Volunteer Policies 2026-2029



girl scouts hornets' nest

Girl Scout Promise, Law, and Mission

Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try:
To serve God* and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.



Girl Scout Law

I will do my best to be
honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong, and
responsible for what I say and do,
and to
respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place, and
be a sister to every Girl Scout.

Girl Scout Mission

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

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

The Volunteer Policies & Procedures of Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council (GSHNC) are established upon the principle that the direction and success of Girl Scouting rests in the voluntary participation of its adult members.

This document outlines the policies and procedures of GSHNC. It is not the intent of this document to repeat national policies, but to adopt specific policies to clarify those areas needed to be defined for local use. These policies and procedures are intended to provide the basis for reasonable and consistent guidance for our volunteers. Volunteers are not employees of Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council, and the policies and procedures contained herein do not constitute an employment contract and are subject to change at the discretion of the Board of Directors of Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council.

All members of Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) are responsible for adhering to the policies, practices, procedures, and guidelines in GSUSA's Blue Book of Basic Documents, Volunteer Essentials, and Safety Activity Checkpoints. These documents are published by GSUSA and are used throughout the national organization.

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

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

These policies and procedures will be reviewed every three years to assure they reflect the volunteer management goals of GSHNC, the current policies and trends in Girl Scouts, as well as current legislative requirements.

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Part 1: Policies

COMMITMENT TO PLURALISM

GSHNC is committed to achieve pluralism through respect for and appreciation of the religious, racial, ethnic, social, and economic diversity of this Country by reflecting that diversity in its membership, leadership, and programming.

We believe this commitment is an integral part of all that we do as an organization. Only individuals willing to accept the basic tenet that Girl Scouting is for all girls may serve in volunteer leadership.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

GSHNC maintains a strong policy of equal opportunity. In keeping with GSUSA's Blue Book of Basic Documents; we recruit, train, promote, and dismiss volunteers on the basis of competence and volunteer position performance, without regard to race, creed, color, ethnicity, religion, lineage or citizenship, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, familial status, age, socioeconomic background, source of income, disability, genetic information, predisposing genetic characteristics, carrier status, domestic violence victim status, or any other characteristic protected by law. Furthermore, to assure the membership of GSHNC reflects the diversity of population groups within its jurisdiction; GSHNC is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and outreach in the recruitment, selection, placement, development, and recognition of volunteers and in the extension of Girl Scouting to adults in all communities within its jurisdiction.

Adults and volunteers are responsible for making Girl Scouting a place where girls are as safe emotionally as they are physically. Girl Scouts welcomes all girls in grades K-12, regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, family structure, religion, and socioeconomic background. When scheduling, helping plan, and carrying out activities, carefully consider the needs of all girls involved (e.g. financial constraints, religious holidays, accessibility of appropriate transportation, and meeting places).

Any volunteer who engages in or encourages discrimination in any form is subject to release from their volunteer position at the discretion of GSHNC.

MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION

All girls and adults participating in the Girl Scout Movement must be registered as members with GSUSA and pay the annual membership dues as outlined by GSUSA, except those adults who are lifetime members. At times there are adults who are working on a short-term project, in a temporary advisory or consulting capacity, who do not work with girls or Girl Scout funds directly, in which membership is not a requirement. Members agree to abide by the policies, principles, and procedures of GSUSA and GSHNC.

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS & BENEFITS

Basic Volunteer Requirements

- Membership Registration - All Adult volunteers participating in the Girl Scout Movement must be registered as members with GSUSA and individually pay the annual membership dues, except those adults who are lifetime members.
- Must complete and pass a criminal and motor vehicle background check.
- Belief in the Girl Scout Mission.
- Acceptance of the Girl Scout Promise and Law.
- Time to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position.
- Completion of required training.
- An understanding that services are given without payment.
- Cooperate with supervisory guidance and provide appropriate feedback to support program improvement.

Benefits to volunteers include:

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

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Volunteers are a valued resource to GSHNC, its staff, and members. Volunteers have the right to meaningful assignments; to be treated with respect; to receive effective supervision and support; to be fully involved and included in volunteer activities; and to receive appropriate recognition for their service and contributions.

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

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

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

GSHNC is committed to the highest ethical standards and we expect all volunteers to act in the best interest of the organization and its mission. This mission demands that we, as

stewards, act in an ethical manner to uphold the public trust and the values of responsibility, integrity, openness, honesty, accountability, and respect in all that we do in the name of Girl Scouts.

I agree to uphold these values and I will:

1. Affirm the Girl Scout Promise and Law.
2. Take all required trainings and comply with GSHNC policies, procedures, and safety guidelines.
3. Welcome girls and adults from a variety of backgrounds and include them in activities. Make an intentional effort to learn about, experience, and appreciate cultures other than my own.
4. Honor the leadership role of the girls and support their decisions.
5. Act responsibly when overseeing Girl Scout funds, maintain accurate records, and file required reports. Girl Scout funds are only to be used in direct support of Girl Scout programs and to pay for appropriate Girl Scout expenses.
6. Model the behavior that shows respect for local, state, and federal laws and ordinances, as well as follow GSHNC Volunteer Policies & Procedures, Volunteer Essentials, Safety Activity Checkpoints, and in GSUSA's Blue Book of Basic Documents.

BACKGROUND CHECK

Caregivers and girls trust that Girl Scouts is a safe place, and we do not take that trust lightly. GSHNC is committed to maintaining policies and procedures that create a safe environment for our members. One of those policies is to conduct a criminal and motor vehicle background check for all new volunteers, and repeat them every three years.

Frequently Asked Questions on Background Check

How do I complete a background check with Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council? After selecting to be a volunteer from the council website and completing the membership registration, be on the lookout for an e-mail from our trusted vendor's website ***Sterling Volunteers*** that offers screening services for our volunteer program. They are the only screening provider that allows volunteers to own and share their criminal and motor vehicle background check in a safe, tamper-free environment. During the Sterling Volunteers verification process you will enter the necessary information to process your own criminal and motor vehicle background check online and receive an e-mail from theadvocates@ sterlingvolunteers.com.

Who are The Advocates?

The Advocates are the Sterling Volunteers customer care team. They are available via phone and e-mail and can help with platform-usage questions and general inquiries. They can be reached at theadvocates@sterlingvolunteers.com or 1-855-326-1860, Option 3.

How long will the background search take?

The majority of searches will be returned in 48-72 hours, although that is not a guarantee. In some cases, especially if we find criminal information or if a candidate has lived in multiple locations, the search can take up to a month.

Why are my DOB and SSN required?

There are three pieces of information needed for an accurate, thorough background check: 1) legal first name and legal last name, correctly spelled; 2) date of birth; and 3) Social Security Number (SSN).

I started the background check and did not finish. I went back in and it did not work. What should I do?

Once you create a username and password, you will be able to log back in at any time to complete your background check. If for some reason you cannot regain access to your account, contact theadvocates@sterlingvolunteers.com or by phone at 1-855-326-1860.

How much does a background check cost?

GSHNC is currently covering the cost of background checks. If you would like to make a charitable contribution to GSHNC to help defray the cost of the background check, your contribution will be used to enhance the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. This option can be selected in the final processing of your background check.

What does GSHNC check for? Are you checking my credit?

We only perform a background check and driving record. We do not check financial information or credit.

I had a background check done at my work. Do I still need to complete one with GSHNC?

Sterling Volunteers is the background check vendor that is used by GSHNC. At this time, we do not accept background checks from other vendors.

What could exclude me from volunteering with Girl Scouts?
Volunteer Disqualification

- Providing false information during the Background Check screening process, such as driver's license number, Social Security number, or date of birth is grounds for automatic disqualification as a Girl Scout Volunteer, regardless of the result of the background check.
- Registered sex offenders are not eligible for membership in GSUSA and may not participate in any capacity with Girl Scout programs. Volunteers may not knowingly hold activities where a registered sex offender is present. No registered sex offender is permitted to attend Girl Scout meetings, events, or activities. Holding Girl Scout activities in the home/dwelling of a registered sex offender is strictly prohibited.
- A non-exhaustive list of conduct or offenses that may disqualify a person from volunteer participation, as well as the process used to determine are below.

Automatic disqualification:

- Federal or State felony conviction within the past ten years (subject to GSHNC review)
- Federal or State felony offenses against persons, including family members

- Federal or State felony drug-related offenses
- Crimes against children, the elderly, the disabled, and other vulnerable populations
- Sexual offenses
- Residing with a registered sex offender
- Crimes defined as public indecency
- Crimes involving the use of weapons
- Arson
- Any violent crime
- 3 or more driving suspensions within the last three years
- Any offense involving driving under the influence, driving while intoxicated, or equivalent within past five years (subject to GSHNC review)

For all other conduct and offenses, GSHNC will review the applicant's situation on a case-by case basis. The decision whether to allow volunteer participation will be within the discretion of Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council.

