



Volunteer Policies & Procedures

2018

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Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York Volunteer Policies & Procedures

I. Introduction

Volunteers are vital to the successful accomplishment of Girl Scouting goals and objectives. Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York is particularly appreciative of its volunteers and the inspiration, skills, and time they give so generously.

Definition. A “volunteer” is any adult (person 18 years of age or older) who, without compensation or expectation of compensation, performs a task on behalf of the council. A “Volunteer” should be appointed prior to performing the task. Unless specifically stated in writing by the council, volunteers shall not be considered as “employee” of the council.

Purpose of Policies. The Council is guided by an elected volunteer Board of Directors in partnership with an employed staff. The Board of Directors establishes these Volunteer Policies and Procedures to:

- **Support** a safe, high quality program experience for girls.
- **Use** the skills and experience and time of volunteers effectively.
- **Provide** all volunteers with the opportunity for participation, challenge, growth, advancement and satisfaction.
- **Create** an environment of courtesy, respect and fairness for all members.

II. Obligations of All Volunteers

Volunteers are held accountable for following volunteer policies as stated in GSUSA Blue Book of Basic Documents, GSUSA Volunteer Essentials, GSUSA Safety Activity Checkpoints, and GIRL SCOUTS NENY Volunteer Policies and Procedures.

Girl Scout volunteers are expected to serve as appropriate role models for girls and for other volunteers. The attitudes, appearance and actions of volunteers have a direct impact on

the lives of girls. The image of Girl Scouting as well as the image of the individual can be compromised by any performance or behavior that violates a law, policy, standard, Girl Scout Law, or customary courtesy and respect.

Membership Registration. All adults participating in Girl Scouts must register as members with Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA), except those adults who are working in a temporary advisor or consultative capacity. [See Section III below for clarification.]

General Expectations. Behavioral expectations for volunteers include, but are not limited to, the items listed below:

- Maintaining conduct consistent with the Girl Scout Promise, Law and values.
- Communication in an appropriate, respectful, and polite manner that supports healthy personal and professional relationships.
- Following Girl Scout safety and program standards outlined in *Safety Activity Checkpoints*.
- Maintaining confidentiality and privacy and refraining from sharing sensitive information concerning Girl Scout programs, activities/events, or girl and adult members of Girl Scouts.
- Handling of Girl Scout funds in accordance with Council policies and utilizing of funds only for Girl Scout purposes.
- Resolution of adult matters or conflicts away from girls, without involving girls, and with respect for the Girl Scout Law.

Prohibitions (including Use of Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drugs). The council expressly prohibits:

- Use of tobacco in the presence of girls at Girl Scout programs or events.
- Consumption of alcohol or other mind-altering substances at girl events or while responsible for girls.
 - Alcoholic beverages are acceptable at events designed primarily for adults; however, if girls are in attendance, consumption of alcohol is prohibited for those responsible for supervising girls.
- Possession, sale, use of illegal drugs, or misuse of prescribed/over-the-counter drugs.
- Performance of volunteer duties or driving while under the influence of alcohol or substances (legal or illegal) that impair alertness or judgment.
- Promotion of religious or political preferences while functioning as a Girl Scout Volunteer (Girl Scouting believes that these are private matters for girls and their families to address together).
- Promotion of an individual opinion or philosophy inconsistent with Girl Scout beliefs and principles at Girl Scout programs, activities or events.
- Willful or malicious damage to Girl Scout property or reputation.
- Possession of weapons at any time in any Girl Scout activity.
 - If weapons are stored in the area of an activity, they must be unloaded and in a locked storage case or cabinet and the keys must be secured in an inaccessible place.
 - Under this policy, prohibited weapons include all firearms and any form of weapon or explosive that is deemed unsafe or is restricted by local, state or federal law. Guns and ammunition are not carried during Girl Scout activities.
- Presence of hazardous materials.

- Volunteers should be aware of all items that might be dangerous (for example axes, knives, sharp tools, solvents, pesticides, poisons, etc.) and secure them to remove any hazard presented by them.
- Volunteers should consult Girl Scout safety resources for guidelines for use of axes or knives as part of Girl Scout camping or outdoor program.

Adult Uniforms and Dress Codes. A uniform is not required for participation in Girl Scout activities. When volunteers choose to wear a uniform, the Girl Scout pin (full size or miniature) is the only requirement. Uniforms should be worn in compliance with GSUSA guidelines.

GIRL SCOUTS NENY requests that volunteers remember at all times they are serving as role models for girls; therefore, their dress must reflect that in both modesty and appropriateness for their position and/or situation. GIRL SCOUTS NENY reserves the right to discuss inappropriate attire choices with individual when they arise.

III. Eligibility, Selection, Appointment, and Onboarding of Adult Volunteers

A positive female role model is essential for meeting the Girl Scout program goals and purposes. However, membership standards are inconclusive, diverse, and non-discriminatory. The Board of Directors of the GIRL SCOUTS NENY reaffirms its support of the following GSUSA policies and the development of an affirmative action plan for volunteers and staff within GIRL SCOUTS NENY's jurisdiction.

Non-Discrimination for Volunteers. There shall be no discrimination against an otherwise qualified volunteer based upon a person's race, color, creed, religion, age, disability, sex, national origin, citizenship, genetic information, marital status or other protected group status. To ensure full equality of opportunity in all operations and activities of the organization, Non-Discrimination Policies and Procedures shall be utilized in the recruitment, selection, training, placement and recognition of volunteers.

Pluralism and Diversity in Girl and Adult Membership. All Girl Scout councils shall be responsible for seeing that membership is reflective of the pluralistic nature of their populations and that membership is extended to all girls in all population segments and geographic areas in their jurisdictions. Accordingly, GIRLS COUTS NENY seeks pluralism and diversity among adult volunteers.

Participation of Male Volunteers. GIRL SCOUTS NENY welcomes and encourages male volunteers to participate in our program. All policies and procedures concerning men are designed to protect our male volunteers and our girl members. Male adults may be part of the leadership team for a GS Troop of girls, including being designated as the Troop Leader for the Girl Scout Troop. Male Girl Scout Leaders are expected to fulfill the same requirements as female Girl Scout Leaders. Specifically, men may not participate alone with girls. At troop meetings, one unrelated female volunteer must be present. In addition, men will not take girls on overnights, camping trips, extended trips, or events without two female volunteers present at all times.

Requirements for Registration. Any adults participating in the following ways must register with GSUSA and successfully complete the background check screening process:

- Those responsible for the safety of girls not in their family

- Those handling GS monies
- Those participating in overnights where girls attend without adults from their family (including those transporting girls, parents/volunteers and overnights on site)

Adults participating in an event as a parent with their own daughter (such as Mom/Dad & Me events), and not taking responsibility for girls that are not a part of their family, are not required to complete this process. These adults, however, may register as an adult member if they wish to be covered by Girl Scout activity insurance for programs and activities.

Steps in the Volunteer Onboarding Process. Potential new volunteers will follow this process:

- Complete a volunteer application
- Become an adult Girl Scout member & pay for membership
- Complete a background screening process
- Receive a welcome email upon completion of the background check

Volunteer Roles. Prior to applying for the position, it is the responsibility of the prospective volunteer to review a Volunteer Role Description for the role for which they are applying. Most Volunteer Role Descriptions are available [online](#). Specialized Volunteer Role Descriptions should be requested from the GIRL SCOUTS NENY liaison managing the position. The membership, training, background screening and time commitment is determined based on the needs of each volunteer role, and these details can be located on that Volunteer Role Description at <https://girlscoutsneny.org>

Appointment. The decision to appoint and retain volunteers is made on an individual basis. GIRL SCOUTS NENY does not discriminate against an otherwise qualified adult volunteer on the basis of race, age, disability, color, ethnicity, gender, national origin, religion, veteran status, or any other legally protected status.

Volunteers shall be appointed for a period not to exceed one (1) year. A volunteer may, however, be released at any time due to failure to fulfill the requirements of the position or a change in the needs of the council.

Volunteers may not be appointed or retained if an outstanding debt to GIRL SCOUTS NENY is unresolved. During processing of appointments, information on outstanding debts will be reviewed. Any appointments with current outstanding debt will be rejected.

Adult Development. The strength of the GS Movement rests in the voluntary leadership of *trained* adult members. All volunteers will receive basic training for their role. Depending upon the role, they may also be required to complete additional training within a specified time frame. To ensure ongoing improvement of GS programming, volunteers should continue to take advantage of adult education opportunities. These trainings ensure that each volunteer has the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in their volunteer role.

All new volunteers are required to view the GIRL SCOUTS NENY Volunteer Orientation Video as well as complete an online knowledge check prior to assuming the responsibilities of their volunteer

role. Details for specific roles are listed below.

Girl Scout Troop Leaders/Co-Leaders/Assistant Leaders

In addition to the Welcome and Orientation Videos, all Troop Leaders are strongly recommended to:

- Access online resources relevant to their troop functions
- Review *Volunteer Essentials* on an annual basis
- Review *GIRL SCOUTS NENY Volunteer Policies & Procedures* on an annual basis

Videos and resources intended to support volunteers are available at girlscoutsneny.org/volunteer_resources. Key subjects covered include troop management, troop finances, troop cookie management, and outdoor activities. Review of these resources may be required for certain troop activities or volunteer roles. In addition, a variety of enrichment opportunities are offered in various formats (in-person, online, etc.). A complete list of offerings can be found at www.Girlscoutsneny.org/for-volunteers/volunteer-courses.

Troop Cookie Managers--Troop Cookie Managers are required to complete GIRL SCOUTS NENY Service Unit Troop level training.

Additional training requirements are outlined in the Outdoor Program section.

IV. **Assessment, Reappointment, Termination, Change in Membership Status**

Volunteer Experience Assessment. Girl Scouts is not only the premiere leadership development organization for girls, it is also a vehicle through which adult volunteers are encouraged to enhance and develop their leadership skills. Every volunteer regardless of role shall have the opportunity to complete a self-assessment. The results will identify the individual completing the information and will be shared with the appropriate staff liaison and volunteer manager. The purpose of this assessment is to provide the volunteer an opportunity to reflect upon their experience for the purposes of their own development. In addition, comments and responses will be reviewed for operational improvement for volunteers and staff. Prior to ending a term or rotation to a new position, the volunteer and staff support member should identify a volunteer to mentor to take on the position being vacated.

Reappointment. Several volunteer positions have certain requirements that must be performed during the course of the GS Year (i.e., completing a Financial Report, required training, etc.). GIRL SCOUTS NENY documents completion of specific volunteer position requirements, and reappointment is contingent upon completion.

