

We are making changes on how we allocate Financial Assistance Awards to our members and wanted to answer some of the most frequently asked questions we have been hearing. We hope to answer all these questions in this document but realize that there may be more questions we haven't thought of. So, please, if you don't see your answer here, ask us!

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What are exact changes in the grant amounts?

A:

- Membership: grant is the same \$25
- Troop Dues: grant is the same \$40
- Supply Voucher: grant is **reduced** \$40
- Event: grant is the same varies
- Camp: grant is **reduced** \$250
- Travel Grant: **REMOVED** (new process coming soon!)

Q: When will these changes impact me?

A: 2018-2019 Travel, Event, Voucher and Troop Dues grants will conclude on Aug 30, 2019. Please note, if you are using Financial Assistance for Event programming in September, you must have your applications submitted by the close of business on August 30, 2019. 2019-2020 Financial Assistance will open on October 1, 2019 and can be applied to all eligible programs.

Q: What if I have an extremely challenging circumstance?

A: We recognize that extenuating circumstances exist. Our Philanthropy team is working hard to increase the amount of Financial Assistance that is available to fund girls with increased needs. We also offer additional assistance to the extent possible for the following extenuating circumstances:

- Homelessness
- Recent change in family structure
- Recent job loss
- Significant illness
- Natural disaster (flood, fire, earthquake...etc.)

If your family falls into any of these categories and doesn't meet our eligibility guidelines, please submit a written description of your situation to FinancialAssistance@Girlscoutswa.org or Girl Scouts

of Western Washington Financial Assistance, PO Box 770, DuPont WA 98327. Extenuating circumstance requests can take 7 days for review and eligibility response.

Q: When can I request Financial Assistance for an event occurring in October?

A: There are several events taking place late September and October 2019 with registration that closes in September 2019. We will only be processing Membership Grants during the month of September, so you must register for events taking place in September and request Financial Assistance before August 30, 2019. Any events that are taking place in or after the month of October will require that you submit a new Financial Assistance Application for eligibility once the new membership year begins on October 1, 2019.

Q: Since the Financial Assistance amount for the store grant is changing, does that mean merchandise prices will change, too?

A: Girl Scout branded uniforms, insignia and other troop supplies are GSUSA-sanctioned merchandise and come with pre-set pricing. Unfortunately, we cannot control the pricing on these items.

Q: Will the cost for camp be reduced since Financial Assistance to camp is reduced?

A: No. Girl Scouts of Western Washington already has tiered pricing that brings the cost to attend camp below the cost of running camp. Costs to run camps increase annually, but Girl Scouts of Western Washington works hard to keep increases in fees to a minimum.

Q Just how much does the Cookie Sale provide toward camp fees?

A: Our Cookie Sale and Product Program supports Girl Scouts!

- 43% goes to girl programming (including camp!)
- 23% goes toward the cost of products
- 19% goes to troop & girl rewards
- 12% goes toward administrative costs & fundraising

Q: Why did we reduce camp grants so much?

A: We would love to provide free camp to all girls requesting Financial Assistance. The reality, with any budget, is that funds are limited. About 50% of our entire Financial Assistance budget goes toward access to camp. For long-term sustainability, in order to support multiple grant options, we need to place limits on Financial Assistance. These were our options:

1. Limit the number of girls receiving full Financial Assistance grants, OR
2. Reduce the amount of each grant and give MORE girls 50% assistance.

After gathering input, we agreed that we would give MORE girls assistance.

Q: When will the camp award changes go into effect?

A: For the 2019-2020 Membership Year our Financial Assistance Camp awards will be reduced from \$600 to \$250. The New Financial Assistance Grant awards will go into effect on October 1, 2019. We are currently adapting a process that will be beneficial for our members' camp grant request procedures. We will update the Financial Assistance website in October with these details. We understand that

this may impact families differently. If you have any questions regarding this change, please contact us at FAquestions@girlscoutsw.org.

Q: How will the elimination of travel grants impact my troop's 2020 travel plans?

A: The good news is that if your travel plans have been submitted and approved by August 30, 2019, Financial Assistance will be awarded. Travel grant awards will no longer be available after August 30, 2019.

Q: What about Financial Assistance for future travel?

A: The travel grant program has been discontinued from the Financial Assistance program. We will continue to honor eligible travel grant requests until August 30, 2019. We also encourage traveling groups and troops to participate in Product Programs and money earning activities to support travel activities. For service project travel, our Philanthropy team is happy to assist girls with grant application questions or support. For more details contact donate@girlscoutsw.org.

