



VOLUNTEER POLICIES

Volunteers are vital to the success of Girl Scouting. It is essential that volunteers be engaged in positions that provide satisfaction, a sense of purpose, and clear-cut responsibilities in order to effectively provide the Girl Scout program to girls. Every adult is responsible for adhering to USA Girl Scout Overseas (USAGSO) and Girl Scouts of the United States of America's (GSUSA) policies and standards. The following policies and procedures are to be used in conjunction with GSUSA's [Blue Book of Basic Documents](#), [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#). It is also expected that all Girl Scout members, both adult and youth, will act within the guidelines of the USAGSO reserves the right to modify, change, disregard, suspend, add to, or cancel at any time, without written or verbal notice, all or any part of the Volunteer Policies' contents as it deems appropriate. or cancel at any time, without written or verbal notice, all or any part of the Volunteer Policies' contents as it deems appropriate.

Questions or clarifications should be directed to Customer Care, overseascustomer@girlscouts.org.

Recommendations for changes may be sent to Customer Care, overseascustomer@girlscouts.org.

Terminology

Policy: An official course of action which must be followed. May only be set by the National Board of Directors and/or the Girl Scouts of the USA, and USA Girl Scouts Overseas Council of Advisors and Staff.

Standard: An established model or example that explains how to uphold a policy.

Procedure: Established criteria or steps for doing something well and safely in order to meet a policy or standard.

USA Girl Scouts Overseas (USAGSO): Girl Scouts of the USA operating outside of the United States are part of USAGSO and served by USAGSO staff.

Overseas Committee Management Team (OCMT): An OCMT is a leadership team of dedicated volunteers working together in their communities to promote Girl Scouts, as outlined in [Girl Scout Blue Book of basic Documents](#) (governing document of GSUSA). Girl Scouting is led in each geographic area by a team of administrative level volunteers. An OCMT will, *at a minimum*, consist of at least two people and fill the roles of *an Overseas Committee Chair, Treasurer and Secretary*. OCMT volunteers are experienced individuals who support and serve girls, troops, and volunteers in their area.

Contents

Membership

Membership Policy.....	3
Uniform Policy.....	3

Program

Safety Policy & Procedures.....	3
Accident and Liability Policy.....	3
Procedure in Case of an Accident or Emergency.....	3
Procedure in Case or a Life-Threatening Accident or Fatality.....	4
OCMT Formation Policy	4
OCMT Disbanding/Merging Policy.....	4

Volunteer Management

Code of Conduct.....	4
Non-Discrimination Policy.....	5
Volunteer Recruitment/Selection Policy.....	5
Criminal Background Check Policy.....	6
Adult Learning/Training Policy.....	7
OCMT- Overseas Committee Chair Policy.....	7
Volunteer Management, Coaching and Evaluation Policy.....	8
Volunteer Recognition Policy.....	8
Volunteer Conflict Resolution Policy.....	9
Volunteer Release Policy.....	9
Child Abuse Policy.....	10

Finance

Borrowing Money Policy.....	11
Volunteer Debt Policy	11
Troop/Group Bank Account Policy.....	12
OCMT Bank Account Policy.....	12
OCMT Digital Payment Policy.....	12
OCMT Year-End Financial Report Policy.....	12
Troop Financial Report Policy.....	13
Fundraising/Money Earning Policy.....	13
Troop/Group Money-Earning Policy (Girl Led).....	14

Conduct

Cultural Sensitivity.....	15
Smoking Policy.....	15
Drug Free Policy.....	15
Alcohol Policy.....	15
Firearm Policy.....	16
Harassment Policy.....	16
Gender Inclusion Guidelines.....	17

Membership

Membership Policy

Membership requirements are set forth by Girl Scouts of the USA. Membership as a Girl Scout adult volunteer is granted to any person who:

- Accepts the principles and beliefs as stated in the Preamble of the Constitution of GSUSA, including the Promise and Law.
- Has paid the annual membership dues or lifetime membership dues to Girl Scouts of the USA.
- Meets membership standard for Girl Scout adults' minimum age of 18 years.

Uniform Policy

There is no mandatory uniform requirement for adult volunteers other than membership pins. The business adult uniforms will be a scarf worn with the membership pins for women and a tie for men for formal Girl Scout occasions. The scarf/tie and membership pins will be worn with navy blue business attire. The tab with appropriate pins worn on a Girl Scout shirt or official troop leader vest is suitable for more casual occasions and promotes visibility. Any previously approved uniform remains official and is acceptable for formal occasions.

Program

Safety Policy

Everyone who delivers the Girl Scout program is expected to meet the program, health, safety, and security standards as written in the [Safety Activity Checkpoints Manual](#).

Accident and Liability Policy

Any serious accident or fatality must be reported immediately to the council.

Standard

1. All participants are protected under Girl Scout Activity Accident insurance, basic coverage. This insurance provides basic accident protection for accident medical care to members traveling to and from and participating in APPROVED, supervised Girl Scout activities, e.g., day camp, troop camp, service unit events, weekend trips (of two consecutive nights or less), and regular troop meetings.
2. Additional sickness and international travel insurance coverage is available for purchase. Please reach out to customer care for additional information.
3. These plans are secondary insurance that individuals are entitled to receive while participating in any APPROVED, supervised Girl Scout activity.

Procedure in Case of an Accident or Emergency

1. Adults should have access to a working phone/cell phone.
2. Wherever Girl Scouts gather, first aid supplies should be on hand. Always check Volunteer Essentials and the appropriate Safety Activity Checkpoint(s) to see if a volunteer with first aid training is required to attend.
3. Use telephone for immediate communication with parent(s) or guardian(s) when reporting nature of emergency, condition of injured person, securing parent/guardian wishes for medical treatment, hospitalization, transportation, and personal attendance.
4. Report an accident or incident within 48 hours using the USAGO Confidential Incident/Accident Report Form and submit to your staff Point of Contact (POC) and to overseascustomer@girlscouts.org.
5. Girls should be made aware of the importance of promptly reporting any accident or illness to their troop leader. An adult should give or supervise all treatment.