Termination of Volunteer Appointment. Situations may arise whereby the council may release or terminate a volunteer from one or all positions prior to the end of the assignment term. Any action to release a volunteer receives careful and detailed consideration. A volunteer may have their appointment terminated because of, but not limited to:

- Refusal to comply with GIRL SCOUTS NENY or GSUSA policies;
- Conduct inconsistent with the principles of the Girl Scout Movement as indicated by the Girl Scout Promise and Law
- Refusal or failure to adhere to financial guidelines of GIRL SCOUTS NENY
- Registered sex offender status* or crimes against a child

*Registered sex offenders are not eligible for membership in Girl Scouts of the USA and may not participate in any capacity with Girl Scout programs. Volunteers shall not knowingly hold activities where a registered sex offender is present.

If charges are pending related to *any* criminal offense (other than traffic violations), acting in a volunteer capacity with the council (i.e., troop meetings, etc.) will not be allowed or will be temporarily suspended pending disposition of the case.

Resignation. Volunteers may choose to resign or request change of positions at any time. Volunteers are encouraged to give as much notice as possible when resigning. If resigning will result in disbanding of the troop, a dropped troop report must be filled out.

Change in Membership Status. When a Girl Scout or Girl Scout volunteer is representing Girl Scouts, in any way, she or he must behave in an appropriate, mature manner that fairly represents the Girl Scout Movement. If a Girl Scout and/or Girl Scout volunteer acts in violation of this procedure, she/he may lose membership privileges.

The council is committed to an environment in which relationships between volunteers, staff, parents and girls are characterized by dignity, courtesy, respect and equitable treatment. Girl Scout volunteers do not have the authority to end Girl Scout membership or participation in Girl Scouts for either adults or girls. Membership and participation status can only be changed by following the processes outlined in the GIRL SCOUTS NENY Volunteer Policies & Procedures.

V. Troop Volunteers & General Responsibilities

Leadership. The leadership of every Girl Scout Troop group must include two unrelated adults within the team. Each Girl Scout Troop must have at least one (1) female Girl Scout Leader who is at least 18 years of age, is a registered Girl Scout adult, has an appropriate volunteer security status, and agrees to meet the training requirements for the position.

Expectations of Troop Volunteers. GIRL SCOUTS NENY Troop Volunteers are expected to carry out the duties of the volunteer role, while abiding by the Girl Scout Promise and the Girl Scout Law. They are expected to embrace and promote pluralism to the best of their ability so that the girls will feel welcome regardless of socioeconomic status, racial, ethnic, cultural, or religious background or disability.

Troop Size. There must be a minimum of five (5) girls to register as a Girl Scout Troop/group. Girl Scout Troops with less than five (5) girls will be registered as individual members. Exceptions to minimum Girl Scout Troop size can be made if at least three unrelated girls:

- Are from sparsely populated rural areas where *no other girls are available* within a reasonable distance and leaders would, otherwise, be willing to take up to five girls.
- Girl Members require more individual time and attention from GS Leaders because of special needs.
- Or are Girl Scouts in the 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grades, registering with a minimum of three girls.

Groups of fewer than five (5) girls who believe that they meet one of the minimum GS Troop size exceptions listed in the policy above should work with their Membership Recruitment Manager and Service Unit Troop Organizer to receive approval to register as a GS Troop with less than five (5) girl members. The council Registrar will work with the appropriate Membership Recruitment Manager and Service Unit Troop Organizer to review the request for final approval. The GS Troop Leader will be contacted only if there is an issue with the exception.

There is no restriction on the maximum number of girls in a troop. Volunteers are encouraged to welcome additional girls to the troop while maintaining appropriate girl/adult ratios.

Registration. Girl Scout Troops may be formed and registered at any time during the membership year. For newly formed troops registering using paper forms, forms are submitted to the GIRL SCOUTS NENY Registrar prior to their second meeting. For the purposes of activities or events, registration is effective when the completed membership forms are received by an employee or at a GIRL SCOUTS NENY Service Center.

Re-registering. Continuing GS Troops should register the girl and adult members/leaders via the online registration system or paper registration forms by October 1 of each year.

Additional Members. Additional girls or adults may be added to a GS Troop at any time during the year.

Adult/Girl Ratios. For information on the mandatory adult/child ratio, please see [Volunteer Essentials](#).

Leadership for Troop Activities. At least two unrelated volunteers must be present for any troop meeting or other activity to be conducted.

VI. Volunteers in Non-Troop Positions

Service Unit Team Members. Service Team Members are appointed annually. Service Unit Managers are appointed by the Volunteer Services Manager and Regional Chair. All Service Team positions are appointed by the Service Unit Manager. GIRL SCOUTS NENY Service Unit Team positions have specific training dependent on the volunteer role. The training consists of a Resource Guide / online video and Resource Guide. Some roles also require a one-on-one training with the appropriate volunteer or staff supervisor. Additional enrichment workshops and courses are encouraged.

Camp Volunteers. Camp volunteers must successfully complete the background check screening process and training. Details of role-specific training are defined in each appropriate role description.

Short-term Volunteers. Volunteers who participate in a one-time or short-term opportunity will receive an orientation specific to their volunteer activity. Details of role-specific training are defined in each appropriate role description.

GIRL SCOUTS NENY Training Academy Faculty. There are several faculty positions within the GIRL SCOUTS NENY's Training Academy: New (Member), Assistant, Observer, Team Teacher, Instructor, and Master Trainer. In some cases, there may be "grandmothering" based on previous experience and/or credentials.

Other Volunteer Roles. For roles not listed above, in addition to the Orientation Video, the volunteer should complete appropriate training as defined by a GIRL SCOUTS NENY liaison.

VII. Conflict Resolution

GIRL SCOUTS NENY encourages volunteers and staff to take positive actions to promptly and efficiently resolve conflicts. Recognizing that each individual has both a personal interest in and a share of the responsibility for resolving conflicts in which they're involved, GIRL SCOUTS NENY favors a collaborative adult conflict resolution process. The most effective way of resolving complaints and concerns is usually by calm, open discussion between the persons involved by telephone or in person. For this reason, prior to utilizing the formal grievance procedure, aggrieved persons are encouraged to try to resolve the matter informally among themselves. E-mail exchanges/use of social media are generally not conducive to effective resolution and, therefore, should be avoided.

Procedures for De-Escalating Conflicts. GIRL SCOUTS NENY staff must be consulted any time issues arise that involve an adult or girl's successful participation in a troop/group, or that involve an adult in a volunteer role.

- Whenever a conflict arises between individuals or an individual and the council, the circumstances surrounding the conflict should be discussed with the immediate supervisor (Girl Scout Service Unit Manager, Regional Chair and Volunteer Support Manager) and all parties involved.
- If, despite the preceding steps, the conflict remains unresolved, any of the involved parties may request a Volunteer Support Manager to serve in an intermediary role -- assisting in the conflict resolution.
- In the event the conflict concerns finances, all records including bank statements, receipts, the most recent Annual Troop/SU Financial Report and any other financial records may be requested, and an audit may be conducted.

Harassment. GIRL SCOUTS NENY is committed to an environment and climate in which relationships are characterized by dignity, respect, courtesy and equitable treatment. It is the policy of the organization to provide all volunteers with an environment free from all forms of unlawful or unwelcome harassment, including implied or expressed forms of sexual harassment. The council reserves the right to refuse membership endorsement or reappointment and to dismiss or suspend from affiliation with the council any volunteer who while conducting Girl Scout program, is found to have harassed another volunteer, employee or Girl Scout member.

Any volunteer who feels that she or he has been subjected to harassment of any type, whether by another volunteer, council staff member, or any agent of the organization should promptly report the incident to their appropriate Girl Scout Service Unit Team Member or appropriate staff member. The individual contacted will take measures (see Conflict Resolution Procedure above) to follow up on all incidents in an expeditious manner.

VIII. Health and Safety

Adults responsible for the safety of girls must be registered.

Girl Scout volunteers are expected to follow health and safety guidelines in selecting meeting places, program venues and providers, or specific activities as well as in communicating with parents and collecting/carrying parental permissions and health information/authorizations. Consult [Volunteer Essentials](#) and [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) for specific information.

Privacy & Confidentiality. Girl Scouts does not require parents to disclose health history or immunization status for girls to participate.

All health related information must be maintained in a confidential manner in accordance with state and federal laws.

Certifications. The presence of an adult with a current first aid and CPR certification is necessary when required by Safety Activity Checkpoints. Volunteers providing certified expertise must maintain current certification to meet Safety Activity Checkpoint requirements.

Medications. No girl will be given any prescribed or over-the-counter medication without prior, expressed written approval and instruction from the custodial parent/guardian (prior written approval and instruction is *only* to be given to a registered volunteer). No medication will be

administered unless it is in the original container and unexpired. All prescriptions must have the girl participant's name clearly printed on the label, as prescribed for the girl by a medical doctor.

Allergies. Allergies requiring any accommodations must be disclosed in advance in writing to the appropriate volunteer or staff.

Child Safety Regulations. State and County Health Regulations for child safety must be adhered to at all times.

- Girls must be accompanied at all times by the “*correct number of adults.*”
- Adults and girls must follow regulations regarding food handling and child safety.
- Children must be supervised by an adult while cleaning supplies are in use.

First Aid/CPR. Injuries or other emergencies (such as cuts/bleeding, burns, seizures, etc.) require prompt action and quick judgment. For many activities, Girl Scouts recommend that at least one adult volunteer be first aid/CPR certified. Volunteers can take advantage of First Aid/CPR training offered by chapters of the American Red Cross, National Safety Council, EMP America, American Heart Association, or other sponsoring organizations approved by their councils. If possible, volunteers should take age-specific CPR training—that is, take child CPR if they're working with younger girls and adult CPR when working with older girls and adults.

A first-aider is an adult volunteer who has taken Girl Scout–approved first aid and CPR training that includes specific instructions for child CPR. If, through the American Red Cross, National Safety Council, EMP America, or American Heart Association, volunteers have a chance to be fully trained in first aid and CPR, doing so may make event and activity planning go a little more smoothly. The *Safety Activity Checkpoints* note when a first-aider needs to be present.

Note: New York's Good Samaritan Laws protect “rescuers” who aid a victim to the best of their ability in a medical emergency.

There are two categories of first-aiders.

- **First-aider (level 1):** The presence of a first-aider (level 1) is required for many group activities. The course required for a first-aider (level 1) offers standard first aid and CPR, preferably with a focus on children. The *Safety Activity Checkpoints* state clearly when a first-aider (level 1) is needed.
- **First-aider (level 2):** The presence of a first-aider (level 2) is required at resident camp, and at any camp activity with more than 200 participants. In addition, some activities require a first-aider (level 2); the *Safety Activity Checkpoints* state clearly whether a first-aider (level 2) is needed. First-aiders (level 2) pass the same course as first-aiders (level 1), and also have emergency response/first response, sports safety, wilderness first aid, and/or advanced first aid and CPR training. Each organization has a different name for its training, so be sure to ask whether a training course fulfills the level-2 requirements.

