



Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska Volunteer Policies

Volunteer Philosophy

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

Affirmative Action

The Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska Council shall not discriminate against an otherwise qualified adult volunteer by reason of disability or on the basis of age. Furthermore, there shall be no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, sex, creed, marital status, national origin, citizenship, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status. In addition, to ensure full equality of opportunity in all operations and activities of the organization, affirmative action policies and procedures shall be utilized in the recruitment, selection, training, placement, and recognition of volunteers. Special emphasis shall be placed upon securing representation of under-represented racial minorities.

Recruitment

The recruitment process consists of a number of methods to attract qualified volunteers who will be matched to appropriate open or newly created volunteer positions. Each volunteer position will have a written description that defines specific responsibilities and schedules, clarifies expectations, and, in conjunction with performance goals, forms the basis for assessment of volunteer performance, reappointment and termination.

Membership

Every participant in any Girl Scouting event or activity (girl or adult) must register and become a member of Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA). GSUSA membership dues are valid for one year. Membership dues (currently \$25) are sent directly to GSUSA; no portion of the dues stays with Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska. Membership dues may not be transferred to another member and are non-refundable.

Information Gathered

Every participant in Girl Scouting is required to complete the GSUSA registration process and provide all necessary information. This information is securely stored through GSUSA's Customer Relationship Management System. Additional information may be requested based on the potential volunteer's desired or actual placement and screening process.

Interview

Designated Girl Scout Spirit of Nebraska staff or volunteers may conduct an interview with a potential volunteer. The interview may include a review of the individual's interests, talents, and availability.

Background Screen

Background screens must be completed online through Asurint and are kept only as long as it is necessary. Screens may include, but are not be limited to, the Child and Adult Abuse/Neglect Central Register, Nebraska State Patrol and/or the Federal Bureau of Investigations, Sex Offender Registry, the Division of Motor Vehicles, and a national criminal record search. Inability or refusal to complete a background screen will result in removal from or non-appointment to a position.

To assure a safe environment for all girl and adult members, Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska requires initial background screening and repeated screening every three years including, but not limited to, the following volunteer positions:

- Volunteers fulfilling the adult requirement of the adult-to-girl ratio by grade level as detailed in Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska's Volunteer Guide and Safety Activity Checkpoints; and all troop co-leaders.

- Volunteers attending overnight trips with troops, groups or sponsored events. This is applicable whether sleeping is involved or not.
- Drivers of planned Girl Scout field trips and other activities – outside the normal meeting time and place – in which a group will be transported in private vehicles. Drivers must also maintain a good driving record, a valid license, and a registered and insured vehicle.
- First-aiders serving in troop or council capacity.
- Administrative volunteers who handle money and/or product. This will include a minimum of one designee per troop who is responsible for handling, receiving, and depositing product sales proceeds, volunteers or parents working at cookie sale booths, troop or service unit treasurers, and any signer on the troop or service unit bank account. This does not mandate that all parents handling money for their daughter during product sales be screened, although as a general practice troops may insist all parents are cleared.

An individual will not be placed into a volunteer position if he or she has been indicted or convicted of any of the following crimes:

- Aggravated or armed robbery
- Animal abuse/cruelty
- Arson
- Child abandonment
- Child abuse
- Child molestation or debauching a minor
- Criminal non-support
- Domestic violence
- Exploitation of a minor involving drug offenses
- Felony controlled substances offences
- Felony violation of custody
- Incest
- Kidnapping
- Murder, first or second degree
- Sexual abuse of a minor
- Sexual assault
- Sexual exploitation of a minor, including child pornography
- Voluntary manslaughter
- Making terrorist threats
- Crimes of deceit and dishonesty

An individual will not be placed into a volunteer position if he or she has been indicted or convicted of any of the following crimes within the last seven years:

- Assault
- Robbery, theft, or larceny
- Burglary
- Misdemeanor contributing to the delinquency of a child
- Driving while intoxicated or under the influence (DWI, DUI)
- License suspension or revoked
- Reckless driving
- Drug/controlled substances charges
- Leaving the scene of an accident (hit and run)
- Vehicular homicide, manslaughter or assault arising out of the operation of a motor vehicle

Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska reserves the right to make exceptions to this policy with Council CEO review and approval based on incident and timing of the charge with the following:

- Written endorsements from individuals who are knowledgeable about the applicant, including Girl Scout volunteers working with this individual, their life and work history
- Yearly repeated background screening



Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska reserves the right to use discretion for all other crimes and/or questionable behavior with incidents evaluated on the following factors:

- Relationship between the incident and the type of service the individual will provide
- Individual's employment and/or volunteer history
- Likelihood that the incident would prevent the individual from performing her or his responsibilities in a manner consistent with the safety and welfare of girls
- Age of the individual at the time of the incident
- Amount of time that has passed since the incident occurred

Other Screening Mechanisms

Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska reserves the right to utilize additional tools to thoroughly screen an individual.

