



Girl Scouts®

Girl Scouts of Western Washington

Volunteer Policies

Effective date: October 1, 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Girl Scout Mission, Promise & Law	3
Introduction.....	4
I. Overview of Volunteer Management Policies.....	4
A. Nature of the Volunteer Relationship	4
B. Purpose of Volunteer Policies	4
C. Girl Scouts of Western Washington’s Commitment to Volunteers	4
D. Volunteer as Role Model	5
E. Safety.....	5
II. Volunteer Selection and Placement	5
A. Inclusion & Non-Discrimination Policy	5
B. Membership Girl Scouts of USA	6
C. Check for Criminal Background History	6
D. Placement	6
III. Volunteer Training and Management.....	7
A. Training	7
B. Expenses and Financial Assistance.....	7
C. Feedback and Evaluation	7
D. Recognition	7
E. Resigning from Volunteer Position/Role.....	8
IV. Volunteer Expectations and Conduct.....	8
A. Child Abuse and Neglect	8
B. Discipline.....	9
C. Sexual Conduct	9
D. Anti-Harassment	9
E. Alcohol and Drugs.....	10
F. Smoking.....	10
G. Firearms & Other Deadly Weapons	10
H. Aggressive Behavior	11
I. Non-Solicitation/Conflict of Interest	11
J. Representation of Girl Scouts.....	11
K. Confidentiality	12
L. Transportation	12
M. Agreements/Contracts.....	12
N. Uniforms	12
V. Procedures for Reporting Suspected Cases of Child Neglect or Abuse & Contact Information.....	13-14

Girl Scouts Mission, Promise & Law

Girl Scout Mission

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

Girl Scout Promise

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

Girl Scout Law

**I will do my best to be
honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong, and
responsible for what I say and do,
and to
respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place, and
be a sister to every Girl Scout.**

*** The word “God” can be interpreted in a number of ways, depending on ones spiritual beliefs. When reciting the Girl Scout Promise, it is okay to replace the word “God” with whatever word your spiritual beliefs dictate.**

INTRODUCTION:

Volunteers have been the support of the Girl Scout Movement since its founding in 1912. The contributions of volunteers at all levels of the organization have been, and continue to be, extraordinary. Girl Scouts of Western Washington (GSWW) could not fulfill its commitment to girls and the community without the dedication and excellent performance of its volunteers. Volunteer policies are developed, approved and implemented for the protection and support of volunteers. These policies ensure that GSWW reaches its organizational goals through meaningful and satisfying adult volunteer involvement in serving girls.

Volunteer management is more than a series of forms and procedures. It is a systematic and strategic way to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all adults in which their needs and interests can be matched to volunteer positions. A volunteer management system values the contributions of volunteers. Volunteers can use their skills, time and talents to further GSWW's mission. Volunteers receive training, support and resources to perform their volunteer position in a successful and productive manner.

I. OVERVIEW OF VOLUNTEER POLICIES

A. Nature of the Volunteer Relationship

Anyone who donates his or her services under the direction and on behalf of GSWW without compensation is considered to be a volunteer. Volunteers are not employees of GSWW. Before performing any tasks as a volunteer, you may be required to apply for and be accepted and appointed to a volunteer position by GSWW. Either the volunteer or GSWW may end the volunteer relationship at any time and for any reason.

B. Purpose of Volunteer Policies

Volunteers are expected to work within the framework of the charter, bylaws, policies, standards, procedures, corporate goals and annual objectives of GSWW and/or Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA). Volunteer policies provide overall guidance and direction to GSWW volunteers as they perform their duties. They are not in any way a personnel agreement nor do they create any binding obligation on GSWW. Further, these volunteer policies do not create an employment relationship of any kind between the volunteer and GSWW. GSWW may change the policies at any time and expects that volunteers will respect and implement any such changes.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or her/his delegate, has discretion to resolve situations involving volunteers that appear to be outside the scope of these policies.

C. Girl Scouts of Western Washington's Commitment to Volunteers

GSWW volunteers -- supported, directed and assisted by GSWW staff -- make Girl Scouting available to girls within a 17-county jurisdiction. GSWW is firm in its commitment to create an organization that values diversity among its volunteers. We cherish the rich traditions of Girl Scouting while challenging ourselves to be innovative

in approaching programs and services to meet the current needs of our girls and volunteers.

