

**The Standards, Guidelines & Procedures for the Volunteer Policies  
Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. (adopted 9.23.2020 Board of Directors)**

**ADOPTION OF GSUSA POLICIES AND STANDARDS**

- 1. Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. (GSGCF) accepts and adopts Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) *Blue Book of Basic Documents* as policies governing its members. Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. accepts and adopts Girl Scouts of the USA safety and program standards to govern its members.**

**STANDARD**

1. GSUSA produces the *Volunteer Essentials* (VE) and distributes to councils for review and editing based on council specific information.

**Guidelines**

- GSGCF reviews annually and as needed for changes and updates.
- GSGCF introduces the VE to new volunteers during orientation and reviews during orientation and training.
- GSGCF informs volunteers of any changes or updates to the VE.
- GSGCF makes the VE available to all volunteers via website.

**STANDARD**

2. GSUSA produces and manages *Safety Activity Checkpoints* on an ongoing basis.

**Guidelines**

- GSGCF staff reviews when revised by GSUSA and shares as appropriate with staff and volunteers.
- GSGCF makes links to these checkpoints available via website.
- GSGCF introduces to new volunteers during orientation and training.

**STANDARD**

3. The *Blue Book of Basic Documents* is a resource provided by GSUSA to guide chartered councils. It contains the Constitution, Bylaws, Policies, Credentials, and Congressional Charter of Girl Scouts of the United States of America as well as criteria and standards for an effective Girl Scout council.

**Guidelines**

- GSGCF staff and Board Volunteers reviews when revised by GSUSA and shares as appropriate with staff and volunteers.
- GSGCF makes available to volunteers via the GSGCF website.

## CRISIS AND COMMUNICATION POLICY

2. Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. will maintain a crisis communication plan that will be shared with volunteers as appropriate and includes the guidelines for responding to the public or media, handling an incident or accident, and reporting an incident or accident.

### STANDARD

1. GSUSA develops *Crisis Communications Guide* available to all staff, board and designated volunteers.

### Guidelines

- GSGCF reviews annually for changes and updates.
- GSGCF Corporate Communications Department and staff distribute as appropriate.

### STANDARD

2. GSGCF creates *Volunteer Crisis Emergency and Reporting Procedures*.

### Guideline

- GSGCF provides 24/7 access to provide support and report major crisis/incidents of people and or property through council phone system.

### Procedure

1. Call direct council line 800-232-4475, follow prompts for reporting emergencies.

### Guideline

- GSGCF provides *Volunteer Crisis Emergency and Reporting Procedures* to volunteers.

### Procedure

1. Identify crisis: the term “crisis” covers a range of scenarios, from local negative press coverage to serious situations that may include actual or potential injury or illness. For practical purposes, different levels of crisis will require different levels of response.

- **Level 1 Situation/Minimal Impact (Council Level Management)**

- A mild, local negative media story about your council or a neighboring council
- Complaints of activity/program mismanagement
- Defective product (cookies, merchandise, magazines, recognition item, etc.)
- Minor injury or illness at camp property or during activity
- Serious injury or fatality of a member when NOT participating in a Girl Scout activity
- Troop or Service Unit financial dispute

Reporting the Crisis: Notify your Service Unit Leadership volunteer or council staff. If you are directed to complete an incident report. Please visit [www.gsgcf.org](http://www.gsgcf.org), then “Forms”, then “Troop Management”, and select “Incident Report.”

- **Level 2 Situation/Moderate Impact**

- Lost troop/camper/Girl Scout
- Crime either committed by or against a girl, volunteer, or staff member
- Threat of legal action
- Serious injury during Girl Scout activity
- Damage (fire, flood, lightning, dangerous debris) on council property

Reporting the Crisis: Notify proper authorities (police, fire, etc.) and as soon as possible contact council emergency staff via 800-232-4475 and follow prompts. If you

are directed to complete an incident report, please use the form available on the council website.

o **Level 3 Situation/Major Impact**

- Death or major injury during Girl Scout activity (emergency services/hospital involvement)
- Allegation of misconduct or abuse by a volunteer or staff
- Violence or a natural disaster threatening Girl Scouts during an activity

Reporting the Crisis: Notify proper authorities (police, fire, etc.) and as soon as possible contact council emergency staff via 800-232-4475 and follow prompts. If you are directed to complete an incident report, please use the form available on the council website. Council staff contacts GSUSA.