The factors used to determine disqualification of a person from volunteer participation is as follows. The nature and severity of the criminal conduct, the position for which the person seeks to volunteer, length of time since the criminal conduct occurred, the circumstances under which the crime was committed, degree of rehabilitation and the number of crimes committed by the prospective volunteer.

GSHNC reserves the right to disqualify or restrict the duties of any person who has been:

- arrested;
- convicted of certain crimes;
- placed on probation or deferred adjudication for certain crimes, and/or who has committed acts that are considered contrary to the community standards of justice, honesty, or good morals, or has pleaded guilty or no contest to certain crimes.

Volunteer approval may include a restriction of handling funds if there is a record of:

- Stealing
- Petty theft
- Misuse of credit cards
- Passing bad checks

Drivers:

Volunteers who drive vehicles for Girl Scout trips must be registered volunteers with a valid driver's license and carry current motor vehicle insurance in compliance with state law. Accidents and violation records will be reviewed by GSHNC staff. A driving restriction may be placed on an individual prohibiting them from driving members on behalf of GSHNC based on the number and severity of suspensions, violations or accidents.

The primary volunteer in charge of a Girl Scout outing or trip should inquire with all drivers that they are registered volunteers, without a driving restriction, have a valid driver's license, and a current auto insurance policy. It is not necessary for the primary volunteer to maintain a copy of these documents.

Acceptable drivers are described as:

- Every driver must be a registered, background checked member (approved adult volunteer) at least 21 years old, and have a safe driving record, a valid license, and a registered/insured vehicle and meets council standards and policies for driving and transporting girls.
- Girl Scout youth members never drive other members to, from or during activities or field trips.
- If a group is traveling in one vehicle, there must be at least two unrelated, registered background checked members (approved adult volunteers) in the vehicle, one of whom is female.
- If a group is traveling in more than one vehicle, the entire group must consist of at least two unrelated, registered background checked members (approved adult volunteers), one of whom is female in each vehicle.

Unacceptable drivers are described as:

- Any driver with 3 or more violations or accidents in the last three years.
- Suspended or revoked license or one serious conviction in the past 5 years such as: DUI, speeding 20+ miles over the limit, reckless driving, hit and run, etc.
- Any driver with an expired license.
- Any driver under 21 years of age.

Driving restriction disputes must be submitted through a case request and will be reviewed within 10 business days of submission.

Caregiver as a volunteer for travel:

- All adults traveling with a troop or group must be registered members of Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) and have an active volunteer role.
- While there is no formal caregiver participation policy, caregivers must be registered as volunteers to participate in any travel activities.
- Adults with driving restrictions are not permitted to transport girls other than their own child(ren).

How do I dispute a decision made by Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council?

Any applicant who disputes or desires to contest the information provided by the reporting agency must file a written notice with GSHNC within 30 days of being notified that their background check for volunteer participation has been determined ineligible and/or restricted. The volunteer will have an opportunity to review the criminal history report provided by the reporting agency. It is the applicant’s responsibility to appeal the report received from the reporting agency and to arrange for any corrections to be sent to GSHNC.

GSHNC reserves the right to re-screen any volunteer on a periodic or episodic basis, as needed. If a person is charged with any misconduct or offense, involvement with GSHNC as a volunteer may be temporarily suspended during disposition or investigation of the occurrence.

SEX OFFENDERS AND OTHER CRIMINAL ACTS

A Registered Sex Offender may not serve as a volunteer with GSHNC in any capacity and they may not participate in any way, either in troop, service unit, or in GSHNC 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.

Troop leaders, troop volunteers, and parents or guardians of girl members are required to immediately notify GSHNC if they or an immediate family or household member is, or become aware that any troop leader, 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, the individuals identified above are also required to immediately notify GSHNC if they have been convicted, have pending charges, are placed on probation for a crime, or become aware of another person in their household or other adult associated with a troop has been convicted, has pending charges or has been placed on probation.

When GSHNC determines that it is reasonably necessary to safeguard girl members, GSHNC may notify the parents or guardians of all girl members of a troop regarding: (a) the status of a troop leader, volunteer or family member as a Registered Sex Offender; (b) the requirements of this Policy; and (c) the steps taken by GSHNC to comply with the policy (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 their girl member from the troop, or if a troop co-leader or other troop volunteer has been dismissed, GSHNC may determine it is not necessary to give notice to the parents or guardians of the other girl members of their status as a Registered Sex Offender.

HARASSMENT/HOSTILITY/BULLYING

GSHNC is committed to an environment and climate in which relationships are characterized by dignity, respect, courtesy, and equitable treatment. It is the policy of GSHNC to provide all volunteers, staff, and members (girl and adult) with an environment free from all forms of unlawful or unwelcome harassment, hostility, and bullying; and therefore, it will not be tolerated.

Harassment on the basis of race, creed, color, ethnicity, religion, lineage or citizenship, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, familial status, age, socioeconomic background, source of income, disability, genetic information, predisposing genetic characteristics, carrier status, domestic violence victim status, or any other characteristic protected by law will not be tolerated, and is grounds for release.

This policy includes physical violence as well as intimidation, stalking, coercion, display of weapons, threats, and talking or joking about harassment or hostility, whether in person or through some other means of communications such as writing, telephone, voice mail, e-mail, or any form of social media.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, “bullying” is defined

as aggressive behavior that is intentional and that involves an imbalance of power or strength, typically repeated over time.

Cyberbullying is bullying that occurs online. Whether cyberbullying occurs in e-mail, a text message, an online game, or on a social networking site, it is prohibited. This includes rumors or images posted online where other people may see them. GSHNC will cooperate with police, schools, and other organizations that share our values who are attempting to enforce laws, regulations, and rules regarding cyberbullying regardless of the potential punishment.

Anyone, regardless of volunteer or member status, who violates this policy and/or refuses to abide by this policy, is prohibited from holding volunteer positions with GSHNC and from attending Girl Scout activities, events, and meetings. Any volunteer who engages in or encourages bullying is subject to release from their volunteer position.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

GSHNC prohibits sexual harassment and retaliation against its applicants, interns, contractors, volunteers, or employees by another individual. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is unlawful under federal, North Carolina State, South Carolina State and local law. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome conduct which is either of a sexual nature or which is directed at an individual because of that individuals' sex or gender, gender identity or gender expression (including, but not limited to, transgender status), and/or sexual orientation. Sexual harassment can be verbal, visual, or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion towards an individual based on sex or gender, gender identity or gender expression, and/or sexual orientation. This includes but is not limited to sexual advances or flirtations, requests for sexual favors, obscene or vulgar comments or gestures, sexual jokes or comments about a person's body, and propositions or suggestive or insulting comments of a sexual nature. It is unlawful and against this policy for males to sexually harass females or other males, and for females to sexually harass males or other females.

In accordance with this policy, GSHNC will not condone or tolerate the following:

- Any display or demonstration of sexual activity between volunteers or between volunteers and girl members.
- Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between volunteers and girl members.
- Infliction of sexually abusive behavior upon girl members, including sexual touching and bodily contact, exhibitionism, voyeurism, and/or involvement of girl members in pornographic materials.
- Unwelcome sexual conduct/harassment of any Girl Scout member, volunteer, or employee of the same or opposite sex.
- Any other similar inappropriate behavior in accordance with federal, state, and local law.

GSHNC maintains an environment that encourages any volunteer who believes that they have been the subject of any unlawful or unwelcome harassment as defined in GSHNC policy, to report the incident to the Chief Operating Officer or their designee. Similarly, a volunteer who believes that a girl member is the victim of any form of harassment must immediately report the fact to the Chief Operating Officer or their designee. The Chief

Operating Officer or their designee will initiate an investigation and, depending on the findings, take appropriate corrective action.

If the harassment involves unwanted physical touching, coerced physical confinement or coerced sex acts, the conduct may constitute a crime. Contact the local police department or, in an emergency, dial 9-1-1.

GSHNC reserves the right to refuse appointment/reappointment to any position and to dismiss or suspend from any position or affiliation with GSHNC, any volunteer who, participating in Girl Scout activities, violates the aforementioned policy.