Emergency Procedures. In the event of an emergency, the volunteers must:

- Provide care for the ill/injured persons.
- Call 911/emergency medical care.
- Notify the child's parent or guardian.
- One adult must stay at the scene. Do not disturb the victim or surroundings until assistance arrives.
- Report the emergency using the GIRL SCOUTS NENY Emergency Staff Contact List.
- Make NO statement of ANY KIND to the media. DO NOT give out any names or information. Ask them to contact GIRL SCOUTS NENY (518-489-8110).

- Secure/maintain all permission forms and medical records to turn into a GIRL SCOUTS NENY service center.
- Complete a GIRL SCOUTS NENY *Supplemental Accident Report*.

Accident/Incident Reports. In the event of an incident, a *Supplemental Accident Report* must be filled out within 48 hours and sent to Human Resources at council headquarters. All accidents reports will be maintained by GIRL SCOUTS NENY in compliance with HIPAA regulations.

All incident reports will be maintained by council headquarters in compliance with HIPAA regulations.

Date Restrictions for Privacy/Confidentiality. Paper forms with confidential information such as social security numbers and drivers' license numbers should be turned into a council office or staff member within 7 days of receipt of completed forms.

Health History forms should not be maintained past their applicable use. Health History forms gathered by a troop/group leader are outdated 12 months past the date originally filled out. At that time, they may be reviewed and updated to extend their use. Health History forms gathered for the purpose of a specific event such as a Council Event should not be kept past the final date of the event. In this case, forms should be returned to the participant or their parent/guardian or shredded.

Infractions. Any infraction of the GIRL SCOUTS NENY Health Issues Policy, as outlined above, will be subject to prompt review under council volunteer disciplinary guidelines. The volunteer will be removed from their responsibilities at the activity.

IX. Child Protection

Safeguarding from Child Abuse. It is the policy of the council to provide an environment that is free of child abuse and that safeguards the health and well-being of all girl members of GSUSA, as defined by the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act. The following are, therefore, prohibited by all adults and girls in the program:

- Physical Punishment: Volunteers cannot restrain, spank, or use any other physical means to punish a child.
- Physical Abuse: Any action that causes harm or injury to a girl, such as hitting, hazing, kicking, and other inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.
- Sexual Misconduct: This includes any inappropriate sexual physical contact, lewdness or communication in words, print or images.
- Physical Neglect: This includes failure to give supervision, failure to provide for safety during activities or time of danger, or failure to meet medical needs.
- Emotional Abuse: This includes verbal attacks, anger outbursts, hostility, humiliation, hazing or socially inappropriate language such as cursing.

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

Situations Regarding Child Custody Parental Arrangements. GIRL SCOUTS NENY staff and volunteers are not responsible for interpreting or enforcing parental custodial agreements.

Further, GIRL SCOUTS NENY staff and volunteers are prohibited from taking on the role of a mediator in these situations.

The GSUSA membership data system provides the ability for one person (parent or guardian) to manage the membership data for girl members (family manager/guardian 1) online. When a girl is first registered, that relationship is established by the person completing the registration (online or paper). In order for the family manager/guardian 1 or guardian 2 to be changed, GIRL SCOUTS NENY requires the current family manager to submit a written request to change the identity of family manager/guardian 1 or guardian 2.

X. Risk Management

The council recognizes that, through its varied activities, there is substantial exposure to risks associated with its operations. In order to provide a safe organizational environment for youth, volunteers, and employees, the council will take reasonable and prudent steps to limit potential organizational liabilities through a program of risk management which includes (but may not be limited to): maintenance of a comprehensive liability insurance program, compliance with all regulatory requirements and organizational standards, continuing education of employees and volunteer personnel, and regularly scheduled review and assessment of the program's effectiveness.

Specific guidelines regarding the suggested adult-to-girl ratios can be found in Volunteer Essentials. In certain situations, the number of adults may be increased to accommodate the special needs of girls.

Non-members: Non-member insurance should be purchased for all events at which non-members are present.

XI. Program

Girl Scouts is an informal-educational program designed to help girls put into practice the fundamental principles of the Girl Scout Movement as set forth in the Girl Scout Promise and Law, with a particular emphasis on leadership development in an all-girl environment. It is carried out in small groups with volunteer adult leadership and provides a wide range of progressive activities developed around the interests and needs of today's girl. Programs are designed to foster courage, confidence and character, with an ultimate goal of helping girls discover their full potential, connect with others, and take action to improve their lives and their communities.

A. TRAVEL & OUTINGS

Volunteer Essentials and [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) must be consulted and guidelines followed. Activity Approval Forms must be submitted and approved, when appropriate.

Travel Notification. Girl Scout Troop Leaders or other adults who work with Girl Scouts are responsible for informing the Service Unit Manager and parents/guardians about the activities of the girls and requesting appropriate council approval.

Guidelines for Troop Travel -- when traveling:

- Less than 50 miles – inform the SUM through email or other written notice.

- More than 50 miles – complete the GIRL SCOUTS NENY Intent to Travel Form and send it to the SUM.
- On all Adventure Activities – you must also complete the GIRL SCOUTS NENY Intent to Travel Form and send it to the SUM

Guidelines for Service Unit Travel -- when traveling:

- Less than 50 miles – inform the GIRL SCOUTS NENY Volunteer Support Manager through email or other written notice.
- More than 50 miles – complete the GIRL SCOUTS NENY Intent to Travel Form and send it to the GIRL SCOUTS NENY Volunteer Support Manager.
- On all Adventure Activities – you must also complete the GIRL SCOUTS NENY Intent to Travel Form and send it to the Volunteer Support Manager.
- Notification of Troop or Service Unit travel should be given to the Service Unit Manager/Volunteer Support Manager four weeks before the date of the activity.

Note: If the person completing the form is the Service Unit Manager, the travel form should be submitted to the Volunteer Services Manager.

Extended Overnights (Events of two (2) nights or more). Additional insurance is required as per GIRL SCOUTS NENY Travel Guidelines.

International Travel. There is a required form to be completed and submitted to GIRL SCOUTS NENY for approval at least six months prior to travel.

Private Transportation. Individuals operating motor vehicles transporting girls must be a registered adult, at least 21 years of age, and be properly licensed and insured for the vehicle. The number of passengers must not exceed the intended number of passengers in the vehicle. Each person must have and use their specific seatbelt. All vehicles transporting girls and/or Girl Scout equipment must be properly registered, adequately insured and operated according to state statute. A minimum of two (2) adults is recommended for each vehicle. Each vehicle shall carry passenger Permission Slips and Health Histories (as submitted).

Drivers. All volunteers coordinating activities (troop leaders, SU Event Coordinators, etc.), where adults are transporting girls not under their guardianship, must be registered with GSUSA and successfully complete the background check screening process.

Additionally, when adults are transporting girls not under their guardianship, they must be registered with GSUSA and successfully complete the background check screening process.

It must be verified that each adult driving is an approved driver and that the vehicles meet the legal insurance, licensing and registration requirements. Drivers should not drive more than 12 hours in any one 24-hour period. Rest stops should be planned every few hours.

Transportation Rentals.

- Only reputable vehicle rental agencies with good maintenance and service records may be used.
- Most rental agencies rent to the driver(s), not the Girl Scout Troop, even if the Girl Scout Troop is paying for the vehicle.
- The driver's insurance is the primary insurance; the rented vehicle replaces the driver's personal vehicle. Drivers should contact their own insurance agent to make sure their

personal insurance covers the rental vehicle, and meets or exceeds the insurance requirements for the states or countries in which the vehicle will travel.

- We recommend that the driver purchase the “damage/collision waiver” insurance, which covers only the replacement value of the rented vehicle, when renting the vehicle.
- Drivers need to be experienced in driving the type of vehicle being rented.
- Remember to always consult [Volunteer Essentials](#) and [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) when traveling beyond your usual Girl Scout meeting place.

Equipment Sign Out. All equipment that is signed out is on a temporary use basis only, for Council equipment is very limited. Therefore, all equipment must be returned within 15 days from the date it is borrowed. There may be a deposit required for certain equipment.

Troop Certified Volunteers. Leaving the troop meeting place means assuming responsibility for the transportation and safety of other peoples’ children. Different activities require preparation and/or certifications in addition to the Orientation Video-- depending on the type of activity for the girls. Troop-certified volunteers include volunteers who are “first aid” and “outdoor-skills” certified.

Field Trips & Sleepovers.

- A Girl Scout Troop that is leaving the regular meeting place on a *field trip* must be accompanied by at least one (1) adult who has accessed GIRL SCOUTS NENY’s *Beyond Your Troop Meeting Video* and completed an online knowledge check, and one (1) First Aider (as defined in *Safety Activity Checkpoints*), as well as an appropriate number of safety-ratio adult members who are background cleared.
- A Girl Scout Troop that is having a *sleepover* (such as a slumber party, lock-in, or overnight at the local zoo) must be accompanied by at least one (1) adult who has accessed GIRL SCOUTS NENY’s *Beyond Your Troop Meeting Video* and completed an online knowledge check, and one (1) *First Aider* (as defined in *Safety Activity Checkpoints*), as well as an appropriate number of safety-ratio adult members who are background cleared.
- A single overnight *backyard* campout in a tent-- not using grills or fire of any kind is considered to be a sleepover.

Forms required: Parent Permission Slips, Health History Forms*, proof of GS Membership registration for all participants, Intent to Travel Form.

**Girl Scouts does not require parents to disclose health history or immunization status for girls to participate.*

B. OUTDOOR PROGRAM

Outdoor Day Outings. Definition of Outdoor Environment & Activities: an outdoor environment is characterized by the presence of natural features such as wooded areas, hiking trails, bodies of water, as well as insects and creatures not normally found in everyday situations. Outdoor activities could include, but are not limited to, activities such as fire building, outdoor cooking, and hiking.

- A GS Troop going on a *one day outing in an outdoor environment* (not sleeping over and *not making a campfire or doing outdoor cooking*) must be accompanied by at least one adult (who has accessed *GIRL SCOUTS NENY’s Beyond Your Troop Meeting* and the *Intro*

to *Outdoor Leadership videos* and completed both knowledge checks), plus one First Aider (as defined in *Safety Activity Checkpoints*), and an appropriate number of safety-ratio adults.

- A Girl Scout Troop going on a *one-day outing in an outdoor environment* (not sleepover) and planning to participate in outdoor activities such as making a campfire or outdoor cooking is considered to be camping and, therefore, must be accompanied by at least one (1) adult who has completed *Outdoor Skills Training*, one (1) First Aider as defined in *Safety Activity Checkpoints*, and an appropriate number of safety-ratio adults.

Forms required: Parent Permission Slips, Health History Forms*, Proof of GS Membership registration for all participants, Intent to Travel Form.

**Girl Scouts does not require parents to disclose health history or immunization status for girls to participate.*

Camping Overnight.