Procedure in Case of a Life -Threatening Accident or Fatality

1. Give priority attention to providing care for the injured.
2. Call emergency service(s), ambulance, fire and/or police. Police must be called in case of traffic accident or fatality.
3. Designate a responsible person at the scene until emergency authority has assumed responsibility. In case of fatality, do not disturb the body and surroundings.
4. Locate victim(s) Health History Record and Permission Form.
5. Contact your Girl Scouts Overseas office. Leave a brief message stating that “there has been an emergency” along with your name, telephone number and location.

West Pacific Office	Abigail Trafford Atrafford@girlscouts.org +1.212.852.8589
North Atlantic Office	Kristen Van Norman Kvannorman@girlscouts.org +1.212.852.6574
New York Office	Lane Cook Lcook@girlscouts.org +1.212.852.5000

6. Make no statement to the media. If approached by the media, use this statement and repeat it as often as necessary: “I am not in a position to answer any questions. Please direct your questions to the council office at overseascustomer@girlscouts.org Thank you for sharing our concern.”

OCMT Formation Policy

USAGSO brings Girl Scouts to the daughters of military, foreign service, and American expat families around the world and to girls in American or International schools. To start Girl Scouting in a new community, members must first contact USAGSO at overseascustomer@girlscouts.org for approval and guidance.

OCMT Disbanding/Merging Policy

OCMT’s that are considering disbanding must first contact USAGSO for approval. Staff will discuss the situation and possible options moving forward with OCMT volunteers. In the event both USAGSO and OCMT volunteers decide to disband an OCMT, the OCMT must follow the staff guidance including bank account closing procedures outlined in this [Standard Operating Procedure](#) (SOP).

Volunteer Management

Code of Conduct

Volunteer Conduct & Behavior

While engaged in Girl Scouts Overseas business, volunteers are expected to act in a professional manner and be role-models for youth. Volunteers should refrain from swearing, gossiping, and/or talking negatively about girls, parents, other volunteers, council staff, or the council.

Create an emotionally safe space.

Adults are responsible for making Girl Scouting a place where girls are as safe emotionally as they are physically. Protect the emotional safety of girls by creating a team agreement and coaching girls to honor it. Agreements typically encourage behaviors like respecting a diversity of feelings and opinions; resolving conflicts constructively; and avoiding physical and verbal bullying, clique behavior and discrimination.

Ensure that no girl is treated differently.

Girl Scouts welcomes all members, regardless of race, ethnicity, background, disability, family structure,

religious beliefs, and socioeconomic status. When scheduling, planning, and carrying out activities, carefully consider the needs of all girls involved, including school schedules, family needs, financial constraints, religious holidays and the accessibility of appropriate transportation and meeting places.

Dress appropriately.

Volunteers are expected to present a clean and professional appearance when representing the organization. Dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the professional attitude and morale of all volunteers and affects the image presented to girls, caregivers, and community partners.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Every adult volunteer in Girl Scouting must be exclusively selected based on qualifications for membership, ability to perform the job, and willingness and availability to participate in training.

Standards

1. There shall be no discrimination based on race, color, religion, ethnicity, sexual preference, gender, creed, national origin, or socioeconomic status.
2. There shall be no discrimination against any qualified adult volunteer by reason of disability or based on age as defined in applicable law.
3. There shall be special efforts in recruitment, selection, training, recognition, and advancement of volunteers to ensure that they are a committed, qualified, and diverse group of individuals.
4. Please report any instances to discrimination to your USAGSO POC, overseascustomer@girlscouts.org, and complete an Incident Report Form.

Volunteer Recruitment/Selection Policy

USAGSO will recruit qualified volunteers to fill volunteer position vacancies based on interest, skill, ability, aptitude, and time required to perform the function of the position.

Standards

1. Depending on the role, volunteers may be required to register as a member of the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. and/or successfully clear a Criminal Background Check. Refer to the Membership Policy and Criminal Background Check Policy in this document for additional details.
2. Volunteers will believe in the aims and purposes of the Girl Scout organization, subscribe to the principles expressed in the Promise and Law, and be willing to abide by the policies and standards of USA Girl Scouts Overseas and Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.

Procedure

1. After registering as a Girl Scout, applicants for positions requiring a background check must successfully pass a Criminal Background Check before beginning their volunteer role. See Criminal Background Check Policy for additional details.
2. Before selecting and confirming a candidate for a role, OCMT members or USAGSO staff may conduct an interview with candidate to include: Girl Scout Mission, Promise and Law, membership requirements, volunteer position description, and/or training requirements.
3. USAGSO provides volunteers with the following:
 - a. Training and skills development.
 - b. Personal and professional development and exploration.
 - c. Subscription to council electronic publications. *Volunteers must opt-in to receiving email communications in their MYGS account to receive electronic publications.*
 - d. Accident and Liability insurance as a part of national and council membership provided that USAGSO, GSUSA, [Volunteer Essentials](#), and [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) policies and procedures are followed.

Criminal Background Check Policy

Each member who seeks to act as a volunteer in the following categories: troop leader, OCMT member, troop cookie manager, overseas volunteer partner, or episodic volunteer at any overnight event is required to successfully complete a local or international Criminal Background Check as outlined in the USAGSO Background Check Procedure below. Information and a FAQ is also available for volunteers on the [USAGSO Website](#).

Standards

All members who join and wish to act or are currently acting as a volunteer in the above-listed roles will have a mandatory background check. The background check should either be issued by Sterling Volunteers or an approved 3rd party vendor. For new members, once the volunteer joins in the above capacities, they will receive an email from Sterling Volunteers to complete their background check. Background checks are valid for three years. The link that is included in the email from Sterling Volunteers is valid for 3 days. If a volunteer is submitting a background check from a 3rd party, the volunteer's name, date of birth, criminal history status should be included in the documentation and should be in English. All correspondence should be sent to overseascustomer@girlscouts.org

USAGSO Background Check Procedure

1. An Adult Volunteer registers with an assigned role of troop leader, OCMT member, troop cookie manager, overseas volunteer partner or episodic volunteer at any overnight event. Upon completion of their registration, an email is sent from Sterling Volunteers. Members should see the email within 24-48 hours of completing their registration.
2. The standard cost of a criminal background check is \$8.00 USD per volunteer who are American Citizens and \$33.00 USD for local nationals and/or American Citizens who have resided abroad for more than five years.
 - a. In three years, when the background check expires, subsequent reminder emails will be sent by Sterling Volunteers to renew those background checks and members will be expected to cover those costs.
3. Once the background check has been processed, candidates will receive an email within two weeks informing them of their background check status.
 - a. Candidates whose background check do not meet USAGSO standards will be notified, along with their Overseas Committee Chair (OCC), and asked to take on a different volunteer role if applicable. For those who are ineligible for any volunteer role in Girl Scouting, a refund will be issued for their adult membership.
 - b. Candidates whose background check meets USAGSO standards will be notified, along with their Overseas Committee Chair (OCC), and may begin their appropriate volunteer role at that time.