Notification of Reports

If a report is found and Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska deems that the individual cannot serve in a capacity as a volunteer, the council will notify the individual in writing. The council will also notify the staff member managing that volunteer and if applicable, troop volunteers, without divulging the nature of the offense.

Placement

Volunteers are selected on the basis of ability to perform the volunteer position, volunteer and Council need, ability and willingness to complete orientation and training, meeting the qualifications for membership in the Girl Scout Movement, possession of appropriate personal skills for the position, agreement to abide by the policies and principles of GSUSA and Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska and satisfactory completion of the Council's adult screening process. Volunteers must be willing to accept and be a role model of the Girl Scout Promise and Law inherent in Girl Scout membership.

Every attempt will be made to place volunteers in positions that meet both their needs and the needs of the Council. In instances where this is not possible, the needs of the Council will take precedence over the needs of the individual. Individuals not placed in a position for which they applied may be recommended for other positions, and they may request to be considered for another position. If the Council declines the individual's application to volunteer, the individual will receive notification of the decision.

Adult-to-Girl Ratios

To ensure proper supervision, volunteers must adhere to both adult-to-girl and male/female ratio guidelines as outlined in Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska's Volunteer Guide and Safety Activity Checkpoints.

Additionally, each Girl Scout troop or group will have at least 2 co-leaders who are unrelated, non-cohabitating adults. Roommates, housemates, or married spouses – no matter the sex of the individuals involved – may not be the only co-leaders of the troop or group and cannot be co-signers on the troop or group bank account. At all times, girls must remain under the supervision of at least two registered, background screened, unrelated, non-cohabitating adult volunteers.

All adults accompanying troop or group overnights must be both registered adult members of Girl Scouts and background screened.

Appointment

Volunteers, minimum age of 18 years, unless otherwise specified, shall be appointed for a term indicated in the written position description.

Reappointment

Reappointment is made on an annual basis for all operational volunteers. Reappointment is based on past performance, adherence to Council and GSUSA policies and principles, support of the Girl Scout mission and law, values, and Council goals, as well as positive relationships with the community, parents, other volunteers, and



employed staff and satisfactorily completing the Council's screening process. Volunteers shall receive notification of their reappointment by their respective department.

Orientation

Basic orientation will be provided to all volunteers. This orientation will include an overview of the Girl Scout organization, Council specific information, and avenues of support and resources available to volunteers.

Training

Based on the volunteer role, volunteers will be required to complete training that is designated as mandatory for the position. Training must be completed within a specified time frame. Training will ensure that each volunteer has the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in his or her work. Inability or refusal to complete required learning will result in removal from or non-appointment to a position.

Support

Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska volunteers shall receive support from the Council. The frequency and type will be based on the volunteer's position but shall generally include guidance and direction as needed or requested, ongoing feedback on performance, assistance in arranging ongoing training, assistance in interpreting GSUSA and Council policies and practices, assistance in problem-solving, assistance in developing and meeting goals related to their volunteer position, and assistance in development of personal and professional skills.

Communication

Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska volunteers and members receive mail, email and phone communications from the Council. Emails serve as the main communication tool to inform members of changes made to the council and our policies, to promote girl and volunteer opportunities, and to share important information. Due to the nature of these communications, volunteers registered as troop co-leaders are strongly encouraged to refrain from opting out of emails.

Assessment and Evaluation

At each department's discretion, volunteers shall be provided a periodic performance assessment and evaluation. The applicable volunteer position description should form the basis of the performance assessment and evaluation. The performance assessment and evaluation session shall also serve as an opportunity to ascertain the mutual interest of the Council and volunteer in the volunteer's continued service in her/his position. A confidential record will be kept for each assessment and evaluation session.

