

FAQ – Participation Definition:

Q: What is the participation definition?

A: For troops who wish to do additional money earning beyond the product programs, there is a set of product program participation requirements those troops/Girl Scouts must meet to do additional fundraising. Here is the participation definition:

Troops and girls must participate in both council-sponsored product programs to be eligible to do additional money earning projects. Participation is demonstrated by the girls learning or enhancing the 5 Skills, and contribution towards the support of program activities for Girl Scouts throughout the Greater Los Angeles council. Participation is defined by 50% of the registered girls in the troop both earning the Participation Patch and meeting or exceeding the emails-sent reward requirement for each council-sponsored product program (emails must be sent through the applicable vendor software to qualify).

The **2023 Fall Product Program** and **2024 Cookie Program** Participation patch requirements are defined as:

Fall Product Program = 10 units per girl (nuts/candy product = 1 unit each; magazine order = 2 units each) and 18 emails sent through M2OS.

Cookie Program = 24 packages of cookies per girl and 18 emails sent through Digital Cookie.

Senior/Ambassador Gold Award Girls

A Senior/Ambassador Girl Scout earning her Gold Award must participate in the council-sponsored product programs, earn the participation patch, and send 18 emails through our vendor platforms in both programs **in order to** do any **additional** money earning projects needed to support her Gold Award project.

NOTE: Troop participation to support girls working on Gold Award projects with money earning components is encouraged; however, it is not required that 50% of the registered girls reach the participation level defined above.

Q: I have a troop of 11 registered Girl Scouts. We want to do additional money earning events; what is considered 50% of registered Girl Scouts?

A: We recommend that all Girl Scouts in a troop participate in the product programs. Both the Fall Product and Cookie Programs are excellent opportunities for Girl Scouts to build confidence and courage and become exposed to the 5 core Leadership Skills: Goal Setting, Decision Making, Money Management, Business Ethics, and People Skills. Further, each Girl Scout's participation works towards the betterment of all Girl Scouts in GSGLA – it is all part of “being a sister to every Girl Scout.”

However, for a troop of 11 registered Girl Scouts, 50% participation is 6 girls who must earn the participation patch and meet or exceed the emails-sent reward requirement in both the Fall Product and Cookie Programs. Registered Girl Scouts are those whose memberships are current for the membership year starting October 1. For this coming season, which would mean girls registered for the October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024, membership year.

Q: We are a new troop and are reluctant to participate in the Fall or Cookie Programs because it seems complicated; what do you recommend for new troops?

A: We recommend that all Girl Scouts in a troop participate in the product programs. Both the Fall Product and Cookie Programs are excellent opportunities for the girls to build confidence and courage and become exposed to the 5 core Leadership Skills: Goal Setting, Decision Making, Money Management, Business Ethics, and People Skills. Further, each Girl Scout's participation works towards the betterment of all Girl Scouts in GSGLA – it is all part of “being a sister to every Girl Scout.”

Participating in the product programs can be as simple as sending out **emails** from the online software programs (M2OS for the Fall Product Program and Digital Cookie for the Cookie Program) to family and friends; the Girl Scout can watch the purchases come in. This is a fun, friendly and safe environment for Girl Scouts to make their own storefront. The advantage of using the online programs is that Girl Scouts can track their progress and watch their sales grow. This also introduces the Girl Scouts and troop to the GSGLA Product Programs arena.

Troop and Girl Scout participation in both the Fall Product and Cookie Programs is a hands-on life skill building program. It enhances the 5 Skills in a fun and rewarding manner. The Fall Product and Cookie Programs also help the troop and girls become financially sustainable.

Girl Scout Cookies are a recognizable brand that is familiar to family, friends, and customers; it is a marketable product and only available once a year. Troops can start out their first cookie season with an initial order and try a booth sale if

desired. Cookie boothing is a great opportunity where Girl Scouts work as a team; they will use valuable tools and techniques as they interact with customers. Each Girl Scout will learn how to build their customer base and they will have repeat customers year after year.

Q: Only one of my Senior/Ambassador Girl Scouts is interested in earning her Gold Award and will also need to put on additional money earning events to support this project. What is the required level of participation in product programs for her?