2. Every volunteer receives emergency procedures at orientation and a yearly update via Service Unit Meeting or staff support.
3. Incident Report Form is available at [www.gsgcf.org](http://www.gsgcf.org) to be completed by volunteers (Emailing information or calling may be appropriate in the absence of form. All details of incident, including contact information for all persons involved must be provided.)

STANDARD

3. GSGCF develops *Guidelines for Responding to Public and Media*.

Guideline

- GSGCF provides *Guidelines for Responding to Public and Media* to volunteers.

Procedures

1. Identify the chief executive officer or the chief communications and marketing officer as the council's spokesperson.
2. Show concern.
3. Let it be known that you want to help and are not withholding information, but only a council spokesperson may disclose the facts.
4. If you are pressured, an appropriate response is, "The facts must be checked, please direct your questions to the council spokesperson."
5. DO NOT DO THE FOLLOWING:
  - o Speculate or second guess.
  - o Talk off the record or make off-the-cuff comments.
  - o Make hasty remarks.
  - o Express feelings.
  - o Refer to the situation as a "nightmare" or "crisis."
  - o Compare the current situation to any other.
  - o Place blame or accept responsibility.
  - o Put yourself in a position to be quoted; the less said, the better.

STANDARD

4. GSGCF develops *Standard Procedures for Responding to Crisis/Incidents* that are accessible to volunteers.

Guideline

- *Standard Procedures for Responding to Crisis/Incidents* are accessible to volunteers.

Procedures

1. Secure the scene of the incident. Depending on the situation, ensure the safety of everyone involved and seek appropriate expertise (police, fire, and rescue) and follow

their instructions. At earliest ability, contact GSGCF staff as indicated via 800-232-4475, and follow prompts. After hours follow prompts for emergencies.

- Always try to remain calm and think clearly.
- Give priority attention to secure the appropriate care for any injured person or persons.
- Secure doctor, ambulance, clergy, and/or police as appropriate.
- Retain another responsible adult at the scene of the accident. Do not disturb the victim or surroundings until the police have assumed authority.
- In the event of a fatality, ALWAYS notify the police.
- Remove all remaining troop members that are not involved away from the scene of the accident/incident.

2. Make appropriate contact.

- Contact Parent/guardian/spouse.

Tips

- Ask parent/guardian/spouse to meet you at medical facility if appropriate.
- Let medical personnel and/or police share the condition of the injured person with the family.

- Council Headquarters: 941-921-5358 or 800-232-4475, follow prompts.

3. Use Incident Report Form on council website, include all facts and contact information for persons involved in the incident.

4. Complete Insurance Claim Form via website as necessary or directed.

5. Refer all media to council public relations spokesperson. Refrain from making comments. See STANDARD 3.

6. In order to reassure girls and help keep everyone calm, be positive. Only share what is necessary.

### **TROOPS AND GROUP CONTRIBUTION AND FUNDRAISING ACTIVITY**

**3. Contributions intended to benefit the Girl Scout program in Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc.'s jurisdiction, regardless of value, form, or designated use, shall be made only to Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. Any tax deduction available to a donor is determined by the Internal Revenue Code.**

The council will, at all times, fulfill its obligation to comply fully with the applicable laws of the State of Florida, any local municipality, any applicable tax laws, and public reporting requirements. The public shall have full disclosure of the financial operations of the council through access to the council's IRS Form 990 and its audited financial reports.

All properties, facilities, and materials belong to Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. Troop and group funds are for the use of all members of the troop or group and not the individual property of any one member.

#### **STANDARD**

1. Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. is the corporate entity which is a not-for-profit organization and has the 501(c) (3) IRS designation for charitable contributions.

#### **Guidelines**

- Gifts that are to be considered as tax deductions must be donated to Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. Donors may restrict gifts of more than \$1,000 to a program, a project, or an area. It is the prerogative of the board of directors to accept or reject gifts.
- All contributions intended to benefit the Girl Scout program in Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc.'s jurisdiction, regardless of value, form, or designated use, shall be made only to Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. Any tax deduction available to a donor is determined by the Internal Revenue Code.
- The value of any real or tangible personal property donated to the council shall be determined by the donor.