Behavior

Any adult volunteer whose behavior is not in keeping with the standards outlined within Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska's Volunteer Guide, Safety Activity Checkpoints as well as those set forth by this Council may be asked to relinquish his or her position. Volunteers should not at any time use profanity when working with girls or when involved in any Girl Scout activity.

Conflict Resolution

The following conflict resolution processes will be utilized:

Informal Process:

1. Problem solving is based on the fundamental values of respect for the individual and fairness.
2. The most effective way of settling differences is by calm, open discussion between the persons involved.
3. Should irresolvable problems continue, a third (uninvolved/unaffected) party, preferably a Girl Scout member, will become involved in an attempt to reach an acceptable solution.
4. Operational volunteers with concerns involving a paid staff person should call the staff member's manager at the Council Service Center.
5. Policy volunteers with concerns involving a paid staff member should express their concern to the Council President.



Formal Process:

If an informal attempt at resolution fails, volunteers may choose a formal method such as GSUSA's volunteer-grievance procedure. Participating in this process will not restrict the Council from taking immediate and appropriate action with respect to the volunteer.

Recognition

Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska values the contributions volunteers make to the organization. Formal and informal means of recognizing volunteers will be utilized. The Council's recognition system will be consistent with the GSUSA recognition system.

Resignation/Reassignment/Release

Volunteers, who find that they cannot fulfill the responsibilities of the position, may resign by notifying the volunteer or staff member who manages the position. When resigning a minimum of two weeks notice is requested in order to ensure continuity of service to girls.

Situations may arise that make it necessary for the Council to reassign or release an individual from his or her Girl Scout volunteer position. The Council may reassign or release an individual for any reason, at its sole discretion, including, but not limited to:

- restructuring of volunteer positions
- elimination of the volunteer position in which the individual serves
- the volunteer's inability or failure to compete the requirements of the position
- the refusal to comply with Council or Girl Scouts of the USA policies and principles, including learning sessions
- misappropriation of funds, including unresolved or unpaid debt
- inappropriate conduct, discrimination and/or harassment

Volunteers will receive written notification of reassignment or release from the Council. Release from the position does not cancel membership with Girl Scouts of the USA unless it is determined that volunteer is unable to meet the membership requirements.

Uniform

A uniform is not required for participation in Girl Scouting. Purchase of a uniform is at the volunteer's expense. While participating in Girl Scout activities, volunteers should wear their Girl Scout membership pin and the appropriate Girl Scout insignia.

Harassment Policy

Civility and respect for each individual's privacy and dignity are required of all volunteers of the Council. Any conduct which is inconsistent with these principles is simply not acceptable and will not be tolerated. More specifically, any form of harassment while volunteering or related to the position - including sexual harassment and also including racial, ethnic, disability, or other harassment - is absolutely prohibited and may result in severe corrective action, possibly including termination from the volunteer position.

Harassment is broadly defined to include any conduct which is personally demeaning or offensive, and tends to equate a person's worth to their gender, race, religion, age, disability status, or other personal traits, rather than their ability to perform their jobs and contribute to the success of the Council. Without limiting the breadth of this definition, harassment specifically includes:

1. Sexual harassment in any form. Sexual harassment is defined by federal regulations as follows:
 - a. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's volunteer position , (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for volunteer



position decisions affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's volunteer performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive volunteer environment.

- b. Prohibited acts of sexual harassment can take a variety of forms ranging from sexually-oriented comments, to subtle pressure for sexual activity, to physical assault. Examples of some of the kinds of conduct included in the definition of sexual harassment are:
- Sexual relations, sexual contact, or threats or intimation of sexual relations or sexual contact which are not welcome and freely and mutually agreeable to both parties.
 - Continual or repeated remarks with sexual implications, placing sexually suggestive objects or pictures in the work area, or propositions of a sexual nature; or
 - Threats or insinuations that the person's volunteer position, promotional opportunities, assignments, or other conditions may be adversely affected by not submitting to sexual advances, or promises or insinuations that any conditions of volunteering may be favorably affected by submitting to sexual advances.

What is or is not offensive must be viewed from the perspective of the victim, and the fact that no objection is voiced or the other person seems to be "going along" does not mean the conduct is acceptable. Nobody – including directors, officers, managers, or customers – is authorized to engage in harassment.

