

Girl Scouts of Nassau County, Inc.

Volunteer Policies

Effective September 14,2005



The Girl Scout Promise

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

The Girl Scout Law

I will do my best to be
honest and fair,
friendly and helpful
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong, and
responsible for what I say and do,

and to
respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place, and
be a sister to every Girl Scout.

Volunteer Policies

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VOLUNTEER POLICIES

INTRODUCTION

The Volunteer Policies of Girl Scouts of Nassau County, Inc., (GSNC) are established upon the principle that the direction and success of Girl Scouting rests in the voluntary participation of its adult members. To ensure the satisfaction of volunteers, the Board of Directors has adopted these policies and procedures on September 14, 2005. These policies and procedures will be reviewed every three (3) years to assure they reflect the volunteer management goals of the Council. Specific parts may be revised as needed.

Mission Statement

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

Affirmative Action

Girl Scouts of Nassau County, Inc., in recognition of its responsibility to its volunteers, its staff, and the girls it serves, reaffirms its policy to ensure fair and equal treatment in all its practices, to all persons regardless of race, color, ethnicity, religion, creed, age, gender, national origin, source of income, disability, marital status, predisposing genetic characteristics, or sexual orientation. In addition, to ensure that the membership and staff of GSNC are reflective of the diversity of population groups within its jurisdiction, GSNC is committed to affirmative action in the following:

- the recruitment, selection, placement, development, and recognition of volunteers,
- the recruitment, hiring, training, and promotion of employed staff, and
- the extension of Girl Scouting to girls and adults in all communities within our jurisdiction.

There shall be special efforts to secure individuals of underrepresented racial and ethnic populations and persons with disabilities, particularly at managerial and professional staff levels and on the Board of Directors. There shall also be special efforts to make reasonable accommodations for physical and mental limitations of employees and applicants consistent with performance of essential job functions and the effective operations of the business.

A copy of GSNC's Affirmative Action Plan is available from the Director, Human Resources.

Commitment to Pluralism

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

We believe this commitment is an integral part of all that we do as an organization.

*Only individuals willing to accept the basic tenet that Girl Scouting is for **all** girls may serve in volunteer leadership or staff positions.*

Who Are Volunteers?

A volunteer can be any person, female or male, 18 years of age or older, who, without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the Council. A volunteer is a caring, responsible and reliable individual concerned with the well being of others who enjoys providing service to the Girl Scout community. A volunteer must be elected or appointed prior to the performance of a task.

▪ **Operational Volunteers**

Operational volunteers are adult members who provide the direct services girls and adults are entitled to receive and/or those who assist in the day-to-day operations of the Council. They are ultimately accountable to the Executive Director/CEO. Operational volunteers are appointed.

▪ **Governance Volunteers**

Governance volunteers are adult members who communicate ideas and feelings, influence proposals, and make decisions that govern the Council and its members. They are accountable to the voting members of GSNC.

Governance volunteers are elected or appointed.

UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED, VOLUNTEER POLICIES APPLY TO ALL VOLUNTEERS.

Benefits

Benefits to registered volunteers include:

- Subscription to *Girl Scout Leader* magazine and Council newsletter
- Training and other learning opportunities
- Annual performance appraisal for operational volunteers
- Supplementary accident insurance as part of GSUSA membership
- Volunteer experience that may be useful for career development
- Limited financial assistance available for adults participating in Girl Scout activities

Basic Requirements

- Membership Registration - Adult volunteers participating in the Girl Scout Movement shall be registered as members with Girl Scouts of the USA and individually pay the annual membership dues, except those adults who are lifetime members or who are working in a temporary advisory or consultative capacity (as stated in the *Blue Book of Basic Documents*.)
- Belief in the Girl Scout Mission
- Acceptance of the Girl Scout Promise and Law
- Time to do the job
- Willingness and availability to take training
- An understanding that services are given without payment
- Willingness to accept supervision, and to provide feedback, suggestions and recommendations

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Volunteers are viewed as a valuable resource to GSNC, its staff, and its clients. Volunteers shall be extended the right to be given meaningful assignments, the right to be treated as equal colleagues, the right to effective supervision, the right to full involvement and participation, and the right to recognition for work done. In return, volunteers shall agree to perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to remain loyal to the goals and procedures of the Council.

Recruitment

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

Selection Process

Each volunteer is selected on the basis of individual interest, skill and experience. Prior to appointment, the following procedures will be followed:

- The volunteer will complete an Application to be a Girl Scout Volunteer.
- The volunteer will provide the names of three (3) references.
- The volunteer will be interviewed to determine proper placement of the applicant to her/his benefit, and particularly to the benefit of the girls.