The council's complete Anti-Harassment Policy and Sexual Harassment Policy are available by contacting the council's Business Services Office.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest exists when the interests or concerns of any volunteer member or any member of their family or any party, group, or organization in which the volunteer is actively involved may be seen as competing with the interests or concerns of GSHNC.
Volunteer members or any member of their family, acting individually, or on behalf of another entity to which they have allegiance or obligation, should not utilize their position with GSHNC for any personal advantage or for the advantage of another entity. A volunteer or any member of his/her immediate family shall not engage in conduct or activities which constitute a conflict of interest.

The purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to protect GSHNC'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.

Duty to Disclose: 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 member is expected to gain financially, the volunteer must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all facts to their service unit leadership and GSHNC staff representative to consider the proposed transaction or arrangement.

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

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

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

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

All members of the Board of Directors will be required to sign an appropriate Conflict of Interest Disclosure.

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

CONFIDENTIALITY

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

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

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

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

Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in release of the volunteer's relationship with GSHNC. Volunteers in certain key positions may be asked to sign GSHNC's Confidential Non Disclosure Agreement or other similar documents.

WHISTLEBLOWER

Retaliation against anyone who has reported an allegation of harassment, sexual harassment, or any violation of any GSHNC policy is expressly prohibited and, if it occurs, will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including releasing the person who has engaged in the retaliatory behavior from their volunteer position. No volunteer making a good faith report shall be subjected to any retaliation from GSHNC.

CHILD ABUSE

GSHNC maintains and supports environments that are free of child abuse and neglect as defined by the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act. Child abuse and neglect are unlawful acts and it is against GSHNC policy for any volunteers or employed staff, male or female, to physically, sexually, or mentally abuse or neglect any child.

GSHNC reserves the right to refuse membership endorsement or reappointment, and to dismiss or to exclude from affiliation with GSHNC, any volunteer who in the judgment of GSHNC poses a risk of injury to a minor or is believed to have abused or neglected any child or who has been convicted of any crime against a child.

In addition to the reporting and conduct standards outlined above, all GSHNC volunteers are now required to complete the GSUSA Girl Scouts Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Course. This course is provided online and is designed to educate volunteers on how to recognize, prevent, and respond appropriately to signs of abuse or neglect.

Completion of this training is mandatory for all new volunteers prior to beginning any role involving direct interaction with minors, and for current volunteers by **December 15, 2026.** Documentation of course completion must be submitted to GSHNC and kept on file.

If any volunteer reasonably suspects or reasonably believes a girl member is being abused, that volunteer must immediately report these suspicions to Child Protective Services. Reports can be anonymous. The reporting volunteer must also complete and file a GSHNC Accident/Incident Report Form.

Who to contact when you suspect abuse:
Anson: 704-694-9351 Montgomery: 910-576-6531 Union: 704-296-4300 Cabarrus: 704-920-1400 Rowan: 704-216-8330 York: 1-888-227-3487 Mecklenburg: 980-314-3577 Stanly: 704-982-6100 National: 800-799-7233

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflicts and disagreements are an inevitable part of life, and when handled constructively can actually enhance communication and relationships.

For purposes of this policy, a conflict is defined as any kind of disagreement between two or more people.

GSHNC is committed to providing individuals the right to a safe and neutral process to resolve conflicts. Recognizing that each individual has both a personal interest in and a share of the responsibility for resolving conflicts in which they are involved, GSHNC uses a progressive conflict resolution process for volunteers.

The most effective way of resolving complaints and concerns is usually by calm, open discussion between the individuals involved by telephone or in person. For this reason, prior to any kind of escalation, the involved parties are encouraged to try to resolve the matter informally among themselves. E-mail exchanges, text messages, and social media communication are generally not conducive to a prompt and efficient resolution and, therefore, are not considered an effective way of resolving conflict and should be avoided.

Below are potential scenarios and steps to follow before escalating a conflict or concern. Please use the Conflict Management Notes worksheet to guide the conversation.

- **Girls in a Troop**: Has the troop leader addressed this situation? Has the troop leader worked with the girls, parents, and other troop volunteers to resolve this matter? If it cannot be resolved at the troop level, has the service unit manager been asked to assist as a mediator for the troop?
- **Adults Within a Troop:** Has the troop leader addressed the situation? Has the troop leader mediated with the parties involved? If it cannot be resolved at the troop level, has the service unit manager been asked to assist as a mediator for the troop?

- **Volunteers:** Has the troop leader/service unit team member/volunteer worked to address the situation? If it cannot be resolved between the volunteers, has the service unit manager been asked to assist as a mediator for the troop?

Conflict/Problem Resolution Procedures
If all steps above have been taken to resolve the conflict informally but the matter has not been resolved, then the appropriate members of GSHNC staff should be informed. You will be asked to provide the member of GSHNC staff with a completed Conflict Management Notes worksheet.

Upon the member of GSHNC staff being notified and given the Conflict Management Notes worksheet the information gathering process will begin. This process can include phone calls, e-mails, and/or in person meetings with all parties involved. Please note that this information gathering can take a minimum of 10 business days. Once all information has been gathered, the member of GSHNC staff will provide a resolution to all affected parties. If a direct resolution is not possible, staff will work to offer an appropriate alternative or benefit to support those impacted.

If deemed necessary by the member of GSHNC staff, a mediator from outside GSHNC may be brought in to assist in resolving any situation.

No volunteer appointment or role may be terminated or released as a result of this process without the review and approval of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or an authorized Executive Officer.

DELINQUENT FUNDS

Members with amounts due to GSHNC more than 30 days past due are not permitted to handle money, product, or merchandise for GSHNC until the amount owed is paid in full. GSHNC reserves the right to restrict or remove from GSHNC any person who owes money to GSHNC.

Process and Consequences:

1. Written Notification: Members with past-due balances will receive written notification from GSHNC regarding the amount owed.
2. 60-Day Restrictions: If the balance remains unpaid 60 days after the notification, restrictions will be placed on troop activities, and the caregiver or troop leader associated with the account may face additional participation restrictions.
3. 90-Day Collections: If the balance remains unpaid 90 days after the notification, the account will be referred to collections.

Restriction or dismissal may occur as a result of delinquent and/or mismanagement of funds. Reappointment to a volunteer position is at the discretion of GSHNC. GSHNC will make a good faith attempt to collect any monies owed and reserves the right to use outside collection agencies. If restitution is not paid within 90 days, GSHNC retains the right to file criminal and/ or civil charges.

GSHNC reserves the right to take legal action if the funds owed are not remitted. Legal action includes, but is not limited to, taking out a warrant to appear in small claims court, report to law enforcement, and submission to legal and or collection agency.

GSHNC volunteers who are authorized signers are personally responsible for all financial consequences of overdrafts that they initiate.

A volunteer owing a debt to GSHNC for more than 4 months will be removed from their volunteer position. They will not be eligible to be reappointed or serve in an appointed volunteer position until such time as that debt is paid in full. When the debt is paid in full, the volunteer may serve only in a volunteer role that does not have financial responsibilities for one full Girl Scout year or upon reevaluation. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to contact GSHNC and request a review of her/his volunteer eligibility status.

Additional restrictions or actions may be applied for specific circumstances; the volunteer will be notified in writing of any restrictions or actions taken.

Volunteers, both at troop and service unit levels, must follow the policies and procedures as related to Finances and Money Earning as detailed in both this document and Volunteer Essentials. This includes but is not limited to:

- Adhering to requirements for submitting annual finance reports by the established deadlines
- Following requirements and guidelines for appropriate money earning activities

CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS

No volunteer may waive liability of a third party on behalf of GSHNC. Volunteers may not enter into any contract or agreement other than those designated in this policy. Volunteers may sign rental car contracts or agreement paperwork after the Troop trip application form has been approved. A copy of this paperwork must be turned into GSHNC prior to the trip. Bus rentals must be approved and contracts signed by GSHNC designee.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE

No volunteer may purchase, consume, possess or be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs/substances, or prescription or over-the-counter medications which impair performance or judgment on GSHNC property, in the presence of girls, during any GSHNC-sanctioned activity (including volunteer meetings), while conducting GSHNC business, or while representing GSHNC or Girl Scouts through the use of Girl Scout–branded clothing, materials, or identification.

Violators of the alcohol and drug policy will be asked to leave GSHNC property or activity site. Any violation of this policy will be grounds for appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including removal from their volunteer role.

Alcoholic beverages may be served to/consumed by adults of legal age at GSHNC events when girls are not present only when previously approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

TOBACCO/SMOKING/VAPING

Volunteers function as role models at all times, and therefore the use of tobacco/smoking/vaping products is prohibited whenever girl members are present in any environment. This policy applies to all types of smoking/vaping and similar apparatus and the use of tobacco in any form.