- The donation of any real or tangible personal property with restrictions on use or conditions of acceptance shall be reviewed by the finance committee. Proposed donations of real or tangible property shall be referred to the board of directors for action as necessary.
- All donations shall be in keeping with the purpose, goals, and activities of the council, and shall not place undue liability or excessive cost of maintenance upon the council.
- The board of directors has the right to refuse gifts or contributions that do not enhance, promote, and ensure the purpose of Girl Scouting and the long-range financial viability of the council.
- Fundraising activities and efforts are approved and directed by designated council staff only. Girls are permitted to participate in fundraising activities/events as shared in Volunteer Essentials. Girls may not endorse a business or product and are not allowed to solicit or ask for donations.
- Volunteers being approached about donations or having knowledge of possible funds should direct donors to contact GSGCF staff and may be asked to secure such donations.
- The council supports and endorses corporate money for volunteering. These are activities in which employers offer donations to organization for which their employees volunteer.

Procedure

1. Volunteer completes process set forth by corporate volunteer company and advises council staff.

**TROOP AND GROUP MONEY EARNING**

- 4. Girl Scouts may only participate in money earning projects in the name of and for the benefit of Girl Scouting. All troops or groups must participate in two council-sponsored money earning programs before seeking approval for additional money-earning opportunities. Exceptions may be made for groups with permission of the CEO. Product programs should provide funds for troops and groups to carry out the Girl Scout program. If additional money is required to carry out program, permission must be secured.**

STANDARD

1. All money, raised or earned, and other assets received in the name of and for the benefit of Girl Scouting must be authorized by a Girl Scout council or Girl Scouts of the United States of America and used for the purposes of Girl Scouting. Such monies and other assets become the property of, and are administered by, the Girl Scout council or Girl Scouts of the USA. Such assets are not the property of individuals, geographic units, or communities within a Girl Scout council, per the *Blue Book of Basic Documents*.

STANDARD

2. Troop Money-Earning Activities – Product programs should provide troops with the funds needed to carry out the Girl Scout program – see Product Program Guidelines below. In the event additional dollars are required, the following guidelines will be followed:

Guidelines

- Permission from council staff is required for troop money-earning projects by completing the Application for Troop Money Earning Project by visiting [www.gsgscf.org](http://www.gsgscf.org), then “Forms,” then “Troop Management.”

Procedure

1. Troop will complete the Application for Troop Money Earning Project on council website and must receive written approval before starting project.

2. Troops are notified of status. Volunteers are responsible to follow up if notification has not been received.

#### Guidelines

- Troop money-earning projects shall not be held during council campaign and product programs.
- Girl Scouts participating in an approved money-earning project must wear either a Girl Scout uniform, attire, or Girl Scout pin, or visually identify themselves as Girl Scouts (poster/sign) with troop number.
- Girl Scout troops may solicit only material goods or services from locally owned, small businesses and fast food chains when approved.
- Girl Scout troops, service units, or individual adults may not solicit monetary donations from businesses, corporations, civic groups, or locally owned small businesses without the approval of council staff.
- Troops may accept gifts of goods, cash or services up to but not to exceed \$250 yearly. Such gifts are not tax deductible to the donor under the Internal Revenue Code. The \$250 limit does not include parent contributions or troop dues for troop activities.

#### STANDARD

3. Product Program Policy guidelines are updated annually and distributed to volunteers.

#### Guidelines

- Only troops who participate in all product programs may conduct an additional troop money-earning project with council approval in advance. Use Volunteer Essential for examples of money-earning activities.
- All grade levels may participate in all council-sponsored product programs.
- In accordance with age-appropriate Girl Scout progression, Girl Scout Daisies may not participate in additional money-earning activities.
- Girl Scout Brownies through Ambassadors may participate in money-earning activities by following guidelines in Volunteer Essentials and completing the Application for Troop Money Earning Project by visiting [www.gsgscf.org](http://www.gsgscf.org), then "Forms," then "Troop Management."

#### Procedure

1. Troops wishing to participate in additional money-earning activities must complete the Application for Troop Money Earning Project by visiting [www.gsgscf.org](http://www.gsgscf.org), then "Forms", then "Troop Management".