GSWW encourages and supports your open and respectful communication with other volunteers, your volunteer supervisor, Girl Scout members, GSWW staff and community members.

D. Volunteer as Role Model

As an adult volunteer, you are a role model for adults and girls involved in Girl Scout programs as you work in partnership planning and implementing these programs. You are expected to honor the diversity of all people in all areas including race, ethnicity, religion, age, national origin, gender, veteran status, sexual orientation, marital status, or the presence of any physical, sensory, or mental disability. Please note that Washington state law defines *sexual orientation* as including heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality and gender expression or identity.

E. Safety

Safety is a prime consideration in all activities. The standards and programs criteria in GSUSA's publication *Safety-Wise* must be followed. GSWW also has additional policies and standards, including training and certifications, required for some higher risk activities and will provide volunteers with any additional materials that may apply to their specific activities. In addition, all volunteers are required to comply with all relevant federal, state or local laws regarding safety, including laws regarding seat belt use and use of cell phones while driving.

II. Volunteer Selection and Placement

A. Inclusion & Non-Discrimination Policy

Volunteers at all levels of GSWW shall be selected regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, age, national origin, gender, veteran status, sexual orientation (including gender identity), marital status, or the presence of any physical, sensory, or mental disability.

GSWW's inclusion policy extends to all areas of volunteer activities including recruitment, selection, placement training, working together, recognition, suspension, and termination.

GSWW selects volunteers on the basis of their qualifications for membership, their ability to perform necessary duties, and their availability and willingness to participate in required training. To ensure that all volunteers and prospective volunteers have equal access to the activities and opportunities of the organization, we affirm our commitment to diversity in recruiting, selecting, placing, and recognizing volunteers.

B. Membership with the Girl Scouts of the USA

GSUSA requires that Girl Scout volunteers become registered members of GSUSA, unless they are very short-term, temporary advisors or consultants. If you have questions about whether you are required to become a registered member of GSUSA, please contact your volunteer supervisor.

C. Check for Criminal Background History

Washington State law requires a criminal background history for all volunteers working with youth. GSWW conducts such histories before placing a volunteer and then periodically thereafter. You may request a copy of your criminal history report.

Although GSWW reserves the right to refuse to place a prospective volunteer for any reason, GSWW also reserves the right to refuse placement of any prospective volunteer with a criminal history, regardless of the nature of crime or date of offense. Factors that may be taken into consideration include, but are not necessarily limited to: what the conviction was for, the volunteer's age at the time of the conviction, and how long ago the crime was committed. Information about any criminal history will be shared only with relevant GSWW staff or volunteer supervisors. Failure to disclose any criminal conviction at the time of application may bar an applicant from volunteering.

If, during the time period that you are a volunteer with GSWW, you are arrested and/or convicted of a crime (including any criminal driving infractions such as a single DUI), or if you receive two or more moving violations within a two year period, you must notify GSWW staff immediately. This includes all such convictions or violations, whether or not they occurred while on Girl Scout business.

Registered sex offenders will not be considered for volunteer positions in which they are involved, or could be involved, with girls. Additionally, any registered sex offenders residing, staying or visiting in the household of a volunteer applicant or current volunteer must be disclosed and identified in the volunteer's application. In addition, GSWW must be notified immediately of such situations, should they arise at any point during the volunteer's tenure with GSWW.

D. Placement

GSWW makes every attempt to place volunteers in positions that match the skills of the volunteer and the needs of both GSWW and the volunteer. However, final placement decisions will be made by GSWW in its sole discretion. Placement in a volunteer position can be terminated at any time by either party for any reason.

III. VOLUNTEER TRAINING AND MANAGEMENT

In your role as a volunteer there is certain information regarding your training and the oversight of your work that is important for you to know. If you have any questions regarding anything described in this section, please consult with your volunteer supervisor or a GSWW staff person for more detailed information.

A. Training

Training is required for most volunteer positions and will be discussed with you upon placement. Required training must be completed within the time frame specific to a position. Volunteers may also be asked to take additional training to update or improve skills in certain areas. GSWW values training not only as a method of maintaining the high quality programs and experience we strive to provide girls, but also as an opportunity for adult volunteers to continue their own personal development.

The GSUSA publication *Safety-Wise* outlines minimum standards regarding what specialized training is required before undertaking certain activities. GSWW has additional standards, including additional training and certifications, required for some higher risk activities.