Background Check Review Standards

1. Criminal Offenses – If USAGSO learns that an applicant or volunteer has been convicted of, has pleaded guilty to, or has pleaded no contest to a misdemeanor or felony under any U.S. or foreign laws, the following shall apply:
 - a. Any person ever convicted of crimes against children, offenses against persons, offenses against the family, crimes involving weapons, arson, any violent crime, or drug-related offense will not be allowed to serve in any capacity.
 - b. Any person convicted in the past 5 years for shoplifting, fraud, false pretense, embezzlement, or larceny will not be allowed to serve in any volunteer role that requires handling Girl Scout money/funds.
 - c. For any other criminal offenses, regardless of whether it is classified as a felony or as a misdemeanor, that person shall have his or her situation reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The decision whether to allow service shall be within the absolute and exclusive discretion of USAGSO Executive Director.

- d. For pending charges related to any criminal offense other than minor traffic violations, current involvement with USAGSO, as a volunteer, will be suspended pending disposition of the case.
2. Contest of Criminal History Transcript - Any volunteer who disputes the findings in the Criminal Background Check provided by Sterling Volunteers must file a written notice with USAGSO, challenging the determination of eligibility.
 - a. Following the submission of each notice, the individual must take all steps necessary to challenge the report and provide USAGSO with sufficient documentation, as deemed by the USAGSO Executive Director, that the decision is in error, and steps are being taken to correct the transcript.
 - b. Upon resolution of the matter, the individual may submit a certified copy of the corrected criminal history report transcript to USAGSO. All costs associated with an appeal of the criminal history report provided to USAGSO shall be borne by the applicant/volunteer. Further, it is the responsibility of the individual contesting the report, not USAGSO, to take all action necessary to contest or correct the criminal history report. Notwithstanding, an "individual" contest of information contained in the criminal history report, USAGSO is entitled to and shall rely upon the information contained in the criminal history report until such time as a corrected criminal history manuscript has been provided.
 - c. USAGSO does not control the information that is contained in criminal history reports, and USAGSO shall have no liability to any person for the information contained in such reports, or for its actions taken in reliance upon such reports.

Adult Learning/Training Policy

All volunteers will complete training designated as required for their position. At the discretion of USAGSO Staff, some training may be waived upon written confirmation and/or experience. Trainings taken at other Girl Scout councils is acceptable with approval. Girl Scout volunteer training enhances the Girl Scout Leadership Experience for the girls and sets the volunteer up for success. Volunteers will be assigned their required training through gsLearn. All required training is available on-line or may be available in person. Failure to complete training may be a reason for release as a volunteer.

Standard

1. USAGSO provides the opportunity for every adult in Girl Scouting to receive training that s/he needs in order to perform the responsibilities of the Girl Scout position s/he has accepted.
2. This training shall be provided on a regular basis, either virtually or at locations that are accessible to USAGSO members and should be completed upon appointment.
3. Training requirements are frequently updated. Please visit the volunteer section of the USAGSO website, www.usagso.org, for current training requirements for your volunteer position.
4. USAGSO recommends that each Troop/Group have a first aider who has received formal first aid training by a certified health and safety agency. Refer to Safety Activity Checkpoints for instances/activities where a volunteer certified in first aid/CPR is required.

OCMT- Overseas Committee Chair Policy

The Overseas Committee Chair position is a one-year term and may be renewed annually with the approval of USAGSO staff.

Standard

1. Believe in the aims and purposes of the Girl Scout organization and subscribe to the principles expressed in the Promise and Law.
2. Act as a role model, interpreting the Girl Scout Mission and goals in a positive manner.
3. Facilitate membership growth that is reflective of the diverse population and that meets the council's goals and objectives.
4. The term is based upon the membership year (October 1- September 30).

Procedure

1. Each OCMT will nominate an Overseas Committee Chair to USAGSO as outlined in their Constitution and By-Laws*.
2. Overseas Committee Chair nominees will complete and submit an [OCMT commitment form](#).
3. USAGSO staff may choose to conduct an interview with nominees.
4. USAGSO staff officially appoints the Overseas Committee Chair.
5. Overseas Committee Chair must complete a Criminal Background Check if one is not current before beginning their term.

**In the event an OCMT operates without a Constitution and/or By-Laws the selection of an Overseas Committee Chair nominee will be put to a vote of the Overseas Committee Association (all registered members age 14 and over), where quorum is 50%. To be nominated to USAGSO, the candidate must receive at least a 51% majority of yes/in-favor votes. Once this has occurred, OCMT should follow succeeding steps 2 – 5 above. In the event an Overseas Committee Association does not exist (such as with a brand-new community), USAGSO staff may appoint an Overseas Committee Chair without local election.*

Volunteer Management, Coaching, and Evaluation Policy

All volunteers are entitled to regular feedback concerning position performance based on the mutually agreed upon position description and reporting system. Coaching is a regular ongoing process.

Standard

1. Adult volunteer online registration must be completed by all volunteers serving in USAGSO. Volunteers have the right to review their record with a USAGSO staff member and may do so at a time mutually convenient for the volunteer and USAGSO staff.

Procedure

1. Volunteer records are to be kept for a period of not less than five years.
2. USAGSO staff will provide feedback to Overseas Committee Chairs on an on-going basis and no less than 3-times per year.
3. Overseas Committee Chairs will provide feedback to their OCMT members on an on-going basis and no less than 2-times per year.
4. The OCMT will provide feedback to their Troop Leaders/volunteers on an on-going basis and no less than 1-time per year.

