



VOLUNTEER PROCEDURES

Revised July 2011 for inclusion in 2011 version of Volunteer Essentials

Volunteer Procedures

In Girl Scouting, the safety and well-being of girls is our top priority. These procedures were developed by Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana to support the volunteer policies, and to guide volunteers when carrying out Girl Scout programs and activities. Volunteers are to observe all procedures found in this document.

All volunteers are expected to support and promote the Girl Scout Promise, Law, ideals and principles, and the policies and standards of Girl Scouts of the USA and GCNWI. We maintain that the strength of the Girl Scout Movement rests with its members who strive to build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. It is through voluntary leadership that the Girl Scout Movement serves girls. To ensure volunteer satisfaction and to utilize the skills and talents of volunteers effectively, it is essential that the standards of the Girl Scout law be followed and maintained for all volunteers.

PROGRAM AND SAFETY

All *Safety Activity Checkpoints* are to be adhered to during any troop/group activities including trips, meetings, overnights, camping and extended trips. *Safety Activity Checkpoints* are available online at www.girlscoutsgcnwi.org/safety-activity-checkpoints.

If troops/groups are leaving the regular meeting site or are meeting at a time and location different from the regular group meeting, parents/guardians must be informed in writing prior to departure. Permission slips for each outing or trip must be signed by a parent/guardian.

Additional permission slips signed by a parent/guardian are required for topics that may be sensitive in nature as outlined in *Volunteer Essentials*.

At least two unrelated volunteers, one who is female, must be present at all times. Each troop/group is to have a minimum of one position-trained volunteer or designee present at all times. Additional volunteers are required as chaperones according to ratios outlined in *Safety Activity Checkpoint*. These volunteers are to be registered as Girl Scouts and complete a volunteer application.

CAMP ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURES

All camp participants must adhere to camp check-in and check-out. Detailed procedures will be sent with your rental confirmation.

Check-in procedures may vary by campsite. Participants must have a complete roster to give the property manager. All vehicles must be parked in the parking lot. Parking on the grass is prohibited. Only one vehicle can be designated as the emergency vehicle for hospital type of emergencies and can travel to the campsite.

Camp participants should inform property manager of the time they will be leaving the camp. Plan to spend one hour cleaning the space. Do not leave the camp without approval of check-out from the property manager. The adult in charge must be on the property the entire time that troops/groups are on the property.

REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

If a volunteer has any reason to believe that a Girl Scout minor is being abused or neglected, they may file a report with the appropriate state's department of children and family services. If in Illinois, call 800-252-2873. If in Indiana, call 800-800-5556. This call may be made from the Girl Scout office, if desired. Volunteers are required to report to vice president of volunteer services anytime a report has been sent to the department or anytime there is reasonable cause to suspect that child abuse or neglect of a Girl Scout minor has occurred.

TROOP MEETING SPACE

Troops/groups deciding on appropriate meeting space locations should refer to *Volunteer Essentials*.

TRANSPORTATION

All volunteers driving Girl Scout members must be at least 21 years of age, must be a registered member of Girl Scouts, and have a volunteer application and clear background check report on file. Volunteers should refer to *Safety Activity Checkpoints* on transporting girls.

PRODUCT PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

All Girl Scouts members are expected to participate in the fall product and cookie programs. In addition to providing an opportunity for girls to earn funds to support troop/group activities, product program funds offset the cost of volunteer training, girl program and administrative support to troops and service units.

SERVICE UNIT and TROOP FINANCIAL REPORTS

By June 15 of each year, service units and troops are required to submit to their membership specialist an annual financial report accompanied by a reconciled bank statement, including a detailed cash report or software program report of their choice, to track monthly financial transactions. Troops are encouraged to keep detailed records and receipts for one year following each membership year in their possession.

BAD DEBTS

In the event that a volunteer has a bad debt exceeding 45 days after they have received notification, said volunteer will be immediately removed from her/his position until the debt is repaid or the situation is resolved.

