Safety Activity Checkpoint](#). Questions related to the Graphic Guidelines/ Social Media and Photography standard and procedure should be addressed to the GSGLA [marketing and communications department](#). GSGLA reserves the right to dismiss a volunteer from any volunteer position if they are found to be in clear violation of this standard and procedure.

24. Accident/Incident Management

Guidelines and procedures presented in all GSGLA documents, manuals, and trainings are designed to prevent or minimize any injury or damage to people and property. Accidents do happen; however, all accidents, incidents, mishaps, conflicts, and property damage require submission of an Accident/Incident form.

24A. Procedure – Accident/Incident Report

The adult in charge of the activity where the accident/incident took place must submit an [Accident/Incident Report eForm](#) within 72 hours. If the [eForm](#) cannot be completed, this [paper form](#) may printed, completed in full, and emailed directly to the [risk management team](#).

24B. Procedure – 24-Hour After-Hours Emergency Hotline

In addition to submitting the [Accident/Incident Report eForm](#) or [paper form](#), all accidents (requiring treatment beyond basic first aid) and/or any damage done to property must also be reported to GSGLA's 24-Hour After-Hours Emergency Line: (877) ICE GSLA (877-423-4752)

24C. Procedure – Report to Staff

An administrative volunteer who is notified of an accident/incident should report it to their immediate staff contact person (e.g., service unit manager notifies the membership specialist, the training facilitator notifies the training staff).

24D. Procedures – Handling the Accident/Incident

- Give the injured person(s) first aid and simultaneously have someone call a hospital, ambulance service or doctor.
- Call 911 if available; if not, call the police.
- Contact the camp ranger if you are on camp property.
- If there has been an automobile accident, a death, or a suspected crime, call the police.
- Put a responsible adult in charge of accounting for all individuals; organize a search for anyone who is missing.
- See that a responsible adult remains with the injured person.
- Do not move the person unless their life is endangered by being left at the scene of the accident/incident.
- If there has been a death, do not move the victim or change the surrounding area until the police have arrived.

After immediate emergency needs have been met, call GSGLA's 24-Hour After-Hours Emergency Hotline: (877) ICE-GSLA (877-423-4752). Your call will be returned by a GSGLA official as soon as possible. Please keep a phone line open or have the ability to accept a message at the number you left with the ICE operator.

After giving the injured person(s) first aid, call the family and report the nature of the emergency and the person's condition. Give only the facts; do not blame anyone. Ask their wishes concerning medical treatment and hospitalization.

For your protection, do NOT discuss the accident/incident or give out information to anyone except the police or a known and recognized GSGLA staff member in a leadership position. If the media contacts you, know you are NOT authorized to make a statement. Immediately direct them to GSGLA's 24-Hour After-Hours Emergency Hotline: (877) ICE-GSLA (877-423-4752) and state it is a media issue.

Make a record of the following, indicating the time and what procedures were followed:

- How the accident or emergency happened
- First aid administered and by whom
- Statements made to ambulance attendants, doctors, police, etc.
- Telephone calls (who made them, who they called, what they said)
- Names and addresses of all witnesses
- Take photos of any property damage

Remember: An [Accident/Incident Report eForm](#) must be submitted within 72 hours of the accident/incident. If the [eForm](#) cannot be completed, this [paper form](#) may be printed, completed in full, and emailed directly to the [risk management team](#).

25. Troop Transfers

Troops are assigned to a geographical area called a service unit, based on a member's zip code. A troop may request a transfer to a new service unit, if the troop moves into another service unit's geographical area based on zip code. Troops that are having personal issues with their service unit must follow the dispute resolution protocol. Transferring to another service unit due to personal issues would be approved in only extremely rare cases and must align with the troops meeting location zip code as it relates to service unit zip code boundaries.

26. Smoke-Free/Tobacco-Free Environment

Research has shown the harmful effects of cigarette smoke to non-smokers, especially children. Cigarettes have also been known to cause fires. As such, smoking and the use of other tobacco products or the use of e-cigarettes is prohibited at all GSGLA facilities and properties.

