

## GSCI Volunteer Policies

Volunteers should familiarize themselves with the GSUSA and Girl Scouts of Central Indiana (often referred to as GSCI) policies, standards and practices that support their role as Girl Scout volunteers. The standards and practices listed below pertain to all volunteers regardless of position or role. Girl Scouts of Central Indiana adheres to all Blue Book of Basic Documents standards, Safety-Wise Standards, Volunteer Essentials, and all other GSUSA and GSCI policies and practices, and local, state and federal laws.

### **Affirmative Action for Volunteers**

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 age, color, disability, gender, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status or veteran status (except where minimum age is qualification).

In addition, to ensure full equality of opportunity in all operations and activities of the organization, affirmative action policies and procedures shall be utilized in the recruitment, selection, training, placement and recognition of volunteers. Special emphasis shall be upon securing representation of underrepresented population groups.

### **Membership Registration**

All girls and adults participating in the Girl Scout Movement shall be registered as members with Girl Scouts of the United States of America and shall individually pay annual membership dues as set by the Girl Scouts of the USA, except those adults who are lifetime members or who are working in temporary advisory or consultative capacity.  
– *Blue Book of Basic Documents*

### **Recruitment**

The recruitment process consists of a number of methods to attract qualified volunteers who will be matched to appropriate open or newly created positions. Written position descriptions that define specific responsibilities and clarify expectations will be completed prior to recruitment and used in the search. Each volunteer will also be expected to consent to a criminal background screening process, run regularly prior to selection, and sign an annual volunteer agreement. All volunteers who work directly with girls, handle troop finances, product program, drive, camp, and travel with girls other than their own, and serve in a service unit position must have a background check on file. Confidentiality of the volunteers' information will be maintained according to Council's best practices.

## **Volunteer Selection and Appointment**

All volunteers participating in the Girl Scout Movement must meet GSUSA membership standards, be registered through Girl Scouts of Central Indiana as members of the Girl Scout Movement, and must agree to abide by the policies, standards and practices of GSUSA and Girl Scouts of Central Indiana.

### **Approval**

Safety of the girls is our number one priority. Any adult volunteering directly with girls, including driving girls, handling money or product program, camping/traveling or supporting the service team must complete and pass a criminal background check on a regular basis and agree to and sign an Annual Volunteer Agreement.

### **Selection, Placement and Appointment**

Each volunteer is selected on the basis of ability to perform the volunteer position, volunteer and council need, ability and willingness to attend training and perform the functions of the position while following Girl Scout policies and procedures, and qualifications for membership in the Girl Scout Movement.

Girl Scouts of Central Indiana makes every attempt to place volunteers in positions that meet both volunteers and Council's needs with the council's needs taking priority. Placement is at the discretion of the council. Volunteers are notified in writing if the application is accepted or disqualified. There may be instances where a volunteer is restricted in the volunteer scope and a qualification may be a condition of volunteering; for example, not handling finances or not driving girls. Most leadership volunteer positions such as troop leader, service team positions and facilitators are appointed for a one-year term. At the end of the term, and upon mutual agreement of the volunteer and council, reassignment may be made to the same volunteer role or another volunteer role, and volunteers should reaffirm agreement by signing the annual agreement. Service Unit Managers, however, will be appointed for 2-year terms, and will be limited to two 2-year terms to encourage succession planning and prevent burnout.

### **Orientation and Adult Education**

To ensure the safety of both girls and adults in Girl Scouts, it is important that volunteers are well trained. Girl Scouts of Central Indiana offers a blend of learning methods for adults to understand and use the current Girl Scout program and materials. All volunteers should complete Council orientation, and basic education for their position in addition to any other required trainings designated as mandatory for the position within the prescribed time period for each position. This will ensure that each volunteer has the knowledge and skills needed to be successful and girls will have positive, safe experiences. Volunteers who do not take required trainings within a timely manner may be removed from their position.

## **Performance Appraisal**

Each volunteer shall be provided with the opportunity for a periodic informal performance evaluation. The discussion should include both a review of the volunteer's performance of position responsibilities and a discussion of any suggestions that the volunteer may have concerning the position or project with which the volunteer is connected. Additionally, a conversation toward the end of the volunteer agreement term should be utilized as an opportunity to ascertain the mutual interest of GSCI and the volunteer in the volunteer's continued service in the position.

## **Reappointment**

As part of the annual conversation, volunteers are asked to renew their position, consider a different position or the determination is made that they have not fulfilled the criteria of the volunteer role.