#### FUNDRAISING POLICY

- 5. All money and other assets, including property, that are raised, earned, or otherwise received in the name of and for the benefit of Girl Scouting must be held by and authorized by Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. Such money and other assets must be used for the purposes of Girl Scouting. They are the property of and are administered by the Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. Such assets are not the property of individuals, troops or groups, geographic units, or communities within Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Council, Inc. Use of the council's name for any fundraising purpose by any other organization or entity shall require prior approval of the board of directors, per the *Blue Book of Basic Documents*.**

#### STANDARD

1. All fundraising activity undertaken by Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. will reflect the values of the Girl Scout Promise and Law and must be in keeping with the principles for which the organization stands.

#### STANDARD

2. Fundraising for Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. is essentially an adult responsibility. The board of directors, elected by the membership, has the prime responsibility to initiate, direct, carry out, or delegate fundraising. Troop money-earning projects are not fundraising and are defined in Policy 4: Troop and Group Money Earning Procedures and Guidelines.

#### Guidelines

- Girl Scout troops or individual members may not solicit funds, as a Girl Scout, for any organization other than Girl Scouts.
- Use of the council's name for any fundraising purpose by any other organization or entity shall require prior approval of the board of directors.
- Adults considering a fundraising project must submit to the council headquarters at least three months in advance, a written proposal stating the project, amount of money to be raised, and use of the money earned. The project must comply with the long-range plans of the council, may be reviewed by the necessary council committees/task groups, and must be approved by the board of directors.

### **FLORIDA STATE SALES TAX**

- 6. Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. is exempt from paying Florida State Sales Tax on purchased items. State law requires the exemption to be used exclusively for/by the corporation. All exempt purchases must be paid with a corporate check; therefore, individuals, troops and groups may not use the sales tax exemption for purchases.**

#### STANDARD

1. GSGCF will make the exempt paperwork available for requests that meet state law requirements.

#### Guidelines:

1. Exempt paperwork will be provided to vendors who have arrangements with GSGCF.

#### Procedures:

1. Volunteers can suggest a proposed vendor who would provide Girl Scout activities for troops and service units tax exempt.
2. Volunteers who suggest a proposed vendor will submit vendor information to service unit manager. Service unit manager will complete Tax Exempt Vendor Request that is reviewed by council staff and vendor is contacted for proposed agreement.

### **BANKING AND FINANCIAL RECORD KEEPING**

- 7. Service Units and other administrative volunteer groups, as identified by Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Council, Inc. shall maintain a non-interest-bearing checking account and follow all guidelines for the purpose of program support in geographical or program areas. Finance reports and supporting documentation will be submitted as requested (at a minimum, annually). Accounts must have a minimum of two signatures of individuals that are registered Girl Scouts and that are not from the same family or household.**

## STANDARD

1. GSGCF creates and updates *Service Unit Banking Guidelines* annually and makes accessible to volunteers via the council website.

## STANDARD

2. Service Unit Leadership (treasurer/service unit manager) will provide oversight and create processes to ensure good financial stewardship.

### Guidelines

- Service Unit Financial Account: Service units shall maintain service unit funds as defined by GSGCF procedures.

### Procedures

1. GSGCF now partners with Wells Fargo to provide free/low-cost simple business checking accounts. It is important for account holders to review and complete forms available on the website to establish and maintain a service unit account.
2. The "Troop Bank Account Signer Request" Form needed to change account holders is located on the council website.
3. Each account holder must be a registered Girl Scout member and an approved adult volunteer.
4. Accounts must have a minimum of two account holders that are unrelated and not living in the same household.
5. Service unit account maintenance: Service units will create practices that ensure the records are accurate and reflect the deposits and expenses of the service unit. Account holders are required to balance the account records to banking records available online.
6. The service unit annual financial report and account will be audited by the council finance management team in July. Service units should maintain records and receipts for a minimum of one year.
7. Finance reports for all troops and service units are due on June 1 each year.

**8. All troops as identified by Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. shall maintain a non-interest-bearing checking account and follow all guidelines for the purpose of program support in geographical or program areas. Finance reports and supporting documentation will be submitted as requested (at a minimum, annually). Accounts must have a minimum of two signatures of individuals that are registered Girl Scouts and that are not from the same family or household.**

## STANDARD

1. GSGCF creates and updates a troop finance procedure annually and distributes to volunteers.

### Guidelines

- Troop financing is an integral part of the troop program. It gives girls experience in sound planning, goal setting, and learning the value of money.
- Sales tax exemption is vetted for troops and is provided directly to vendors and the tax identification number may not be provided to troops.
- Troop budgeting procedures are as follows:

### Procedures

1. Each troop develops and administers its own budget.
2. Troop budget is based on realistic program plans for the year.
3. Troop budget should contain provisions for:
  - support for troop activities
  - service in helping others



- membership dues
- 4. Some troop activities such as Take Action Projects may require the need for additional money-earning projects. Refer to Volunteer Essentials section on troop money-earning activities and complete required application online. Approval must be granted before project can be started.

