

Girl Scouts Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana Volunteer Policies and Procedures

Effective October 2023

We are excited to have you as a Girl Scout volunteer. We look forward to your contributions! Please familiarize yourself with Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana's volunteer policies and procedures, which guide and protect your status as Girl Scout volunteers and help our council provide a safe, rewarding experience for all members.

Volunteers are to observe all policies and procedures found in this document. Read all our [Volunteer Policies & Procedures \[PDF\]](#) or see the breakdown below.

All guidelines in our Volunteer Essentials are subject to change as new information or changes noted by federal or state health agencies regarding the spread of COVID-19 emerge. Please review and stay updated with our COVID-19 guidelines, which require all volunteers to take all reasonable precautions to limit potential exposure for girls, volunteers, and families.

Human Relations Statement Policy

Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana is committed to engaging girls in a lifelong leadership development journey that empowers them to take action in making the world a better place. Volunteers are essential to the strength and capacity of the Girl Scout Movement and are essential partners in achieving the goals of the council. The council will strive to promote an atmosphere in which relationships are characterized by dignity, honesty, courtesy, respect, and equitable treatment.

Membership Policy

Girl Scouts of the USA is a membership organization. All adults participating in the Girl Scout Movement should be registered members of Girl Scouts of the USA and pay the annual membership dues, except those who are lifetime members or who are working in a temporary advisory or consultative capacity. Financial aid is available.

Nondiscrimination Policy

It is the policy of Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age (over 40), disability unrelated to the individual's ability to perform designated volunteer duties, national origin, citizenship, marital status, or economic status.

Eligibility and Placement Policy

Adults, ages 18 and up are encouraged to volunteer for the Girl Scouts! Volunteer roles are assigned based on the ability to perform in the volunteer position, volunteer and council needs, ability, and willingness to attend training, and qualifications for membership in the Girl Scout Movement.

Volunteers shall be Girl Scout adult members and complete a criminal background check. Criminal background checks are performed to maintain a safe environment for girls and adults. Volunteers are required to renew their criminal background check every three (3) years.

Assignment and Approval Procedure

Prior to volunteering in any capacity with Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana, all adults must be eligible to serve as volunteers. Eligible volunteers are those adults who have completed the volunteer screening process and have been approved to volunteer.

Reappointment Procedure

Operational volunteers will be appointed for a term of one year. Reappointment will be based on past performance, adherence to council and Girl Scouts of the USA policies, standards and procedures, support of the Girl Scout Mission and council goals.

Training Policy

Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana strives to develop each person's ability to effectively perform her or his assignment(s) in the Girl Scouts. In pursuit of this endeavor, orientation and/or training for all volunteer assignments is provided.

A volunteer is expected to participate in any training necessary for her or his position. Failure to complete training programs may be a basis for release or cause for non-reappointment to the current position. Check [gsLearn](#) for training for your volunteer position.

- At least one registered adult in a troop/group leadership role must complete the Girl Scout Welcome Session before their first assignment.
- At least one registered adult in a troop/group leadership role must complete required training before or within 30 days of the first troop meeting. Required trainings are listed once you access [gsLearn](#)
- It is required that adults in positions of troop/group leadership whose group will be changing grade levels participate in training for the new level available in [gsLearn](#)

Training Procedures

Volunteer training opportunities are offered in a variety of formats including online, webinar, face-to-face and blended learning, which combines eLearning with a face-to-face skills session.

For any training facilitated by a trainer - for example, webinar, face-to-face or blended learning:

- Pre-registration for training is required.
- Some courses, such as first aid and outdoor education, have fees to cover the cost of supplies and certifications. Participants have to pay in full when registering for the course.
- A waiting list will be established for courses that exceed the maximum capacity. Registration deadlines are indicated on the Learning Portal.
- Participants will receive a course confirmation to remind them of their registration no later than 48 hours prior to the training.
- Children cannot be accommodated at training events due to insurance considerations.

The cost for volunteer training is considered a troop expense and can be covered by troop treasury funds. Partial financial aid may be available for training courses that have a fee. Please complete the [Adult Development financial aid application](#) found on our website and submit it for approval.

Cancellations

In-person courses may be canceled due to low registration or inclement weather. Registered participants will be notified by email if the course is canceled due to low registration. In the case of emergency or inclement weather, you will be notified by telephone. Only those registered for a course can be notified if a course is canceled.