Volunteer Recognition Policy

USAGSO will provide volunteer recognition that includes formal awards consistent with GSUSA's recommendations.

Standard

1. Recognition activities will be carried out by all staff and volunteers who supervise others. The Overseas Committee plays the most critical role in communication and recognition as they know the local volunteers best; however, USAGSO-wide recognitions occur as well.

Procedure

1. OCMT and USAGSO staff may provide formal recognitions such as certificates, thank you pins, plaques, dinners, lunches, ad publicity and public recognition of the volunteer and their importance to USAGSO.
2. The Volunteer of Excellence Award, membership numeral guards, and years of service pins are approved by the OCMT and can be awarded throughout the year.

3. USAGSO annually approves other GSUSA -level recognitions through a formal nomination process. To obtain information on how to submit a volunteer for formal recognition, visit our website at www.usagso.org or contact Customer Care at overseascustomercare@girlscouts.org. These recognition nominations are due to USAGSO in the first quarter of the calendar year and include the following:
 - a. Appreciation Pin
 - b. Honor Pin
 - c. Thanks Badge
 - d. Thanks II Badge

Volunteer Conflict Resolution Policy

All volunteers are entitled to a formal conflict resolution process when needed.

Standard

1. A volunteer may initiate a formal conflict resolution process upon request.
2. The volunteer should be provided the opportunity to discuss in detail the problem or difference with those to whom they are directly accountable:
 - a. A volunteer working in the OCMT is accountable to the Overseas Committee Chair.
 - b. The Overseas Committee Chair is accountable to their assigned USAGSO Membership Manager.
 - c. The Membership Managers are accountable to their Regional Team Leads/Directors.
 - d. The Regional Team Leads/Directors are accountable to the USAGSO Executive Director.

Procedure

1. If resolution is not reached after initial discussion, the volunteer should put the grievance in writing citing the policy or procedure that has allegedly been misinterpreted, misapplied, or violated. The signed and dated statement is submitted to the person against whom the grievance is registered, with a copy being sent via email to the next level supervisor and the Membership Manager, as outlined in the standards above.
2. After the copy of the written statement is received, the immediate supervisor calls a conference with the two parties for the purpose of resolving the conflict.
3. A written summary of the conference is to be distributed to the parties involved, with copies sent to the Membership Manager via email.
4. Should the volunteer find the resolution unacceptable and it is a matter of legal significance, the USAGSO Executive Director, in consultation with the Council of Advisors, will make the final decision and see that the decision is implemented.

Volunteer Release Policy

A supervisor, either USAGSO staff or volunteer, may initiate release of service prior to the end of the period or term of commitment. An involuntary release requires documentation. A volunteer who has been released involuntarily for cause (as defined below) may not return as a volunteer for USAGSO in any capacity.

Voluntary Release Standard

1. A person may resign their volunteer position at any time. Annual membership dues are non-refundable.
2. An adult volunteer who is released from her/his position due to amicable resignation, restructuring, or elimination of volunteer positions may be accepted for volunteer service with USAGSO again at a future date.
3. An adult volunteer who is released from her/his position may continue adult membership with GSUSA, unless it is determined that she/he is not able to meet the membership requirements related to accepting the principles and beliefs of the Movement, or to support the mission and values of the organization. When this is the case, her/his Girl Scout membership will not be renewed.

Procedure

1. Notify immediate supervisor of decision to resign.
2. Return all Girl Scout property and money to the OCMT or, if unavailable, to USAGSO staff, within 48-hours of resignation.
3. Perform any hand-over of information or access requested by either the OCMT or USAGSO staff within 7 days of resignation.

Involuntary Release Standard

1. Volunteers may be released due to restructuring of volunteer positions, the elimination of the volunteer position in which a person serves, the inability or failure to fulfill the requirements of the position, mismanagement of Girl Scout monies, the refusal to comply with USAGSO or Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. policies, the refusal to support the mission and values of the organization and USAGSO goals, or membership in an organization whose goals are not compatible with those of GSUSA.
2. The following constitutes cause for involuntarily releasing a volunteer from her/his position: mismanagement of monies (including outstanding monies due to USAGSO), refusal to comply with USAGSO or GSUSA policies, harassment, abuse, libel, or any malfeasance. A volunteer who is released involuntarily for cause is not eligible for future service with USAGSO in any volunteer or staff capacity.
3. An adult volunteer who is released from her/his position may continue adult membership with GSUSA unless it is determined that she/he is not able to meet the membership requirement related to accepting the principles and beliefs of the Movement or to support the mission and values of the organization. When this is the case, her/his Girl Scout membership will not be renewed.

Procedure

1. Quickly gather and evaluate the facts. When the possibility of release is indicated, take no action based on unsubstantiated information.
2. Involve a minimum amount of well-informed people as possible in the fact-gathering and decision-making process.
3. If performance is the basis for the decision, every effort should be made in assisting the individual in improving the performance or, if possible, placement in another position for which the person is better suited. The appropriate USAGSO Membership Manager and other appropriate staff member(s) should always be informed of intentions to release a volunteer. Then the USAGSO staff person, having knowledge of the facts, will advise on proper procedures, and take appropriate actions to resolve the situation.
4. Discuss the situation with the individual concerned. Explain why he/she is not qualified for their assigned position. When possible, have USAGSO staff present during the discussion to avoid the possibility of misunderstanding or misquoting.
 - a. Be objective, state FACTS.
 - b. Be tactful.
 - c. Be honest.
 - d. Be clear and concise.
5. Unless otherwise indicated, the discussion should be followed with a written summary, one copy going to the individual, and one copy attached to the volunteer's electronic file at the USAGSO office.
6. Involuntary release shall occur only after careful consideration has been given. The operational volunteer being released shall be fully informed of the reasons for the release by their immediate supervisor and an additional USAGSO staff person.
7. Do not disclose confidential information. Absolute confidentiality must always be observed to protect the rights of the volunteer.

Child Abuse Policy

1. USAGSO supports and maintains environments free of child abuse and neglect as defined by the "*Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act*". USAGSO will not tolerate any abusive, harassing, or demeaning situation within the Girl Scout setting.

