

Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts

VOLUNTEER POLICIES

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GIRL SCOUTS OF EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

VOLUNTEER POLICIES

Volunteer Philosophy

We maintain that the strength of the Girl Scout Movement rests in the volunteer leadership of its adult members. It is through this volunteer leadership that the Movement serves girls. To ensure the satisfaction of volunteers and to use the talents of volunteers effectively, it is essential that the following policies be established and maintained.

Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts (GSEM) consists of volunteers who strengthen GSEM through two distinct types of service, Operational volunteers and Policy-making volunteers. Operational Volunteers (i.e. service unit members, troop volunteer members) are those involved in carrying out the specific, measurable objectives of GSEM, which have been developed within the framework of the corporate goals as adopted by the board of directors. These volunteers are ultimately accountable to the Chief Executive Officer. Policy-making volunteers include officers, board members, board committee members, and board nominating and development committee members. While volunteers are not employees of GSEM, they are key contributors to the success of the GSEM mission, and are also obligated to comply with and conform to all GSEM and GSUSA policies pertaining to volunteer service.

Defining Policies and Procedures

A **policy** is an established position that must be followed. Policies provide consistency of action, gives direction, and minimizes the need for risk management. Difficulty or inconvenience in carrying out the requirements of a policy shall not be used as an excuse for not adhering to the policy.

A **procedure** describes the course of action to carry out a policy.

Universal Policies of GSEM

The following policies are to be used in conjunction with Girl Scouts of the USA's Blue Book of Basic Documents, Safety Activity Checkpoint, Volunteer Essentials manual and the GSEM bylaws. These policies do not create a contract with any volunteer, express or implied, and may be changed at any time at the discretion of the GSEM Board of Directors.

Child Abuse

Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts supports and maintains environments that are free of child abuse and neglect. The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act defines child abuse and neglect as any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker, which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation, or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm. This pertains to a child under the age of 18, or the age specified by the child protection law of the state in question.

The Act defines sexual abuse as the employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or assist any other person 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, and in cases of caretaker or inter-familial relationships, statutory rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children.

Child abuse and neglect are unlawful acts and it is against GSEM's policy for any volunteer, male or female, to physically, sexually, or mentally abuse or neglect any girl member. It is also against GSEM policy to hire or engage any person with a history/record of such abuse or neglect.

When a girl member tells an employee or volunteer that she has been the victim of child abuse or neglect as defined in the organizations policy that employee or volunteer immediately completes an incident report and sends it within 24 hours to the:

Chief Membership Services Officer	or	Chief Human Resources Officer
GSEM		GSEM
265 Beaver St		95 Berkeley Street
Waltham, MA 02452		Boston, MA 02116
781-893-6113		617-482-1078

They will in turn make inquiries about the incident and document the resolution of how the incident was handled.

Inclusion

GSEM'S policies expressly prohibit any form of unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, learning disability and physical or mental disability, ancestry, genetic information or any other protected class status, by and toward any volunteer, staff member or girls.

GSEM affirms its commitment to comply with all applicable laws and regulations of the United States and applicable states regarding public accommodations with respect to its programs, activities and service to girls and volunteers. GSEM is committed to assuring inclusion of all population groups within its jurisdiction, and is committed to extending the opportunity of Girl Scouting in the recruitment, selection, placement, development and recognition of volunteers in all communities within its jurisdiction. GSEM shall place emphasis upon securing participation of persons from under-represented populations.

Harassment

"Harassment" is behavior that is not welcomed by an individual and is humiliating, demeaning or offensive. Behavior is considered harassment when such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a volunteer's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. Harassment can be physical or verbal behavior and can include stereotypical statements, derogatory statements, abusive language, and discriminatory remarks that are offensive or objectionable to the recipient, cause the recipient humiliation, or interfere with the recipient's volunteer's performance.



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GSEM is committed to an environment in which relationships are characterized by dignity, respect, courtesy and equitable treatment. 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.

GSEM feels strongly that volunteers have the right to volunteer in an environment that is free of prohibited harassment. Prohibited harassment is a form of discrimination and is a violation of federal and state laws, and GSEM policy. It is illegal and against the organization’s policies for any volunteer, male or female, to harass another volunteer, or Girl Scout member, of the same or opposite sex.

GSEM takes allegations of harassment seriously. GSEM will respond promptly to complaints of harassment. Where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, GSEM will take prompt and strong disciplinary action, up to and including the release of the offender. All complaints will be investigated as discreetly and confidentially as possible.