26A. Procedure - Smoking:

As role models to Girl Scouts, leaders and volunteers are prohibited from smoking at Girl Scout events or activities where minor girls are the focus of the event, i.e., troop meetings, outings, or activities, camps, GSGLA programs, etc. Volunteers working directly with girls must not smoke in front of the girls at any time or in any location where girls may be exposed to second-hand smoke. There will be no smoking in GSGLA-owned or operated buildings and facilities, or near the entry/exit doorways. Volunteers responsible for girls must ensure other adults present (e.g., parent helpers) follow the no-smoking rule.

26B. Procedure - Tobacco Use

Smoking and the use of other tobacco products is not allowed in the presence of girls when acting in an official Girl Scout capacity.

27. Alcohol and Substance Abuse

27A. Procedure – Requirements

Girl Scout volunteers and chaperones shall not possess, sell, or use illegal drugs. The use, distribution, or possession of illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages is not permitted at Girl Scout events or activities where minor girls are the focus of the event, i.e., troop meetings, outings, or activities, camps, GSGLA programs, etc.

7B. Procedure – Legal Drugs

Girl Scout volunteers and chaperones shall not misuse prescribed or over-the-counter drugs at any Girl Scout activity. While volunteering, including transporting girls, it is not permitted to be under the influence of any substance, including marijuana, which may impair physical and/or mental skills.

27C. Procedure – Alcohol at adult Events

Girl Scout volunteers shall not drink or be under the influence of alcohol during Girl Scout activities when girls are present. An exception to this standard and procedure includes a limited number of GSGLA sponsored or approved (with prior written consent) events for adults where girls may be participating as speakers, greeters, flag ceremony color guard, etc. and whose parents will be notified that alcohol is being served to adults.

27D. Procedure - Dismissal:

Violations of these procedures and standards regarding alcohol and substance abuse will result in immediate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

28. Harassment

28A. Procedure – Requirements

GSGLA is committed to an environment and climate in which relationships are characterized by dignity, respect, courtesy, and conduct that is in alignment with the principles of the Girl Scout Law. It is the standard and procedure of GSGLA to provide all volunteers with an environment free from all forms of harassment. Any act of harassment by any volunteer, of any gender or identity, against another volunteer, girl member, or GSGLA employee, shall not be tolerated.

28B. Procedure – Reporting harassment

Any volunteer who feels that they have been subjected to harassment of any type should follow the dispute resolution standards and procedures as outlined in the dispute resolution section of Volunteer Essentials. The appropriate staff member will follow the escalation guidelines to investigate and resolve the situation in an expeditious manner.

29. Child Abuse

What is Child Abuse? Although there are many formal and acceptable definitions of child abuse, the following is offered as a guide on child abuse and neglect:

- Child abuse consists of any act of commission or omission that endangers or impairs a child’s physical or emotional health and development.
- Child abuse includes any damage done to a child which cannot be reasonably explained, and which is often represented by an injury or series of injuries appearing to be non-accidental in nature.

Forms of Child Abuse:

- **Physical Abuse** - Any non-accidental injury to a child. This includes hitting, kicking, slapping, shaking, burning, pinching, hair pulling, biting, choking, throwing, shoving, whipping, and paddling.
- **Sexual Abuse** - Any sexual act between an adult and child. This includes fondling, penetration, intercourse, exploitation, pornography, exhibitionism, child prostitution, group sex, oral sex, or forced observation of sexual acts.
- **Neglect** - Failure to provide for a child’s physical needs. This includes lack of supervision, inappropriate housing or shelter, inadequate provision of food and water, inappropriate clothing for season or weather, abandonment, denial of medical care and inadequate hygiene.
- **Emotional Abuse** - Any attitude or behavior which interferes with a child’s mental health or social development. This includes yelling, screaming, name-calling, shaming, negative comparisons to others, and telling them they are “bad, no good, worthless or a mistake.”

All states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands have specific laws which identify persons who are required to report suspected child abuse to an appropriate agency.

Therefore, if you witness or suspect child abuse or neglect, whether inside or outside of Girl Scouting, always notify the appropriate council staff immediately and follow your council’s guidelines for reporting your concerns to the proper agency within your state.