2. Harassment on the basis of any other improper factor. Such as race, color, religion, age, national origin, genetic information or disability. As with sexual harassment, any conduct which could be offensive and create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment on the basis of one of these factors, is improper and is strictly prohibited. This could include, for example, racial jokes or slurs, religious jokes or slurs, or the assignment of work known to be beyond an individual's disability limitations with the intent to harass or annoy.

If a volunteer believes that he or she has been the subject of harassment, the volunteer should immediately report the circumstances to his or her staff contact, the CEO, or Human Resources.

Child Abuse Policy

Because some positions within Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska KA have direct contact with children, the Council supports and maintains environments that are free of child abuse and neglect. Child abuse or neglect is defined as any act or failure to act resulting in imminent risk of serious harm, death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation of a child by a parent or caretaker who is responsible for the child's welfare.

Sexual abuse is defined as employment, use, persuasion, inducement, or coercion of any child to engage in or assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or any simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing any visual depiction of such conduct; or rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children. Sexual abuse may also include sexual touching and bodily contact, exhibitionism, voyeurism, and/or involvement of children in pornographic material.

Child abuse, neglect, and sexual abuse are unlawful actions. It is against the Council's policy for any volunteer to physically, sexually, or mentally abuse or neglect any girl member or child. Suspected child abuse must be reported immediately to management or Human Resources and the proper authorities according to state law. Failure to report can result in criminal and/or civil liability. If a volunteer is unsure as to whether a situation or incident is required to be reported, the volunteer should contact management and/or Human Resources for guidance.

Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska reserves the right to refuse membership, to dismiss or to exclude from affiliation with the Council any volunteer that is found guilty of child abuse or neglect or is currently charged with or convicted of or pled guilty/no contest to child abuse or neglect. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in discipline up to and including termination of the volunteer position.



Motor Vehicle Use

Any motor vehicles used to transport Girl Scouts must be duly licensed, insured and operated by a responsible adult with a valid driver's license. The driver of the vehicle is responsible for insurance coverage as required by law on any vehicle used to transport Girl Scouts. Cell phones shall not be used by the driver while transporting Girl Scouts.

Insurance

All registered members are protected under Girl Scout Activity Accident Insurance, Basic Coverage. This is a secondary insurance which provides coverage for accident-related medical expenses to members traveling to and from or participating in approved supervised Girl Scout activities of two nights or less. The Council is responsible for providing descriptive information on the plan to volunteers. Information is provided in the Safety-Wise section of the council's Volunteer Guide.

The Council does not assume responsibility for replacement or repair of a volunteer's personal effects.

Tobacco and Controlled Substances Use

Each volunteer is responsible for abiding by the safety procedures set by GSUSA and the Council. Volunteers shall not use tobacco products or nonprescribed controlled substances while on the Council's premises or while in the presence of girls during Girl Scout activities.

Alcohol Use

Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska is committed to protecting the health and safety of our girl and adult members, parents, staff, and vendors and understands that the presence of alcohol can impact the environment. Therefore, the council prohibits the use, sale, purchase, or distribution of alcohol on council premises including council service centers and camps, or when acting in a volunteer or chaperone capacity.

The council recognizes that, in some situations, the Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska may participate in public events where alcohol may be present, and over which the council has no control. Individuals acting in a volunteer or chaperone capacity may not use alcohol at such events. Individuals not acting in such capacity, but who are participating in the event with the Girl Scouts, may do so in moderation. The council will also permit the presence and distribution of alcohol at fundraising events provided that those consuming alcohol are not acting in a volunteer or chaperone capacity, and do so in a responsible manner. In either instance, the Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska reserves the right to ask a participant to leave the event should their behavior pose a potential risk to the safety or health of its girl and adult members, parents, staff, or vendors.

Weapons/Firearms Use

The possession of firearms and other dangerous weapons at Council properties or at any Girl Scout related activities, except for approved programming in compliance with Safety-Wise guidelines, is strictly prohibited. Regardless of whether a volunteer possesses a concealed weapons permit (CCW) or is allowed by law to possess a weapon, weapons are prohibited on any Spirit of Nebraska property or at any Girl Scout activity. Spirit of Nebraska management will respond promptly, positively, and aggressively in dealing with and removing any threats or acts of violence and/or aggression. This may include involvement of law enforcement officials when appropriate.

Approved, Board of Directors: October 6, 2018
Original board approval: September 20, 2008