DISBANDED TROOPS

A troop disbands when they decide not to reregister or stop meeting during the membership year. Money belongs to the troop and not to individual girls. When a troop disbands, the service unit manager is to be notified, the troop decides how to use existing funds, completes an annual financial report, closes out the troop bank account, and turns any remaining funds into the council.

ADULTS HANDLING FINANCES

All volunteers handling money must be registered as adult members. This includes, but is not limited to, troop cookie chairs, service unit product managers, service unit treasurers and troop volunteers. Volunteers should deposit funds on a regular basis within 48 hours of receipt.

TROOP BANK ACCOUNTS

All troops are required to hold their Girl Scout funds in a bank account. The bank account is to be opened in the name of Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana, Troop Number

XXXXX. There are to be minimally two (2) signers on the account. This account will use the federal tax identification number 36-3871241. The address on the account must be that of one of the signers. Bank statements are to be sent to the home address of a person registered with the troop, not to the Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana's service center address. Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana recommends establishing an account with Harris Bank. The council has been able to establish a mutually beneficial partnership with Harris Bank that provides many benefits to troops that open a business account, such as, waiving account fees.

TROOP MONEY EARNING

All Girl Scouts are expected to participate in Girl Scout product program activities to cover their expenses. These programs include the Fall Product Program and the Girl Scout Cookie® Program. If Girl Scouts need additional money to support program activities and have completed the two council-wide product program activities, they may apply for an additional money-earning activity. Girl Scouts should refer to *Volunteer Essentials* money-earning standards for further information. Girl Scouts need to complete a Money-Earning Application for activities beyond council-sponsored programs. Council money-earning activity procedures are available. Girl Scout members participating in the Girl Scout Silver Award, the Girl Scout Gold Award, or travel pathway activities will follow the same procedures outlined above to secure permission for additional money-earning activities.

CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS FOR COUNCIL-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

If the council cancels an activity/event, for any reason, event registrants will receive a full refund. Council reserves the right to cancel an event in case of severe weather conditions or for low reservations. Council will inform all event registrants of cancellation by phone and/or email. Individuals wishing to cancel event reservations need to be aware that deposits are non-refundable. There will be no refunds for pre-purchased tickets or event no-shows. Individuals may request refunds for sickness, family emergencies or family death and must provide a written statement with the request for a refund to the event contact person. Occasionally, situations arise when a troop or individual needs to cancel after the deadline. In these situations, requests for refunds will be made on a case-by-case basis.

TRAINING PROCEDURES

Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana will publish a schedule of volunteer training opportunities online and in print several times per year.

Volunteer training opportunities are offered in a variety of formats including online/self-study, webinars, face-to-face, and blended learning, which combines an online option with an abbreviated face-to-face session. Check the training calendar for information on training sessions suggested for your volunteer position.

Volunteer training opportunities will be offered in multiple locations throughout the council.

Pre-registration for training is required and taken on a first-come, first-served basis. Some courses, such as first aid and outdoor education, have fees to cover the cost of supplies. Participants are not considered registered until the fee is paid in full. Participants may register for training by using the online registration system, by fax, postal mail, or phone. A waiting list will be established for courses that exceed the maximum capacity, and those on the waiting list will be contacted if an opening becomes available. Registration deadlines are indicated in the training calendar. Participants will receive a course confirmation to remind them of their registration.

Courses may be canceled due to low registration or inclement weather. Participants will be notified by e-mail or phone if the course is canceled due to low registration. In the case of inclement weather, you will be notified by telephone. Only those registered for a course can be notified if a course is canceled. If you must cancel, please contact the manager of adult development at the Gathering Place.

Limited financial aid may be available for training courses that have a fee. Please complete the appropriate financial aid application and submit it with your training registration. The cost for volunteer training can be considered a troop expense and covered by troop treasury funds.

An electronic training record will be maintained for each participant. Training cards for personal records will be available upon request.