Consider the following:

- Troop participation in Fall Product Program and Cookie Program.
- Dollar goal of money-earning project does not exceed troop needs.
- GSUSA program, health, and safety standards as outlined in *Safety Activity Checkpoints* are met.
- Project is appropriate for the grade level.
- Girl participation is voluntary.
- Activities relate to at least one of the five Girl Scout Leadership Experience outcomes.
- Funds are credited to the troop as a whole and not credited to individuals.
- Parents/guardians approve and support the project.

#### STANDARD

2. GSGCF creates and updates Troop Bank Account Procedures annually and distributes to volunteers as necessary.

#### Guidelines

- Troop Financial Account: Troops shall maintain troop funds as defined by GSGCF procedures.

#### Procedures

1. GSGCF now partners with Wells Fargo to provide free/low-cost simple business checking accounts. It is important for account holders to review and complete forms available on the website to establish a troop account.
2. The "Troop Bank Account Signer Request" Form needed to open a new account or change account holders is available on the council website.
3. Each account holder must be a registered Girl Scout member and an approved adult volunteer.
4. Each account must have a minimum of two account holders that are unrelated and not living in the same household.
5. Troop account maintenance: Troop leader is accountable for troop funds. If treasury responsibility has to be designated to another volunteer, then troop leader should periodically review for accuracy. Troops will create practices that ensure that the funds are accurate and reflect the deposits and expenses of the troop account holders, who are required to balance the account records to banking records available online.
6. Girls should be involved in budget and money management of troop funds. Please review to suggestions in *Volunteer Essentials*.
7. Troop account records and bank reports are to be available upon request and should be shared often with girls and families.
8. Finance reports for all troops and Service Units are due on June 1 each year. The troop financial report and checking account will be audited by the council finance committee in July. Troops should maintain records and receipts for a minimum of one years.

#### STANDARD

3. GSGCF creates and updates procedures for handling Disbanded Troop Funds and Property.

#### Guidelines

- Disbanded troop funds will be retrieved from accounts and placed in a council holding account. If the troop is reformed during the next calendar year, funds are returned to it. If

the troop does not reform after one membership year, funds will be directed to council operating budget.

- Girls or parents voluntarily moving to a new troop do not have access to funds girls have contributed to the troop. There is no individual accounting in Girl Scouting. All funds belong to the troop. Girls and parents may vote and choose to gift some funds to a girl's new troop as long as it does not negatively impact the troop budget.
- Funds for troops that split forming two or more troops, or that disband with girls joining other troops will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and may be divided in proportions related to girl numbers for the new troops and/or troops receiving the girls. Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida staff make final decisions on any funds distribution.
- All property of disbanded troops (books, equipment, records) shall be turned over to the service unit.
- Girl Scouts are not permitted to make monetary donations to other organizations. They may execute a drive for supplies and items and donate those.

### **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR MEMBERS**

**9. Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc., in the desire to welcome all girls and adults as members and support a quality program, will make available, as funds allow a program of financial assistance. Guidelines and criteria will be established and reviewed annually to support membership and program needs of girls first, then adult volunteers and troop needs, based on a family's ability to pay, program quality, and funds available for assistance, in order to provide the widest reach possible.**

#### **STANDARD**

1. Through the budget process, GSGCF sets aside funds for the Promise Fund (funds used for financial assistance). The council may seek additional funds via grants, foundations, and/or personal gifts designated to Promise Fund.

#### **Guidelines**

- At the time of membership engagement, parents/caregivers may select financial assistance for the girls' membership fee.
- Financial assistance is available for membership fee first, then troop assistance.

#### **Procedures:**

1. Parents/Caregivers or troop leadership will complete Promise Fund applications for girls via council website upon registering when seeking financial assistance.
2. Applicants are notified if the funds are available and application is approved.