2. Volunteers shall not commit physical or mental injury nor sexual abuse such as: exploitation, negligent treatment, or maltreatment. USAGSO will neither condone nor tolerate infliction of physically, mentally, or sexually abusive behavior or bodily injury upon girl members, including failure to provide adequate safety measures, care, and supervision in relation to Girl Scout activities; and emotional maltreatment of members, including verbal abuse and/or verbal attacks.
3. USAGSO shall reserve the right to refuse membership endorsement or reappointment, and to dismiss or to exclude from affiliation with USAGSO, any volunteer implementing or providing resources to Girl Scout programming who is suspected of, charged with, or convicted of child abuse and/or neglect.

Procedure

1. Incidents of abuse should be reported immediately to the immediate supervisor and USAGSO Executive Director or her/his designee.
2. Adults that suspect or know of a child being abused must also report such abuse to local authorities. Contact your OCMT or USAGSO staff for guidance on reporting abuse.

Finance

USA Girl Scouts Overseas (USAGSO) follows the financial guidelines established by GSUSA and the Internal Revenue Service. USAGSO is responsible for the safe keeping of all Girl Scouts money in its jurisdiction, including money in OCMTs. Troop leaders and OCMT treasurers are responsible for the safekeeping of funds and accurate financial records. Up to date financial information can be found [here](#) on our website.

Borrowing Money Policy

Troops/groups and OCMT's shall not borrow money from banks, individuals, or lending agencies.

Volunteer Debt Policy

Any Girl Scout volunteer who has financial debts owed to USAGSO will be required to clear his/her debt or make satisfactory financial arrangements to the OCMT or USAGSO and will be considered on financial restriction until the debt is cleared. While on financial restriction, the volunteer may not hold any Girl Scout position requiring financial management. Upon clearing of his/her debt obligations, his/her continuation in their current position will be reviewed by the OCMT or USAGSO staff.

Procedure

1. Upon notification from the OCMT Cookie Manager or OCMT Treasurer of a volunteer debt resulting from the Girl Scout cookie sale, a USAGSO staff member will send the debtor a letter giving him/her 10 days to pay the debt or make financial arrangements to satisfy the debt.
2. If there is no response, USAGSO staff will take necessary action depending on the amount of the debt which may include, but not limited to, submitting the volunteer to a collection agency or reporting to the local Military Police. After submission to the collection agency or military police, the volunteer will be released of all Girl Scout responsibilities. Refer to Volunteer Release Policies in this document.
3. If the volunteer responds to the 10-day letter and agrees to a schedule for paying the debt, he/she will remain on financial restriction until the debt is paid. A USAGO staff member will work with other volunteers in the community to ensure the volunteer in question is not handling finances in the future.
4. Once the debt is satisfied per the payment schedule, the volunteer's status will be reviewed by involved USAGSO staff members and OCMT members to which the volunteer reports.
5. Upon notification from the OCMT Cookie Manager or OCMT Treasurer of a volunteer debt resulting from the Girl Scout cookie sale, a USAGSO staff member will send the debtor a letter giving him/her 10 days to pay the debt or make financial arrangements to satisfy the debt.

Troop/Group Bank Account Policy

USAGSO volunteers are not permitted to open a Troop bank account.

OCMT Bank Account Policy

Any OCMT's holding funds shall open an OCMT bank account, if opening a bank account is permissible in your country. For details on how to open and manage an OCMT bank account, please review the [OCMT Banking Procedures](#)

Where it is not possible to open a bank account, the following procedures will be put in place to safeguard the Girl Scout Funds:

- Funds should be kept in a secure, locked location.
- If the location is a volunteer's home, this should be added to the homeowners or renter's insurance policy in case of fire or theft.
- The OCMT treasurer will be required to keep a detailed log of all financial transactions, including any funds received and funds going out.
- For those transactions related to submission of payment or program purchases, a detailed, itemized receipt is required and is to be attached to the financial records.
- The cash amount should be checked by a second party and balanced quarterly. A second copy of the cash log should be given to the OCC for safe keeping.

OCMT's shall keep only enough money in the account to provide for programs for the girls and general cash flow as necessary with a maximum of \$50.00 per registered girl to be carried over to the next Girl Scout year. Amounts in excess of \$50.00 per girl should have a specific, written plan for the use of the funds and be submitted with the year-end financial report to USAGSO. Exceptions may be reviewed and approved by USAGSO staff.

Standard

1. OCMT accounts are to be used for OCMT business only. Funds can only be used to support Girl Scouting in the community, including girl programs, adult development, girl and/or adult registration fees, and administrative costs of the organization.
2. Individuals who are authorized to sign checks are responsible to ensure enough funds are available for checks written. Authorized signers must be a registered member and authorized volunteer who has a valid criminal background check. The signer and OCMT members are responsible for any overdrafts, collections or charges incurred. USAGSO is not responsible for any charges incurred to the accounts.

OCMT Digital Payment Policy

OCMT's may utilize digital payment services to collect funds electronically from members for items such as dues and events when using the required standards set by USAGSO. Please review the [OCMT Digital Payment Standard Operating Procedure](#) for standards and specific instructions.

OCMT Year-End Financial Report Policy

Each OCMT must maintain records of its financial activities and file an OCMT Year-End Financial Report by June 30. OCMT's may request an extension by contacting their USAGSO Membership Manager.

Standard

1. Each OCMT must maintain a financial record of income and expense during the year.
2. OCMT's handling the equivalent of \$1,000 USD or greater during the year must also conduct and submit an audit with the year-end financial report.

Procedure

1. OCMTs should [submit](#) their year-end financial report showing the actual expenses and income for the year, troop financial forms, troop fund roll-over applications, and audit (if applicable) to USAGSO no later than June 30. Instructions for submitting the forms are available in the [EOY Finance Section](#) on our website or by contacting USAGSO at overseascustomer@girlscouts.org.

Troop Financial Report Policy

Each troop/group must maintain records of its financial activities and troop progress and file an Annual Troop Report with their OCMT as required. If the troop does not fall under an active OCMT, this annual troop financial report must be submitted directly to USAGSO Customer Care, overseascustomer@girlscouts.org.