Performance Appraisal Policy

Volunteers will be provided with the opportunity for a regular review and feedback. Standards of performance shall be established for each volunteer position, in accordance with council goals.

Confidential Policy

Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana respect the right to individual privacy of each registered Girl Scout member. Information obtained by Girl Scouts, its staff and/or volunteers may only be used by and for Girl Scouts for the purpose of Girl Scout activity and should not be used for any other organization or solicitation.

Child Abuse Reporting Policy

Any time volunteers have reasonable cause to believe that a Girl Scout minor may have been abused or neglected, they may file a report with the appropriate state's department of children and family services. Girl Scout volunteers are considered permissive reporters, and although not required by law to file such reports, are encouraged to do so.

Volunteers are required to send an email to customercare@girlscoutsgscnwi.org any time a report has been sent to the department of children and family services, or any time there is reasonable cause to suspect that child abuse or neglect of a Girl Scout minor has occurred.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse Procedures

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 any Girl Scout office if desired.

Cyberbullying and Social Media Usage Policy

The Council is committed to an environment and climate in which relationships are characterized by dignity, respect, courtesy and equitable treatment. It is the policy of the organization to provide all with an environment free from all forms of unlawful or unwelcome harassment, hostility and bullying; and therefore, it will not be tolerated.

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, electronic mail, or any form of social media.

According to the US 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 email, 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. GSGCNWI 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

GSGCNWI 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.

Finance Policy

Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana is responsible for ensuring that all money earned or received in the name of Girl Scouting within its jurisdiction is used for Girl Scout purposes. All money received becomes the property of Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana and not of individuals.

Custodianship of such funds is the responsibility of designated registered adult members, in conformity with council-established policies, standards, and procedures. Girl Scout volunteers must abide by mandatory policies, standards, and procedures set forth by GSUSA publications, as well as those found in Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana's volunteer policies.

Service Unit and Troop Financial Reports Procedures

By July 30 of each year, troops are required to submit an annual financial report through the Finance tab of the Volunteer Toolkit, 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.

By July 30 of each year, Service Units are required to submit a detailed cash report and an annual financial report accompanied by a bank statement. The Service Unit Detailed Cash Report and Annual Financial Report can be found in [gsLearn](#).

Bad Debt Procedures

In the event that a volunteer has a bad debt exceeding 45 days after they have received a notification, said volunteer will be immediately removed from their position by the council and will be sent to collections. Volunteers with bad debts may also be subject to legal action.

Disbanded Troop Procedures

A troop disbands when the members decide not to reregister or stop meeting during or at the close of the membership year. Money accumulated by the troop bank account always belongs to the troop and not to individual girls. Troops that are disbanding must complete the following steps:

- Notify the service unit manager.
- Troop decides how to use any existing funds.

- Complete and submit the Annual Financial Report in the Finance tab of Volunteer Toolkit.
- [Complete the Disbanding Troop form](#)
- All remaining funds not used by the troop must be transferred to the council. Make checks payable to Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana; Memo: Disbanding Troop
XXXXX. Mail to any Gathering Place, ATTN: Customer Care
- Close out the troop bank account after all outstanding checks have cleared.

Adults Handling Finances Procedures

All adults handling money must be approved volunteers with no financial restrictions. This includes, but is not limited to, troop cookie managers, troop fall product managers, service unit cookie managers, service unit fall product managers, service unit treasurers, troop treasurers, and troop support volunteers. Volunteers should deposit funds on a regular basis within 48 hours of receipt.

Volunteers who accept responsibility for troop finances of any kind are responsible for the girls' funds. The volunteer must be able to provide receipts, bank statements, signed permission slips, etc. to show where and how their Girl Scout funds were used and provide balances due.

Troop Bank Account Procedures

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. No signer on the account may be a Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana employee. 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.

Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana recommend establishing an account with BMO Harris Bank. The council has been able to establish a mutually beneficial partnership with BMO Harris Bank that provides many benefits to troops that open a business account, such as, waiving account fees. Troops select one of two letters that is submitted to the bank when opening or modifying a bank account. Your service unit manager or troop support specialist will advise you on bank account activity, troop financial reporting and use of sales tax exemption forms.

Troop Money-Earning Procedures

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. Any group money-earning activities may not compete with the Girl Scout Cookie Program or other council product programs selling times. This black-out period is for October, January, February, and March.