Girl Scout volunteers may participate in certification courses sponsored by other organizations. To have this noted in your training record, submit a copy of the certification to the regional manager of adult development.

Volunteer training opportunities for eight or more participants can be scheduled upon request if a trainer is available. Please complete the *Training by Request* form, found in the *Training Calendar* and submit to your regional adult development manager.

Children cannot be accommodated at training events due to insurance considerations. Please do not bring children to training sessions unless childcare arrangements are specifically mentioned for that course.

Volunteers transferring from another Girl Scout council are asked to submit a copy of their training record for review by a manager of adult development. Training will be verified and volunteers will be contacted if any additional courses or updates are needed.

Volunteers in positions of leadership whose group will be changing grade levels should participate in training for their new level.

All volunteers are encouraged to participate in enrichment training to enhance their volunteer knowledge and skills.

VOLUNTEER COACHING PERFORMANCE AND CORRECTIVE ACTION

The process for performance assessment and corrective action supports the Performance Appraisal Policy. A volunteer may have the opportunity for a performance review by their volunteer or staff supervisor. The purpose of a performance review is to coach a volunteer, evaluate changes that need to be made, help assess whether a position is a good fit or make any other recommendations to help the volunteer be successful in her/his role. Generally, performance reviews are conducted at the end of a volunteer's position term, although, the best time to address unsatisfactory behavior is at the time the behavior occurs.

If there is an unsatisfactory performance appraisal, the volunteer will be asked to make changes or to fulfill specified requirements. If this is the case, then the volunteer and/or staff will follow these steps:

1. A volunteer asked to adjust unsatisfactory performance will be given a verbal warning. Verbal warnings should be taken seriously as a first attempt to correct unfavorable behavior.
2. If the verbal warning does not correct the behavior, the next step is a detailed written warning which includes (a) the date, (b) the unsatisfactory behavior being addressed and how that behavior impeded activities or relationships, (c) the date the verbal warning was given and any pertinent details, (d) the changes or requirements the volunteer needs to fulfill, (e) the timeframe in which the volunteer will make the expected changes and (f) actions that will be taken if the volunteer does not make the necessary changes within the specified timeframe.
3. If the volunteer fails to fulfill the request, the volunteer may be subject to removal from the position, reassigned to another position or be terminated.

At times, a volunteer may not be able to fulfill a request within a particular timeframe. It is the obligation of the volunteer to share that information with the requestor as soon as possible in order to be able to come to an agreed upon timeframe by which a request is to be fulfilled. It is at the discretion of the requestor whether the timeframe can change but is not obligated to change the timeframe if it is not in the best interest of other volunteers, adults or girls.

If a volunteer does not agree with the written warning they may submit a letter within five business days to the membership representative or supervisor for their area requesting an alternative solution. The council will then implement the Grievance/Conflict Resolution Policy and Procedure.

TERMINATION

The termination process supports the Termination Policy and exists to ensure consistency and fairness. Request for a volunteer's termination can be initiated by volunteers, non-volunteers or staff and must be made to the Vice President of Volunteer Services. Termination requests should generally follow a coaching and corrective action process unless extenuating circumstances exist.

When it is deemed necessary to possibly terminate a volunteer, the council will adhere to the following steps:

1. The vice president of volunteer services or designee will have a discussion with the volunteer to explain why there is concern about the volunteer's performance/actions. There will be one other person present during the discussion to help avoid the possibility of misunderstanding or misquoting. The vice president of volunteer services or designee will explain the termination process and answer questions and will indicate in writing the outcome of the meeting.
2. All parties involved in the situation which initiated the termination process or are involved in the situation surrounding the termination will submit a written statement of events to the designated representative.
3. The vice president of volunteer services or designee will assign a team of five volunteer representatives from throughout council to convene in order to evaluate the facts provided in written statements. The volunteer representatives must act only on the basis of substantiated information and involve only those directly involved in the fact-gathering and decision-making process. The representatives will cross reference actions against existing GSUSA and/or GCNWI documents which outline standards of behavior. They may also meet with the participants as a group to seek clarity.