WEAPONS

Firearms and/or weapons are prohibited while on GSHNCs property (owned or leased), driving a GSHNC - owned, rented or leased vehicle, or at meetings, events, or trips. Weapons include firearms, knives, explosives, and other items with the potential to inflict harm. Any violation of this policy will be grounds for appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including removal from their volunteer role.

Excluded from this provision, would be any equipment that a volunteer would use in a typical camping environment while engaged in camping activities or by a trained adult while conducting a GSHNC-approved Girl Scout program activity, and must be used according to the guidelines for such in Safety Activity Checkpoints.

UNIFORMS

Girl Scouts of the USA is a uniformed organization in which the uniform is a symbol of pride and respect and a mark of distinction. Although wearing a uniform is encouraged, it is not required for participation.

The official emblem of the Girl Scout Movement in the United States is the trefoil. The badges, insignia, and uniforms of Girl Scouts of the United States of America shall be protected to the fullest extent possible and shall be made available to and used only by

members registered with Girl Scouts of the United States of America, or persons authorized by the National Board of Directors.

For adult members, the unifying look of the uniform is an official Girl Scout official scarf or tie, worn with official membership pins and combined with their own navy blue business attire. Volunteers are encouraged to wear the Girl Scout pin when they are not in uniform and participating in Girl Scout activities, i.e. at meetings, during cookie booths.

ANIMALS

Animals may not be brought onto any GSHNC property or into any activity without the written permission of the Chief Executive Officer or their designee. Exceptions will be made for animals needed to assist persons with disabilities and for fulfilling program activities.

PROPERTY

No person should use or alter Hornets' Nest Council property or equipment without permission from GSHNC.

The use of Hornets' Nest Council properties and/or equipment, for personal gain or for the purposes of solicitation or distribution of literature for non-sanctioned Girl Scout events is prohibited.

No sale or solicitation of materials or services of any type is allowed on Hornets' Nest Council properties without the written permission of GSHNC.

"Solicitation" means requesting another person to purchase goods and/or services; donate goods, services, or money to any person or organization; or sign petitions or the like for any purpose.

Part 2: Procedures

VOLUNTEER PHILOSOPHY

Volunteers are Hornets' Nest Council's greatest asset in guiding generations of girls to become leaders in their own lives and in the world. It is through this volunteer leadership that the Girl Scout Movement serves girls and realizes its mission to build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. To ensure job satisfaction of volunteers and to utilize the talents of volunteers effectively, it is essential that the following policies and procedures be established and maintained. Together we can work to ensure the safety and well-being of all members.

GSHNC will create a culture of appreciation that includes both formal and informal methods to recognize all volunteers for their time, talent, and impact. Volunteers can also be nominated or nominate other volunteers for more formal council and national recognition consistent with the GSUSA guidelines, Adult Recognitions in Girl Scouting. More information can be found in the GSHNC Adult Recognitions Handbook.

VOLUNTEER WELLNESS

Volunteer service can involve multiple commitments. Enthusiasm, energy, and positive attitudes are essential to providing girls and adults with worthwhile and enjoyable leadership experiences. To this end, it is vital that adult volunteers not overextend themselves by volunteering for too many overlapping roles. Building a broader base of adult support by encouraging others to participate increases and expands the opportunities for everyone to grow and share. Hornets' Nest Council is committed to providing enriching quality experiences for both girls and adults.

VOLUNTEER/STAFF PARTNERSHIP

Hornets' Nest Council staff are employed to provide full-time managerial and specialist expertise, research capability, and continuity to support the delivery of program to girls through volunteers. Volunteers and staff are considered to be partners in implementing the Mission and the goals of GSHNC. It is essential that each partner understands and respects the needs and abilities of the other.

VOLUNTEER ROLE

A volunteer is any adult (18 years of age or older) who, without compensation or expectation of compensation, performs a task on behalf of GSHNC. A volunteer must be approved (registered member of Girl Scouts and background check approved) and appointed by GSHNC prior to performing the task.

All adults accompanying troop/group meetings or activities on a regular basis or attending any overnight activity or who at any time assume care, custody, or responsibility for girl members and/ or Girl Scout money must be both a registered adult member of GSUSA and a volunteer of GSHNC.

GSHNC has two main categories of volunteers:

• Operational Volunteers: Adult members who provide the direct/indirect services to girls and adults. Operational volunteers are appointed for a term of up to one year, depending on the volunteer position held.

• Governance Volunteers: Members who communicate ideas and feelings, influence proposals, and make decisions that govern GSHNC and its members. They are accountable to the voting members of GSHNC. Governance volunteers are elected or appointed. Volunteers are primarily 18 years of age or older, although girls age 14 and above may serve as Delegates or Alternates.

Unless otherwise specified, Volunteer Policies & Procedures apply to all volunteers.

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Each volunteer position will have a volunteer position description that defines specific responsibilities, clarifies expectations, and forms the basis for assessment of volunteer performance, reappointment, rotation to another position, and/or release.

ACCEPTANCE AND APPOINTMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer eligibility is determined, and acceptance is completed online. Prior to applying for a volunteer position, it is the responsibility of the prospective volunteer to review the volunteer position description for the role for which they are applying.
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. GSHNC reserves the right to limit volunteer involvement until all steps have been completed.

1. Prospective volunteer reviews volunteer position descriptions located on the GSHNC website to determine their interest in becoming a volunteer.
2. Prospective volunteer joins Girl Scouts by registering online, selecting the appropriate volunteer role, and paying the membership dues.
3. All prospective volunteers are required to successfully complete a background check. Active volunteers must undergo a renewed background check every three (3) years. GSHNC will provide notification when a background check renewal is required.
4. Prospective volunteer receives notification that their background check has been approved.
5. The new volunteer appointment is conditional based on successful completion of required training for their position.

Appointment Terms

• Operational volunteers may be appointed for a term of up to one year and will be reappointed based upon completion of responsibilities as outlined in volunteer position description. Please see Volunteer Supervision, Performance Assessment, and Reappointment section of this document for more information.

• Terms for governance volunteers (including delegates, members and Officers of Board of Directors and its committees, etc.), vary.

Approval as a GSHNC volunteer does not guarantee placement within a specific troop or volunteer role. Troop co-leaders have the discretion to determine which approved volunteers will

serve within their troop based on the needs of the troop and the best interests of the girls. GSHNC retains final authority regarding volunteer appointments and placement.

TRAINING AND SUPPORT

To ensure volunteers are prepared to deliver high-quality programming and leadership, they need to complete training for their role. Volunteers are encouraged to continually enhance and develop their skills throughout their leadership volunteer experience.

All new Girl Scout Volunteers must complete the following mandatory training before acceptance of their leadership role:

- GSHNC Leading the Way Learning Path Series an overview of the Girl Scout purpose and organization, GSHNC information, and the support systems available to help them in their work.

After acceptance of their leadership role, all new Girl Scout co-leaders must complete the following trainings in the assigned time frame. Volunteers in a co-leader position who do not complete the required trainings within the assigned time frame may be removed from their volunteer position.

New Co-Leader Training Schedule

Before the first troop meeting
- GSHNC Leading the Way Part 1: Your Volunteer Experience Begins
- GSHNC Leading the Way Part 2: Before Your First Troop Meeting

In the First 90 Days
- GSHNC Leading the Way Part 3: Leveling Up Your Leadership
- Complete one in person New to the Nest Training

Recommended:
- First Aid/CPR

Additional required training expectations are outlined in each volunteer position description. Other training may be offered to be completed within specified time frames. Additionally, there may be mandatory training or refresher workshops for all volunteers that coincides with their background check renewal process.

Volunteer training is offered in a variety of ways to best meet varied and unique learning styles: written resources, face-to-face learning, and interactive online learning.

Training records are kept on file by GSHNC Volunteers should also keep personal records of their training history.

Troops may decide to cover the cost for volunteer training as a troop expense.

VOLUNTEER REAPPOINTMENT

Volunteers are automatically reappointed to their current volunteer position(s) unless they resign or are otherwise notified by GSHNC staff. In the case of unsatisfactory performance,

the volunteer will be asked to make changes or to fulfill specified requirements to correct the unfavorable behavior within a specified time frame. Failure to improve performance will subject a volunteer to redirection or release. At any time, a volunteer may be appointed to another Girl Scout position, removed from a position, or may resign from a position.

Service unit team members will be reappointed based on past performance, adherence to GSHNC and GSUSA policies and procedures, support of the Girl Scout mission, promise, and law, supporting Hornets' Nest Council goals, as well as positive relationships with the community, parents, other volunteers, and GSHNC staff. Service unit team positions are a one-year, renewable term. Service unit team members will be evaluated on their performance prior to reappointment. There will be mutual acceptance of position accountabilities, expectations and time commitments. Volunteers with financial responsibility to troops/groups or to GSHNC will not be reappointed to a position if required financial responsibilities have not been met.