- Girl Scout Troops who are camping on council owned sites with established sleeping and restroom facilities must be accompanied by at least one adult who has completed *Outdoor Skills Training*, one First Aider (as defined in *Safety Activity Checkpoints*), as well as an appropriate number of safety-ratio adults.
- Girl Scout Troops who are camping on non-council sites which have established restroom facilities must be accompanied by at least one adult who has completed Outdoor Skills Training, one First Aider (as defined in *Safety Activity Checkpoints*), as well as an appropriate number of safety-ratio adults.

Forms required: Parent Permission Slips, Health History Forms*, Proof of GS Membership registration for all participants.

**Girl Scouts does not require parents to disclose health history or immunization status for girls to participate.*

The primary First Aider for any overnights and the primary Camp-Trained adult for overnight camping cannot be male. Males may, however, act as additional "First Aiders" and "Outdoor Skills" trained adults.

Camping is an integral and fun part of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Because it is important to protect the safety of the girls in the program, the following policies are in place for camping:

- Each Girl Scout Troop must follow the *Volunteer Essentials* requirements for the ratio of adults to girls, and follow all guidelines that are appropriate to the activities they are doing while camping.
- One of the volunteers camping with the Girl Scout Troop must provide proof that they are currently certified in First Aid/CPR/AED.
- Men who camp with a Girl Scout Troop must follow all volunteer procedures. When men are part of the Girl Scout Troop Leadership Team, separate sleeping arrangements must be provided. No men may sleep in the same room as girls; a separate room, tent, or sleeping area must be provided. In the case of a husband and wife team, separate sleeping arrangements away from the girls and other volunteers is recommended.

Camping Formats. Registration for GIRL SCOUTS NENY camps and requesting approval for camping at non-GIRL SCOUTS NENY sites should identify the type of camping format being applied.

1. Individual Format: A girl(s) camping at GIRL SCOUTS NENY facility with a female parent/guardian.
2. Troop Format: Troop/Groups of girls camping at any approved outdoor facility with the appropriate number of registered and trained adult volunteers with the appropriate volunteer security status—can include groups of troops such as a Service Unit Campout.
3. Non-Troop Format -- Girls camping in several formats:
 - o Camping event where girls are supervised by a parent/guardian such as a MOM-N-Me campout.
 - o Camping event where girls are supervised by a parent/guardian and include members of their immediate family such as a Family Camp.
 - o Camping event where troops/groups of girls are supervised by the appropriate number of registered and trained adult volunteers with the appropriate volunteer security status.--can include groups of troops such as a Service Unit campout.

Note: Service Units may choose to organize their camping events using formats 2 or 3 (Troop/Non-Troop Formats) as described above.

Camp Trained Adults. Requirements for trained adults vary.

1. Individual Format: Girl(s) must be accompanied by a registered female parent/guardian with an appropriate volunteer security status and with the appropriate level of “Outdoor Skills”/“Overnight Tent Camping” training. Because girls are supervised by their parent/guardian, the adult is not required to be First Aid/CPR/AED certified.
2. Troop Format: Each Girl Scout Troop must have at least one (1) registered Camp Trained Adult who has completed the appropriate level of camp training, and one registered First Aid/CPR/AED Trained Adult – it is strongly encouraged that this not be the same individual. Each Camp and First Aid/CPR/AED certified adult must have the appropriate volunteer security status.
3. Non-Troop Format: The # of camp-trained adults must be one (1) for each group of up to 10 GS Daisies or Brownies and one (1) for each group of up to 35 GS Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors or Ambassadors. For all program grade levels they must be camping within an area of approximately 150 square yds. These events must have a Health Supervisor (a registered female GS Adult with Level 1 First Aid/CPR/AED certification from an approved provider), unless the # of girls is more than 200. If the # of girls is more than 200, the Health Supervisor must have a certification that is Level II. Both the individuals certified for Camping and First Aid/CPR/AED cannot fill any other additional Event Staff positions including but not limited to: Event Coordinator, Camp Certification, Health Supervisor or Life Guard. Each Camp and First Aid/CPR/AED certified adult must have the appropriate volunteer security status.

Adult to Girl Ratio. Refer to the guidelines in *Volunteer Essentials – Chapter 4 - Safety-Wise, Knowing How Many Volunteers You Need*. Female Camp and First Aid/CPR/AED trained adults can be counted as part of the required number of adults. Each adult counted as a Safety-Wise ratio adult must be registered and have the appropriate volunteer security status.

Domestic Animals or Pets at Camp. Domestic animals or pets, other than service animals, must not be brought to any Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York camp at any time. Pets belonging to on-site, permanent staff will be contained—either indoors, behind a secure fence, or on a tie-out – while campers are on the property.

Men at Camp. It is expected that men camping with Girl Scout Troops are an active part of the adult team accompanying the Girl Scout Troop/group camping. If a MALE VOLUNTEER is one of the adults camping with a Girl Scout Troop/group, these steps must be followed for both Council and non-Council Facilities:

- A separate sleeping area must be designated for males away from girls.
- Registered males CANNOT be counted as Safety Wise Ratio adults due to the fact they must sleep in a different area than the girls.
 - A male cannot serve as the primary Troop Camp Trained adult, or adult to meet girl/adult ratios.
 - A male volunteer may supervise camping activities between the hours of 8:00a.m. and 10:00p.m.; during other hours he is expected to be in the designated separate sleeping area.
 - A female Troop Camp-Trained Adult, First Aider and/or Safety Wise Ratio adult to meet girl/adult ratios must supervise camping activities involving male volunteers.

Vehicles at Camp. A maximum of one vehicle per GS Troop per unit will be allowed to park at the GS Troop campsite. All other vehicles must park in designated parking areas. The Site Coordinator/Site Manager has the final decision as to the safe placement of vehicles. With the exception of loading and unloading directly related to arrival and departure of GS Troops, all vehicles must remain parked in their designated areas. If you have special needs (e.g., medical, physical, and ADA accessibility) and will need to drive your vehicle into camp, the Fire Road may be used. However, you *must* notify the Site Manager (of your need to drive your vehicle into camp) at least one week in advance, giving the Site Manager time to work on site designations, as well as making sure that the Fire Road will be open/cleared. It is very important to remember that the 5 mi./hr. speed limit *must* be followed at all times.

Personal Property. GIRL SCOUTS NENY is not responsible for property damage such as loss, theft, vandalism, acts of nature to personal vehicles and effects brought onto camp property for programs, events, training, GS Troop camp, special events, and resident camp.

Camp Emergency Procedures. Girl Scout Groups will access a copy of the camp emergency procedures prior to attending camp.

Reservations of GIRL SCOUTS NENY facilities. See GIRL SCOUTS NENY website.

Camping on Non-Council Sites. All sites must meet all [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) and council approval must be obtained.

Day Use of Council Sites. Reservation requests may be made for picnics, hiking outdoor skill building nature study, etc. GS troops wishing to use council sites during the day for GS programs must follow Camp Reservation Procedures.

Burn Bans. Burn bans are occasionally implemented by the Forest Service for the protection of life and property. GIRL SCOUTS NENY will follow their recommendations. The Encampment Director or Troop Leader may be contacted for updates. During burn bans, only propane, solar and indoor cooking is permitted.

Camp Closings. In the case of pending weather conditions, emergency repairs, etc., GIRL SCOUTS NENY will make the determination no later than noon, on the date of departure as to

whether facilities will remain open for activities. Listed Event Coordinators will be notified by phone and/or email if camp is officially closed.

Industrial Kitchen Reservation and Use. Use of industrial kitchens at GIRL SCOUTS NENY camps are subject to local regulations. GIRL SCOUTS NENY will abide by any and all regulations that apply and require that GIRL SCOUTS NENY staff, volunteers and girls do the same. Therefore, documentation that appropriate food management and/or food handling licensing has been obtained must be provided at the time the reservation is requested. Additionally, copies of that licensing must be on hand at time of use and shown upon request. In no case may children under age 14 be permitted in the industrial kitchens.

Port-a-Potty Cleaning Procedures. Kapers related to a “refresh” of port-a-potties used by Girl Scouts at Girl Scout events are permitted according to the guidelines that follow. Girls may:

- Perform a general sweep of the port-a-potty area for litter
- Check supplies (such as toilet paper and paper towels) and restock if necessary
- Spray air freshener and/or disinfectant provided it is in non-aerosol form

Any physical cleaning of the port-a-potties must be performed by adults and/or third party vendors; this includes wiping of the seats and/or interiors of the port-a-potties and removal of human waste.

Environmental/Ecological Issues. GIRL SCOUTS NENY is concerned with conservation of the environment. Good stewardship of the environment will be modeled by all volunteers working with girls and will be apparent in all we do. Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York encourages members to reduce, re-use and recycle during Girl Scout activities. Members should follow guidelines in *Volunteer Essentials*, *Outdoor Education in Girl Scouting*, and [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) for minimal impact to the environment during all outdoor activities.

XII. Girl Scout Finances

A. Financial Assistance

Financial assistance is to be available to girls and is to be based on multiple factors, including financial needs. It is the intent of Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York that financial consideration not be a barrier to participation in the Girl Scout program.

Eligibility. Applicants must be registered Girl Scouts before funds can be allocated – unless applying for membership dues. All applicants will be considered, unless an applicant has an outstanding account with the council, in which case, no financial assistance will be considered until the outstanding balance is paid.

Types of Requests. Financial Assistance will be considered for Girl Scout membership dues, activities, events, insignia, sash and Girl Scout Camps.

Application Process. Application for all Financial Assistance must be made by the parent using the Girl Grant Application. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

Camp Experiences. Only requests for camp experiences on Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York's camp properties will be evaluated. Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York does not provide financial assistance for camp experiences on non-GIRL SCOUTS NENY camp properties.

B. TROOP/GROUP FINANCES

Volunteer Essentials and [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) must be consulted and all guidelines followed.

All volunteers who are responsible for GIRL SCOUTS NENY/Troop finances, fund raising, and associated collections must be registered Girl Scouts with an appropriate volunteer security status.

GS Funds. All money collected, earned or deposited in the name of Girl Scouting is used to meet the purpose of Girl Scouting within GIRL SCOUTS NENY. Such money becomes the property of Girl Scouting and is not the property of individuals. Girl Scout Troop funds are not to be credited or given to individuals, because it will affect our 501(c)3 tax exempt status. Girl Scout Troop funds are not to be commingled with an individual's personal/ business accounts.

Money Owed to the Council or Taken From Girl/Group Accounts. GIRL SCOUTS NENY reserves the right to pursue collection efforts and/or prosecute to the fullest extent allowable under the law. Situations involving large amounts of money or product may require that a police report be filed, and/or be referred to the District Attorney for investigation. Additionally, individuals involved in delinquencies, theft, or misuse of troop funds (such as borrowing funds from the troop account for personal use) will face release from their current Girl Scout position and ineligibility for future appointment. Primary communication and collection attempts will begin and will be the responsibility of council staff. Failure to repay the amount owed can result in immediate criminal charges, notification to creditors, referral for collection by an outside agency, and/or wages garnished.