[Girl Scouts need to complete a Money-Earning Application](#) for activities beyond council-sponsored programs. See additional Money-Earning Basics online in Volunteer Essentials. Girl Scout members in troops and individual girl members participating in the Girl Scout Silver Award, the Girl Scout Gold Award, or travel activities will follow the same procedures outlined above to secure permission for additional money-earning activities.

Council Shop Check Acceptance Procedure

We only accept personal or troop checks. Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana reserves the right to refuse or accept any check. Information on the check must be preprinted by a financial institution and have a valid check number. It must include the person's name, the address of the person, the phone number and troop number. We do not accept temporary or starter checks, two or three-party checks, checks drawn on foreign banks, or payroll checks.

A state-issued driver's license, state-issued ID card, or US Passport must be shown upon request. If an ID is requested, the information must match the preprinted information on the check. The customer whose name is printed on the check by the financial institution must be present.

Checks should be presented for the exact amount of purchase only. No cash back. By writing a check to us for payment you authorize us to withdraw the full amount of the payment from your checking account by the standard deposit of your check, or utilizing Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) if we choose. In the event that a check is returned from the bank unpaid for any reason and funds are available in your account, we reserve the right to Utilize Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) to withdraw the full amount of the check, plus our \$25 fee, directly from your account.

There is a \$25 return check fee for insufficient funds.

Product Program Procedures

Payments Due to the Council

Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana will use Automated Clearing

House (ACH) electronic funds transfers for money due from the troop to the council for both product programs. ACH is an electronic network for financial transactions. It is the safe and secure system through which funds are transferred electronically (sweep), to make payments and/or collect funds. The ACH system uses the bank routing number and bank account number to identify accounts to be debited.

Troops are required to deposit all money received as a result of their product program into their troop bank accounts a minimum of one week prior to the scheduled sweep transaction date.

Troops who have insufficient funds in their troop bank accounts to cover the total amount due to the council at the time of the sweep are responsible for all bank fees incurred as the result of insufficient funds.

Troops may occasionally receive a returned check written by a customer from their bank due to non-sufficient funds (NSF). Troops will need to email a copy of the NSF check to Product Program and the following steps will then take place:

- Product Program will update Nut-e/eBudde to reflect the loss of sales and payments.
- GSGSGCNWI will refund the cost of any bank fees to the troop.
- GSGSGCNWI will pursue collections of the NSF check.

Counterfeit Money

The council strongly recommends that troops, including girls and their parents, not accept any bill larger than a \$20 (twenty) when taking payments for Girl Scout products. If an individual decides to accept a \$50 or \$100 bill, they accept full responsibility for any that may turn up as counterfeit.

We also strongly recommend that troops purchase a counterfeit bill detector pen to use at booth sites (available at many office supply stores and on the Internet). This is another opportunity for an entrepreneurial lesson for our Girl Scouts.

Reporting Product/Money Loss

Girl Scout volunteers and anyone accepting responsibility for Girl Scout products and payments are responsible for making restitution and providing supporting paperwork to the council or to the troop.

In the case of fraudulent activity such as theft of product and/or money, product damage due to negligence, carelessness, fire, flood or Acts of God, there is still a responsibility.

The following steps must be taken in reporting the incidents mentioned above:

- A police report must be filed within 24 hours of the occurrence,
- A copy of the police report including the details below must be submitted to the

Girl Scout council within 48 hours of the occurrence:

- Date and time Location Troop number
 - Full name of the volunteer
 - Details of the incident including the amount of cookies and/or money involved
- Submission of the above conditions and information does not absolve the person who incurred the loss. The persons who incurred the loss or incident are expected to submit said loss through their insurance provider to make restitution to the troop or council. The Girl Scout council reserves the right to review each occurrence or incident separately. We will take into consideration the circumstances surrounding each case.

Guidelines for Conduct Policy

Girl Scout volunteers may not consume or use alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs or be under the influence of same at any council-owned property or at any function where girls are in attendance. In addition, performing volunteer duties while under the influence of illegal drugs and/or alcohol is prohibited. The use of alcohol may be permitted at council-approved functions with the prior approval of special events staff.

Adults who accompany troops or groups must not smoke in the presence of minors at Girl Scout activities. Smoking is not permitted at council-owned sites except in designated areas.