A: GSGLA is a Troop oriented organization; therefore, it is most desirable that the troop support the older Girl Scout by participating in both the Fall Product and Cookie Programs. Both programs are excellent opportunities for the girls to build confidence and courage and become exposed to the 5 core Leadership Skills: Goal Setting, Decision Making, Money Management, Business Ethics, and People Skills. Further, each Girl Scout's participation works towards the betterment of all Girl Scouts in GSGLA – it is all part of “being a sister to every Girl Scout.”

However, in this case, only the Senior/Ambassador earning her Gold Award must participate in the Fall Product and Cookie Programs and both earn the participation patches and meet or exceed the emails-sent reward requirements for each program.

Q: I have two Ambassadors remaining in my troop. Both Girl Scouts are working on their Gold Award Project. They do not think that they will need to raise additional funds to complete their projects. What should they do?

A: The Girl Scout Motto is “Be Prepared.” With that said, the Girl Scouts should participate in both the Fall Product and Cookie Programs, earn the participation patches, and send the minimum number of emails (as defined earlier). It would be advantageous for the Girl Scouts to have met the requirement, if they need raise additional funds towards their Gold Award Project, than to be in a position where they need to raise additional funds and not have met the requirement.

Q: We have a multi-level troop, which includes Senior and Ambassador Girl Scouts working on Gold Awards. We want to raise funds for troop activities and Gold Award projects; what are the criteria for our troop?

A: Since your troop would like to participate in additional money earning events, it would be required that 50% of the Girl Scouts registered in your troop participate in both the Fall Product and Cookie Programs. In doing so, each Girl Scout in that 50% must earn the Fall and Cookie participation patches and send, via the applicable online platform, 18 or more emails. This would require the Gold Award project Girl Scouts' participation in both Fall and Cookie Programs, and both earning the participation patch in each and sending out the minimum

required number of emails, as defined in the definition. They would need to be among the 50% of the registered Girl Scouts in the troop participating.

Q: My Senior/Ambassador Girl Scouts feel burnt out after so many years of participating and just want to finish their projects. What would be your suggestion on encouraging their participation?

A: While we appreciate the diligence and participation of your Girl Scouts, we are certain that they have been rewarded for their efforts and gained skills that will help them in the future. The Girl Scouts can focus on giving back to Girl Scouts as a whole - troops and girls can use the money, if the entire troop agrees, for Girl Scout Lifetime Membership for Graduating Ambassadors. Participation in the Fall Product Program can be as simple as sending out **emails** from M2OS. This approved social media venue benefits older Girl Scouts who have busy schedules and little time for selling.

Q: Our Senior and Ambassador Girl Scouts would like to use the funds they have earned from the Fall Product and Cookie Programs toward expenses for their Gold Award Project. How do we handle this since the Fall Product and Cookie Product Programs are meant to support troop activities?

A: The Girl Scouts in the troop can put this up for a vote. If your troop votes to allow the Girl Scouts working towards their Gold Award Project to use a portion of the troop's funds toward the expenses incurred for their Gold Award Project, then this has become a Girl Scout/troop decision.

Q: Our troop is planning to apply for SEME events. Can the Girl Scouts in the troop use their troop money earned from these events toward Silver or Gold Award Projects?

A: Girls who participate in the Fall Product and Cookie Programs are encouraged to earn additional funds to help finance their Silver or Gold Award projects. However, there are some specific guidelines to which you must adhere. Money obtained from a troop money-earning event may be used for their Silver or Gold Award projects if it has been voted on and approved by the Girl Scouts in the troop. Funds from troop money-earning events must only be used for troop events, projects, trips, or travel, and not for individual Girl Scout activities, except in the case of Silver and Gold Award projects. A Girl Scout may allocate her troop money-earning event funds directly towards her Gold Award project. This does not count as a private benefit as the funds support the project and not the Girl Scout directly (*Volunteer Essentials* pg. 107). All money-earning efforts, beyond the Fall Product and Cookie Programs, must be approved by the Special Events and Money Earning Go Team using the SEME e-form application (found at gsglavolunteerapps.org/specialevent-2/).