Bank Accounts

To safeguard Girl Scout Troop funds, all Girl Scout Troops and Service Units must establish a troop bank account. Troop and/or Service Unit funds MUST NOT be placed into a personal bank account. All account information must be registered with Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York. Council reserves the right to periodically audit and inspect transactions of troop bank accounts.

Bank Fees. Choosing a bank which does not charge monthly service charges or charges only minimal fees on Girl Scout Troop bank accounts is recommended. GIRL SCOUTS NENY has no control over services charges that a bank may attach to an account.

Account Name. "GIRL SCOUTS OF NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK" must be included in the name of bank accounts, e.g., Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York Troop 0000.

Signatures. Two (2) authorized signatures are required for each Girl Scout Troop bank account; only one (1) signature is required on each check. However, issuing a check for over \$500 requires *either* two signatures *or* written authorization (may be through email) of the second signatory documenting approval for the purchase/expense. The documentation must be attached to the monthly bank statement. Appropriate signatures are Girl Scout volunteers who

are registered with the Girl Scout Troop and have undergone a background check. On each account, there must be at least two (2) people who are not related to each other and do not reside in the same household. *All signatories should be registered GS adults and approved volunteers.*

The person who holds the debit card and/or checkbook should not be the only person who receives the monthly bank statements. Both individuals need to have access to bank statements. Troop bank accounts and funds are the property of GIRL SCOUTS NENY, and GIRL SCOUTS NENY reserves the right to randomly audit troop accounts (and will do so on a rotating basis). Any time the signers on an account are changed, GIRL SCOUTS NENY should be notified. *All signatories on the account are responsible for reviewing troop finances regularly.*

The troop may obtain one debit card to be used for deposits and payments; the card is for official GS business only. The debit card is not to be used for personal purchase. The cardholder is responsible for obtaining purchase receipts, securing the card, and is legally responsible for the transactions posted to the card. Debit card expenditures should be reconciled monthly to ensure accurate and timely bi-annual reporting and that there are no unauthorized expenditures applied to the account. Inappropriate debit card usage will result in forfeiture of the debit card privilege.

Any Change on a Bank Account. To make any changes in the banking account, a troop must be registered with the council. Examples of changes include but are not limited to:

- Changes in any signatures
- Change in address
- Change in bank name or account

GIRL SCOUTS NENY must be notified within 30 days of any changes to bank accounts.

Letter of Authorization. A *Letter of Authorization* to open a council bank account or to make a change to the account may be required by some banks. To obtain a *Letter of Authorization* from the council, contact your Volunteer Support Manager prior to going to the bank. Please give Council staff at least a two-business day turn-around time to process the letter. When contacting the council, have the following information:

- Name and branch address of the bank where account is to be opened
- Name of Bank Officer who should receive the Letter of Authorization
- Bank's fax number or email address
- Girl Scout Troop number
- Who will be authorized to sign checks from the account/who will be accountable for the funds

Please note that the Letter of Authorization will be signed by a council Officer to permit the financial institution to open the account, with the signers designated by the troop or service unit. This authorization letter notes the council can review bank account statements, or close the account if questions about the usage of these funds arise. This is a measure to help safeguard Girl Scout funds.

Reporting to Troop Parents and Adults.

- At least two (2) times during the year, parents/guardians of the girls in the Girl Scout Troop should be informed about the current status of the GS Troop income and expenses (Treasurer's Report must be provided).

- Parents/guardians of the girls in the GS Troop always have the right to review the income and expenses of the GS Troop, providing the girls and their parents with a copy of the Annual GS Troop Financial Report is recommended.
- Keeping Girl Scout Troop income and expense records up-to-date will reduce misunderstandings with girls and their parents/guardians about the use of Girl Scout Troop funds.
- Be sure to obtain receipts for all Girl Scout Troop expenses and deposits and attach them to the Girl Scout Troop copy of the required Annual Girl Scout Troop Financial Report.

Note: An ATM withdrawal receipt does not qualify as a receipt for reimbursement or justification for troop/group purchase. Troop/group checks may not be made out to cash. All purchases made with cash require detailed receipts of the goods and services purchased.

Annual Troop Financial Report to GIRL SCOUTS NENY

- The fiscal year for a Girl Scout Troop is June 1st to May 31st. The Annual Troop Financial Report is submitted, along with the May Bank Statement, to the Service Unit Treasurer by June 15th. The GS Service Unit Team must submit reports to council no later than June 30th. *Note:* If the account year-end balance is more than \$10.00 per girl carry over, note details on the Year-End Finance Report.
- Troop Leaders/Assistant Troop Leaders whose troops have not turned in the Annual Troop Financial Report will be contacted by council staff (and may not be reappointed) regarding submission of the completed report.

Managing Troop Finances.

- Troops will reimburse only those expenses that were approved in advance and that directly relate to a troop activity. Expenses that exceed the amount approved may not be reimbursed. If possible, potential overages should be discussed with the troop committee before purchases or expenditures are made.
- Sales Tax Exemption / Sales Tax Exemption Forms provided by GIRL SCOUTS NENY should be used when purchasing goods and services. These forms allow the troop to avoid paying state and local sales taxes, which are not reimbursable. Troops will be provided with a tax-exempt form.

To qualify as an exempt purchase, both the name of the organization and the volunteer must be identified on any bill or invoice. Payment must be made using cash, a check or a debit or credit card of the organization. A volunteer should not use a personal check or personal debit or credit card to make *tax-exempt purchases* on behalf of the organization. If a volunteer makes a purchase for the organization using her/his personal credit card, she/he may not purchase the item exempt from tax, because payment was not made using the funds of the organization.
- Expenses must be submitted no later than 30 days after the expense was incurred or the date of the event, whichever is later. The troop/group may elect not to reimburse items submitted after this date. No expenses will be reimbursed if submitted beyond six months of when the expenses were incurred.
- Mileage will not be reimbursed unless the troop committee elects to do so under special circumstances.

- Checks issued by a troop or group for reimbursement of expenses must be deposited within 90 days of issuance. The troop/group will not be obligated to honor, reissue or replace checks still outstanding beyond this 90 day period.
- The troop treasurer must deposit checks received from their parties (parents, GIRL SCOUTS NENY, etc.) within 30 days of receiving them.
- Expenses should be reported including the name of the vendor, store or other location, the purpose of expense, the date the purchase was made, and a detail of the itemized amounts to be reimbursed. Itemized receipts must be provided in order to be reimbursed.
- All funds received by a GS Volunteer payable to GIRL SCOUTS NENY, must be turned over to GIRL SCOUTS NENY within 30 days.

Disbanding Girl Scout Troops. A disbanding troop occurs when all the girl members in the troop decide to leave the troop and are either not going to re-register as Girl Scouts in any GS Troop, or are going to join another GS Troop. At that point, the disbanding troop number is retired, and the troop is no longer active. The term disbanding troop does not apply to one or more girls choosing to leave a GS Troop that remains active.

Allocating Funds:

- If none of the girls in a disbanding troop are continuing as a Girl Scout in another Troop, all remaining funds must be sent to the Service Unit.
- If all of the girls continuing in Girl Scouts choose to join the same active Girl Scout Troop, all funds shall be transferred to that Troop/group.
- If the continuing girls choose to join two or more other active Girl Scout Troops, funds will be divided on a per girl basis (based on those girls continuing in Girl Scouts). The Girl Scout Troop Leader must complete a final *Annual Girl Scout Troop Financial Report* indicating that the Girl Scout Troop is disbanding and that the bank account has been closed.
- If no girls are continuing in Girl Scouts, send a check for the remaining GS Troop funds payable to the Service Unit. Write the SU# on the memo line on the front of the check.
- If some girls are continuing, the report should detail what checks were sent to what other troops.

Girl Transferring to Another GS Troop or Becoming an individual GS Member. When a girl decides to move her membership to another active troop or becomes an independently registered girl, all troop monies are the property of the original troop and remain with that troop, unless the troop makes a decision to share a portion of the money that has been earned.

C. GIRL SCOUT TROOP MONEY-EARNING ACTIVITIES

Troop Money-Earning

Girl Scout Troop money-earning activities are valuable program activities and should be suitable to the age and ability of the girls. These Girl Scout Troop money-earning activities are consistent with the goals and principles of the Girl Scout program. For more specific direction see “*Chapter 5, Managing Group Finances*” in *Volunteer Essentials*.

Parent Permission. Permission must be obtained in writing from a girl's parent/guardian before she may participate in Girl Scout Group money-earning projects / Product Sales programs.

Council-Sponsored Money-Earning. The primary money-earning activity for Girl Scout Troops is QSP and the Cookie Program. In most cases, the Product Sales program should be sufficient to support the Girl Scout Troop activities. GS Troop participation in all GIRL SCOUTS NENY Product Sales is required for approval of additional money-earning projects. The determination of how proceeds from GS Group money-earning activities are used must be a girl decision.

Note: If financial obligations from the previous "cookie sale" year have not been met, girls will only be able to sell cookies (with a signed permission slip) at established cookie booths--this goes for Troop and Service Unit booths.

SU Permission Needed for Additional Money-Earning. Additional money-earning projects must be approved in writing by designated Girl Scout Service Unit Team members of the council before the money-earning project is undertaken. Participation in QSP and the Cookie Program and completion of the Annual Troop Financial Report, for the most recent year, will be reviewed if approval is requested for an additional Girl Scout Troop/group money-earning project.

Other permitted money-raising activities for Troops include bake/craft sales (where items are made by girls) and garage sales. Additionally, there are other examples included in "Chapter 5, Managing Group Finances" in *Volunteer Essentials*.

Additional money-earning projects will not take place while GIRL SCOUTS NENY Product Sales are occurring, unless the Council has granted permission.

Money-earning activities must be managed in compliance with all federal, state and local laws and regulations. All money-earning activities must be with organizations that align with the mission of Girl Scouting. It is the responsibility of the adult volunteers organizing and executing money-earning activities with their troops to ensure they are in compliance.

Prohibited Money Raising Activities for Troops.

- Raffles, bingo, scratch cards or any game of chance
- Auctions--live and on-line
- Selling of gift cards (script) / coupon books or discount cards
- Direct selling of any non-Girl Scout products (like Avon, Pampered Chef, etc.)
- Direct solicitations for cash
- Grants from corporations or foundations (unless working through the Council's Grants staff person).
- Use of any external online fundraising sites that are not related to the GIRL SCOUTS NENY cookie program. Prohibited sites include, but are not limited to: gofundme.com; kickstarter.com; giveforward.com and crowdrise.com. Any funds solicited in this manner will not be passed through to troops.

Approval Process for Additional Money-Earning.

- For any non-council money-earning activity, the Girl Scout Troop/Group Leader must complete the Group/Money Earning Request form and submit it to the Girl Scout Service Unit designee for approval before finalizing money-earning plans.
- Approval requires participation in Product Sales Program and good financial standing including submitting the current *Annual Troop Financial Report*.
- If approved, the Girl Scout Troop may proceed with the approved project.