Possession of firearms by adults in any Girl Scout activity or in any way affiliated with a Girl Scout program activity where children are present, shall not be permitted, unless otherwise dictated by law and/or a council-approved activity.

Program and Safety Policy

Leaders/Advisors must obtain written parent/guardian consent for every girl that may want to participate in any activity that is held at a different place or time from the regularly scheduled meeting. The regularly scheduled meeting place by definition includes the outside property where the troop meets.

Parent/Guardian consent to participate shall also be obtained if an activity involves unusual risk and/or sensitive issues as defined in Safety Activity Checkpoints, even if conducted at the regularly scheduled meeting time and place.

A certified first aider must be present during an overnight or camping trip and as specified by Safety Activity Checkpoints. A registered adult must be present who has appropriate council approved training or skill competency, as determined by the council, for the specific event or trip.

Program and Safety Procedures

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 girlscoutsGSGCNWI.org/forms.

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, or the multi-use permission slip](#), 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 Safety Activity Checkpoints. A Sensitive Topics Permission Form can be found at girlscoutsgcnwi.org/forms. Single use or multiple activity permission forms are available.

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 Checkpoints. These volunteers are to be registered as Girl Scouts and approved volunteers.

Male volunteers may accompany a Girl Scout group on an overnight. Be sure the following procedures are followed:

- When camping on council property, be sure the Property Registrar (312-416-2500 ext. 6371) is made aware so that the property manager may be informed of male volunteers accompanying the troop/group.
- One member of the leadership team must be an unrelated female.
- Separate sleeping accommodations and hygiene facilities must be arranged.
- Girl Scout leaders are expected to exercise care and good judgment to ensure a safe and appropriate environment for the girls.

Camp Arrival and Departures Procedures

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 to 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 the property manager of the time they will be leaving the camp. Plan to spend one hour cleaning the indoor and outdoor space(s) used by your troop/group. Do not leave the camp without the 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.

Product Program Participation Procedures

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.

Cancellations and Refunds Procedures

Council Sponsored Activities

If the council cancels an activity or event for any reason, troops or families will receive a full refund. Programs may be canceled due to low enrollment. If a program does not meet the minimum girls required by the registration close date, the program will be canceled. Participants will be notified of the cancellation via email on the Monday prior to an in-person program and approximately two days prior to a virtual program. Council events and activities run rain or shine unless there are safety concerns that prompt the council to issue a cancellation notice.

For virtual programs, the number of registered participants will be based on individuals who registered and paid (where applicable) for the program.

Refunds will be made as follows:

- No refunds issued on pre-purchased tickets. Prices are subject to change.
- No refunds are given within two weeks of a program.
- You may swap participants up to the day of the event.
- Refunds will not be given for programs or events of \$5 or less.
- You may receive a credit on your program registration account for future experiences.
- Refunds will not be given for deposits on council-sponsored trips.
- Refund requests must be made in writing to reghelp@girlscoutsgcnwi.org prior to registration deadline.
- Girl and adult membership registration is non-refundable.
- Participants choosing not to attend will not be issued a refund.

Deadlines and Min/Max Requirements

Once registration begins, programs will be filled on a first-come, first-serve basis. Registration will continue until the program has reached the maximum number allowed or the registration deadline, which varies depending on the program. Programs may be canceled if the stated minimum is not met; all programs are subject to change or cancellation. A waiting list is created for programs that have

reached capacity. To be placed on the waiting list select "Add to Wait List" in the program registration system.

Girl Scouts GCNWI day and resident camp and site rentals have a separate refund and cancellation policy.

Membership

Membership fees are non-refundable.

Troop Camping

If a troop needs to cancel for any reason, cancellation must be made by email to property@girlscoutsGSGCNWI.org.

- The \$25 per site application fee for camp property rentals is non-refundable.
- In the event of cancellation, GSGSGCNWI will refund 50 percent of fees paid excluding the \$25 per site application fee
- In the event of rescheduling a rental, GSGSGCNWI will transfer fees paid excluding the \$25 per site application fee to a new reservation made within the same membership year.

Council Shop Return and Exchange Procedures

Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana will accept your return or exchange of unworn, unwashed, unaltered merchandise within 60 days of the original purchase.

Merchandise may be returned or exchanged at any of our Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana locations, provided they are open. Returns with a receipt will be credited via the original payment method. Items without a receipt will only be accepted for exchange at the current retail price or in-store credit. All clearance and Joliet outlet store merchandise are final sale and cannot be returned or exchanged. Pre-assembled uniforms are not returnable or exchangeable.