Criminal Background Check

As appropriate for the protection of the girls we serve, volunteers in certain assignments will be asked to submit to a criminal background check. Volunteers who do not agree to the background check will not be able to serve.

Appointment

Each volunteer will receive a Volunteer Position/Appointment Letter and a copy of the Volunteer Agreement. The person to whom the volunteer is accountable will sign the letter. This person may be another volunteer or a staff person.

The volunteer will return one signed copy of the letter to the person who appointed her/him.

Operational volunteers shall be appointed for a term of one year.

Note: Volunteers may be re-appointed.

(For terms for policy-making volunteers, refer to the Girl Scouts of Nassau County, Inc., Bylaws, Article IX).

Training

Formal training for adults as well as individual on-the-job guidance and direction broadens understanding of the philosophy, aims, and program of the Girl Scout movement and increases the knowledge and skills needed to do the job with competence and satisfaction. The timing and methods for delivery of such training should be appropriate to the complexity and demands of the position and the capabilities of the volunteer.

Uniform

Girl Scouts of the USA is a uniformed organization in which the uniform is a symbol of pride and respect and a mark of distinction. Although wearing a uniform is encouraged, it is not required for participation in most Girl Scout activities. The uniform may be worn when appropriate at Girl Scout activities and is recommended for Council meetings and official functions. Attention should be given the correctness and proper placement of insignia. Volunteers are encouraged to wear the Girl Scout pin when they are not in uniform and participating in Girl Scout activities.

Volunteer/Staff Relationships

Staff is employed to provide full-time managerial and specialist expertise, research capability, and continuity to support the delivery of program to girls through volunteers. The partnership relationship of volunteer and staff, in fact, reinforces the reality that both volunteers and staff have equally valued and valid contributions to make to our movement. Volunteers and staff are considered to be partners in implementing the Mission and program of the Council. It is essential that each partner understands and respects the needs and abilities of the other.

Supervision, Performance Appraisal and Reappointment

Each volunteer must have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for direct management of that volunteer. This supervisor shall be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the volunteer, and shall be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance.

Supervision of operational volunteers should include periodic verbal and/or written evaluations based upon job expectations outlined in the *Volunteer Position Description*. Following the evaluation, a volunteer may be reappointed for the position currently held, may be appointed to another Girl Scout position, or may terminate her/his services to Girl Scouting. Re-election of governance volunteers is defined in Girl Scouts of Nassau County, Inc., Bylaws, Article IX (latest edition).

Confidentiality

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary, privileged, or sensitive information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a staff member, volunteer, member, or other person, or overall GSNC business. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of the volunteer's relationship with the Council.

Release/Termination

Either the Council or the volunteer may initiate a release from a position prior to the end of the term of appointment for any reason. A volunteer unable to complete her/his term should give written notice to the person to whom the volunteer is accountable as far in advance as possible. Membership in the Girl Scout Movement may continue beyond the term of a specific position, and is not contingent upon a current appointment to a position.

Exit Interview

All volunteers upon leaving a position should participate in an *exit interview* conducted by someone in a supervisory position.

Recognition

There are many ways in which adult volunteers may be recognized, such as personal notes of thanks, words of commendation in the presence of co-workers, presentations made by a special person, invitations to report on a successful venture, or opportunities to move to a more responsible position. Presentations may be made at any appropriate occasion. The Council's formal recognition system will be consistent with the GSUSA publication, *Adult Recognitions in Girl Scouting*.

Conflict/Problem Resolution Procedures

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

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

- The volunteer should first attempt to resolve the conflict with the others involved. If this does not settle the issue, then
- The volunteer should be provided with an opportunity to discuss the issue(s) with the person who appointed her/him (volunteer or staff member).
- The volunteer should then be provided an opportunity to discuss the issue with the next level manager or supervisor.
- If the volunteer is not satisfied with the disposition at this point, the Chief Executive Officer will make the final decision as to the resolution of the issue in the case of operational volunteers. The President may be involved in the case of policy-making volunteers.

Harassment

GSNC is committed to an environment in which relationships are characterized by dignity, courtesy, respect, and equitable treatment. It is the policy of the Council to provide all volunteers, staff and girl members with an environment that is free from all forms of unlawful or unwelcome harassment, including implied or expressed forms of sexual harassment.

Harassment on the basis of race, religion, creed, color, age, gender, national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law will not be tolerated, and is grounds for termination.