B. Expenses and Financial Assistance

Volunteers must obtain approval from their volunteer supervisor before incurring any expenses to be reimbursed. We also suggest that you keep accurate records of your expenditures because some non-reimbursed expenses associated with your volunteer activities may be tax deductible.

GSWW recognizes there may be people qualified and eager to volunteer in Girl Scouting but whose economic situations do not allow them to cover expenses directly related to their volunteer activities. If this describes your situation, we encourage you to consult privately and in confidence with your volunteer supervisor to determine whether GSWW is able to assist you with some or all of the incidental expenses necessary to fulfill your volunteer role.

C. Feedback and Evaluation

A volunteer supervisor may evaluate a volunteer's performance. The purposes of such evaluations are to:

- 1) Review the volunteer's performance in her or his volunteer role.
- 2) Give the volunteer an opportunity to provide feedback to GSWW.
- 3) Determine the volunteer's interest in continuing as a volunteer in either the current or another position.

Reappointment to a volunteer position may be dependent on the completion of a satisfactory review. We look at this as an opportunity to strengthen the relationship between you and GSWW and recognize the important work you are doing. Your supervisor may make a recommendation for future placement. A written summary of the evaluation will be placed in your volunteer file.

D. Recognition

In Girl Scouting we feel it is very important to recognize the work of our volunteers. GSWW follows a system of recognition that is outlined in GSUSA's publication, *Adult Recognition in Girl Scouting*.

E. Resigning from Volunteer Position/Role

Volunteers may occasionally need or want to resign their positions prior to the end of their terms. If you elect to leave your volunteer position, GSWW requests that you notify your supervisor with as much lead time as possible to assure a smooth transition.

IV. VOLUNTEER PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS AND CONDUCT

A. Child Abuse and Neglect

Child abuse and neglect are unlawful acts. Washington laws require staff to report incidents of suspected abuse or neglect to the Department of Social and Health Services, Child Protective Services (CPS) or to the local law enforcement agencies. GSWW staff who become aware of a suspected case of child abuse involving any child participating in GSWW activities or events, are guided by GSWW staff policies, procedures and Washington State Law. For volunteers' responsibilities in this regard, see *Volunteer Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect*, p. 13, below.

Abuse and neglect include but are not limited to the following:

- Emotional mistreatment of girl members or other children participating in GSWW activities or events, including verbal abuse or verbal attacks.
- Physical neglect of girl members or other children participating in GSWW activities or events, including failure to provide adequate safety measures, care or appropriate supervision of activities.
- Any form of sexual abuse of a child, including sexual touching, inappropriate bodily contact, exhibitionism, voyeurism, or any involvement of girl members or other children participating in GSWW activities or events, with pornographic materials.
- Physical abuse of girl members or other children participating in GSWW activities or events, including all types of corporal (physical) punishment, e.g. spanking, slapping or shaking.

Although GSWW may terminate a volunteer at any time for any reason, abuse and neglect is unlawful and will not be tolerated. As a result, GSWW reserves the right to:

- Suspend from her/his volunteer position any volunteer during investigation of allegations of abuse or neglect. This includes instances where the volunteer was aware of potential abuse or neglect by another and did not report it to staff, CPS or local law enforcement officials.
- Refuse membership endorsement or re-appointment to any volunteer accused of, arrested for, or convicted of child abuse or child neglect, or is a registered sex offender.

- Dismiss or exclude from affiliation with GSWW any volunteer who has been accused of, arrested for, or convicted of child abuse or neglect or is a registered sex offender

Volunteer Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

As a volunteer you are *strongly encouraged* to report any suspected incident of child neglect or abuse directly to Child Protective Services (CPS). However, even if you choose not to make a report directly to CPS, you *must* report any suspected incidents to GSWW staff. (Volunteers who make a report directly to CPS should also notify their local GSWW Field Executive that they have done so.) For information about how to report suspected child abuse or neglect, and relevant phone numbers, refer to pp. 13-14, below.

B. Discipline

GSWW will not tolerate, permit or condone any form of physical discipline or verbal abuse, such as sarcasm or name calling, at any time. Assistance with motivation and coaching techniques is available through GSWW training and/or from your volunteer supervisor as necessary.

C. Sexual Conduct

During Girl Scout activities, we do not condone or allow sexual displays of any sort, nor do we allow volunteers to publicly advocate for sexual practices or activities. Discussion of sexual issues is a private matter between girls and their families. If information on sexuality is part of a Girl Scout program, it is to be presented in an informational, objective and non-biased manner with prior written consent of a parent or guardian.