Conflict Resolution Policy

The conflict resolution process is based on the fundamental values of respect for the individual and fairness. The policy exists so members of the organization can air their grievances and have avenues to resolve them.

All volunteers may use the conflict resolution procedure. Every volunteer may expect a fair resolution of her/his dispute without fear of jeopardizing her/his volunteer status. The initiation of the conflict resolution procedure will not restrict the council from taking immediate and appropriate action with respect to the volunteer.

Conflict and Grievance Resolution Procedures

Volunteers are encouraged to voice concerns they have in order to find a resolution to those concerns. GSGCNWI 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. All conflict and grievance resolutions will be guided by the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

Conflict Resolution Procedures

Conflict resolution procedures are implemented when an individual expresses a conflict with another individual. GSGCNWI 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. GSGCNWI will also work to ensure confidentiality if the individual requests it; however, confidentiality, oftentimes, limits an investigation of a situation.

GSGCNWI 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:

- The individual is strongly encouraged to discuss the situation face-to-face with the person with whom they have a conflict to seek understanding, remove all possible misunderstandings, share viewpoints, and diffuse a situation with a peaceful resolution. If that does not resolve the issue, proceed to next step.
- The parties should jointly discuss the situation with the volunteer or staff supervisor to assist in finding a resolution mutually benefiting all parties involved. If this does not resolve the issue, proceed to next step. If the issue is not resolved by this point, the individuals may escalate the issue to the director of volunteer services or vice president of member and mission engagement.

Grievance Procedures

Grievance procedures may be implemented when a volunteer expresses concern with the application of the council's policy, procedure, practice or decision. Filing a grievance will not guarantee a reversal of the application of the council's policy, procedure, practice or decision, but provides a forum for further discussion and review.

A volunteer may express a concern by discussing the concern with her/his volunteer or staff supervisor.

The volunteer and their volunteer or staff supervisor will strive to find a solution or mutual understanding of the expressed concern. The expressed concern will also be shared with the appropriate department for consideration, review, or possible future implementation.

Transportation Policy

Volunteers operating motor vehicles transporting Girl Scouts must be at least 21 years of age and hold a valid driver's license.

- Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana requires that buses used to carry Girl Scouts must have insurance in accordance with current minimum amounts as determined by the council. A copy of the current insurance certificate must be on file at the corporate office confirming this information.
- Volunteers transporting Girl Scouts must carry appropriate insurance in accordance with state laws. All activity insurance regulations, as stated in policies carried by the council or GSUSA, must be followed.
- Companies used for renting or leasing cars, buses, vans, or other vehicles to transport Girl Scouts must provide a certificate of insurance listing the Girl Scouts as an additional insured entity. This certificate must be approved by the Girl Scout's insurance carrier prior to transporting any Girl Scouts
- In passenger cars, vans and trucks used during Girl Scout activities, each passenger must have their own seat belt. The State laws of Illinois and Indiana regarding passenger restraint systems, including booster seats, must be followed at all times.

Transportation Procedure

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 background check screening with no driving restrictions on file. Volunteers should refer to Safety Activity Checkpoints on transporting girls.

Resignation Policy

In order to maintain professionalism and support an effective transition of responsibilities, volunteers are encouraged to give at least two (2) weeks' notice when they are resigning from their assignment. Written notification of resignation is to be provided to the volunteer's immediate supervisor.

Termination Policy

Although it is anticipated that a volunteer's activities with the council shall be mutually rewarding, situations may arise that make it necessary to release an individual from a volunteer position. Reasons for termination may include, but are not limited to:

- Abuse, neglect, mishandling, or mistreatment of girls or adults
- Inability to perform the assignment.
- Excessive absence or tardiness
- Misappropriation of funds or outstanding debt
- Unsatisfactory completion of objectives or failure to take corrective action.
- Conviction of a felony during volunteer service
- Discrimination regarding race, color, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age (over 40), disability unrelated to the individual's ability to perform designated volunteer duties, religion, or economic status.
- Failure to maintain strict confidentiality when handling sensitive or privileged information.
- Violation of Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana and/or Girl Scouts of the USA policies
- Actions not consistent with the Girl Scout Movement

Termination Procedures

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 director 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:

- The director of volunteer services or designee will have a discussion with the volunteer to explain why there is concern about the volunteer's performance/actions.
- The director of volunteer services or designee will conduct an investigation into the issues to determine if the termination is warranted.
- The director of volunteer services or designer, in certain circumstances, may assign a team of volunteer representatives from throughout council to convene in order to evaluate the facts. If convened, 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. They may also meet with the participants as a group to seek clarity.
- When the facts indicate that release or termination is necessary, the volunteer will be notified of the decision.