For more information, please review these available resources:

[U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Child Abuse and Neglect](#)

[U.S. Department of Health & Human Services: How to Report Child Abuse and Neglect Mandatory Reporters](#)

[CDC Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention](#)

29A. Procedure – When to Report

Any act of child abuse or neglect, including physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse or neglect by any volunteer, regardless of gender or identity, against any girl member, shall

not be tolerated. Girl Scout volunteers are also responsible for protecting the well-being of girl members by reporting any witnessed or suspected abuse or neglect.

29B. Procedure – Reporting Instructions

Volunteers have an important role in protecting children from abuse and neglect. When a Girl Scout volunteer witnesses or suspects that a child may be a victim of child abuse or receives information that a child is or may be a victim of abuse, they should contact their membership specialist.

As a Girl Scout volunteer, our existing volunteer policy and safety guidelines require you to report abuse to council staff. To do so, contact your assigned membership specialist directly, email [customer care](#), or call (213) 213-0123 to be connected to your assigned Membership Specialist.

Additionally, an [Accident/Incident Report eForm](#) is to be submitted within 72 hours of the accident/incident. If the [eForm](#) cannot be completed, this [paper form](#) may be printed, completed in full, and emailed directly to the [risk management team](#).

If you witness or suspect child abuse or neglect, whether inside or outside of Girl Scouting, always notify your membership specialist immediately and follow GSGLA's guidelines for reporting your concerns to the proper agency within your area.

Each county has its own agencies that manage child welfare cases. GSGLA covers four counties in our membership area.

Los Angeles County

(800) 540-4000

(800) 272-6699 – TDD

[Mandated Reporter Online Child Abuse Report](#)

Kern County

(661) 631-6011 or

(760) 375-6049

[Online Child Abuse Report](#)

San Bernardino County

(909) 384-9233 or

(800) 827-8724

[Information on Reporting Child Abuse](#)

Ventura County

(805) 654-3200

[Information on Reporting Child Abuse](#)

Orange County

(714) 940-1000 or

(800) 207-4464

[Information on Reporting Child Abuse](#)

For more information, please review these available resources:

[U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Child Abuse and Neglect](#)
[U.S. Department of Health & Human Services: How to Report Child Abuse and Neglect Mandatory Reporters](#)
[CDC Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention](#)

29C. Procedure - Immediate Danger

While volunteers are not mandated reporters, all adults are protectors of children. If a child is in immediate danger, call 911 or the local police. Keep the child in your care until appropriate assistance arrives.

When a Girl Scout volunteer observes physical injuries of a suspicious nature, receives a report or accusation of sexual abuse, learns that a child is fearful of returning home, and/or has been abandoned by the parents or caregivers, the volunteer must call the local police or contact your county's child abuse agency.

Within 72 hours of the calling either 911 or the local police, an [Accident/Incident Report eForm](#) must be submitted. If the [eForm](#) cannot be completed, this [paper form](#) may be printed, completed in full, and emailed directly to the [risk management team](#).

This information is considered confidential. Therefore, after it is reported to law enforcement and the appropriate person at GSGLA, it should be discussed on a need-to-know basis only, to protect the privacy of the child.

29D. Procedure – Abuse or Bullying at a Meeting or Activity:

Volunteers are expected to establish a no-tolerance procedure for abuse or bullying at troop meetings, events, or any Girl Scout activity. In instances where one child abuses another, the parents or caregivers of each child should be notified immediately. The child responsible for the abuse will be removed from the program or environment in which they are participating. In such situations, the parent or caregiver of the abused child can determine whether to submit a report to local authorities about the behavior of the other child or take other appropriate action.

29E. Procedure – Child Abuse Charge or Conviction:

GSGLA will release a volunteer who has been convicted of or pleads guilty or no contest to a charge of child abuse or neglect when GSGLA is aware of such conviction or charges. GSGLA may release a volunteer who has been charged with child abuse or neglect pending resolution of the charge. It is within the discretion of GSGLA to determine whether the person should be suspended from all volunteer positions or will be allowed to continue. If and when such charges are cleared, a volunteer may be considered for reinstatement, at the discretion of GSGLA.