If a volunteer believes that she/he has been subjected to harassment, the volunteer has the right to file a complaint with GSEM. If a volunteer would like to file a complaint with GSEM, the volunteer should contact her/his GSEM staff contact or in the event that for any reason the volunteer is uncomfortable with filing a complaint with her/his GSEM staff contact the following individuals should be contacted:

<p>Chief Membership Services Officer GSEM 265 Beaver St Waltham, MA 02452 781-893-6113</p>	<p>or Chief Human Resources Officer GSEM 95 Berkeley Street Boston, MA 02116 617-482-1078</p>
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These persons are also available to discuss any concerns volunteers may have and to provide information about GSEM’s policy on harassment and the complaint process.

Non-smoking Environment

GSEM maintains a non-smoking environment in and at all Girl Scout activities and sites, including transportation to and from such sites and/or activities if girls are being transported. Smoking must not take place within the view of any girls and not within any GSEM facilities or properties.

Drug Free Environment

GSEM has an obligation to the girls and their families, its volunteers and staff to maintain a drug free environment. GSEM prohibits the use, possession, transfer or sale of illegal drugs, the improper use of legal drugs (such as those obtained through prescriptions) and prohibits the use of alcohol when in the presence of girls or when carrying out a Girl Scout program. GSEM requires that volunteers not be under the influence of alcohol while carrying out their volunteer position, or be engaged in the current use of illegal drugs.

Any volunteer engaged in the use, possession, transfer or sale of illegal drugs, or the improper use of legal drugs, or the use of or under the influence of alcohol, during the time they are volunteering for GSEM is subject to immediate release from their volunteer position.

Financial Assistance

GSEM will designate funds for financial assistance for girls and adults, based on need. Council financial assistance will be administered so that every member has equal opportunities to participate in any Girl Scout program, activity or event (within GSEM's budget limit).

Council financial assistance includes:

- Membership fee assistance is designed to extend Girl Scouting to girls and adults volunteers who cannot afford the GSUSA membership fee.
- Camperships are available to Girl Scouts. These grants may be requested for both resident and day camps and can be found in the brochure(s).
- Individual Assistance - girls and adult volunteers may receive financial assistance in very special circumstances to help with out-of-pocket funds to pay for Girl Scout activities.

Confidentiality

It is against the organization's policies for any volunteer to disclose confidential personal, health or financial information about any child or adult member which becomes known to them through their volunteer position. Such information may only be shared when necessary to access financial aid, other support available from GSEM for that individual, and only through established systems or the appropriate GSEM staff contact. Collected health information may be disclosed to the extent necessary solely for treatment purposes.

Names, addresses and phone numbers of girls and adults may not be shared with any individual or business outside of Girl Scouting except as required for safety. Confidential information about members must not be published through Internet channels. The privacy of all members must be respected and protected.

Transportation of Members

It is GSEM policy that any member transported to and from council approved activities is done in accordance with applicable law. Drivers are required to have a valid driver's license, insurance, a properly registered vehicle, and be at least 21 years of age to transport girls.

Conflict of Interest

Each volunteer has an obligation to conduct business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflict of interest. An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when a volunteer is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for his or her self or for a relative as a result of their dealings with the Girl Scouts. For purposes of this policy, a relative is defined as any person who is related by blood or marriage or whose relationship is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

If a volunteer has any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts or leases it is imperative that it is disclosed in writing to the Chief Executive Officer or an officer of the board as soon as possible so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties.

Conflict Resolution

GSEM has established a procedure for resolving conflicts which arise when an operational volunteer believes that policies and/or procedures related to her/his position are not being administered properly as applied to her/him.

Conflict Resolution Practices

Step 1

A volunteer should address his/her concern to a Membership Specialist who understands the volunteer management system of GSEM. It is hoped that most, if not all, situations will be resolved through informal conferences and communications.

Step 2

When a volunteer and her/his Membership Specialist are unable to resolve a complaint through informal efforts, the volunteer may request a copy of GSEM's conflict resolution procedures for volunteers. Every volunteer may expect prompt attention to her/his concerns and a fair resolution of the complaint without fear of jeopardizing her/his volunteer status. The initiation of the conflict resolution procedure, however, will not restrict GSEM from taking appropriate action to safeguard the health and safety of the girls whenever necessary.

If a volunteer would like to file a complaint with GSEM, the volunteer should contact her/his GSEM staff contact or in the event that for any reason the volunteer is uncomfortable with filing a complaint with her/his GSEM staff contact the following individual should be contacted:

Chief Membership Services Officer GSEM 265 Beaver St Waltham, MA 02452 781-893-6113	or	Chief Human Resources Officer GSEM 95 Berkeley Street Boston, MA 02116 617-482-1078
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S/he is also available to discuss any concerns volunteers may have and to provide information about GSEM's policy on conflict resolution and the resolution process.

Volunteer Management Systems Policies

Application

Every volunteer is required to complete a volunteer application. The application and CORI form includes authorization allowing GSEM to obtain information deemed necessary in order to safeguard the health, safety and general well-being of the girls we serve.