VOLUNTEER RESIGNATION

A volunteer may resign from their volunteer position at any time following these steps:

1. Prior to giving notice, we encourage them to discuss the reason(s) with their GSHNC Community Engagement Specialist and Volunteer Engagement Manager.
2. At least two weeks prior to leaving, the volunteer should submit a written resignation outlining the specific position(s) from which they are resigning and the reason(s) for leaving.
3. When applicable, we ask that the volunteer assist in identifying a replacement and communicate her/his decision with members of the service unit team.

The volunteer may be required to balance Girl Scout funds/accounts and return property and records. The volunteer and their GSHNC Community Engagement Specialist and Volunteer Engagement Manager will be responsible for completing all necessary steps to ensure a smooth transition.

VOLUNTEER REDIRECT/RELEASE

Either GSHNC or the volunteer may initiate a redirect or release from a volunteer position prior to the end of the term of appointment for any reason. Situations may arise in which GSHNC may initiate a release of a volunteer from a position prior to the end of the term of appointment. Any action to release a volunteer will receive careful and detailed consideration.

Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council may release a volunteer because of, but not limited to:

- Restructuring of positions or elimination of the volunteer position in which the individual serves;
- The volunteer’s inability or failure to complete the requirements of the position;
- Conduct not consistent with the principles of the Girl Scout Movement;
- Not demonstrating the core values of the Girl Scout mission. This may include but is not limited to: speaking poorly of girls, parents, volunteers, or GSHNC staff; posting negative comments on Facebook or other social media websites, etc.;
- Failure to support GSHNC policies, activities, and/or goals;
- Refusal to comply with GSHNC or Girl Scouts of the USA policies and procedures. Examples include but are not limited to:

    - Unauthorized possession of dangerous weapons on Girl Scout property or while conducting volunteer activities, as stated in the policy prohibiting weapons.
- Willful violation of security or safety rules; negligence or any careless action, which endangers the life or safety of a girl or another adult.
- Failure to ask permission for additional money-earning events or to submit annual financial reports
- Failure to submit a Troop Trip Application and/or follow Safety Activity Checkpoints
- Acts of discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, ethnicity, religion, lineage or citizenship, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, familial status, age, socioeconomic background, source of income, disability, genetic information, predisposing genetic characteristics, carrier status, domestic violence victim status, or any other characteristic protected by law;
- Membership in an organization whose goals are not compatible with those of GSUSA or GSHNC;
- Abuse, neglect, mishandling, or mistreatment of girls or adults;
- Conviction of a felony or engaging in criminal conduct, acts of violence, or making threats of violence towards anyone;
- Being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances while volunteering; unauthorized use, possession, or sale of controlled substances while on Girl Scout premises or conducting volunteer activities (excluding prescribed medications that do not impair performance).
- 3 or more driving suspensions within the last three years;
- Breach of confidentiality of personal or health information;
- Refusal to participate in conflict resolution procedures with GSHNC staff and other volunteers or parents;
- Misappropriation of funds or product inventory or debt incurred to GSHNC or service unit.

No volunteer may be released from their position without final review and approval by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or an executive-level officer of GSHNC.

All volunteers who are redirected or released will be notified in writing. GSHNC will maintain confidentiality; however, it may be necessary to notify other approved volunteers and/or members impacted by the change in volunteer status.

Volunteers who are released or redirected from their volunteer position are no longer approved volunteers with GSHNC. They are still considered members of GSUSA and GSHNC unless it is determined that they are not able to meet the membership requirements related to accepting the principles and beliefs of the Girl Scout Movement or by supporting the mission and values of the organization.

Volunteers who are released or redirected from a volunteer position may or may not be restricted from attending and/or participating in Girl Scout activities/events as members depending on the nature of the situation.

REINSTATEMENT OF RELEASED VOLUNTEERS

Girl Scout volunteers who have been released may be considered for reinstatement to their volunteer position. A former/prospective volunteer who wishes to be reinstated as a volunteer with GSHNC may submit a request in writing after a period of 24 months from the date of Hornets' Nest Council's decision to restrict or remove the individual from her or his position. Fulfillment of the waiting period and submission of request does not guarantee an applicant will be reinstated as a volunteer.

Volunteers who were removed due to the results of their background check must wait five years from the time of the infraction to request reinstatement. Fulfillment of the waiting period does not guarantee that an applicant will be appointed as a volunteer.

It is the responsibility of the former volunteer to complete all the required steps to apply for reinstatement as a volunteer.

When a volunteer is reinstated, GSHNC reserves the right to coach the volunteer for a minimum of 12 months to ensure compliance with the Girl Scout Promise and Law and their volunteer position description. Coaching may include but is not limited to check-ins with Hornets' Nest Council staff, training updates/refreshers, troop/event drop-ins, etc. Should a reoccurrence arise where the reinstated volunteer is having the same issues/behaviors that lead to their original release GSHNC reserves the right to immediately release them from any and all volunteer positions with the organization. GSHNC reserves the right to limit or deny reinstated volunteer involvement as deemed appropriate.

OTHER YOUTH SERVING ORGANIZATIONS

To ensure the integrity of our brand and safety of our members, all volunteers are charged with ensuring that girl members participate in activities that are safe, girl-led and conducted under the supervision of registered and trained adult Girl Scout volunteers.

Girl Scouts will continue doing what is best for girls and Girl Scouts – that means strong girl led, all girl, and girl-focused program. All Girl Scout members should:

1. Use the full name of Girl Scouts whenever possible. Do not refer to Girl Scouts as “Scouts” or “Scouting.”
2. Wear uniforms proudly and publicly whenever you are representing Girl Scouts. Do not mix uniform pieces with those of other youth-serving organizations.
3. Use Girl Scouts’ name, logos, and likenesses according to guidelines provided by Girl Scouts of the USA. If you wish to use the Girl Scout logo, please contact customercare@hngirlscouts.org for assistance and approval.
4. When participating in community events such as parades, flag ceremonies, or festivals, request a distinct Girl Scout booth or marching space if possible.
5. If girls are members of multiple youth-serving organizations, ensure that funds earned by Girl Scouts are spent on Girl Scout expenses and Girl Scout troop experiences only.
6. Sharing of membership information including, but not limited to, name, phone number, email addresses, program level, and membership status is strictly prohibited.

FLYERS/INFORMATION IN MAILBOXES

It is against federal law to insert flyers in mailboxes. Girl Scouts and Girl Scout volunteers may not place any matter not bearing postage into a mailbox. This includes flyers, Cookie Program information, letters, etc.

APPROPRIATE GRADE-LEVEL TROOPS/GROUPS

Girls participate in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience in troops or independently, in these program grade-levels.

- Girl Scout Daisies: Grade K-1
- Girl Scout Brownies: Grade 2-3
- Girl Scout Juniors: Grade 4-5
- Girl Scout Cadettes: Grade 6-8
- Girl Scout Seniors: Grade 9-10
- Girl Scout Ambassadors: Grade 11-12

Service Unit assignment is based on the troop's meeting location.

Bridging girls to the next grade-level early is not recommended due to the progressive nature of the Girl Scout program.
Girls who are home schooled and whose grades do not fit into the traditional levels will be assigned a program level that is closest to their homeschool level. Homeschool girls entering Kindergarten must be 5 years old on or before December 31st of the year they are to enter Kindergarten and be participating in homeschooling on at least a Kindergarten level.

Girls who are held back a grade level and are already participating in the Girl Scout program are able to continue forward with their troop or stay behind. That is a joint decision between the girl's caregivers and the troop leaders.

New girls joining Girl Scouts who have repeated a grade level should join a troop of the program level that reflects their current grade in school.

Extenuating circumstances may lead to the need for a multi-grade level troop.

PARTICIPATION CATALOG

The Participation Catalog is an online listing of troops in Hornets' Nest Council. The Participation Catalog helps us ensure that every girl who wants to be a Girl Scout has the opportunity to participate in a troop experience. All troops with less than 12 girls will be displayed in the participation catalog as open to accepting new girls.

If your troop does not want to display on the participation catalog the troop must fill out a participation catalog survey every year indicating as such including why you don't want your troop displayed. Completing the form does not guarantee your request will be approved. The form will be reviewed and the outcome determined within 5 business days of GSHNC receiving the completed form.

Daisy, Brownie and Junior troops will not be removed from the participation catalog until the troop has at least 12 girls or under extenuating circumstances.