Sexual Harassment

GSNC will also not condone or tolerate sexual harassment, which has been defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

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

- Any display or demonstration of sexual activity between volunteers or between volunteers and girl members.
- Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between volunteers and girl members.
- Use of Girl Scout name, related activities, publications and/or facilities as vehicles for public or private promotion of sexual orientation and/or practice.
- Infliction of sexually abusive behavior upon girl members, including sexual touching and bodily contact, exhibitionism, voyeurism and/or involvement of girl members in pornographic materials.
- Unwelcome sexual conduct/harassment of any Girl Scout member, volunteer, or employee of the same or opposite sex.

The Council maintains an environment that encourages any volunteer who believes that she/he has been the subject of any unlawful or unwelcome harassment as defined in the Council's policy, to report the incident to either her/his immediate Supervisor or to the CEO. Similarly, a volunteer who believes that a girl member is the victim of any form of harassment must immediately report the fact to the CEO of the Council. The CEO will conduct an investigation and, depending on the findings, take appropriate corrective action.

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

Alcohol and Drug Use

No volunteer may use, possess, transfer, distribute, manufacture, or sell alcohol or any illegal drug while on the Council's property, while responsible for the health and safety of girls or while operating a vehicle or potentially dangerous equipment. In addition, no volunteer may undertake a role as a Girl Scout volunteer while under the influence or impaired by any drug or alcohol, including prescription and over-the-counter drugs.

Violators of the alcohol and drug policy may be asked to leave the Council property or activity site and future participation in Girl Scouts may be jeopardized.

Smoking

Volunteers function as role models at all times, and are therefore not permitted to smoke in front of girls during Girl Scout sponsored meetings, events or trips. Volunteers are expected to observe the law with regard to where and when smoking is permitted/prohibited.

Child Abuse

GSNC supports and maintains environments that are free of child abuse and neglect. Child abuse and neglect are unlawful acts and it is against the Council's policy for volunteers or employed staff, male or female, to physically, sexually or mentally abuse or neglect any girl member.

In accordance with this policy, GSNC will neither condone nor tolerate the:

- Infliction of physically abusive behavior, or bodily injury, upon girl members.
- Physical neglect of girl members, including failure to provide adequate safety measures, care and supervision in relation to Girl Scout activities.
- Emotional maltreatment of girl members, including verbal abuse and/or verbal attacks.
- The sexual abuse or exploitation of girl members.

Child abuse and neglect are forms of behavior that negate the integrity of the adult/girl leadership relationship. GSNC reserves the right to refuse appointment/reappointment to any position, or to dismiss or suspend from any position or affiliation with Girl Scouts of Nassau County, Inc., any volunteer who violates the aforementioned policy or who is found guilty of child abuse or neglect or has been convicted of child abuse or neglect.

GSNC supports and maintains an environment that encourages any girl member who believes that she has been a victim of abuse or neglect to report the incident immediately to either her Leader, some other adult or to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Council. Similarly, a volunteer who believes that a girl member is the victim or at risk of abuse or neglect must immediately report the fact to the CEO of the Council. GSNC is a "mandated reporter." Under New York State law, the Council must report known or suspected abuse or maltreatment. The Council has a responsibility to care for all children in its care. Any report of child abuse will be forwarded to an appropriate governmental authority. In addition, all citizens are empowered to report to the New York State Child Abuse hotline (1-800-342-3720) and may remain anonymous.

Conflict of Interest Statement for Volunteers

No Volunteer, or any member of her/his family, should accept any gift, entertainment, service, loan or promise of future benefits from any persons who either personally, or whose employees might benefit or appear to benefit, from such Volunteer's connection with Girl Scouts of Nassau County, Inc., unless the facts of such benefit, gift, service or loan are disclosed in good faith and are authorized by the Board. Volunteers are expected to work out for themselves the most gracious method of declining gifts, entertainment and benefits that do not meet this standard.

No Volunteer should perform for any personal gain, services to any Girl Scouts of Nassau County, Inc. supplier of goods or services, as employee, consultant, or in any other capacity which promises compensation of any kind, unless the facts of such transaction or contracts are disclosed in good faith, and the Board authorizes such a transaction. Similar association by a family member of the Board or committee member or by any other close relative may be inappropriate.

No Volunteer, or any member of her/his family should have any beneficial interest in, or substantial obligation to, any Girl Scouts of Nassau County, Inc. supplier of goods or services or any other organization that is engaged in doing business with or serving Girl Scouts of Nassau County, Inc., unless it has been determined by the Board, on the basis of full disclosure of facts, that such interest does not give rise to a conflict of interest.

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

Any matter of question or interpretation that arises relating to this policy should be referred to the President for decision and/or for referral to the Board of Directors for decision, where appropriate.

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

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