Prior to having any contact with children or managing funds volunteers are required to have a criminal background screening (CORI check) on file in accordance with Massachusetts state law ch. 6 Sec. 172H. A volunteer application and a CORI consent form for a criminal background check is required for all adult volunteers.

Volunteer candidates whose records indicate a history of child abuse, violent crime or sexual crimes will be denied a position. At the discretion of GSEM, volunteer candidates may be denied a position due to financial irresponsibility, drug and alcohol related offenses, or other serious offenses or history that would reflect adversely upon the organization or its mission. GSEM management also reserves full discretion to withdraw an offer or decline to appoint a volunteer candidate for any reason. Volunteers will be required to submit to a CORI check once every three years. Volunteers are required to immediately report any arrest or conviction. Volunteer will be provided with a copy of GSEM's CORI policy and procedures upon request.

Position Descriptions & Expectations

Each volunteer position will have a written description that defines specific duties and responsibilities, qualifications, training required and term of appointment.

Supervision

GSEM will support volunteers in their roles by establishing clear volunteer guidelines in which there are periodic checkpoints for volunteers on the job. These checkpoints will allow GSEM and the volunteers we are supporting an opportunity to review completed work to ensure that the expectations of the volunteer match the goals of GSEM. GSEM staff should be made aware of conflicts and matters of mishandling of Girl Scout funds.

Volunteer Support

GSEM will also support volunteers in their goals of troop management in the following ways:

- Provide a contact person (staff or volunteer) to answer questions, give direction via telephone, direct contact or email
- Provide aids such as program kits and other packaged and convenience programs
- Offer adult learning opportunities in areas of orientation, leadership essentials, CPR/First aid and outdoor skills
- Offer volunteer opportunities beyond the position currently held
- Provide start-up materials
- Provide ongoing support to various pathways, service units and/or events

Membership

All volunteers participating in the Girl Scout Movement shall meet GSUSA membership standards, shall agree to abide by the policies and principles of both GSUSA and GSEM, and be a registered member.

Selection

Every adult volunteer is selected on the basis of their ability to perform the duties of the volunteer position, and the willingness and availability to participate in training for the position, if such training is offered. A satisfactory CORI check is also required in advance of any volunteer activities.

Appointment

Every attempt will be made to place operational volunteers in positions that meet both their needs/interest and the needs of GSEM. In instances where this is not possible, the needs of GSEM will take precedence over the needs of the individual. Individuals not placed in a position for which they applied may be recommended for other positions and they may also request reassignment. All operational volunteers (i.e. troop volunteer and service unit team members) shall be appointed annually for a term of one year or as designated on the position description. All appointments are made at the sole discretion of GSEM.

Re-appointment

Prior to completion of her/his term, each volunteer will receive notice of whether he/she is being reappointed to his/her position or not. Reappointment is contingent on acceptance of position accountabilities, expectations, and time commitment as outlined in the volunteer agreement. All decisions concerning selection, appointment, or reappointment are made by GSEM in its sole discretion.

Training

Each volunteer must complete adult learning courses designated as required for her/his position. Adult learning courses will ensure that each volunteer has the knowledge and skills needed to perform successfully in position for which they have been appointed. GSEM outlines adult learning course requirements essential for each volunteer in a written volunteer agreement. Refusal or inability to participate in the required courses can result in a volunteer's release from or non-appointment to a position.

Recognition

GSEM values the contributions of its volunteers and recognizes their service through various avenues. The formal adult recognition system of GSEM will be consistent with the most current GSUSA publication.

Release

Any volunteer may resign her/his position upon written notification to her/his volunteer or GSEM staff contact. GSEM may release a volunteer for any reason, in its sole discretion, including but not limited to:

- Restructuring of volunteer positions
- The elimination of the volunteer position in which a person serves
- The inability or failure to complete the requirements for the position
- Misappropriation of funds
- The inability or failure to perform to GSEM's satisfaction
- Failure to comply with GSEM or GSUSA policies
- Failure to support the mission and values of the organization and GSEM goals
- Membership in an organization whose goals are not compatible with those of GSUSA
- Appearance on the sex offender list of any state
- Providing false, incomplete, or misleading information on the volunteer application
- Inappropriate behavior including, but not limited to physical violence, abuse, carrying firearms stalking, threatening, menacing, lying, harassment, or falsification of documents
- An unacceptable CORI check is received
- A breach of the volunteer agreement

A volunteer can only be released by a staff member of GSEM. Any volunteer who is released from her/his Girl Scout position may continue her/his membership with GSUSA unless it is determined that she/he is not able to meet the membership requirement related to accepting the principles and beliefs of the movement or to support the mission and values of the organization.