### **SMOKING/VAPING POLICY**

**10. Adults are responsible for role-modeling positive behavior. Smoking/Vaping is never allowed in the presence of girls or on Girl Scout property except in designated areas away from girls.**

#### **STANDARD**

1. All volunteers are required to adhere to the Smoking/Vaping Policy.

#### **Guidelines**

- Smoking/Vaping is prohibited in all facilities occupied by Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. No form of smoking is allowed at camp except in designated smoking areas. This includes e-cigarettes, vaping, and chewing tobacco. No smoking is ever allowed in the presence of girls. No smoking is allowed at troop meetings or on troop activities away from the meeting place.

## Procedures

1. When asking troop parents or committee members to be involved in activities or outings ensure all adults are aware of the smoking/vaping policy.
2. When at troop outings and camping ensure that all adults are aware of the designated smoking area and that adult coverage while parents are away represents adult/girl ratios and safety guidelines in *Volunteer Essentials*.
3. When traveling long distances with adult smokers provide break opportunities and designate smoking areas out of the eyesight of girls.

### ALCOHOL/DRUG POLICY

**11. Adults are responsible for role-modeling positive behavior. Adults are responsible for making Girl Scouting a safe place for girls. No alcohol or illicit drugs may be possessed or consumed in the presence of girls or at Girl Scout functions or on Girl Scout property. The exception for the presence and consumption of alcohol may be approved with the permission of the chief executive officer.**

## STANDARD

1. All volunteers are required to adhere to the Alcohol/Drug Policy.

## Guidelines

- The chief executive officer (CEO) may approve the following exceptions:
  - a. Girl Scout Adult Events
    - Alcohol may be possessed, served, or consumed by adults at Girl Scout adult events when approved in writing by the CEO.
    - Girls participating in adult events where alcohol will be served or consumed must have a parent present or written parental permission to attend the event.
  - b. Non-Girl Scout Groups Using the Regional Girl Scout Campus
    - Alcohol may be possessed, served, or consumed by adults in non-Girl Scout groups using the regional Girl Scout campus when approved in writing by the CEO.
    - Adult and Girl Scout members attending non-Girl Scout functions at the regional Girl Scout campus do not represent Girl Scouts unless assigned to do so by the CEO.
  - c. Prescription drug use is allowed when general drug usage guidelines as recommended by pharmacist are provided, given that the capacity of the adult is not diminished or impaired by the usage of such drugs.

## Procedures

1. For exceptions: Submit a written request with detailed description of event and activities to the CEO or designee. Do not proceed forward with planning until you have received written approval.

### TROOP PROGRAM POLICY

**12. All troops will follow the program designed by GSUSA to deliver highest quality experience for girls, using program standards provided by GSUSA and council initiatives. Adults and girls must work to eliminate risk; ensure safety; and ensure that policy, standards, guidelines, and risk management procedures are followed.**

## STANDARD

1. All volunteers are required to follow the program standards located in the *Volunteer Essentials* and *Safety Activity Checkpoints* to ensure quality Girl Scout experience. Adherence to the Safety chapter in *Volunteer Essentials* and the recommendations found in *Safety Activity Checkpoints* is required for the well-being of every girl and adult member.

#### Guidelines

- Safety standards and guidelines will be used in troop organization and when planning program activities.
- A Parent/Caregiver Consent Form must be obtained from the parent/caregiver for the girl to participate, to demonstrate that the Girl Scout is in general good health and is able to participate in all indicated activities. This health/permission record is kept by volunteer in charge for all activities for girl members to participate. Visit [www.gsgcf.org](http://www.gsgcf.org), then “Forms,” then “Troop Management,” and then “Parent/Caregiver Consent Form.”
- A Volunteer Consent Form must be obtained from all adult volunteers to demonstrate that the adult volunteer is in general good health and is able to participate in all indicated activities. This health/permission record is kept by volunteer in charge for all activities for adult members to participate. Visit [www.gsgcf.org](http://www.gsgcf.org), then “Forms,” then “Troop Management,” and then “Volunteer Consent Form.”

#### STANDARD

2. Resources that explain the Girl Scout program standards are provided in orientation, training for the position, and via the GSUSA website.

#### Guidelines

- Troop leaders and troop co-leaders are required to take Volunteer Orientation and Troop Pathway Training prior to appointment.
- Other volunteer positions are required to take Orientation and position training prior to appointment.