4. When the facts indicate that release or termination is necessary, the team of volunteer representatives will communicate their decision in writing directly to the volunteer. The individual will be given the opportunity to resign or withdraw voluntarily by submitting their resignation in writing. Unless otherwise indicated, the discussion should be followed with a written summary, one copy of which goes to the individual and one copy of which remains in the volunteer's file.

All release and termination proceedings shall remain strictly confidential. The council reserves the right to notify relevant GCNWI persons. A current record of terminated volunteers will be kept on file at all times for reference during volunteer selection and appointment. Termination does not terminate membership with Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.

REINSTATEMENT PROCESS

A volunteer can request an evaluation of reinstatement one year following the date of termination. This request must be in written format addressed to the vice president of volunteer services, or designee, and may be revisited by the same team of volunteers, if possible, or a combination of the same team and new volunteer representatives.

GRIEVANCE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Volunteers are encouraged to voice concerns they have in order to find a resolution to issues. GCNWI recognizes the importance of resolving conflicts and grievances in a timely manner and ensuring fairness for all individuals involved. Often times, "grievance" and "conflict" are used interchangeably when discussing issues. Because each of these is unique, they are addressed separately to better serve the needs of the individuals involved.

Grievance Appeal Procedures for Volunteers

Grievance appeals are implemented when a volunteer finds issue with the application of the council's policy, procedure, practice or decision. A volunteer will initiate an appeal by doing the following:

1. The volunteer will discuss the grievance with their volunteer or staff supervisor manager or supervisor to address the issue. If this does not resolve the issue proceed to step 2.
2. The volunteer filing the grievance must submit a grievance statement in written format and include a summary of the complaint, the policy/procedure/practice/decision addressed and the specific actions they want to occur and submit that to the assigned membership staff person or appropriate staff person to find a resolution. If this does not resolve the issue then proceed to step 3.
3. The volunteer will submit the grievance statement and details of previous steps they have taken to resolve the issue thus far to the director of volunteer services in their region. The director of volunteer services will offer a resolution. If this does not resolve the issue then proceed to step 4.
4. The volunteer and/or director of volunteer services may escalate the issue to the vice president of volunteer services to offer a resolution.

Conflict Resolution Procedures for Volunteers

Conflict resolution procedures are implemented when an individual expresses a conflict with another individual. GCNWI encourages individuals to, first, reach out to the person with whom they have a conflict in order to share perspective and remove any misunderstandings. Often-

times, a discussion, with the intent of seeking understanding can simply be the solution. GCNWI will also work to ensure confidentiality if the individual requests it; however, confidentiality, often times, limits an investigation of a situation.

GCNWI favors a mediation approach to conflicts where the individuals retain the power to come to a mutually beneficial agreement through a facilitated discussion. The facilitator is usually a volunteer, staff member or third party. An individual can follow these steps to resolve conflict:

1. The individual is strongly encouraged to discuss the situation with the person with whom they have a conflict to seek understanding, remove all possible misunderstandings, share viewpoints and diffuse a situation with peaceful resolution. If that does not resolve the issue proceed to step 2.
2. The parties should jointly discuss the situation with the volunteer or staff supervisor to assist in finding a resolution mutually benefitting all parties involved. If this does not resolve the issue proceed to step 3.
3. The individuals will participate in a voluntary mediation session which is facilitated by a volunteer, staff person or designated third party to facilitate a discussion in order to find a resolution benefiting all parties involved. The mediator will document the outcome of the mediation session. If this does not resolve the issue proceed to step 4.
4. If the issue is escalated beyond this point, the individuals involved will submit in writing the issue, the solution they seek and submit that to the mediator who was involved in step 3 to escalate to the vice president of volunteer services or vice president of membership.