D. Anti-Harassment

GSWW is committed to and supports an environment in which relationships are characterized by dignity, respect, courtesy and equitable treatment. It is the express policy to provide all volunteers, employees and girl members or other participants at GSWW events and activities an environment free from all forms of unlawful or unwelcome harassment, including implied or express forms of sexual harassment. We do not condone and will not tolerate any harassment on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, age, national origin, gender, veteran status, sexual orientation (including gender identity), marital status, or the presence of any physical, sensory, or mental disability.

With specific regard to sexual harassment, GSWW strives to provide volunteers with an environment free of sexual harassment, which is a form of sex discrimination. It is expressly forbidden for any volunteer, male or female, to sexually harass another volunteer, employee, Girl Scout member or other participants at GSWW events and activities, of the same or opposite sex.

If you feel you have been subjected to harassment of any type, whether by another volunteer, GSWW staff member or any agent of GSWW, promptly report the incident to your supervisor, the next level supervisor, the Chief Operating Officer or the Chief Executive Officer. GSWW will investigate the report promptly. GSWW will not tolerate any retaliation as a result of making a good faith complaint.

E. Alcohol and Drugs

Volunteers may not interact with, or deliver programs to, girl members or other children participating in GSWW activities or events while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

The use of prescription or over-the-counter drugs in a manner not prescribed by a medical professional or the drug manufacturer is also prohibited. However, over-the-counter drugs or prescribed medication may be used for their stated purposes if the recommended dosage is not exceeded. In addition, the medication should not prevent you from performing necessary duties in a safe and effective manner. Check with your physician or pharmacist to determine whether the medication could inhibit your effective performance, including driving.

Alcohol shall not be available or consumed during any Girl Scout activity or program where girls are present on the site. (Note: a “site” includes the entire physical space under GSWW staff or volunteer control, or which is being used by them to deliver a particular program or event. *E.g.*, if a Service Unit (SU) is renting part of a state park, the “site” includes the sites the SU has rented and any camp space rented by adults providing Girl Scout programming or accompanying girls, even if they are in a private RV away from the girls.)

The consumption of alcohol on GSWW properties is limited to adults-only fund raising events planned and organized by GSWW. No girl members will be permitted anywhere on the site at any GSWW fund-raising event at which alcohol is served.

F. Smoking

Volunteers may not smoke in the presence of children while in their capacity as Girl Scout volunteers. In all cases, Washington State laws regarding smoking must be observed, whether or not children are present. (No girl member or other children participating in GSWW activities or events are allowed to smoke at any Girl Scout event or while conducting any Girl Scout business, even if the participant is of legal age to smoke.)

G. Firearms and Other Deadly Weapons

Firearms: Possession of any firearm is prohibited, whether carried on the person, or stored in a vehicle, by volunteers or non- members attending any Girl Scout activity or event, regardless of whether the volunteer has a license to carry a concealed weapon. However, this policy does not apply to law enforcement officers who are acting in an official capacity or are required to carry weapons even when off-duty, or to any GSWW-approved rifle and/or gun-safety programs subject to program rules. At troop meetings

or event sites not owned by GSWW, all firearms must be secured to ensure that children cannot access them.

Deadly weapons: Subject to exceptions noted above, use or possession of a deadly weapon, as defined below, by girls or adults is prohibited at any Girl Scout activities.

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 9A.04.110 defines a deadly weapon as "any explosive or loaded or unloaded firearm, and shall include any other weapon, device, instrument, article, or substance... which, under the circumstances in which it is used, attempted to be used, or threatened to be used, is readily capable of causing death or substantial bodily harm."

NOTE: Pocket knives and archery equipment, when used for their intended purposes and under trained adult supervision for program activities, are allowed under this policy.

H. Aggressive Behavior:

Aggressive behavior, by girls or adults, which may result in bodily, emotional or mental harm, is unacceptable.

When the aggressive behavior is displayed by a child toward another child or adult, the leader will discuss the behavior with the child and notify the child's parent or guardian. If the behavior continues or results in injury, a GSWW staff member must be contacted and the child may be removed from the premises, activity or event.