#### STANDARD

3. All volunteers must adhere to *Volunteer Essentials* standards and GSGCF guidelines for all overnight activities.

#### Guidelines

- Ensure the safety of sleeping areas. Always provide separate sleeping and bathroom facilities for adult males.
- Ensure the following:
  - Each participant has her own bed/sleeping bag/cot.
  - Parent/caregiver permission must be obtained if girls are to share a bed.
  - Adults and girls never share a bed.
  - It is not mandatory that an adult sleep in the sleeping area (tent, cabin, or designated area) with the girls. If an adult female does share the sleeping area, there should always be two unrelated adult females present.
  - During “He and Me” overnight events (in which girls share sleeping accommodations with males), ensure the details are clearly explained in parent/caregiver permission slip.
- Males in an overnight setting
  - A male can sleep in a cabin, tent, or room with his spouse.
  - Males must sleep separately from the girls.
  - Males must have separate bath/shower facilities from the girls.
  - Family camping on council-owned sites requires dedication of the entire facility to family camping.

#### STANDARD

4. All volunteers must adhere to *Volunteer Essentials* standards and GSGCF guidelines for all troop and council travel program activities.

#### Guidelines

- Troop travel and activities held away from the regularly scheduled troop meeting place must be approved in a timely manner by the parents/caregivers and other appropriate persons as defined below.
- Trips require submission of the Troop Travel Request two weeks prior to trip. Visit [www.gsgcf.org](http://www.gsgcf.org), then “Forms”, then “Troop Management”, then “Troop Travel Request”.
- Out-of-state travel is permitted for Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors and requires a troop travel request be submitted three months prior to the trip.
- Out-of-country travel is permitted for Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors and requires an troop travel request be submitted six months prior to the trip.
- For some trips (longer than three nights, extreme activities, or daytrips including non-members), additional insurance must be taken. Council staff will provide this when you submit your Troop Travel Request.

#### STANDARD

5. GSGCF distributes product program participation procedures to volunteers through training and the council website.

#### Guidelines

- Girls participating as Girl Scouts in troops or individually during the duration of the product program will be able to participate in the product program with proper training.

#### **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT POLICIES**

**Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. wishes to secure and retain the highest caliber of Girl Scout adults in order to provide a positive Girl Scout Leadership Experience for girls. The council has adopted the following provisions to facilitate this and as an indication of their intent. Nothing herein constitutes a requirement to maintain a volunteer’s commitment for any specific amount of time.**

**13. There shall be no discrimination against an otherwise qualified adult volunteer by reason of disability or on the basis of age. Furthermore, there shall be no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, sex, creed, religion, national origin, citizenship, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, socioeconomic status, or any other legally protected status. In addition, to ensure full equality of opportunity in all operations and activities of the council, non-discrimination policies and procedures shall be utilized in the recruitment, selection, training, placement, and recognition of volunteers. Special emphasis shall be placed upon securing representation of under-represented population groups.**

**14. All volunteers shall be recruited in a method to attract qualified volunteers for appropriate positions. They will be selected on the basis of council need and their ability to perform the specific volunteer positions and to meet responsibilities of the position including membership as reflected in the specific position description and background screening. Placement in a volunteer position is limited to the term outlined in the position description (usually one year) and the need of the council. Orientation and training will be provided for the position and must be completed prior to appointment. Appointment and reappointment is based on the completion of required responsibilities, position training, satisfactory completion and assessment of the skills and abilities to perform the duties and responsibilities and the need of the council, satisfactory performance in the position as well as performance adhering to policy, standards, and guidelines. The council has both informal and formal recognition systems to recognize and appreciate volunteers.**

#### STANDARD

1. Volunteer position descriptions are created and reviewed annually, are provided upon appointment and are available upon request.

2. GSGCF orientation and volunteer position training is created and reviewed annually.

Guidelines

- Orientation and training are delivered in a variety of methods.
- Trainings will be advertised on the council website and through direct emails and may be offered at various locations throughout the council jurisdiction.
- Volunteers receive orientation and training materials necessary to complete their position requirements prior to appointment.

STANDARD

3. All volunteers complete a volunteer onboarding process for their specific role.

Guidelines

- Volunteers register as a Girl Scout member and select a volunteer role. They submit the background screening as a part of their registration process, and complete training for their specific position, if required.