30. Sex Offenders

A registered sex offender may not serve as a troop leader, co-leader, troop helper, chaperone, or in any other troop volunteer position. A registered sex offender may not participate in any way, either in troop activities of any kind or in GSGLA activities where girl members may be present. Troop meetings and activities may not be held or conducted at any residence where a member of the household is a registered sex offender. Having a registered sex offender living in the home disqualifies all adult members of that household from becoming a GSGLA volunteer.

30A. Procedure – Reporting Volunteers or Family/Household Members:

Troop leaders, other troop volunteers, and parents or caregivers of girl members are required to immediately notify GSGLA if they learn or become aware that any troop leader or other troop volunteer, or troop family member is a registered sex offender, has pending charges, has pled guilty or no contest, or has been placed on probation or deferred adjudication, regarding sexual offenses.

In addition, troop leaders or other troop volunteers, and parents or caregivers of girl members, are required to immediately notify GSGLA if he or she is or has an immediate family or household member who has pending charges, pled guilty or no contest, or who has been placed on probation or deferred adjudication regarding sexual offenses.

30B. Procedure – Notification of Parents

When GSGLA, in its discretion, determines that it is reasonably necessary to safeguard girl members, GSGLA may notify the parents or caregivers of all girl members of a troop regarding: (a) the status of a troop leader or volunteer or family member as a registered sex offender; (b) the requirements of this standard and procedure; and (c) the steps taken by GSGLA to comply (for instance, the dismissal of, or written notice as described above to, the registered sex offender.) For instance, if a family member of a registered sex offender withdraws his or her girl member from the troop, or if a troop leader or other troop volunteer has been dismissed, GSGLA may determine it is not necessary to give notice to the parents or caregivers of the other girl members of his or her status as a registered sex offender.

This standard and procedure addresses registered sex offenders only. It is not intended to and does not limit GSGLA's right to dismiss troop leaders, volunteers, or girl members or to deny the applications of potential troop leaders, volunteers, or girl members, for other reasons than those addressed in this registered sex offender standard and procedure.

Reminder: GSGLA does not appoint any volunteer who is a registered sex offender nor has a registered sex offender in their household.

31. Weapons and Fireworks

31A. Procedure – Firearms and Weapons

GSGLA strictly prohibits staff, volunteers, or girls from possessing any form of weapons, handgun, firearm, prohibited weapon, or explosives restricted or allowed by local, state, or federal law at any time while engaging in Girl Scout activities, programs, or while on any Girl Scout properties. Exempted from this are specific instances approved in writing by a GSGLA executive, or Law Enforcement Personnel when acting in a professional capacity. Volunteers and girls may use pocketknives, kitchen knives, hatchets, and other such equipment only under strict supervision and only after proper instruction.

The possession of unauthorized weapons or firearms at any Girl Scout event on GSGLA property will be grounds for dismissal. A pocketknife is acceptable when used for training or as a camping tool.

31B. Procedure – Law Enforcement

Exceptions to the standard and procedure include law enforcement officers, security guards, or other persons who have been given (prior) written consent by GSGLA to carry a weapon on the property. GSGLA reserves the right to conduct searches on its property or authorize searches by law enforcement on its property.

31C. Procedure – Weapons in the Home or Vehicle

All persons who normally maintain weapons in their home or their vehicle will secure or remove them before girls enter the premises. This includes troops who meet in a home where weapons are present.

31D. Procedure – Fireworks

GSGLA strictly prohibits the possession, use, or sale of fireworks at Girl Scout events or on GSGLA-owned properties. Fire-powered projectiles or rockets may be approved for an organized program or activity conducted with a council approved instructor or agency.

32. Legal Action Against or by GSGLA

32A. Procedure – Description

When an adult has brought legal action against GSGLA or has caused GSGLA to initiate legal action, GSGLA has the right, at its discretion, to decline to appoint that person to a volunteer position within GSGLA or to remove that volunteer from his or her position if currently in place. Legal action includes, but is not limited to, taking out a warrant to appear in small claims or magistrate court.