Q: How will Financial Assistance changes impact foster youth?

A: Girls who are in a foster care program meet eligibility criteria and will qualify for Financial Assistance awards.

Q: Can a girl in my troop who needs Financial Assistance get a Brownie vest as part of her bridging ceremony?

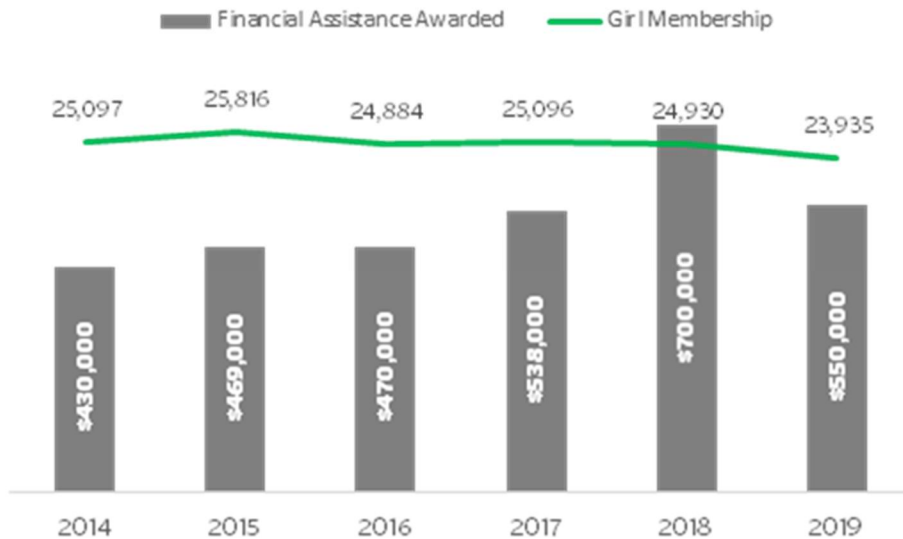
A: YES! A sash is \$7.00, and a vest is \$19.50. These can be also be purchased with a \$40 Supply Voucher Grant.

Q: Why doesn't the Supply Voucher Grant cover the full costs of the start-up uniform for girls?

A: It's very close. The Daisy uniform and start up badges equals \$38 + tax, which is about \$1.25 more than the grant, so there will be a small out-of-pocket expense. If the uniform is ordered online, any shipping costs can be covered on "Free Shipping Fridays!"

Q: We did a lot of work last year to update the Financial Assistance application process. Why did we provide input to the most recent change last year, only to change to something completely different the next year?

A: Our efforts last year to improve our Financial Assistance program were focused on creating a user-friendly experience for our members. The outcomes of this work were very successful and created more Financial Assistance requests than in years past. Below are GSWW's Financial Assistance and girl membership data. As you can see, we saw growth of about \$160K in grant awards, but we did not see an increase in girl membership. Unfortunately, this isn't a sustainable Financial Assistance model.



Q: Where do membership fees go and why can't this be applied towards Financial Assistance needs?

A: Girl Scout membership dues are sent to Girl Scouts of the United States of America. These fees do not directly support Girl Scouts of Western Washington's Financial Assistance Program.

Q: How did we determine which grant amounts to change?

A: We determined that we did not want to cap a grant and say no to a girl requesting help. We asked ourselves this question: For example, do we give fewer girls full camp grants or MORE girls a partial camp grant? Our preference is to have MORE girls experience camp! Reducing the dollar amounts of grants allows more girls to participate in each grant category.

Q: Why can't we use the event grant for day camp?

A: Currently, event grants do not include participation in camp programs. In FY20, we will have a Financial Assistance project team dedicated to closely monitoring Financial Assistance trends. We aim to discuss funding and program concepts so that we can provide our families equal access to all Girl Scouts of Western Washington programs.

Q: How can I support Girl Scouts of Western Washington's Financial Assistance program and provide opportunities to girls in need?

A: There are many ways you can contribute! Please consider making a meaningful annual donation, a monthly reoccurring gift, attending a fundraising event throughout the year, submitting your donation or volunteer hours for a company match with an eligible employer, or including Girl Scouts of Western Washington in your estate planning. Please reach out to our Philanthropy Team by emailing Donate@girlscoutsww.org to learn more about supporting our Financial Assistance program.

Questions? Please ask us!

FAquestions@girlscoutsww.org