Procedures

1. Once the background screening is approved, the applicant will complete any training specific to their role and complete a volunteer position agreement. Required for troop leaders, troop co-leaders, troop product managers, service unit team positions, and board members.
2. The volunteer's position is approved and recorded in the council's records/database.
3. Volunteers are re-appointed based on performance and completion of position.

STANDARD

4. For the safety of children, council reserves the right to temporarily suspend or restrict volunteer status upon notice of questionable behavior, unresolved conflict, or criminal act until investigation or review has been closed.

STANDARD

5. GSGCF abides by Criminal Background Screening Considerations Guidelines for evaluating collected information on background screening results.

STANDARD

6. The council conducts adult volunteer recognition activities annually.

Guidelines

- GSGCF makes recognition forms available on council website.
- GSGCF Volunteer Recognition Committee reviews all nominations and contacts recipients and nominators.
- Awards are presented at annual awards reception and announced on council website and social media, and press releases when possible.

STANDARD

7. GSGCF encourages informal recognition throughout the year including National Volunteer Appreciation Week.

STANDARD

8. GSGCF creates and administers a Volunteer Performance Process, which includes a performance corrective plan, release and non-re-appointment process, and resignation process.

Guidelines

- The GSGCF's Volunteer Performance Process is created using guidelines provided in GSUSA's Blue Book of Basic Documents, which is found on the GSGCF website for review.

STANDARD

9. Criteria for the immediate release of volunteers is used where applicable and based on guidelines provided by GSUSA's Blue Book of Basic Documents, which is found on the GSGCF website for review.

STANDARD

10. The grievance process is defined through the Volunteer Performance Process and is based on guidelines provided by GSUSA's Blue Book of Basic Documents, which is found on the GSGCF website for review.

**15. It is the policy of the organization to provide all volunteers with an environment free from all forms of unlawful or unwelcome harassment, including implied or expressed forms of sexual harassment. The council expressly prohibits any form of harassment on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, sex, religion, creed, age, disability, national origin, citizenship, veteran's status, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, socioeconomic status or any other protected group status. All incidences should be promptly reported.**

STANDARD

1. GSGCF shares information about the policy in a variety of formats.

STANDARD

2. All volunteers are encouraged to report/document unlawful or unwelcomed harassment to the direct supervisor (may be volunteer) of the person involved in the incident.

Guideline

- Please visit [www.gsgcf.org](http://www.gsgcf.org), then "Forms," then "Troop Management," and select "Incident Report."

**16. Volunteers are expected to fully support the work and mission of GSGCF and GSUSA. Volunteers need to be good role models through open communication, conflict resolution, information sharing, creation of a welcoming environment, and consistent demonstration of a climate of courtesy, respect and professionalism to girl and adult members and their families, and the community and council staff.**

STANDARD

1. GSGCF creates and administers a Volunteer Performance Process, which includes a performance corrective plan, release and non-re-appointment process, and resignation process.

Guideline

- The GSGCF's Volunteer Performance Process is created using guidelines provided in GSUSA's Blue Book of Basic Documents, which is found on the GSGCF website for review.

STANDARD

2. Criteria for the immediate release of volunteers is used where applicable and based on guidelines provided by GSUSA's Blue Book of Basic Documents, which is found on the GSGCF website for review.

STANDARD

3. The grievance process is defined through the Volunteer Performance Process and is based on guidelines provided by GSUSA's Blue Book of Basic Documents, which is found on the GSGCF website for review.

## **CHILD ABUSE**

**17. Adults in Girl Scouting are responsible for providing a safe environment for the physical and emotional safety of girls in Girl Scouting. In accordance with local, state, and federal laws adults must report child abuse to authorities. Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. reserves the right to refuse membership, endorsement, or reappointment, and to dismiss or exclude from affiliation any volunteer who is found guilty of or convicted of child abuse or neglect.**

### **STANDARD**

1. The council 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 the council's policy for any volunteer, male or female, to physically, sexually, mentally, emotionally, or verbally abuse or neglect any girl member.

### **STANDARD**

2. The council reserves the right to refuse membership, endorsement, or reappointment, and to dismiss or to exclude from affiliation with the council, any volunteer implementing the Girl Scout program who is found guilty of child abuse and/or neglect or who has been convicted of child abuse and/or neglect.

### **STANDARD**

3. For the safety of children, council reserves the right to temporarily suspend or restrict volunteer status from all activities and affiliations upon notice of criminal act until investigation has been closed.