Additionally, Troop Leaders should:

- Ensure all required trainings have been attended
- Provide a Foundational Experience for the troop as defined by GSUSA
- Provide opportunities for parent/ caretaker engagement within the troop
- Create an inclusive and welcoming environment to all girls and adults
- Attend 85% of service unit meetings or send another adult to represent troop
- Follow all GSUSA and GSCI Policies and Procedures
- Submit a troop annual report

## **Conflict Resolution/Dispute**

All parties involved in a dispute are encouraged to find resolution amongst each other. If that is not possible, any volunteer involved in a situation requiring conflict resolution should submit their issue in writing to their direct staff contact. If the dispute involves that staff contact, written submission should be directed to the staff supervisor. If the staff contact or supervisor cannot resolve the situation, the written description of the issue and initial resolution is to be submitted to the staff Conflict Manager. The Conflict Manager will pull together all parties involved and lead an investigation. All information from involved parties will be reviewed and discussed with the Conflict Management committee who will determine what steps should be taken with full notification to the COO and CEO. A determination will be made within a reasonable time frame of the written submission and is final.

If the dispute involves members of the Board of Directors or other Policy Influencing Volunteers (Finance committee, etc.) submission is to be submitted to the Board Chair.

## **Volunteer Release**

Either Girl Scouts of Central Indiana or the volunteer may initiate a release from a position. A volunteer is requested to give as much notice as possible when resigning in order to ensure continuity of the troop, Service Unit, or committee.

Situations may arise that make it necessary to release an individual from a position. A volunteer can only be released from their position/role by a GSCI staff member.

GSCI may release a volunteer for any reason, from any and all positions held, at its sole discretion, including but not limited to:

- Restructuring of positions, elimination of the volunteer position in which the individual serves
- Volunteer's inability or failure to complete the requirements of the position
- Misuse of funds or failure to pay cookie or product program money owed
- Failure to complete training required for the volunteer position
- Failure to cooperate in any type of financial review of a troop or service unit account
- Refusal to comply with GSCI or GSUSA policies, standards or procedures; or failure to support the mission, values, program initiatives and goals of GSUSA and GSCI
- Failure to ensure all girls and volunteers are welcomed, included, and treated with respect
- Derogatory language about girls, parents, volunteers or council staff in person, in writing or on social media
- Disclosure or misuse of membership data and personal girl and/or adult member contact information not related to official Girl Scout business.
- Listed in the sex offender registry of any state or conviction of a sexual or related offense
- Providing false, incomplete, or misleading information on the volunteer application
- Inappropriate behavior including, but not limited to, physical violence, abuse, unauthorized carrying of firearms, stalking, threatening, menacing, lying, harassment, sexual harassment, or falsification of documents

Release from the position does not cancel membership with Girl Scouts of the USA unless it is determined that the released volunteer is unable to meet membership requirements.

If a volunteer is charged or accused of a felony or misdemeanor relating to violence, sexual abuse, or child endangerment, or money mismanagement related to Girl Scout funds, volunteer must take a leave of absence from volunteering until the investigation is concluded and/or charges are dismissed.

## **Appeals Process**

Adults who have been denied or released from their volunteer status can appeal the decision by writing a letter to the Chief Executive Officer. Volunteer status will be reviewed annually at the request of the individual.

## **Child Abuse**

Girl Scouts of Central Indiana, Inc. supports and maintains environments that are free from child abuse and neglect. The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (“the Act”) defines child abuse and neglect as:

The physical or mental injury, sexual abuse as exploitation, negligent treatment or maltreatment:

- A child under the age of 18 or the age specified by the child protection law of the state in question
- By a person who is responsible for the child’s welfare
- Which indicate, under circumstances, the child’s health or welfare is harmed or threatened

The Act defines sexual abuse as the use of persuasion or coercion of any child to engage in any sexually explicit conduct (or any simulation of such conduct) for the purpose of producing any visual depiction of such conduct or rape, molestation, prostitution, or incest with children.

Child abuse and neglect are unlawful acts. It is against Girl Scouts of Central Indiana’s policy for any volunteer or employed staff, male or female, to physically, sexually or mentally abuse or neglect any girl member.

In accordance with this police, the Girl Scouts of Central Indiana, Inc. will neither condone nor tolerate:

- Infliction of physically abusive behavior or bodily injury upon girl members;
- Physical neglect of girl members, including but not limited to, failure to provide adequate safety measures, care and supervision in relation to Girl Scout activities;
- Emotional mistreatment of girl members, including, but not limited to, verbal abuse and/or verbal attacks.

Girl Scouts of Central Indiana will comply with all laws regarding reporting suspected child abuse. Employed staff and volunteers should immediately report suspect child abuse to the Child Abuse Hotline 800-800-5556, and must also immediately inform the Vice President of Program and Property or the Troop Support Director of any abuse or suspected abuse involving girls. The Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer must be informed of any abuse involving Girl Scouts staff or volunteers.