All termination proceedings shall remain strictly confidential. The council reserves the right to notify relevant GCNWI persons. Termination does not terminate membership with Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.

Whistleblower Policy

Purpose

Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana (GSGCNWI) requires all directors, officers, employees, volunteers and contracted vendors (hereafter referred to as "stakeholders") to observe high standards of professional and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. These individuals must comply with all applicable laws and regulations and practice the Girl Scout Law and Promise in fulfilling their responsibilities.

This policy establishes procedures for the reporting of:

- concerns regarding accounting or auditing activities
- the commission of unlawful acts such as corruption, bribery, theft or misuse of council property, fraud, coercion, willful omission to perform duty.
- gross misconduct or gross inefficiency
- any condition that may significantly threaten the health or safety of girl members, volunteers, employees or the public.

Reporting in Good Faith

GSGCNWI encourages all stakeholders to promptly report any action or suspected action in violation of our ethical standards using the procedures established by this policy. Stakeholders reporting a known or suspected violation must do so in good faith, without malice to GSGCNWI or any individual, and have reasonable grounds for believing that a violation of our standards has occurred.

Failure to report a suspected violation or to act in good faith may result in corrective action up to and including termination of services provided by the stakeholder.

No Retaliation

This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable stakeholders to raise concerns within GSGCNWI prior to seeking resolution outside the organization. With this goal in mind, no stakeholder who in good faith reports a suspected violation, or cooperates in the investigation of a suspected violation, will suffer harassment, retaliation, or be subject to adverse employment, volunteer or vendor consequences as a result of their efforts to comply with this policy.

Moreover, retaliation against a stakeholder who has reported a suspected violation in good faith is grounds for corrective action up to and including termination of services provided by the stakeholder.

Reporting Procedures

Serious concerns relating to financial reporting, unethical or illegal conduct, should be reported via any one of the avenues listed below. The variety of options provided is intended to offer flexibility for the complainant and the ability to report to parties not implicated in the complaint.

Employees

- Discuss the concern with your immediate supervisor, manager, or department head.
- Discuss the concern with a member of the Human Resources team.

Directors

- Discuss the concern with the Board Chair
- Discuss the Concern with the CEO or a member of the executive team.

Volunteers

- Discuss the concern with your volunteer supervisor or service unit manager
Discuss the concern with your primary staff liaison.

Vendors

- Discuss the concern with your primary contact within GSGCNWI.

-Or-

All employees, directors, volunteers and vendors may make use of our third-party reporting service via any the following avenues:

- Toll Free Telephone Hotline: 877-472-2110 (English speaking U.S. and Canada)
800-216-1288 (Spanish speaking North America)
- Email: reports@lighthouse-services.com (complainant must identify name of the company)
- Fax alternative for written documents: 215-689-3885 (please be sure to use company name)
- Web: lighthouse-services.com (click on Report Incident link). Username: GSGCNWI and Password: juliette

Complaint Handling Procedures

The action taken will depend on the nature of the concern. Initial inquiries will be made to determine whether an investigation is appropriate and the form that it should take. Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation.

Regardless of whether the concern was reported to GSGCNWI staff or through the third-party service, the complainant will receive acknowledgment that the concern was received. The final disposition of all complaints received will be reported and reviewed by the Audit Committee of the Board of Directors.

Confidentiality

Reports of suspected violations and investigations pertaining thereto will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct a full investigation and cooperate with law enforcement authorities. Disclosure of such information to individuals not involved in the investigation will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense and may result in corrective action up to and including termination of services provided by the stakeholder.

GSGCNWI strongly encourages stakeholders to identify themselves when reporting suspected violations in order to facilitate investigation of the matter. However, reports may be made anonymously in writing or by voice message to the VP of HR or through the third-party reporting service. Please note that while anonymous allegations will be investigated to the extent possible, consideration will be given to the prudence of continuing such investigations based on the likelihood of confirming the alleged facts or circumstance.