Standard

1. Troops/groups should maintain a financial record of income and expenses during the year.

Procedure

1. The troop leader or her designee is responsible for completing the Annual Troop Year-End Financial Report and submitting it to the OCMT or USAGSO no later than June 30.
2. If troops are requesting funds to roll-over to the next year, a troop roll-over application must be submitted to the OCMT by June 30.
3. The OCMT reviews each troop's report and roll-over applications. Should there be any questions, the OCMT will discuss the matter with the troop leader. The Membership Staff may find it necessary to conduct an audit of the Troop Account.
4. Failure for a troop/group to submit the Annual Troop Report will result in the troop not being allowed to participate in USAGSO and OCMT money-earning activities. It may also result in either the dismissal of the troop leader/s or a delay in registering the troop at the beginning of the next year pending receipt of the report.

Fundraising/Money Earning Policy

Fundraising to promote the interests of the Girl Scout Movement may be conducted by GSUSA, USAGSO and Girl Scout OCMT's both independently and collaboratively. All money earning activities must follow the standards outlined in the [Blue Book of Basic Documents](#) and [Volunteer Essentials](#).

For the purposes of USAGSO, Fundraising is defined as money solicited by a community or a member, where no goods or services are exchanged. Money earning is defined as services or goods offered or created by youth members, in exchange for money.

Troops/groups support their activities through a combination of troop/group dues and profits from participation in the GSUSA/USAGSO Product Program(s). Any additional money-earning projects should occur only when there is a need for such funds due to a specific program/project goal.

Fundraising should only be undertaken by adult/community OCMT's for the support and upkeep of the community and its needs/properties.

Adult members in their Girl Scout capacities may not solicit financial contributions for purposes other than Girl Scouting. Girl members may not engage in any direct solicitation for money except for Girl Scouts earning the Gold Award ([GSUSA Blue Book of Basic Documents](#)).

Standards

1. All money raised, or earned, and other assets received in the name of/for the benefit of Girl Scouting must be authorized by USAGSO and used for the purposes of Girl Scouting. Such monies and other assets become the property of and are administered by USAGSO/GSUSA. Such assets are not the

property of individuals, geographic units, or communities within USAGSO ([GSUSA Blue Book of Basic Documents](#)). Girl Scout groups and individuals must have permission from an authorized USAGSO representative (the designated member of the OCMT) before asking organizations, businesses, corporations, foundations or individuals for financial or in-kind gifts. Please contact us at overseascustomer@girlscouts.org before soliciting and/or accepting donations. If the OCMT is unsure, please contact your USAGSO staff representative.

2. All approved donations from a foundation, corporation, government entity, civic group, or individual (including recognition of volunteer service hours) received on behalf of a USA Girl Scouts Overseas troop or overseas committee that request or require a tax receipt will be accepted and recognized by USA Girl Scouts Overseas. Donations of \$1,000 or more are subject to a 10% handling and processing fee.
3. USA Girl Scouts Overseas will distribute the funds to the appropriate USA Girl Scouts Overseas troop or overseas committee (less 10%). All funds must be expended by the end of each fiscal year (September 30) in which the donation was received, and detailed use of all contributions received included in the financial statement submitted by the OC. Funding received for approved for Gold Award and troop service projects do not incur any processing or handling fees by USAGSO. For Gold Award projects, the girl retains 100% of donations that support her pre-approved project but must still follow the above-referenced procedures regarding money earning forms and gifts requiring donor acknowledgment - should they be requested or required. The funds will then be directly deposited into the Girl Scout's approved personal account after tax notification is sent to the donor by USAGSO for Gold Award; Troop donations will be deposited into the approved OC account.
4. Please contact overseascustomer@girlscouts.org for current information on money earning related to Highest Awards or International Travel.

Procedure

1. Contact USAGSO for approval of solicitation request (financial or in-kind) as well as when unsolicited financial gifts are received.
2. Submit a Fundraising Request Form at <https://usagso.wufoo.com/forms/skihilz1xz6t4t/>
3. USAGSO staff will review the request and provide approval, guidance, and/or disapproval by email.
4. After receiving approval, if a gift requires tax acknowledgment or receipt, funds must be sent to USAGSO for processing and acknowledgement as a tax-deductible donation. After the check is processed and the donor acknowledged, the portion of funds that are assigned to a Troop or OCMT will be dispersed to designated entities.
5. Checks should be made out to:
USA Girl Scouts Overseas
Attn: Katherine Nolan Brown
420th Avenue
New York, NY 10018
As required by *GSUSA Basic Blue Book of Documents*, the council must be a beneficiary of the solicitation (EIN: 13-1624016)

Troop/Group Money-Earning Policy (Girl Led)

With OCMT approval prior to the beginning of the project, a troop/group may conduct a money-earning project.

Standard

1. There shall be no direct solicitation of cash, selling of commercial products, games of chance or third-party fundraising involved in money-earning activities.
2. Troops/groups support their activities through a combination of troop/group dues and profits from participation in the USAGSO Product Program. Money-earning projects should occur only when there is a need for such funds due to a specific program goal.
3. Door to door sales are not permitted.
4. Each troop or group must obtain local/OCMT permission for money earning in conjunction with

USAGSO approval.

5. USAGSO is not responsible for any debts incurred by troops/groups when they undertake a troop/group money-earning project.
6. Girls' money earning for Highest Awards & International Travel have a different set of rules. Please contact overseascustomer@girlscouts.org for current information on money earning related to Highest Awards or International Travel.

Procedure

1. A Troop/Girl Money Earning request must be submitted to the OCMT prior to the project and approval must be granted by the OCMT before the project may be conducted by girls and adults.
2. Money earning projects are to be suitable to the ages and abilities of the girls and are to be planned and carried out by them.
3. Adults may assist girls in their troop/group money earning projects but may not conduct independent money earning for the troop/group or individual girls.

CONDUCT

Cultural Sensitivity

USAGSO represents members from many different countries and cultures. Girl Scout activities conducted overseas may be outside of the cultural norms of the United States, particularly when they are in partnership with sister World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS). Volunteers should use their best judgment regarding conduct within cultural norms. However, if volunteers are unsure about the appropriateness of an activity, or need direction and clarity on specific conduct questions, reach out to USAGSO Staff or overseascustomer@girlscouts.org.