When the aggressive behavior is displayed by an adult ("aggressive adult") toward another adult or a child, the aggressive adult will be temporarily removed or suspended by a GSWW representative from any Girl Scout position and/or activity. GSWW must be contacted and a review is conducted by GSWW staff, which could result in the adult being removed from the premises, activity or event or in the volunteer's termination.

I. Non-Solicitation/Conflict of Interest:

No volunteer or any member of his/her family shall utilize his/her position or contact information acquired as part of that position for monetary gain, to advocate for positions and causes not directly related to Girl Scout business, or to solicit for fund-raising for other organizations, including their children's schools, sports programs, etc. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of in-person requests, regular mail, telephone, email, text messaging, or any other electronic or other form of communication.

A volunteer who has a conflict of interest with any GSWW activity or program-- whether personal, philosophical or financial-- will not serve nor be accepted as a volunteer with GSWW or will be limited in their participation to volunteer positions which are clearly outside the area of conflict.

J. Representation of Girl Scouts

Prior to taking any action or making any statement which might effect or obligate GSWW or GSUSA, volunteers must seek approval from appropriate staff. These actions and statements may include, but are not limited to, a public statement to the press, accepting or soliciting donations (other than from troop sponsors), a coalition or lobbying

effort with another organization, or an agreement involving contractual or other financial obligations. As a volunteer, you are only authorized to act as a representative of Girl Scouts as specifically outlined in your written position description.

K. Confidentiality

As a volunteer you may be exposed to proprietary or privileged information about GSWW, its business, its staff, its volunteers, other Girl Scout members (including girls), or their families. It is your responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of this sensitive information. Failure to do so may result in termination of your volunteer position or other corrective action.

L. Transportation

Drivers for Girl Scout activities, business, etc. must be adults, 19 years or older, have been licensed drivers for at least three years, and be licensed and insured to drive the vehicle they are using. Note: the three years' experience requirement begins at the time the driver becomes licensed. It does not include the period during which s/he had an instruction (learner's) permit.

M. Agreements/Contracts

Volunteers may not enter into or sign any agreements or contracts that contain a hold harmless agreement or obligate GSWW to assume any liability or financial responsibilities.

N. Uniforms

A uniform is not required for participation in Girl Scout activities. Volunteers who are conducting Girl Scout business or representing Girl Scouts are encouraged to wear the Girl Scout pin when not otherwise in uniform.

IV. Procedures for Reporting Suspected Cases of Child Neglect or Abuse & Contact Information

■ **Contact Child Protective Services* (CPS) directly with the information. You can contact CPS by calling 1-888-822-3541. This toll-free, 24 hour number, will give you the local CPS number in your area.**

OR

■ **If you are a leader or other neighborhood based (troop) program volunteer, you may contact your Service Unit's Girl Scouts of Western Washington (GSWW) Field Executive to provide the information, which will begin the process of making a report to CPS. * The Field Executive will contact CPS within 24 hours. (See next page for phone numbers of GSWW offices.)**

If you are a volunteer working with girls in settings other than troop program-- such as community overnight or day camps, or other events-- please contact CPS directly, or the staff person working with the specific event or activity.

All information is to be kept confidential. Information is to be discussed only with appropriate council staff.

Any person making a good faith report concerning suspected child abuse or neglect is provided civil and criminal immunity by Washington State statute RCW 26.44.060.

*** Leaders and other volunteers should be aware that, whether you call CPS directly or call your local GSWW staff person, CPS may require further information from you directly. However, reports to CPS may be made anonymously.**

Girl Scouts of Western Washington Office Phone Numbers*:

Field Executives (membership staff) can be contacted by calling the nearest Girl Scout Office, including local Regional Offices:

DuPont Girl Scout Center

(Also serves as the regional office for South Puget Sound):

Pierce County 253.475.0307

Toll-free from other areas: 1.800.541.9852

Grays Harbor Regional Office..... 360.532.2520

King County:

East King County Regional Office: 425.614.1126

Seattle Regional Office: 206.826.2174

South King County Regional Office 425.656.9175

Peninsula Regional Office 1.800.767.6828

South King County Regional Office 360.423.3800

Snohomish County Regional Office1.877.822.9435

Northern Counties Staff:

Island County 360.341.2774

Skagit & San Juan Counties 360.755.9000

Whatcom County 360.676.2570

After Hours:

In the case of a true emergency such as a serious injury or accident to a girl or adult participating in Girl Scout activities, please call the GSWW answering service at:

1. 800.303.9963.