Financial Accountability Policies

Account Responsibility

Those assuming responsibility or oversight of any Girl Scout monies within GSEM are accountable to GSEM for those funds.

- All adults handling money must be registered members of GSEM and have a valid CORI on file.
- Volunteers are responsible for complying with all finance and fund raising policies and practices including but not limited to:
 - Money handling
 - Banking
 - Record keeping
 - Reporting
 - Money Earning activities

A debt is defined as: a check written for insufficient funds, unpaid product sale funds to the organization or the troop, non payment of fees promised and any other amounts owed to the organization for products or services. A volunteer who repays a past due debt may be re-appointed as a volunteer but will not be allowed to hold a money handling or leadership position. Debts to GSEM or debts incurred in the name of the troop to outside vendors, banks or for services rendered which become past due will be processed for collection.

When a debt is incurred individuals may be released from volunteer positions and/or subject to legal action up to and including criminal prosecution by GSEM for misappropriation of funds. Unpaid funds collected for product sales or events or misuse of troop, service unit or the organizations funds are considered mishandled funds.

Troop and Service Unit Bank Accounts

All funds held on behalf of a specific troop or service unit must be deposited in a bank account in the troop or service unit name under the umbrella of Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts, Inc. Each account must be properly identified as Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts, Inc., Troop Number _____, or Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts, Inc., _____ Service Unit, **with a mailing address in care of the appropriate volunteer**. There must be **at least two authorized signers** on each account. For service unit accounts, these will be the Service Unit Coordinator and Treasurer. For troop accounts, this will be two non-related adults responsible for the troop.

All accounts must be held under the Tax ID# of Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts. The Tax ID may only be used to open troop and service unit bank accounts as outlined above.

Disbanded Troop Funds

Remaining money in disbanded troop funds does **not** belong to individual girls or volunteers and may **not** be refunded to them. Money may not be disbursed to another organization or charity in order to empty the treasury. The procedure for handling funds in troops which are about to disband is as follows:

- A troop volunteer should close the troop's bank account by asking the bank for a check for the amount remaining in the account.
- Have the check made payable to Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts.
- Because all bank accounts are operated under the GSEM's tax exempt status, any funds remaining in troop accounts when a troop is disbanded must be returned to the GSEM. Be sure all outstanding transactions have been cleared before contacting your bank to close the account. Mail your check, marked with the notation "Disbanded troop # _____," to:

Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts
Attn: Accounting Dept.
95 Berkeley Street
Boston, MA 02116

- Funds remain available through GSEM for troop start-up.

Volunteer's Role in Troop and Service Unit Financing

The account signers must periodically inform parents and girls of the troop's financial status. All registered adults in the troop have the responsibility **and right** to review the troop books to ensure accuracy in accounting. All registered adults with the troop should ensure that accurate records of income and expenditures are maintained and reported regularly at the troop meeting. Service Unit Treasurers must give a regular report of income and expenses at Service Unit meetings. The treasurer is responsible for completing and turning in an annual financial report for the service unit.

Troop/group, service units may use Massachusetts sales tax exemption when purchasing supplies. When using the tax exemption, volunteers will sometimes be called upon to provide an exemption certificate for the supplier from whom a purchase is being made. It is important that the certificate be properly completed in order to comply with regulations pertaining to the exemption. Charitable exemption numbers will not be issued to individual troops/groups. Therefore, all volunteers need to use the exemption number issued to GSEM. At no time may the sales tax exemption be used for personal purchases or for another organization's use.

The Massachusetts Sales Use and Tax Exemption Certificate may be obtained by contacting your local Service Center.

Year End Balance in Troop Treasuries

Troops may hold over balances in the troop treasury from one year to the next. Funds from a troop treasury should never be spent down frivolously, or given to girls directly.

Acceptable uses for the balance in a troop/group treasury include:

- Payment of individual GSUSA registration fees for returning or new members
- Gifts to bridging girls, such as program-level materials or uniform components such as sashes or vests
- Troops taking large or extended trips which cross over multiple years may retain additional funds
- It is recommended that troops retain enough money to begin troop/group activities in the fall

Financial Reporting

Each Troop and Service Unit is required to submit an annual Financial Report by June 15. Each troop and service unit must turn in a financial report with a copy of the most recent bank statement to the assigned GSEM staff member.

Mid Year Review

At mid year the Service Unit/staff will check-in with troops to ensure that they are on track to meet their financial year-end goals.

Troop/Service Unit Money Earning

A troop must be registered prior to participating in council product sales. In order to be eligible for additional fund raising activities a troop/service unit must:

- Have a financial report on file for the prior year – unless they are a new troop.
- Participate in the cookie sale.
- Have approval prior to carrying out a money earning project.