Smoking Policy

The use of tobacco products, e-cigarettes, and/or vaping products is not permitted in the presence of girls by any participant at Girl Scout functions, nor at any time in any USAGSO-owned or leased building.

Drug Free Policy

Girl Scout volunteers will not possess, take, distribute, manufacture, sell, or be under the influence of controlled substances, and/or illegal drugs at a Girl Scout activity, on or off USAGSO properties. Failure to comply will result in an immediate release of the volunteer.

Alcohol Policy

Recognizing that USAGSO operates overseas and different cultures have different cultural attitudes towards alcohol, adults may be permitted to consume alcohol in the presence of girls. However, adults who are drivers for an activity, or adults who are included in girl/adult ratio requirements, are prohibited from using alcohol at any time. If alcohol will be present at an event, volunteers must designate in advance which adults will remain alcohol-free so that they may act in the event of an emergency. Adults should consume alcohol responsibly and set an appropriate example for girls in their care. Adults must never be intoxicated while interacting with, or in the presence of, girls at Girl Scout activities.

The use of alcohol is prohibited on USAGSO Girl Scout properties or facilities. Failure to comply will result in the immediate release of the volunteer. With USAGSO permission, and a signed agreement for that specific date and occasion, volunteers may use alcohol on Girl Scout property in a lawful and responsible manner provided the previous rules are followed.

Firearm Policy

No weapons, concealed or otherwise, are allowed at any Girl Scout activity on council properties. Activities that involve the use of firearms may not be attempted by a Girl Scout group without written authorization by USAGSO. USAGSO may not authorize these activities for girls under 12 years old and without ensuring that they are properly planned, supervised, and insured (Volunteer Essentials).

Standard

1. The possession or use of firearms and other dangerous weapons is not permitted by volunteers on USAGSO properties or at Girl Scout events unless activity approval for firearm or other weapon use is obtained. Failure to comply will result in immediate release of volunteer.

Harassment Policy

It is the policy of USA Girl Scouts Overseas to provide all volunteers with an environment free from all forms of unlawful or unwelcome harassment, including implied or expressed forms of sexual harassment. USAGSO expressly prohibits any form of harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, ancestry, disability, veteran's status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law.

Standard

1. USAGSO is committed to an environment and climate in which relationships are characterized by dignity, respect, courtesy and equitable treatment.
2. It is paramount that USAGSO provide all members with an environment free of all forms of unlawful or unwelcome harassment, including implied or expressed forms of racism, discrimination, or physical harassment.
3. In addition, members involved in Girl Scout programming are entitled to an environment free of sexual innuendo, advances, observation, or harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as *“unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.”*
4. It is against USAGSO policies for any volunteer, male or female, to sexually harass another volunteer, employee or Girl Scout member of the same or opposite sex.
5. USAGSO prohibits inappropriate or overly familiar touching, sexual innuendos, obscene gestures, jokes and remarks of a sexual nature, especially when such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's performance or ability to do her or his assignment.
6. USAGSO reserves the right to refuse membership, endorsement or reappointment and to discuss or suspend from affiliation with USAGSO any volunteer who, in conducting Girl Scout programs, exhibits behavior that is detrimental to the proper role model for girl members.

Procedure

1. Any volunteer who feels that she or he has been subjected to harassment of any type, whether by another volunteer, USAGSO staff member or any agent of the organization, should promptly report the incident to a supervisor or to the Executive Director. If the complaint involves the Executive Director, the volunteer should contact Girl Scouts of the United States of America headquarters.
2. The contacted party will take appropriate measures to resolve or correct the situation in an expeditious manner.

USA Girl Scouts Overseas

Inclusion Guidance Regarding Gender and Sexuality

Introduction

USA Girl Scouts Overseas (USAGSO) believes all Girl Scout members should be able to have a safe and welcoming experience, and this belief is deeply rooted in the Girl Scout Promise and Law. This guidance document is designed to support and celebrate the work USAGSO volunteers do every day to create inclusive and welcoming spaces. It provides language and guidance for creating safe and inclusive spaces, and we hope it makes clear our stance on gender inclusion. We believe all members thrive when they feel a sense of belonging, and we know how important the Girl Scout experience is to so many young people. It is important to our organization that our members feel they can bring their best and authentic selves to Girl Scouts - knowing they will be welcomed by everyone who carries the Promise and Law in their hearts. This guidance is inspired by the amazing youth and adults throughout our overseas Girl Scout community, with the intent to help our members and partners as we continue making the world a better, more inclusive, place.

Program Eligibility

Girl Scouts was created as a space where girls can learn to work together, learn together, and grow together in ways that historically had been reserved for men and boys. Our understanding of gender has evolved and will continue to shift, but we also wish to honor the integrity of the space we have built to help our members become the leaders of tomorrow. To achieve this goal, we acknowledge that not all people will be eligible for membership. We do not make this decision lightly, and our program eligibility is deeply rooted in our mission.

- Youth Membership
 - USAGSO welcomes all girls to join the Girl Scout movement regardless of gender assigned at birth or sexual orientation. Additionally, there will be no rules that single out girls based on their gender assigned at birth, gender identity or sexuality.
 - While the focus of the organization will remain centered on girls and women, we also know non-binary adults and young people may find belonging at USAGSO. In the case that a non-binary youth wishes to join USAGSO, every attempt will be made to:
 - place them in a troop that will welcome them or
 - connect them to our Worldwide Juliette Network so they can join as an Individually Registered Member (IRM).
 - When hosting Girl Scout events that are open to non-member participants, participation should be open to the local community regardless of gender identity.
 - Some youth members may begin to explore or question their gender identity after joining Girl Scouts. We honor these members by allowing them to choose whether their participation in USAGSO is still a good fit. At no time will we disallow a current member to continue based on gender identity if they still feel USAGSO is a safe space where they can grow.
- Adult participation
 - Eligible adults, regardless of gender identity, sexuality, race, religion, or creed, who agree to uphold the promise and law of Girl Scouts can join.
 - Volunteer roles are subject to background checks and training.

