

**Girl Scouts North-Central Alabama (GSNCA)**  
**Troop/Service Unit Policies**

105 Heatherbrooke Park Drive  
Birmingham, Alabama 35242

*Adopted by the GSNCA Board of Directors: October 18, 2017*  
*Revisions Approved by GSNCA Board of Director: August 15, 2018*

**A. General**

- 1) Girl Scouts of the USA Safety Activity Checkpoints, *Volunteer Essentials, the Blue Book of Basic Documents* and following statements will comprise the troop and service unit operating policy statements for Girl Scouts of North-Central Alabama, Inc. (GSNCA).
- 2) All GSNCA adult members will comply with the GSNCA Volunteer Personnel Policies approved by the GSNCA Board of Directors August 24, 2016 and revised August 15, 2018.
- 3) Girl Scout leaders may not sign hold harmless agreements or waivers for a troop activity with an outside vendor providing a program activity. If a vendor requires a hold harmless agreement be signed, parents must be made aware of the potential risks and decide whether or not to sign the agreement for their own daughter(s) participation in the event; participation in the event will be optional. Parents who sign the activity waiver must also sign a council hold harmless agreement for the activity. The activity participation must be approved by the council by completing a troop activity application to ensure the activity meets the required Safety Activity Checkpoints.
- 4) Personal firearms are not permitted on any GSNCA property or at any GSNCA activity except as carried by authorized law enforcement personnel or as part of a council-wide approved certified instruction program.
- 5) No smoking or vaping is permitted on any GSNCA property or in any GSNCA building.
- 6) No alcoholic beverages, controlled substances or illegal drugs are allowed on GSNCA owned property. Use of alcoholic beverages at adult-only events on GSNCA property must be requested and approved by the CEO in writing. If the use of alcoholic beverages is approved supplemental/additional insurance must be purchased.
- 7) Council and Troops will ensure that separate bathroom facilities, male and female, are designated for all day activities which involve family members; separate sleeping areas and bathroom facilities, male and female, must be designated for all overnight activities. Troops, Service Units and GSNCA may conduct family camping events with family shared units with the approval of the CEO.
- 8) All volunteer/service unit day camps must complete a day camp application that is approved by the CEO and all registration and fees processed/passed-through the council.

- 9) Financial assistance may be provided, on the basis of financial need and the council operating budget, to active girl and adult members for the cost of membership dues, uniforms, activities and training approved by the council.
- 10) GSNCA supports and maintains environments that are free of child abuse and neglect as defined by Alabama state law and prohibits any adult or girl participating in a Girl Scout activity to physically, mentally, emotionally, sexually or verbally abuse or neglect any girl or adult. If abuse or neglect is suspected, the incident should be reported to the Alabama Department of Human Resources at the number listed on the GSNCA emergency procedure card.
- 11) In emergency or crisis situations staff and volunteers must adhere to all crisis guidelines and procedures outlined in the GSNCA crisis management plan. In the case of any accident or media event that occurs during a Girl Scout sponsored event staff and volunteers must follow the instructions on the GSNCA emergency procedures card.
- 12) The corporation/council bylaws specify the delegate structure and the delegate's role in the governance of GSNCA.

## **B. Troop Finances**

- 1) Troops may have sponsors to include a meeting place sponsor and approved monetary and in-kind sponsors. Troop monetary sponsorships shall not exceed \$350 unless approved by the CEO on a case-by-case basis. Any monetary or in-kind donations must be accepted and recognized by GSNCA in accordance with IRS guidelines. Sponsorship agreements will be submitted through the finance department to the CEO for approval. Exceptions to the \$350 amount for extended trips and community service projects must be requested and approved by the CEO. All contributions to a troop will be made as a "donor restricted" donation to GSNCA. All sponsorships received by troops must be sent to the council for processing for the donor to receive an IRS tax deduction letter. The troop will receive an ACH deposit in the amount of the sponsorship from GSNCA and the donor will receive letter verification of their tax-exempt donation. Monetary or in-kind donations greater than \$350 received by a troop will be processed through the council and \$350 returned to the troop unless a higher amount has been approved by the CEO. Any sponsorship to a troop in excess of \$350 retained by GSNCA will be placed in the girl scholarship fund to provide Girl Scout opportunities for girls in-need
- 2) All troop funds will be maintained in a bank account in the name of *Girl Scouts of North-Central Alabama, Inc., Troop \_\_\_\_* (insert troop number). At least two unrelated adult troop members must be signers on the account. Troop bank accounts will be opened with Girl Scouts of North-Central employer federal tax identification (EIN) number. A letter verifying the troop number, responsible signers and all required bank requested documents will be provided by the area membership manager to the troop leaders to open the troop account.