Cadette, Senior and Ambassador troops may request to have their troop removed from the catalog but troops with less than 6 girls may not have their troop removed from the catalog except for the most extenuating of circumstances.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES

Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council would like all girls to have the opportunity to engage in the Girl Scout Experience, regardless of financial status and is based on need without

regard to race, creed, color, religion, national origin, ability, or any other characteristic protected by Federal or state law.

What does Financial Assistance cover?

- GSHNC provides financial assistance to girl members for all or part of their membership. Financial assistance is also available for basic uniform pieces and council-led programs.
- Adult volunteers requesting financial assistance must currently hold or have the intent to step into an approved volunteer role. Eligible roles include:
    - Co-Leader
    - Cookie Manager
    - Fall Product Manager
    - Troop Treasurer
    - Service Unit Leadership Team Member
    - Juliette Mentor

• Financial assistance for girls and adults is subject to the availability of funds within the GSHNC operating budget.

• When possible, troops who have had the opportunity to participate in the Fall Product Program and the Cookie Program should use troop funds to renew girl and leader memberships.

Learn More about Financial Assistance on our website.

Receipt of financial assistance indicates commitment to participate in Product Programs (Fall and Cookie).

How do I apply for Financial Assistance?

Families can request financial assistance on the Payment screen during the online membership registration process.

Your request is noted as **PENDING FINANCIAL AID REVIEW.** Requesting financial assistance does not guarantee approval.

Financial assistance is provided at the discretion of Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council and is contingent upon the availability of funding. Approval of financial assistance is not guaranteed, and award amounts may vary based on available resources and established eligibility criteria.

- Within 5 Business Days of your Request, GSHNC will email you with a link to an Assistance Request Form. Your responses to the Request Form do not determine approval, but completion of the Form is required for the Membership Registration to be completed.
- You will receive an email for each individual you have requested assistance for. Please complete a request form for each individual.
- Spots are not able to be held, so we suggest that you complete your form as soon as possible. If not complete within 30 days, we will remove the application for membership. We do ask families to make any contribution they are comfortable with toward registration costs. This allows us to stretch limited resources further and provide assistance to more families. However, please do not contribute if this would put a burden on your family or prevent participation in Girl Scouting.
- Within 3-5 business days of completing the Request Form you will receive an email

with valuable information, including coupon codes that can be used for uniforms, books and GSHNC Events. Please keep an eye out for this email and keep this email, since you will use the information in that email throughout the year.

BANK ACCOUNTS

All troops and service units must open a separate business checking account into and out of which all funds flow. All Girl Scout accounts must have two unrelated, approved signers who are responsible for funds. These accounts, the signers, and the use of Hornets' Nest Council's EIN must be authorized in writing by GSHNC.

Troops are encouraged to open their accounts at a branch of PNC. We realize this bank may not be an option in your area and it is allowable to use another bank or credit union.

This bank account may only be used for the Girl Scout program; money earned by girls can only be used to fund their Girl Scout experience. Funds of more than one troop may not be co-mingled in one bank account with funds from other troops; each troop must have its own bank account. Co-mingling of funds will be regarded as misappropriation.

Other groups including but not limited to Day Camps and Travel Groups are welcome to open their own bank accounts. Those accounts are subject to the same policies and procedures as Troop and Service Unit bank accounts including the submission of a Annual Troop Report every June.

Troops and service units must follow GSHNC procedures when opening accounts, closing accounts, or changing bank account signers at a financial institution. GSHNC has the authority to change bank account signers, request bank statements, or close accounts whenever it deems necessary.

The Bank Account Information and ACH Authorization form must be completed by all GSHNC troops and groups that have been given permission to open a bank account in the Hornets' Nest Council's name. This form must be completed for new bank accounts as soon as it is opened or if there are any changes in authorized signers. The information on the completed form will be available to your Service Unit Treasurer and GSHNC staff.

The debit/check card must not be used for personal purchases. The cardholder(s) are responsible for obtaining purchase receipts, securing the card(s), and are legally responsible for the transactions posted to the card. Online banking is permitted.
All Girl Scout funds must be deposited into the troop/service unit bank account and all itemized receipts of purchases, bank receipts/deposits and monthly bank statements must be kept on file for a period of two years.

GSHNC reserves the right to review troop and service unit accounts. If a troop or service unit fails to submit its annual Troop report, it is subject to financial review and/or closure of the account by GSHNC. Other situations that may result in a financial review include but are not limited to:

- Complaints from parents/caregivers
- Suspected misuse
- Mismanagement or theft of funds

Financial reviews may be initiated at the full discretion of GSHNC.

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Volunteers who oversee Girl Scout funds, whether for troops, service units, day camps, or any other reason, are accountable to GSHNC and girls in all financial matters.

The troop leaders are responsible for good management of funds including timely deposits of funds, up-to-date record keeping, monthly review of bank statements, responsible management of funds, and submission of timely reports to affected girls, their parents, and GSHNC. Receipts showing how the money was spent must document all cash withdrawals. If cash is collected, receipts must be provided that document the reason for the payment.

Although troop finances can be managed by any approved, registered adult listed to the troop, the troop co-leaders will ultimately be responsible for the troop's finances and the submission of the Finance Tab. Failure to exercise proper management over finances will result in a funds restriction or release from volunteer position.

All troops, service units, and day camps are required to submit an annual troop report to GSHNC by June 30. Parents/caregivers can view completed troop finance report(s) on the Volunteer Toolkit, therefore it is important to comply with this procedure as financial transparency at all levels of Girl Scouting encourages trust and confidence. Additionally, any registered Girl Scout and their parents/caregivers will be given access to view financial records upon request. The troop leader has access to the Finance Tab on the Volunteer Toolkit and must work with the troop treasurer (if there is one in place) to submit the finance report annually by the June 30th deadline.

Troops that fail to submit their Annual Troop Report will not be eligible to participate in the following activities:

- Distribution of proceeds from troop sales and/or cookie sales
- Troop trips
- Other money-earning activities
- Fall product sales

Volunteers with financial responsibility to troops/groups or to GSHNC may not be reappointed to a position if required financial responsibilities have not been met.

MONEY EARNING AND FUNDRAISING GUIDELINES

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

The Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program are the two best opportunities for

girls to earn troop funds. Troops must participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program in order to participate in additional money earning or fund raising. Consideration will be given to troops that formed after these opportunities have passed. Troops who participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program usually do not need to participate in additional money earning or fund raising unless they are planning trips or other travel.

Money Earning

Money earning activities are those girls implement in order to supplement monies raised through the Girl Scout Product Programs - the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program. Other money earning activities are arranged by troops and service units and can include raking leaves, shoveling snow, walking pets, service-a-thons, etc. The funds earned through money earning are to be used for Girl Scout mission-based activities and must be retained by the troop or service unit, not by individuals. These funds must be accounted for through the required annual troop reporting.

Troops that fail to submit their Annual Troop Report will be ineligible to participate in any money-earning activities until the report has been submitted and reviewed by GSHNC staff.

Money Earning Time Frames

Girls may not participate in other money earning activities that involve the sale of goods or services during the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program seasons. Check the GSHNC website for exact dates.

- Fall Product Program typically takes place mid-September-October.
- Girl Scout Cookie Program typically takes place December-March.

Money Earning Parameters

- If your troop would like to engage in any money earning activity troops must submit the Money Earning Application at least four weeks before beginning a money earning activity.
- Troops must have participated in BOTH the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program in order to engage in additional money earning. It is encouraged, not required, for 100% of troop members to have participated.
- Troops MUST have submitted an annual troop finance report (ATR) in order to participate in any additional money-earning activity.
- Troops must follow GSHNC Volunteer Policies & Procedures, Volunteer Essentials, and Safety Activity Checkpoints to ensure girl safety, including appropriate girl-to-adult ratios of approved Girl Scout volunteers.
- If a Girl Scout has not participated in the Girl Scout Cookie Program and/or Fall Product Program, she shall not be excluded from any activities due to lack of participation.
- If troop dues are collected, Girl Scouts shall not be excluded from any activities regardless of their ability to pay troop dues.
- The money earning should have a purpose that helps develops skills girls are learning in Girl Scouts.
- Girls are involved in the development of the budget for the amount of money that is needed.
- Girls must be able to explain the reason they are earning money.

- Money earning should not exceed the amount the troop needs for their proposed activity(ies).
- The activity should be age appropriate.
- Participation is voluntary.
- Local ordinances and health and safety laws related to involvement of children in money earning must be observed.
- Arrangements must be made for safeguarding money during money earning.