Q: Our Senior and Ambassador Girl Scouts are busy teens with full schedules; they are involved in sports, music, clubs, religious commitments, academia,

and Girl Scouts. I am naming only a few activities they are members of or are participants in. How can a Gold Award applicant be expected to know, adhere to, and/or meet the participation requirement with her demanding schedule?

A: We understand that older Girl Scouts are busy and involved in many organizations. It is wonderful that they value Girl Scouts, the friendships they have made, and that they can take the life skills they learned and implement them throughout their lives. They are at a point where they are making more decisions that are applicable to their future and we respect their decisions and choices.

Participating in the council sponsored product programs benefits all GSGLA Girl Scouts, not just the Girl Scouts participating in the product programs. There are several resources available to Senior and Ambassador Girl Scouts, their leaders, and caregivers. Information can be obtained on the GSGLA website, and they can contact Customer Care at 213-213-0123 if they have questions.

Fall Product and Cookie Programs are facilitated differently from each other. While we respect that many organizations have a fall fundraising component, the GSGLA Fall Product Program has elements that they do not have. For Senior and Ambassador Girl Scouts to meet the participation requirement in the Fall Product Program, it can be as easy as:

- setting up their own storefront in M2 Online System (M2OS)
- creating an avatar
- adding a video if they choose
- and then, through M2OS, sending out emails to family and friends.

They can even post a link to their storefront on various social media platforms.

All items their customers purchase – whether Gift of Caring, nuts/candies, or magazines – will earn the troop proceeds, no matter how large or small the customer’s order is, as well as assist in meeting the unit requirement.

Q: Why is GSGLA setting requirements for the Girl Scouts to participate in the Fall Product and Cookie Programs?

A: Girl Scouts as an organization provides structured money earning activities for our troops and Girl Scouts that teach critical leadership skills. The participation definition has always been and will continue to be **specific** to troops and Girl Scouts who want or need to do *additional money earning events* to accomplish their goals and must be meaningful and tied to the 5 leadership skills. Therefore, the participation definition is not applicable to all troops and Girl Scouts. As a reminder, the participation definition is applicable to troops that want to participate in *additional money earning activities*.

Q: My troop has one Senior/Ambassador Girl Scout who wants to earn her Gold Award; however, our troop has not participated in GSGLA Fall Product and

Cookie programs for a few years and will not be participating in GSGLA Product Programs. How can she participate if the troop does not support her?

A: The troop leader or the Girl Scouts' caregiver can volunteer as the Troop Fall or Cookie Chair and submits the online agreement and ACH debit forms to support the Girl Scout's product sales.

Q: How does the definition of participation apply to Cadette Girl Scouts who are working toward their Silver Award and wish to participate in additional money earning events?

A: Cadette level Girl Scouts who are working on their Silver Award projects and wish to do additional money earning events (besides the Fall Product and Cookie Programs) must earn the participation patch in both the Fall Product and Cookie Programs and send the minimum required emails through each of the online platforms.

Q: How does the participation definition apply to a Cadette working alone on a project that requires additional money earning?

A: That single Cadette must have earned the participation patch and have met the emails-sent reward requirement in both product programs to do any additional money earning events.

Q: How does this apply to a Silver Award team with multiple girls (up to 4 Girl Scouts) working on their Silver Award project?

A: If the Girl Scouts working on the project need to participate in additional money earning events to support their project, all the Girl Scouts in the team need to earn the participation patch and send the minimum number of emails (via the applicable online platforms) for both the Fall Product and Cookie Programs.

Q: We want to make sure that we have 50% of our Girl Scouts participate in Product Program; how do I verify which and how many girls are registered in my troop?

A: Go to the GSGLA website at www.girlscoutsla.org. Click on MyGS/MyAccount and log in to check your troop roster.

Note: throughout this FAQ and found in other GSGLA documents, when not referencing the organization, it is referring only to the youth members; adults will be referred to as Adults, by their role (Troop Leader, Troop Fall Product Chair, etc., or, where applicable, Caregiver).