Caregiver Communication

Non-disclosure of troop members' gender identity or sexuality

In keeping with our values of safety and respect, we will honor everyone's right to privacy as it pertains to their gender identity and/or sexuality. Caregivers will not be notified if a transgender or non-binary Girl Scout or troop leader is placed in a troop or group with their child. Private information of any kind must be shared only when relevant or necessary (i.e., It is inappropriate to share sensitive information from a Girl Scout's health form with anyone other than those who need to know the information for the safety and wellbeing of that Girl Scout.)

As troop leaders and community volunteers work to create a safe, inclusive space for all members, youth

members may begin to feel comfortable sharing sensitive information about their own gender or sexuality. If a member feels their troop or community is a safe space for declarations regarding gender identity or sexual orientation, it is USAGSO's expectation that this type of personal information will remain within that safe space. At no time should the troop leader or staff member report such sensitive information to individuals or entities outside that safe space including, but not limited to, other volunteers or members, parents, caregivers, schools, etc.

Reporting of Safety Concerns

All attempts or declarations of self-harm, abuse or harm to others will be reported, along with the specific details of the incident, in accordance with USAGSO's mandated reporting requirements, which can be found within [Volunteer Essentials](#) (page 42). However, if this disclosure is made alongside a discussion regarding gender or sexuality, we always will honor the privacy of the individual regarding their gender identity or sexuality, and that information remains confidential.

Facilities, Trips and Overnights

USAGSO understands the need for privacy for all our members and community participants regardless of their gender assigned at birth or gender identity. We know when Girl Scouts are respectful of others' boundaries and have appropriate supervision, they can be safe in any space.

- USAGSO has curated this list of best practices to keep vulnerable spaces (i.e., shower stall, toilets and changing areas) safe for all members of all ages:
 - Members and community participants will be allowed to use the vulnerable space that best aligns with their gender identity without question.
 - Public nudity is prohibited. (Exceptions may be made for family members in private family quarters.)
 - Vulnerable spaces will be designated as single occupancy. For spaces with only a single toilet and/or shower stall, each group will be responsible for making a schedule that maintains privacy and single occupancy of the space.
 - All members and community participants should have an orientation to the space that outlines these practices.
 - A suggested space orientation for your troop is [linked here](#).

Sleeping for Overnight Trips:

- On overnight trips, all members and community participants will have their own sleeping bag or bedding, bed, mattress, cot, etc. If individual youth are to share a bed, caregiver permission must be obtained in advance.
- Youth and adults should never share a bed. (Exceptions may be made for family members in private sleeping quarters.)
- Any member who is eligible for the program (see Program Eligibility) will not be subject to unique restrictions when it comes to overnight trips.
 - All youth members of USAGSO and eligible program participants regardless of gender, gender assigned at birth, sexuality, race etc) may share sleeping quarters. Division and organization of sleeping areas should be based on program level, troop, or program group, not gender, race, or any protected class.
- It is not mandatory that an adult sleep in the sleeping area (tent, cabin, or designated area) with the youth members as adult volunteers can monitor safety by patrolling the sleeping areas in shifts. It is the recommendation of USAGSO that whenever possible, youth and adults should have separate sleeping areas.
 - If an adult woman (regardless of gender assigned at birth or sexuality) does share a sleeping area with youth members, there always should be two unrelated adult women assigned to the sleeping area, and both adults must have an active USAGSO membership and a current

- background check on record.
- An adult man (regardless of gender assigned at birth or sexuality) or non-binary adults will have a separate sleeping area from youth members. (Exceptions may be made for family camping when using single family sleeping quarters.)
- All adult women will follow the same sleeping procedures determined by a troop or community, and those procedures should be consistent with the guidelines for safe sleeping arrangements outlined in this document.
- All Girl Scouts should have an orientation to their sleeping space that includes respecting others' privacy and boundaries.

Gender Expression

USAGSO believes there is no “right way” to be a girl and encourages all members to be themselves. Girl Scouts generally may wear whatever makes them comfortable, and for uniformed events, members always will be allowed creativity within the GSUSA uniform standards, which have been created to maximize individual expression. For fancy or formal events, members should always be allowed non-dress options that make them feel like their best self. USAGSO believes when members can express themselves in ways that make them feel good, they are more likely to be successful.

Names and Pronouns

USAGSO adult members who engage in frontline work with Girl Scouts should provide a space for them to share the names and pronouns that make them feel the safest. No members—adult or youth—will ever be required to share their pronouns if they feel unsafe to do so. Members will be expected to respect and use the names and pronouns that correspond with how each Girl Scout introduces themselves to the best of their ability.

Girl Scouts has a long history of allowing youth members to choose a nickname that makes them feel like their best self, and although chosen names are not the same as nicknames, we do believe calling someone by the name they prefer to be called is an important sign of respect. All Girl Scouts will be allowed to use the name and pronouns they determine while in the Girl Scout program. [The Trevor Project National Survey](#) on mental health shows that transgender and non-binary youths' likelihood of suicide is nearly cut in half when their pronouns are respected by adults in their lives.

All members of the USAGSO community are expected to make every effort to use the correct name and pronoun for each member of the community. Direct, intentional disregard of someone's name or pronouns will be addressed as bullying and will not be tolerated as this is a breach of the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

Addressing Bullying

Bullying based on sexuality or gender identity will be handled in alignment with USAGSO guidance on bullying. In no case will a Girl Scout be allowed to intentionally misgender or speak disparagingly about other Girl Scouts' gender or sexuality.

Conflict Surrounding These Guidelines

Through the establishment of these guidelines, it should be clear that actions of USAGSO staff, volunteers and adult members must be girl centered and support the safety and mental health of our youth members. Interventions taken to address conflict must be in line with the youth members' wishes and preserve their mental and physical safety.

If there are questions about the ways to safely implement these guidelines, we encourage you to reach out to your membership manager. It is the responsibility of volunteers on the ground to create the safe, inclusive space detailed in this document, and your USAGSO team is here to provide the support and resources you need. Inclusion is an essential part of the Girl Scout Promise and Law, and we see this set of guidelines as the operationalization of our long-standing values.