Money Earning May Not

- Have girls asking for cash donations.
- Involve games of chance such as raffles, drawings, or silent auctions. The Internal Revenue Service does not allow girls to participate in these activities.
- Endorse “commercial products” (e.g., Thirty One, Tupperware, Candle Light, etc.). “Commercial products” is any product sold at a retail location or that benefits a for-profit organization. Since 1939, girls and volunteers have not been allowed to endorse, provide a testimonial for, or sell such products. Girl Scouts does not allow product demonstration parties where the use of the Girl Scout trademark increases revenue for another business. Any business using the Girl Scout trademark must seek authorization from GSUSA.
- Girl Scouts may not solicit funds on behalf of another organization while representing Girl Scouts by wearing an official uniform, sash, vest, official insignia, or other apparel that identifies them as Girl Scouts. This includes participating in fundraising activities such as walkathons, telethons, or similar events that raise money for another organization.
    - Exceptions may be approved by the council in advance for community events that align with the Girl Scout mission, values, and brand. Troops wishing to participate in an external fundraising event while wearing Girl Scout uniforms or other identifying apparel must obtain prior written approval from the council before promoting or participating in the event.Troops are encouraged to support community organizations through service projects, Take Action projects, or other non-fundraising partnerships that reflect the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Girl Scouts may always participate in events as private individuals without prior council approval, provided they are not wearing official Girl Scout uniforms, insignia, or other items that identify them as representatives of Girl Scouts.
- Girls with regular jobs may choose to donate their earnings to their troop or Girl Scout Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award projects. They should not wear their Girl Scout uniform or act as a Girl Scout representative when they are working their regular job. Once the money is given to the troop, it becomes troop funds and belongs to the troop not the girl who donated it.

Money Earning and Fundraising Group Agreement

It is important to understand that all troop money belongs equally to girls registered in the troop. Periodically, there are Girl Scout activities such as longer trips, attending the National Girl Scout Convention, etc. which require numerous money earning and/or fund raising activities, which may occur over the course of multiple years. We strongly encourage each troop to use the Money Earning and Fund Raising Activity Group Agreement form at the start of a money earning and/or fund raising activity. It will help troops manage fund disbursement as it can be expected that all girls may not participate at the same level. In cases like this, it is important to plan in advance for the equitable distribution of funds using Fund Banding as

required by the Internal Revenue Service.

Funds Banding refers to ranges or bands that determine equitable disbursement of funds earned during money earning and fund raising activities. Any funds deposited into a Girl Scout account are subject to the banding requirements of the IRS. Girls, with the guidance of their troop leaders and GSHNC registered volunteers, should pre-determine banding ranges, prior to the start of any money earning or fund raising activities, based on appropriate effort, amount of revenue earned, or activity-related banding ideas. Fund Bands cannot be calculated dollar for dollar, hour for hour, or dollar for hour.
Examples of Fund Banding: $X = (10-15 hours of participation = $75 earned)

Fundraising

Fundraising involves adults asking businesses, organizations, or individuals for money or in-kind contributions to support troop activities. Girls are not allowed to fundraise unless they are working on their Girl Scout Gold Award. Sponsors, such as local businesses and organizations, can help ensure that all girls in the community have an opportunity to participate in Girl Scouting. Periodically, troops and service units may plan activities that require larger than usual budgets (e.g., Destinations such as a trip to Juliette Gordon Low's home). In addition, community organizations, businesses, faith-based organizations, and individuals may become sponsors by providing group meeting places, providing activity materials, loaning equipment, or donating money. They may even volunteer their time and talent. Donations of goods and services are called "in-kind" contributions.

Financial Contributions

Businesses, organizations, and individuals may donate directly to a troop, group or service unit. It is the policy of GSHNC to accept gifts designated for a troop or service unit and redirect those funds back into the troop, group, or service unit bank account. The direction of the funds must be specifically communicated via the donor through email, phone, letter, or designation online. All gifts designated to a troop will be split 50% to GSHNC Sister2Sister Fund and 50% to Service Unit or Troop.

Any donation $250 or greater must first be sent through GSHNC. Amounts less than $250 can be given directly to the troop but if the donor would like a receipt the monies must come through the Hornets' Nest Council. Volunteers, troops and groups are not permitted to issue a donation receipt on behalf of Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council.

All donation checks must be made payable to: Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council (GSHNC).

Sponsorships

Before working with a potential sponsor, please contact GSHNC Director of Development. If GSHNC may already be working with the business or organization on a council-wide donation and it is important that we work together. GSHNC can also provide guidance on the availability of some sponsors and other tips that could strengthen your ask. GSHNC has relationships with many organizations and may also know of reasons not to connect with certain organizations.

In-Kind Contributions

In-kind donations are goods or services, other than cash, that are to be used by troops for Girl Scout mission-based activities. Examples of in-kind gifts include:

- space for a meeting or event
- program supplies
- food
- camping equipment

If the sponsor would like a receipt the troop needs to document the in-kind contribution via the In-Kind Donation Solicitation Request Form. GSHNC will ensure the sponsor receives a thank you letter meeting IRS requirements.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS DUE TO TROOP CHANGES

Graduating Girl Scout Ambassador Troops

When all girls of a troop graduate, care must be taken with the final expenditure of troop funds. All troop money is the property of the troop, not the individual girls, and the troop should decide how to spend the money prior to dissolving the troop and closing the bank account. All decisions concerning the disposition of troop funds should be made by the troop not by the leaders to "surprise the girls".

Options to consider depending on the remaining amount of troop funds:

- Purchase discounted Lifetime Girl Scout memberships for each graduating girl.
- Leave a legacy to Girl Scouts by donating to a fund or program in honor of the troop.
- Take advantage of the last year of girl membership to participate in GSHNC planned activities and events.
- Donating Remaining Troop Funds to Sister 2 Sister: Troops may donate remaining funds to support their Service Unit's Sister 2 Sister campaign goal by either:
    - Writing a check to GSHNC with the Service Unit name and "Sister to Sister" in the memo line, and mailing it to the council office.
    - Donating online via the Service Unit's CauseVox site by selecting "Designate a Page" and choosing the appropriate Service Unit. An email receipt will be provided, and the Service Unit's fundraising goal will be updated accordingly.

New Troop Leadership

If new troop leadership has been appointed, turn all supplies, financial records, and the bank account over to the new troop leader. The signatures on the bank account must be changed with the bank and a new Bank Account Information and ACH Authorization Form should be submitted. There is no need to close the account and open a new one.

Troop Leadership Vacancy

If new leadership has not been determined, turn all troop supplies, financial records, and the bank account over to your GSHNC Membership Specialist.

Troop Merges or Splits

If a troop merges with another troop the funds and supplies will be combined for use by all the girls in the newly formed troop. If a troop splits, equal portions of the troop funds and supplies will follow girls to their new troop. This will be done with guidance and direction from your GSHNC Membership Specialist.

Troop Disbands

If a troop disbands, girls are encouraged to use existing monies for activities before the troop disbands. If there are remaining funds, girls can decide to donate to another GSHNC troop or to the Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council Sister-to-Sister fund, GSHNC, a service unit, or another non-profit organization as decided by the girls.

GSHNC membership specialists will assist with allocating funds for girls transferring to new troops. The bank account should be closed and all remaining funds, if any, must be turned in to the GSHNC Service Center. Money may never be given in the form of cash to individual girls or adults. Disbanded troops are required to submit a Disbanding Form and a final finance report through the VTK Finance tab, including the required three bank statements. Remaining funds need to be turned over to your GSHNC membership specialist.

Once money is donated it cannot be recovered if the volunteer or a girl was to return to GSHNC after.

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (IRS) COMPLIANCE AND TROOP ACCOUNTS

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

- Once money is received into the troop treasury (bank account), it no longer belongs to individual girls.
- Cash-based accounts may not be kept for or distributed to individual girls. For additional information on the distribution of funds to individual girls, see the information on Fund Banding included in the Money Earning and Fund Raising Activity Group Agreement.
- All benefits provided should relate back to supporting the Girl Scout mission; decisions should be based on our tax-supported philosophy regarding what is mission-related. For example, camp, travel, and Girl Scout events are mission related. Scholarships to an outside organization would not be mission related.
- A business or individual may not receive a tax deduction for money given directly to troops or an individual Girl Scout, as they are not considered a charitable nonprofit. The Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council Tax ID number may not be used by these businesses or individuals.
- Donations may be made to GSHNC and include a restriction for troop use when the donation is made. GSHNC will cut a check for the designated troop and mail it to the troop treasurer. (Troops may receive up to $500/donations. Four $500 donations may

be accepted per year. All funds must be spent in the fiscal year they are received).
- Troop monies cannot follow a girl if she leaves the GSHNC council.
- Money follows an individual girl within the GSHNC Council. The amount of money is not calculated dollar for dollar. The IRS prohibits funds from following an individual girl dollar for dollar.