- 3) Funds in troop accounts may not be prorated or kept in separate accounts for the individual girl members in the troop. All girls in troop will benefit equally from the fall product, annual cookie program and any other money-earning activities.
- 4) Girls must be registered prior to participating in any troop activity including the fall product sale, annual cookie program or money-earning activity.
- 5) Troop money-earning activities are limited to the fall product sale, the annual cookie program and approved additional money earning activities. Troops that do not participate in the annual cookie program will not be allowed to conduct money-earning activities. Money-earning activities, other than the fall product sale and the annual cookie program, require a money-earning activity application be completed and approval by the CEO prior to conducting the activity. Money earning activities should not take place during the annual cookie program and comply with United Way guidelines and restrictions for the area. Money-earning activities for girl's highest award projects will be included as part of their project development and approval process and submitted to the Volunteer Services Department for approval. If a troop is engaged in a project or trip that will require a large expenditure of funds, special permission to conduct additional money-earning activities may be requested from the CEO. For trip approval the troop must have an extended trip application on file. If for a community service project, the project must be outlined on the money-earning application. The funds for these extended trips and community service project should be noted as restricted on the troop financial report.
- 6) Each troop will submit an annual financial report to the council not later than June 15<sup>th</sup> each membership year.
- 7) In the event a troop disbands, the troop monetary assets will be turned into the council within one month of disbanding. Assets will be held for 12 months pending the reorganization of the troop. If the troop fails to reorganize within 12 month the funds will be transferred to the financial assistance account. Troop supplies and others assets will be turned over to the service unit manager to be used for start-up/new troops or service unit events. If girls from the disbanding troop transfer to another troop, the troop funds and assets will be transferred proportionally based upon the number of girls in the troop.
- 8) All funds from GSNCA to the troop will be by direct deposit. Each troop must have an ACH form on file with the council for to receive deposits. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the CEO.
- 9) All payments to GSNCA for the fall product sale and annual cookie program will be by automated clearing house (ACH) transactions.

### **C. Service Unit Finances**

- 1) All service unit funds will be maintained in a bank account in the name of *Girl Scouts of North-Central Alabama, Inc., Service Unit \_\_\_\_\_(insert service unit number)*. At

least two unrelated adult service unit members must be signers on the account. Service unit bank accounts will be opened with Girl Scouts of North-Central EIN number with a signed letter with all required documents from the area membership manager.

- 10) All funds from GSNCA to the Service Unit will be by direct deposit. Each service unit must have an ACH form on file with the council for deposits. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the CEO.
- 2) Service Units maintain custodial and administrative funds for the benefit of all girls in the unit and are generated by service unit sponsored events, membership and product sales incentives. Service Units normally do not conduct money-earning activities. Exceptions for service unit money-earning activities must be submitted to the CEO for approval.
- 3) Every service unit will file a financial report with GSNCA by June 15<sup>th</sup> each membership year.

#### **D. Council Funding**

All troops are encouraged to participate in the annual cookie program and the fall product sale. Troops and girls that do not participate in the annual cookie program will not be entitled to the entrepreneurial discount rates for events, facility rental, day and resident camp.

#### **E. Troop Organization and Activities**

- 1) All adult volunteers, except temporary advisors or program presenters, must be registered members of GSUSA.
- 2) All girls that participate in GSNCA activities, including troop meeting and activities, must be currently registered members of GSUSA.
- 3) Unregistered adults and children may attend and participate in troop events and activities provided supplemental insurance is purchased.
- 4) Troops must include a minimum of five girls, unless an approved older girl troop, and be willing to add more girls to the troop up to at least 12 girls. Troops that will not accept up to 12 girls should notify and request approval through their membership manager and the senior director of membership for approval by the CEO.
- 5) The minimum number of unrelated adult volunteers for each troop depends upon the level, grade and the number of girls in the troop, refer to *Volunteer Essentials*. Troops should include two adult trained leaders (leadership team), fall product sales and cookie program manager(s) and an active troop committee. If the two leaders are related or residing in the same house, a third non-related must be a registered active member of the leadership team.

- 6) Health history forms will be completed and signed by each girl's parent and must be in the possession of the troop leadership team at all times.
- 7) Troops must submit council permission for camping trips, money-earning activities, all water activities, horseback riding, caving, skiing, rappelling, trips outside council, trips of three or more nights and other activities deemed high risk.
- 8) Every driver transporting girls on an activity must carry personal liability insurance. All drivers must have a background check before transporting girl troop members. A driver may not transport girls if convicted of any of the following within the past five years: DUI, DWI, hit and run, leaving the scene of an accident, reckless driving, three or more speeding tickets, driving without a license or a felony in a motor vehicle.

#### **F. Use of Chartered, Leased or Borrowed Vehicles**

All contracts for charting, leasing or borrowing a vehicle must be submitted to the CEO for approval. Proof of vehicle insurance in the amount of at least one million liability insurance must be attached to the request.

#### **G. Use of Program Centers, Camps and Offices**

- 1) Members may use the program centers, offices, with council approval. Requests for use must be made through the program department. Keys and alarm codes will be issued to the responsible volunteer who reserves the space.
- 2) Members and non-members will be allowed to rent the council program center, camps, on a paid fee basis. Reservations will be made through the program department. Deposits must be paid within two weeks of the date the reservation was made and full fee paid within two weeks of the date of the event. In the event that the rental is canceled GSNCA will charge an administrative fee of 25% of the total rental cost if canceled with more than 30 days' notice and 50% of the total rental cost if notice is less than 30 days from the date of rental. This administrative fee will be deducted from the damage deposit held by GSNCA.
- 3) Users will be responsible for clean-up and any damage to the program center. The cost of clean-up and repairs will be deducted from the damage deposit. If damages exceed the damage deposit the renter will be billed for the additional costs.
- 4) Pets, other than service animals, are not permitted at any activity at the camps, office and program center without permission from the CEO.

#### **H. Social Media**

- 1) Troops and service units are encouraged to use social media as a means of communication. Troops and service units should use closed social media sites as a means

of sharing information and activities. If requested GSNCA staff should be allowed to participate in the closed troop and service unit social media group.

- 2) GSNCA can ask troops and service units to remove posts from their sites that have misinformation or embargoed information.
- 3) GSNCA will remove posts from GSNCA sites that do not directly support the mission or contain derogatory remarks or misinformation and advertising of other goods and services.
- 4) GSNCA, troops and services units should not list girls names in photographs posted on social media sites. If names are posted only the first names of girls should be used.
- 5) GSNCA may ask members to not use email addresses that may be offensive to the mission of Girl Scouts as part of their volunteer work.