The Girl Scouts of Central Indiana reserves the right to refuse membership, to dismiss or to exclude from affiliation with Girl Scouts of Central Indiana any volunteer or employee who is either suspected or convicted of child abuse, neglect or any related crime.

Girl Scouts of Central Indiana will consider any of the above-mentioned prohibitions as the basis for dismissal from Girl Scouts of Central Indiana.

## **Harassment**

Girl Scouts of Central Indiana prohibits any form of harassment in the workplace, including sexual harassment or harassment based on an individual's age, color, disability, gender, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, or veteran status or any other legally-protected category, or based on protected activity (i.e. opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the statutory complaint process).

Sexual harassment is defined as:

Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the individual's employment or volunteer status;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or volunteer decisions affect such individual;
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment may include a wide variety of behaviors and occurs on various levels, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature such as patting, pinching or unnecessary touching.
- Overt or implied threats against an individual to induce them to perform sexual favors or to engage in an unwelcome sexual relationship.
- Verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature including hints of a desire for sexual relations or making jokes or remarks of a sexual nature to or in front of a person who finds them offensive
- Use of sexually suggestive terms or gestures to describe a person's body, clothing or sexual activity
- Displaying, viewing, forwarding or posting offensive, sexually suggestive pictures, jokes or materials (including emails, texts, and social media) in the workplace.

## **Individuals and Conduct Covered**

These policies apply to all staff members, visitors, volunteers and other individuals involved with Council programs. Girl Scouts of Central Indiana prohibits harassment, discrimination, and retaliation whether engaged in by or toward employees, girls, parents or volunteers, by a supervisor or manager, or by someone not directly connected to Girl Scouts of Central Indiana (e.g., an outside vendor, volunteer, consultant or patron).

Conduct prohibited by these policies is unacceptable at all Girl Scout functions, such as during Council-related trips, meetings, activities, and other Council-related events.

### **Filing a Complaint**

Any individual who believes that they have been harassed in violation of this policy should discuss it immediately with their immediate volunteer supervisor, the Chief Executive Officer, or the Chief Operating Officer.

The availability of this complaint procedure does not preclude individuals who believe they are being subjected to harassing conduct from promptly advising the offender that their behavior is unwelcome and requesting that it be discontinued.

### **Investigation**

Any reported allegations of harassment, discrimination or retaliation will be investigated promptly. The investigation may include individuals interviews with the parties involved and, where necessary, with individuals who have observed the alleged conduct or may have other relevant knowledge.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent consistent with adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action.

### **Responsive Action**

Misconduct constituting harassment, discrimination, or retaliation will be dealt with appropriately. Responsive action may include, for example: training, reprimand, or termination as a volunteer, as Girl Scouts of Central Indiana deems appropriate under the circumstances.

## **Misuse of Funds**

Misuse of funds is considered if:

- An individual owes an outstanding debt to Girl Scouts of Central Indiana or any of its sub-units, including but not limited to troops, service unit, camp, etc. for any reason.
- An individual writes a check with insufficient funds to Girl Scouts of Central Indiana.
- An individual has misused troop funds, or has failed to remit all funds due to Girl Scouts of Central Indiana or any of its sub-units, including but not limited to cookie or product program, troop, service unit, camp, etc.
- An individual fails to provide financial records, as requested by Girl Scouts of Central Indiana.

### **Appeal Process**

Reinstatement to any volunteer position for release of misuse of funds may be considered through an appeal process. The appeal process begins by the released individual making a formal request, in writing, to the chief executive officer. An

appeal can be made only in the event full restitution, including any collection fees, has been made and said individual has not had habitual debt. The individual may be requested to provide appropriate documentation to support payment of debt.

### **Habitual Debt**

Debt is considered habitual if any debt is owed Girl Scouts of Central Indiana or any of its sub-units, including but not limited to troop, service unit, camp etc. more than one time for any circumstance considered to be misuse of funds.

### **Financial Assistance**

Financial assistance is provided for girls and volunteers who have economic need for the following: uniform assistance, membership assistance, assistance to attend camp and other GSCI programs, and girl and adult trainings to benefit the troop. Moreover, the cookie program troop proceeds are intended to assist all girls with funds to support troop programming and membership renewal for girls and volunteers after the first year in the troop.

### **Weapons**

Possession or use of firearms and ammunition, or other weapons shall not be permitted at Girl Scout activities or on Girl Scout properties with these exceptions:

- For a council-approved program activity for girls that meets all Safety Activity Checkpoints, and has been approved by GSCI
- By law enforcement officials legally required to carry weapons

### **Inclusivity**

All volunteers and staff shall be responsible for ensuring that membership is reflective of the pluralistic nature of their local community, and that membership is extended to all girls in all population segments and geographic areas in their jurisdiction. Through the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, girls develop skills to advance diversity and promote tolerance in the twenty-first century. We are committed to understanding similarities and differences, building relationships and promoting an environment of acceptance and respect. Each individual involved must ensure that Girl Scouting is for all girls.