Here are some common scenarios:

- Troop mergers: Funds are combined for use by all girls in the newly formed troop.
- Troop splits: Funds are divided equally among girls; e.g., 10 girls = 1/10 of funds per girl.
- Girl moves to another troop: Equal portions of funds follow the girl(s) to their new troop.
- Girl becomes an Individual Registered Member (Juliette): Funds follow the girl and are deposited into the service unit's account. The service unit assumes responsibility for these funds.

Gift or donations, including those from family members, are not considered proceeds from money earning or fund raising. Please keep in mind that a gift or donation deposited into a troop bank account associated with the Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council is subject to the IRS requirements and Fund Banding requirements established by the troop's Money Earning and Fund Raising Activity Group Agreement.

THIRD PARTY PAYMENT PROCESSING SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS

GSHNC does not encourage the use of any third party payment processing software except for CheddarUp. Troops are not allowed to use Hornets' Nest Council EIN or tax identification number to set up any third party or peer-to-peer payment application.

If a troop chooses to utilize a peer-to-peer payment processing software such as Venmo, CashApp, PayPal, Zelle, Square and others, it is a troop decision that must involve girls and the decision must be unanimous.

Payment Services are not allowed to be linked to personal bank accounts, they must be linked to the troop bank account.

Volunteers who are not bank account signers should not be given access to any payment processing login information.

Troops who decide to utilize a third party payment processing software should be prepared to be issued a 1099 tax form at the end of the year.

TRAVEL AND TROOP TRIPS

When traveling with your troop make sure all participants are registered members of GSHNC. Any adult volunteer participating in an overnight trip must be a registered volunteer with a valid background check.

Ensure trip/activity meets all requirements in Safety Activity Checkpoints. A completed Troop Trip Application Form must be turned into GSHNC and approved by GSHNC prior to certain activities and trips occurring. See Safety Activity Checkpoints for more information.

When traveling, leaders should receive from parents/caregivers a signed Annual Permission Form or an Overnight Permission Form and Health History Form. The health form and permission form should be accessible to the adult in charge of each girl either electronically or physically.

The Annual Permission and Health History Form allows for troop trips/activities that are:

1. Located within approximately one hour travel distance from the Hornets' Nest Council footprint.
2. Total duration does not exceed eight (8) hours, including travel time.
3. Are not considered high-risk activities as defined in Safety Activity Checkpoints and the GSHNC Troop Trip Application.

Trips/activities outside of these parameters require a separate Overnight Permission Form.

A completed Troop Trip Application Form must be turned into GSHNC and approved by GSHNC for the following trips:

1. Cruises (1 month in advance)
2. International Trips (1 year in advance)
3. Any trip or activity involving council approval. For a complete list of all activities requiring council approval please see safety activity checkpoints.

Please note that troops with outstanding Annual Troop Reports or unpaid cookie balances will not be eligible to participate in troop trips until all reports and balances are resolved.

REGISTERED VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENT FOR TRIPS AND TRAVEL

To promote the safety of girls and ensure appropriate supervision, all adults attending a troop, Service Unit, or council-sponsored trip or camping experience must be currently registered and approved Girl Scout volunteers. This requirement applies regardless of whether the adult is serving as a chaperone, driver, overnight participant, or other adult participant.

This policy applies to, but is not limited to:

- Day trips and field trips
- Overnight camping
- Extended travel
- High-adventure activities
- Any organized troop, Service Unit, or council-sponsored travel experience

This policy does not apply to council-sponsored events that are specifically designated as family or public events where unregistered parents, guardians, or guests are invited to attend by the council or event organizer.

Troop leaders, Service Unit volunteers, and event coordinators are responsible for ensuring that all adults participating in trips and travel meet current council volunteer requirements prior to the activity.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in an adult being prohibited from participating in

the trip or travel experience and may result in additional action in accordance with council policies and procedures.

FIRST AID/CPR TRAINING

It is best practice to have at least one adult volunteer who is trained in first aid/CPR accompany the troop any time they leave their regular meeting place. For many activities, GSHNC requires that at least one adult volunteer be first aid/CPR certified. More information on which activities require an adult volunteer be first aid/CPR certified can be found in Safety Activity Checkpoints.

Volunteers can take advantage of first aid/CPR training offered by chapters of the American Red Cross, National Safety Council, EMP America, American Heart Association or other sponsoring organizations approved by GSHNC as well as first aid/CPR training opportunities are offered by GSHNC.

First aid/CPR training that is available entirely online does not satisfy GSHNC requirements. Such courses do not offer enough opportunities to practice and receive feedback on your technique. If taking a course not offered by one of the organizations listed in the previous paragraph, or any course that has online components, get approval from GSHNC Director of Outdoor Programming and Training first by emailing customercare@hngirlscouts.org.

EMERGENCIES

If an emergency occurs during a Girl Scout troop meeting, activity, etc., Girl Scout volunteers must follow the GSHNC Emergency Procedures. These procedures ensure safety is the number one concern in any emergency and volunteers are guided to seek help, and report the incident, efficiently and effectively.

GSHNC Emergency Procedures

1. Provide all possible care for the injured person.
2. Call for help: 9-1-1 (Police, Fire, EMS)
3. Move non-injured people away from the scene.
4. In the event of a motor vehicle accident, serious accident, or fatality – always notify the police. Unless the victim is in immediate danger, do not allow the disturbance of the victim or surroundings until first responders arrive.
5. Call emergency contact(s) of injured
6. Speak only to police or other first responders
7. Report emergency to GSHNC
    a. Emergency Phone: 704-731-6500 and follow the prompts
    b. GSHNC will provide you additional support on how to handle the emergency.
8. Complete an online Accident/Incident Report Form.
9. Volunteers should not make statements of any kind to the media. Refer requests to GSHNC Chief Marketing Officer or Chief Executive Officer. Volunteers must also refrain from posting and/or sharing pictures or comments on social media related to the emergency.
10. Do not discuss the incident with media/witnesses, release names, place blame, or accept liability.
11. If an automobile accident, share insurance information with the other party, do not sign any accident report, except for the police report.

12. Keep a record of the order of events, treatments, calls, etc.

ACTIVITY INSURANCE

Every registered Girl Scout, registered adult member, and anyone who participates in a Girl Scout event or activity is automatically covered under the Plan 1 Basic activity insurance plan upon registration. This insurance provides up to a specified maximum for medical expenses incurred as a result of an accident while a member is participating in an approved, supervised Girl Scout activity or trip, after the individual's primary insurance pays out.

An approved, supervised Girl Scout activity is an activity carried out by girls who are registered members of the Girl Scout Movement under the overall supervision of volunteers, in keeping with GSHNC Volunteer Policies & Procedures, Volunteer Essentials, and Safety Activity Checkpoints.

Additional activity insurance coverage must be purchased for any approved, supervised Girl Scout activity that involves travel outside of the U.S.

MEETING PLACES/CAMPS/SITES

A meeting place needs to provide a safe, clean, and secure environment that allows for the participation of all girls and adults. You might consider using meeting rooms at schools, libraries, houses of worship, community buildings, childcare facilities, and local businesses. For teens, you can also rotate meetings at coffee shops, bookstores, and other places girls enjoy spending time.

See Volunteer Essentials for a few points to keep in mind as you consider meeting locations.

Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council will allow using your own home as a meeting location for regularly scheduled troop meetings. This should be a last resort if the troop cannot find another public place to meet. Due to the high amount of liability on the volunteer holding the meeting, there are strict guidelines that MUST BE met. The volunteer must submit the Private Residence Authorization Form.

Troops may also have an occasional meeting or camp out at a private home. Strict guidelines MUST BE met and an application submitted to GSHNC for approval. The volunteer must review and submit the Private Residence Authorization Form.

Please know that during all Girl Scout activities including ones at your home two, unrelated, registered and background checked approved volunteers, one of whom must be female, must be present at all times.

Volunteers are allowed to sign User Agreements for meeting locations. All Hold Harmless agreements/contracts for meeting locations must be completed and signed by GSHNC Chief Executive Officer or their designee.

The Volunteer Engagement Handbook is designed to provide guidance, clarity, and support throughout your journey as a valued volunteer with Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest

Council. While it outlines key policies, procedures, and expectations, it is not intended to cover every possible circumstance. Situations may arise that require additional direction, and we encourage open communication with your council staff, Community Engagement Specialist, or Volunteer Engagement Manager for clarification or further assistance.

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to building girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place.