- If not approved, the Girl Scout Troop Leader may correct the issue that caused the project to not be approved and then resubmit the revised *Group/Money Earning Request form* to the Girl Scout Service Unit designee.
- Girl Scout Daisies are permitted to conduct one additional Group Money-Earning Project outside of the Product Sales Programs.

Donated Funds. Troops and Service Units may not solicit cash donations. Occasionally, someone may offer a donation to a Troop or SU who did not solicit them. (i.e. offering a \$10 donation at a cookie booth because they don't want to buy cookies). Any donations of \$250 or more, or donations of any amount that need a tax receipt must:

- Be made payable to GIRL SCOUTS NENY
- Be mailed or dropped off to a GIRL SCOUTS NENY Service Center with a notation of which troop the donation is for.
- Be sent back (by council) to the designated troop.

The Council will send the donating organization an official tax receipt. Since only the Council holds non-profit status as a 501 c(3) with the IRS, any donations or proceeds from fundraising events conducted by troops are not eligible for tax receipts, unless they are submitted to the Council for processing.

For volunteers earning matching dollars through their employer for volunteer hours, please refer to the guidelines in *Volunteer Hour Matching Gifts and Other Tax Deductible Gifts.*"

Spending Funds. Always keep in mind that Girl Scouting is an organization for girls and all funds should be spent to benefit the girls. Direct benefit for the Girls could include but is not limited to:

- Re-registration costs for girl members
- Girl Scout activities open to all GS Troop members
- GS Badges and/or patches
- GS uniform components or GS program books
- A donation to a cause the girls decide upon

Long term girl-planned activity must be based on the girls' decision and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- A future GS trip that is age-appropriate and will take place within three to four years
- Assistance so that all GS Troop members will have the opportunity to attend GS activities/camp.

Recognition of Volunteer Contributions based on girl input could include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Re-registration costs for adult volunteers
- GS patches
- GS adult uniform components or GS program books
- Small appreciation gift for the volunteers--such as flowers for the leader

Since the girls earned the money through Product Sales Programs or other Group-Money Earning Projects, they should decide how their funds are spent.

D. INDEPENDENTLY-REGISTERED GIRL MONEY-EARNING

Money earned by independently-registered girls (non-Girl Scout Troop/Group members) participating in the cookie program will be deposited in the Service Unit's account. Registered

Girl Scouts participating in the cookie program may receive a “Cookie Dough” Card. The dollar amount of this card will be based on the Product Sales’ profit and incentive structure, the girl’s program grade level, and the girl’s level of participation. *Money raised is for Girl Scout activities and is not to be retained by individuals.*

Eligibility. Independently-registered girls may only participate in a cookie program under the supervision of a Girl Scout Service Unit Cookie Coordinator or a Service Unit Cookie Manager.

- The independently-registered girl will participate in the program in the same manner as the other members of the Girl Scout Troop.
- Proceeds generated will be retained by the GIRL SCOUTS NENY Service Unit and will become the property of the Service Unit treasury.
- The independently-registered girl will be eligible to apply for proceeds from the Service Unit account.
- Girls participating in this manner will be eligible to receive a “Cookie Dough” Card with a dollar amount equal to her product sales profit, based on the girl’s program grade level and level of participation.
- Any booth sales are coordinated by the Service Unit Cookie Manager and the Service Unit Manager and inputted into eBudde).

Note: If financial obligations from the previous “cookie sale” year have not been met, independently-registered girls will only be able to sell cookies (with a signed permission slip) at established cookie booths--this goes for Troop and Service Unit booths.

E. GIRL SCOUT SERVICE UNIT FUNDING

All volunteers responsible in any way for GIRL SCOUTS NENY or Girl Scout Service Unit finances and money-earning projects must be registered Girl Scouts and in good standing.

Accounts. Girl Scout Service Unit accounts may be audited by GIRL SCOUTS NENY at any time. GS SU bank accounts must be reconciled monthly and must maintain a positive balance at all times.

Compliance. Money-earning activities must be managed in compliance with all federal, state and local laws and regulations. All money-earning activities must be with organizations aligned with the mission of Girl Scouting. It is the responsibility of the adult volunteers, organizing and executing money-earning activities for the service unit, to ensure they are in compliance.

Source of Funds. The Girl Scout Service Unit will receive funds from the Product Sales Program. Money collected for Service Unit girl events should balance out with expenditures. If there is money left over, it should be used for the next girl event.

QSP and cookie profits for Independently Registered Girls (IRGs) will be received by the Service Unit. Just like with Troop bank accounts, funds are not credited or given to an individual. IRG members may request funds from the Service Unit to attend events or programs. The Service Unit team will decide, as a whole, how much they wish the girl to receive.

Funds from a disbanded troop will be placed into the Service Unit Account.

Additional Money-Earning. Service Units are encouraged to limit the amount of time spent on additional Money-Earning Projects so they can spend time on girl programming and adult development and recognition. Service Units are not allowed to conduct any money-earning activities while GIRL SCOUTS NENY Product Sales are occurring.

The United Way, requires GIRL SCOUTS NENY troops and SUs, in Clinton, Essex and Franklin counties to receive permission for any money-earning project from September-December. Money-Earning Project Forms are submitted to the Volunteer Services Manager during this time.

Other Permitted Money Raising Activities for Service Units are the same as *Other Money Raising Activities for Troops* (see above).

Service Units should complete the Money Earning Project Form and submit it to their Volunteer Support Manager for approval prior to starting any permitted money raising activity.

Prohibited Money Raising Activities for Service Units.

- Raffles, bingo, scratch cards or any game of chance
- Auctions--live and on-line
- Selling of gift cards (scrip)/coupon books or discount cards
- Direct selling of any non-Girl Scout products (like Avon, Pampered Chef, etc.)
- Soliciting businesses or individuals
- Grants from corporations or foundations
- Use of external online fundraising sites that are not related to the GIRL SCOUTS NENY cookie program. Prohibited sites include, but are not limited to: gofundme.com; kickstarter.com; giveforward.com and crowdrise.com. Any funds solicited in this manner will not be passed through to Service Units.

Tax Deductions for Donated Funds. As noted above, Service Units may not solicit cash donations. Any donations of \$250 or more, or donations of any amount that need a tax receipt must be:

- Made payable to GIRL SCOUTS NENY
- Mailed/dropped off to a GS Service Center--noting which SU the donation is for.
- Sent back (by council) to the designated Service Unit.

The Council will send the donating organization an official tax receipt.

Since only the Council holds non-profit status as a 501c(3) with the IRS, any donations or proceeds from fundraising events conducted by Service Units are not eligible for tax receipts, unless they are submitted to the Council for processing.

F. GIRL SCOUT SERVICE UNIT FINANCES

Managing Girl Scout Service Unit Funds. The Service Unit Manager is accountable for the management of Service Unit funds, even if another volunteer is appointed to help manage the funds. The Service Unit Manager may appoint another volunteer to be responsible for managing the Service Unit bank account. The volunteer must be a registered member of GSUSA, complete the Criminal Background Check process, and support the principles of Girl Scouting and the goals and objectives of the Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York.

Money Owed to Council or Bank Accounts. GIRL SCOUTS NENY reserves the right to pursue collection efforts and/or prosecute to the fullest extent allowable under the law. Situations involving large amounts of money or product may require that a police report be filed, and/or

be referred to the District Attorney for investigation. Additionally, individuals involved in delinquencies, theft, or misuse of service unit funds (such as borrowing funds from the service unit account for personal use) will face release from their current Girl Scout position and ineligibility for future appointment. Primary communication and collection attempts will begin and will be the responsibility of council staff. Failure to repay the amount owed can result in immediate criminal charges, notification to creditors, referral for collection by an outside agency, and/or wages garnished.

Service Unit Bank Accounts

Bank Choice. Choosing a bank which does not charge monthly service charges or charges only minimal fees on Girl Scout Service Unit bank accounts is recommended.

“GIRL SCOUTS OF NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK” must be included in the name of bank accounts, e.g., Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York Service Unit 0000.

To Open or Make any Change on a Bank Account (Two Steps Required).

Step One--Letter of Authorization. A *Letter of Authorization* to open a bank account, from the council may be required by some banks. To obtain a *Letter of Authorization* from the council, contact your Volunteer Support Manager prior to going to the bank. Please give Council staff at least a two-business day turn-around time to process the Letter of Authorization. When contacting the council, have the following information:

- Name and branch address of the bank where account is to be opened
- Name of Bank Officer who should receive the Letter of Authorization
- Bank’s fax number
- Service Unit number
- Authorization to sign checks from the account and who will be accountable for the funds.

The Letter of Authorization will be signed by a council Officer to permit the financial institution to open the account with the signers designated by the Service Unit. This authorization letter notes the council can review bank account statements, or close the account if questions about the usage of these funds arise. This is a measure to help safeguard Girl Scout funds.

Step Two--Account Registration/Re-registration. To open a bank account or make any changes in the banking account, a Service Unit must be registered with the council. Examples of changes include but are not limited to:

- Changes in any signatures
- Change in address
- Change in bank name or account

GIRL SCOUTS NENY must be notified within 30 days of any changes to bank accounts.

Safeguards. Two (2) authorized signatures are required for SU bank accounts; only one (1) signature is required on each check. However, issuing a check for over \$500 requires *either* two signatures *or* written authorization (may be through email) of the second signatory *or* other designated Service Team Representatives, documenting approval for the purchase/expense. The documentation must be attached to the monthly bank statement. Appropriate signatures are registered Girl Scout volunteers in the Service Unit (having undergone a background check). On each account, there must be at least two (2) people who are not related to each other and do not reside in the same household. *All signatories should be registered GS adults and approved volunteers.*

The person who holds the debit card and/or checkbook should not be the only person who receives the monthly bank statements. Service Unit bank accounts, and funds therein, are the property of GIRL SCOUTS NENY. GIRL SCOUTS NENY reserves the right to randomly audit Service Unit accounts and will do so on a rotating basis. Any time the signers on an account are changed, GIRL SCOUTS NENY should be notified. All signatories on the account are responsible for reviewing troop finances on a regular basis.

The Service Unit may obtain one debit card to be used for deposits and payments; the card is for official GS business only. The debit card is not to be used for personal purchase. The cardholder is responsible for obtaining purchase receipts, securing the card, and is legally responsible for the transactions posted to the card. Debit card expenditures should be reconciled monthly to ensure accurate and timely bi-annual reporting and that there are no unauthorized expenditures applied to the account. Inappropriate debit card usage will result in forfeiture of the debit card privilege.

Budgeting & Spending. It is recommended that Service Unit Teams develop a budget which includes projected sources of funds and anticipated expenses for major events in the upcoming year, as they complete their Service Unit Action Plan.