### **Confidentiality**

It is against GSCI's policies for any volunteer to disclose non-public personal, health or financial information about any girl or volunteer or member which becomes known to them through their volunteer position. Financial information may only be shared when necessary to access financial aid, other support available from GSCI for that individual, and only through established systems or the appropriate staff contact.



Collected health information may be disclosed to the extent necessary solely for treatment purposes. Names, addresses and phone numbers of members, families/guardians, staff and volunteers shall not be disclosed without permission of the member, the girl's family/guardian, staff and volunteers, verbally, electronically or otherwise, except as required for safety. The privacy of all GSCI members, families/guardians, staff and volunteers must be respected and protected.

### **Tobacco and Smoking**

Girl Scouts of Central Indiana is a completely tobacco, nicotine and smoke-free facility, including vaping pens. GSCI maintains a non-smoking/non-tobacco environment in and at all Girl Scout activities and sites, including transportation to and from such sites and/or activities. Tobacco use must not take place within the view of any girls and not within any GSCI facilities or properties.

### **Substance Abuse and Alcohol**

GSCI has an obligation to its girl members and their families/guardians, its volunteers and staff to maintain a drug and alcohol free environment.

#### ***GSCI prohibits:***

- Use, possession, transfer or sale of illegal drugs or other substances
- Improper use of legal drugs (such as those obtained through prescriptions)
- Use of alcohol or marijuana, or being under the influence of alcohol or marijuana, when in the presence of girls or participating in any Girl Scout activity..

Any volunteer engaged in the use, possession, transfer or sale of illegal drugs; the improper use of legal drugs; the use of alcohol or marijuana; or who is under the influence of alcohol or marijuana during the time they are volunteering for GSCI is subject to immediate release from their volunteer position. Any volunteer engaged in giving illegal drugs or alcohol to a girl(s) will be immediately released from their volunteer position and reported to law enforcement.

Alcohol may possibly be served at adult-only fundraising/donor events or adult-only gatherings with prior authorization at the CEO's discretion.

### **Social Media and the Girl Scout Promise and Law**

As a Girl Scout, the Girl Scout Promise and Law should guide all your actions—and that's true when you're using social media, too! We've included some ideas to keep in mind below, but this isn't a comprehensive list—when in doubt, ask yourself, "Is this action in line with the Girl Scout Promise and Law?"

**Be honest and fair.** Be transparent about your role as a Girl Scouts of Central Indiana volunteer when communicating about Girl Scout-related issues online.

**Be friendly, helpful, considerate and caring.** Treat others as you want to be treated. Don't use social media to attack other volunteers, troop members, or staff members.

**Be courageous and strong.** Careful monitoring of social media is important in maintaining a welcoming and supportive community. If you see posts, comments, or behavior that concern you, please notify your staff contact – membership manager or other staff member. Don't be afraid to speak up or ask questions.

**Be responsible for what you say and do.** Remember that what you post online will be around for a long time (think of it as your online carbon footprint), and nothing is really private anymore. Use discretion, and if you have questions about whether or not you should post something, ask your staff contact.

**Respect yourself and others.** Respect other people's privacy and your own personal boundaries by using discretion when choosing to connect with a fellow volunteer or girl guardian. For service unit or troop Facebook groups, the privacy settings give you the ability to give permission to only those who are involved with the service unit or troop. Please maintain your Facebook group as a closed group for an extra layer of security and to help us ensure that there's just one Girl Scouts of Central Indiana page that's visible to the public (<https://www.facebook.com/GirlScoutsofCentralIndiana/>). Please do not publish girls' full names online. Girls' safety is a top priority!

**Respect authority.** If your actions on social media—as with any other kind of actions taken as a Girl Scout volunteer—do not support the Girl Scout Promise and Law, we do reserve the right to take corrective action, including releasing a volunteer. For service unit or council wide social media groups, please include your membership manager or other staff contact as an Administrator. This will help ensure continuity for the group as volunteers rotate out, as well as provide an extra set of eyes for safety and security.

**Use resources wisely.** Managing a social media group takes time. You may want to consider the amount of time it will take to manage before creating a social media group for your troop, service unit, or other Girl Scout group.

**Make the world a better place and be a sister to every Girl Scout.** This is true regardless of how you are communicating!

As a representative of Girl Scouts, your online presence can reflect positively or negatively on Girl Scouts. It's recommended to set your personal Facebook profile to "private" (only your Facebook friends can see it), especially if you have Girl Scouts of Central Indiana listed as an organization that you volunteer for or represent (\*see above - respect authority). Please remember that your Facebook profile picture can always be viewed publicly, so use discretion when choosing how the world sees you.