Always keep in mind that Girl Scouting is a girl organization and all funds spent should benefit the girls. Service Unit funds may be used toward the purchase of the following:

- Postage/Postcards
- Office Supplies (paper, copies, checks, etc.)
- Girl Scout Leader Appreciation Gift/Events
- Offset some Girl Scout Service Unit Event Costs
- Girl Scout Service Unit Equipment
- Resource Materials (Handbooks, Songbooks, etc.)
- Annual Meeting/Recognition/Luncheon Meals for Delegates
- Girl Scout Troop/Group Start-up Money
- Membership Recruitment Events

Expenses and Reimbursements.

- SU Teams will reimburse only those expenses that were approved in advance and that directly relate to a SU activity. Expenses that exceed the amount approved may not be reimbursed. If possible, potential overages should be discussed with the SU Team before purchases or expenditures are made.
- Sales Tax Exemption /Sales Tax Exemption Forms provided by GIRL SCOUTS NENY should be used when purchasing goods and services. These forms allow the troop to avoid paying state and local sales taxes, which are not reimbursable. Service Units will be provided with a tax-exempt form.

To qualify as an exempt purchase, both the name of the organization and the volunteer must be identified on any bill or invoice. Payment must be made using cash, a check or a debit or credit card of the organization. A volunteer should not use a personal check or personal debit or credit card to make *tax-exempt purchases* on behalf of the organization. If the SU volunteer makes a purchase for the organization using her/his personal credit card, she/he may not purchase the item exempt from tax, because payment was not made using the funds of the organization.

- Expenses must be submitted no later than 30 days after the expense was incurred or the date of the event, whichever is later. The SU Team may elect not to reimburse items

submitted after this date. No expenses will be reimbursed if submitted beyond six months of when the expenses were incurred.

- Mileage will not be reimbursed unless the Service Unit Team elects to do so under special circumstances.
- Checks issued by the Service Unit Team for reimbursement of expenses must be deposited within 90 days of issuance. The Service Unit Team will not be obligated to honor, reissue or replace checks still outstanding beyond this 90-day period.
- The Service Unit Treasurer must deposit checks received from third parties (parents, GIRL SCOUTS NENY, etc.) within 30 days of receiving them.
- All funds received by a GS Volunteer payable to GIRL SCOUTS NENY must be turned over to GIRL SCOUTS NENY within 30 days.

Reporting. At least two (2) times during the year, Leaders and Team Members in the Service Unit should be informed about the current status of the Service Unit income and expenses. Notification may occur at a Service Unit Meeting via a Treasurer's Report. Members of the Service Unit always have the right to review the income and expenses of the Service Unit. Keeping Service Unit income and expense records up-to-date will reduce misunderstandings about the use of the Service Unit's funds. Accounting of Service Unit operational funds and individual event funds are maintained separately, then combined for reporting on the *Annual Service Unit Financial Report*.

Service Unit Annual Financial Reports are prepared and submitted, along with the May Bank Statement to the council. Be sure to obtain bills and receipts for all Service Unit expenses and deposits and attach them to the Service Unit copy of the required Annual Financial Reports. A copy of the report must be shared with the Service Unit members.

The fiscal year of a Girl Scout Service Unit is June 1 – May 31. Service Units are required to provide annual financial statements to the council office. They are due June 30th, recapping the entire fiscal year.

XIII. Other Financial Situations

A. Collection of Outstanding Funds

To protect the integrity of council-approved Girl Scout Troop money-earning activities, all efforts will be made to ensure that the outstanding balances are paid.

Safeguards & Guidelines. The Girl Scout Troop will not assume debt responsibility for any individual.

As per Girl Scouts of the USA policy, **ALL troops must have a troop bank account.**

A Troop Product Sale Manager is responsible for handling large sums of cash during the QSP and Cookie Programs. Do not leave cash around your home, in your purse, or in your car. The troop is responsible for paying for all QSP products and cookies products ordered. If the money is lost, the amount is still owed to the council.

Girl participation slips and receipts are the troop's financial protection. The Troop Product Sales Manager is financially responsible for all the troop's QSP products and cookies,

until they have been signed for. Receipts must be complete and signed by the parent/guardian--*not* by the girls.

Troops must pay their entire troop balance in full regardless of non-payment or insufficient funds from a parent. If the troop cannot pay for the entire cookie bill on the due date, the troop should hand in as much money as they can to GIRL SCOUTS NENY--including the troop proceeds. GIRL SCOUTS NENY will work with the troop one-on-one to determine the troop proceeds based on the monies paid.

By New York State law, the troop receives QSP products and cookies from GIRL SCOUTS NENY and owes GIRL SCOUTS NENY for all product received. It is a separate transaction between the troop and the parent when products are given out from the troop and, therefore, the parent owes the troop money. Small claims cases can only be filed by the entity (person/troop) that is owed money against the person that owes the money. Small claims cases must be filed in the city/town where the person that owes money resides. If the troop would like assistance with the Small Claims Court filing or a GIRL SCOUTS NENY representative to accompany them, please email productsales@Girlscoutsneny.org

The following guidelines should be kept in mind:

- Payment for QSP product and/or magazines is due at the time the order is placed.
- Payment for cookies is to be collected **ONLY** upon delivery to the customers, not at the time of order. Only for Gift of Caring orders should payment be collected when ordered.
- If you have girls with large orders (100+ packages), do not give them all of the cookies at once-- give them 6-8 cases at a time. When they make payment, give them more cookies.
- Collect money at least once a week.
- Receipts are to be used for all transactions when product is moved and when money is collected.
- Preferred payment method is cash. Checks must be made payable to the troop. Do not accept starter checks, counter checks, out-of-state or third-party checks.
- In no case does the income from product sales become the property of individual girl members. In addition, for girl members who participate in Girl Scouting individually rather than through a troop, the total proceeds resulting from their efforts are retained by the Service Unit in which they are registered.

Cookie Program Collections Assistance. GIRL SCOUTS NENY is aware that some troops have parents or guardians that do not pay for some or all cookies they received during the Cookie Program.

- GIRL SCOUTS NENY may have some limited funding to assist troops that are in this situation. GIRL SCOUTS NENY needs to know the total owed by the parent/guardian. An amount per box will be calculated, and funds will be able to be distributed back to those troops to help replenish some of their troop funds (once GIRL SCOUTS NENY receives all information from all troops affected).
- Once the Product & Retail Services Team receives the completed Cookie Program Collections assistance Form with the attempted collection documentation attached (written timeline of conversations or emails), we can complete the calculation process. The level of assistance will be based on the information received. Product Sales Collection Forms and documentation must be included in the Troop Final Report Envelope, in order for the troop to be eligible for the Collections Assistance Program.

B. Relationships with Third Parties

For guidance in understanding ethical concerns related to fund-raising and financing, consult the noted sections of the Blue Book of Basic Documents. Individual violations or perceived violations will be reviewed and discussed with the party involved as they arise, based on the circumstances of the situation.

- While soliciting financial contributions for Girl Scouts, adult members may not solicit contributions for other organizations/beneficiaries. However, adults may engage in combined fundraising efforts authorized by GIRL SCOUTS NENY in which *the council* is the beneficiary (such as United Way). Girls may not engage in any direct solicitation for money.
- Any permission for endorsements, individual testimonials or authorization of books, plays, promotion pictures, radio and TV programs about Girl Scouting shall be first referred to the CEO of the council, for further action in keeping with the policies of GSUSA.
- For safety and security reasons, external sales on third-party internet sites, eBay or the Girl Scout council/service unit/troop/individual website of Girl Scout Cookies or of any other product, item or service MAY NOT BE CONDUCTED BY ANYONE AT ANY TIME, unless included as part of a GIRL SCOUTS NENY sponsored program (*The Blue Book of Basic Documents -- "Internet Sales"*).
- Sales on the Internet of Girl Scout merchandise such as uniforms, insignias, publications, and equipment may only be conducted by duly authorized and licensed Girl Scout councils, council shops retail agencies and/or GSUSA licensed vendors. Permission to sell on the internet must be obtained from GSUSA (The Blue Book of Basic Documents – “Internet Sales”).
- No soliciting of funds, using any external online fundraising sites that are not related to the GIRL SCOUTS NENY cookie program, is permitted. Prohibited sites include, but are not limited to: gofundme.com, kickstarter.com, giveforward.com and crowdrise.com. Any money solicited in this manner will be retained by Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York.

C. Volunteer Hour Matching Gifts and Other Tax Deductible Gifts

All voluntary contributions intended to benefit the Girl Scout program in the Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York jurisdiction regardless of value, form, or designated use shall be made only to the council and must follow current IRS guidelines. Incorporated as a public charity and designated as a 501(c) (3) organization, the council is the only entity to which tax-deductible contributions may be made. The Federal Internal Revenue Code determines any tax deduction available to a donor.

Because Volunteer Hour Matching Gifts are adult-generated funds and not generated by the girls as money earning program activities, they must be considered separately. Once Volunteer Hour Matching Gift funds are received at the council service centers, 100% may be returned to the Girl Scout Troop or Service Unit.

In cases where a company will match volunteer hours with a donation to an organization recognized by the IRS as a 501(c) (3) charitable organization, council will verify hours as requested and all contributions must be receipted by Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York. Individual Girl Scout troops and service units are not recognized as 501(c) (3) charitable organizations and, therefore, may not deposit these gifts.

Donations received as matching grants for volunteer service may be credited to the Family Partnership Campaign at the direction of the Service Unit or Troop but only if the funds are retained by the Council.

In order for the funds to be appropriately distributed, the volunteer must follow these steps:

- Complete the paperwork or online form required by the company
- Send an email to Give2GirlScouts@Girlscoutsnyny.org, letting us know you applied so we can watch for the check. Include, in your email, the following information:
 - Who is the volunteer requesting the grant – *Full Name, Service Unit #, Troop #, Address*
 - What is the name of the company to which the grant request is directed
 - How many volunteer hours are being reported
 - What amount is being requested
 - Will the funds be added to Family Partnership or returned to the Troop/Service Unit
- Email the information to Give2GirlScouts@Girlscoutsnyny.org--subject line "Volunteer Hours."

XIV. Product Sales Crisis Management

In the food industry, product complaints are not unusual. Councils and GSUSA expect a certain number of product complaints every year. These include, for example, reports that the product does not taste right or found damaged when the package was opened. Occasionally, there are reports of foreign objects in the product. Containment (confining a difficult incident to the situation and the location in which it took place) is the key to the successful resolution of product complaints.

Immediately notify the Product & Retail Services Team of any irregularities with the product or other situations to ascertain a course of action – whether an exchange of product or a refund is appropriate.

What if a Girl Scout is injured while selling Magazines, Nuts and Candy or Girl Scout Cookies?

- Give priority to securing medical attention for the injured person.
- In the event of a fatality, notify police and leave the victim and surrounding area undisturbed.
- Make notes about exact happenings. Be ready to answer – who, when, where, how, nature of injuries and/or damage. Have names and phone numbers of injured persons.
- Keep a responsible adult at the scene. Make sure the injured person and the surrounding area is not disturbed until police and ambulance arrive and assume authority.
- Put an adult in charge of the rest of the troop/group.
- In the event of an emergency, contact one of the following individuals in this order:
 - Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mary Buszuwski – cell 518-538-3831; work 518-489-8110 x103
 - VP, Marketing – Kris St. Peter – cell 518-796-1409; work 518-489-8110 x100 or 210

- Refer all media inquiry (newspaper, radio, TV) to the VP, Marketing, Membership, Product & Retail Services and/or Chief Executive Officer. Do not discuss the incident, place any blame, or accept liability.
- Follow all *Activity Checkpoints* in the *Leadership Essentials Manual*.

Any and all media contact must be handled by GIRL SCOUTS NENY. Do not respond to media questions or inquiries but, instead, refer them to GIRL SCOUTS NENY's Director of Marketing—Daniella Nordin 518-792-0947 x215

XV. Public Relations

The public impression of the GIRL SCOUTS NENY Council is affected by the activities of everyone in the Girl Scout Movement. Keeping positive, consistent messages before the public is primarily the function of GIRL SCOUTS NENY's Marketing Department, which handles all broadcast media (television and radio). By coordinating communications, Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York will provide strong, consistent messages to external and internal audiences.

In the case of serious accident, health emergency or death, all volunteers and staff need to be aware of the council procedures.

Girl Scout Service Unit Public Relations. When a newsworthy event or happening in a Girl Scout Service Unit occurs, Girl Scout volunteers must contact their Public Relations (PR) Specialist and/or Service Unit Manager. The PR Specialist and/or Service Unit Manager will then draft a press release and contact the appropriate local print media, (newspapers, newsletters, etc.) in their Girl Scout Service Unit.

Multiple Girl Scout Service Unit Public Relations. In some cases (where several Girl Scout Service Units are in an area served by one newspaper) one of the PR Specialists and/or the Service Unit Manager will be designated to work directly with the newspaper, to ensure a steady, non-repetitive flow of information.

Council-wide Public Relations. When it is felt that a newsworthy event or happening has the potential to interest a widespread audience, Girl Scout volunteers must first contact their PR Specialist and/or Service Unit Manager. If the PR Specialist and/or Service Unit Manager agree that the newsworthy event or happening has widespread appeal, a media/press release will be drafted and the council's Marketing Department will be notified. If the Marketing Department agrees with the PR Specialist and/or Service Unit Manager that the event has widespread appeal, then the Vice President of Marketing will contact the broadcast media (TV/radio).

National Public Relations. National media are never contacted by members of Girl Scout councils; GSUSA's PR staff handles all national media contact. If a Girl Scout volunteer feels that an event or happening has national appeal, they will follow the steps listed in the above "Council Wide Public Relations" procedure--if the council's Marketing Department agrees that the event or happening has national appeal, the Vice President of Marketing will then contact GSUSA's Public Relations staff.

Emergency Situations. If an emergency situation occurs, Girl Scouts and volunteers must follow the GIRL SCOUTS NENY Emergency Procedures which include making NO statement of ANY KIND to the media. Do NOT give out any names or information. Ask the media to contact GIRL SCOUTS NENY headquarters (489-8110).

Cookie Program Public Relations. In order to give every Girl Scout an equal opportunity to meet and exceed their personal Cookie Program goals, ALL Girl Scout Cookie Program media efforts (newspaper, magazine, television, radio, billboard, etc.) are coordinated by the council's Marketing Department. A single Girl Scout Troop, Service Unit, or individual may NOT contact the media nor list their contact information in an advertisement, commercial, PSA, etc. without written approval from the GIRL SCOUTS NENY Director of Marketing.

Flyers/Information in Mailboxes. It is against federal law to insert flyers in mailboxes. Girl Scouts and Girl Scout volunteers may not place any matter not bearing postage into a mailbox. This includes flyers, Cookie Program information, letters, etc.

IX. Technology

Safety Activity Checkpoints and *Volunteer Essentials* must be consulted and guidelines followed.

Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York supports the development and use of technology, and it is the council's intent to protect the safety, security and privacy of all registered members of the council. Electronic mail (email), sent to Girl Scout volunteer lists, is never to be used to send solicitations of any kind, inappropriate jokes or political information.

The use of email is a convenient and quick method of communication between council staff and Girl Scout volunteers, girls or their parents.

Confidentiality. Anyone using email should be aware that most emails are not necessarily sent through secure channels and that they should only send content which is not confidential or libelous. Persons using email should not "blanket mail" an email from someone else to others, without the permission of the person who sent the original email. Steps should be taken to properly secure and protect personal information in possession of volunteers, whether in paper or electronic form.

Conflict Resolution. Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York encourages volunteers and staff to take positive actions to resolve conflicts quickly. We believe a personal phone call or meeting to be the most effective and positive action step. Due to potential escalation of conflicts, email exchanges and use of social media, to resolve issues, are not recommended by council.

GIRL SCOUTS NENY Social Media Policy

According to Wikipedia, Social Media has been broadly defined to refer to the many relatively inexpensive and widely accessible electronic tools that enable anyone to publish and access information, collaborate on a common effort or build relationships." Some of the most common types of social media include social networking sites (Facebook) and (LinkedIn), microblogging sites (Twitter), forums, blogs and content-sharing services (YouTube).

The goal for Girl Scouts of Northeastern NY is to create and maintain a social media presence to recruit potential Girl Scouts, volunteers and donors, as well as to retain current membership. The use of social media enhances the visibility of our council as a united front-reaching out to the community and media regarding council activities, events and more. We continue to strengthen the mission of building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

Five Key Guidelines for Social Media Use by Volunteers:

1. Act responsibly on and offline:

- **Act responsibly.** The Girl Scouts of Northeastern NY Code of Conduct describes the ethical values to which all Girl Scouts aspire, including responsibility, respect, fairness and honesty. Ensure that your online content and conduct reflect your responsibility, especially when identifying yourself as a Girl Scout volunteer. Be respectful of the opinions of others, especially when acting as a representative for Girl Scouts.
- **Separate personal, business and Girl Scout networking.** Be aware of areas where lines between the personal, professional and Girl Scout arenas are likely to blur. Use privacy settings to separate activity on your personal social networks from your professional and Girl Scout persona. Create a separate account for your Girl Scout identity.
- **Avoid threatening communications.** Girl Scout volunteers should avoid speech that threatens, insults, or ridicules any person or groups based on their race, religion, gender, disability or other characteristics.

2. Add value:

- **Understand each social network's compliance policy.** When using a social media network, review the network's policies and ensure that you are in compliance before posting. Norms of use vary depending on the social space, as do rules for posting promotions, reviews, links and solicitations.
- **Listen first.** Read conversation threads thoroughly before responding to individual comments.

3. Be transparent:

- **Include a disclaimer.** As a Girl Scout volunteer, you have informed opinions on topics related to our work, and we want you to share them. However, if you choose to talk about Girl Scouts or Girl Scout related topics via social media channels, it is necessary to include a disclaimer acknowledging that your personal opinions are not an official statement on behalf of Girl Scouts of Northeastern NY. Disclaimers may be stated one time in your biography or profile page rather than being repeated in each post.
 - Full sample disclaimer: *This is a personal blog. I am a Girl Scout volunteer, but opinions expressed are my own and not those of Girl Scouts of Northeastern NY.*
 - Short sample disclaimer (as on Twitter bios): *Girl Scout volunteer. Opinions are my own.*

4. Abide by Girl Scout volunteer policies:
 - **Adhere to Girl Scouts of Northeast NY Code of Conduct.** As a volunteer it is important that you pay attention to social media etiquette and follow the general guidelines outlined for Social Media use for Girl Scout volunteers.
 - **Remove yourself from discussions in which a conflict of interest may be a concern.** Be aware of your relationship to Girl Scouts and other organizations. If you have a conflict of interest, be the first to acknowledge that relationship and remove yourself from the conversation.
5. Give credit:
 - **Respect [intellectual property laws](#).** Give credit where credit is due. If you are using another organization's content, obtain permission and make sure that the rights holders have received proper attribution in your post.

GIRL SCOUTS NENY Social Media Code of Conduct

Below are some general tips to remember when using social media.

1. **Be honest and fair.** Be transparent about your role as a Girl Scouts of Northeastern NY volunteer when communicating about Girl Scout-related issues online.
2. **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, the council or staff.
3. **Be courageous and strong.** Careful monitoring of social media is important in maintaining a positive image of Girl Scouts. If you see posts, comments or behavior that concern you, please notify your (insert staff title). Don't be afraid to speak up or ask questions.
4. **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 (insert appropriate council staff person or volunteer role).
5. **Respect yourself and others.** Respect other people's privacy and your own personal boundaries by using discretion when choosing to accept or invite a fellow volunteer and/or parents as your Facebook "friend" on your personal Facebook page or who you follow on Twitter. (For the service unit or troop Facebook page, the privacy settings will give you the ability to give permission to only those who are involved with the service unit or troop.)
6. **Respect authority.** Girl Scouts of Northeastern NY reserves the right to block or delete any postings, administrators or group members or to restrict volunteer access to social media sites within council control. Also, if you are contacted by a member of the media through a social media site and asked to comment on an issue, please refer them to (insert staff contact), (insert staff title) at (insert staff phone number).
7. **Use resources wisely.** Your time is a valuable resource and your social media activities should not interfere with your volunteer commitments.

8. **Make the world a better place and be a sister to every Girl Scout.** This is true regardless of how you are communicating, but it especially true in the online world.

9. **Be mindful of how you look and act by living the Girl Scout Promise and Law.**

Your online presence can reflect positively or negatively on Girl Scouts of Northeastern NY. Be wary of your actions captured via images, posts or comments. It is always recommended to set your personal Facebook profile to "private" (only your Facebook friends can see it), especially if you have Girl Scouts of Northeastern NY listed as an organization you volunteer for or represent. Please remember that your Facebook profile can be viewed publicly, so use discretion when choosing how the world sees you.

10. **Deliver effective and deliberate communication.** Respond to questions and concerns in a timely manner. Be a valuable resource for information.

DISCLAIMER

These policies are not a contract for participation as a volunteer nor are they intended to create or imply a contract. The Council reserves the right to change, suspend, or eliminate any or all matters contained herein and all other policies, rules, and procedures at any time without prior notice. It also retains the sole discretion to interpret the provisions of these policies and to depart from the provisions if the Board of Directors determines that such action is appropriate.

The current Council volunteer policies supersede the provisions of all other previous handbooks, manuals, policies, rules and procedures that address the subjects covered herein or are inconsistent with these policies and procedures. All such previous handbooks, manuals, policies, rules and procedures are expressly revoked.

The Council volunteer policies are consistent with the policies of GSUSA. The Council volunteer policies are reviewed periodically. Notice of revision(s) will be placed on the Council's web site, and in the Council newsletter, and will be communicated through the standard Council volunteer organizational system.