

girl scouts 
usa girl scouts
overseas



Effective September 1, 2024

Volunteer Policies & Procedures

Girl Scout Promise, Law, and Mission

Girl Scout Promise

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

Girl Scout Law

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



Girl Scout Mission

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

***Girl Scouts of the USA makes no attempt to define or interpret the word “God” in the Girl Scout Promise. It looks to individual members to establish for themselves the nature of their spiritual beliefs. When making the Girl Scout Promise, individuals may substitute wording appropriate to their own spiritual beliefs for the word “God.” Note: This disclaimer appears in the National Leadership Journey adult guides, but not in the girls’ books. It is included here as a reminder to you, as a volunteer, that it is your responsibility to be sensitive to the spiritual beliefs of the girls and adults in your group and to make sure that everyone in the group feels comfortable and included in Girl Scouting. Please feel free to share this information with girls’ families.**

Introduction

The Volunteer Policies & Procedures of USA Girl Scouts Overseas are established upon the principle that the direction and success of Girl Scouting rests in the voluntary participation of its adult members.

This document outlines the policies and procedures of USAGSO. It is not the intent of this document to repeat national policies, but to adopt specific policies to clarify those areas needed to be defined for use overseas. These policies and procedures are intended to provide the basis for reasonable and consistent guidance for our volunteers.

All members of Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) are responsible for adhering to the policies, practices, procedures, and guidelines in GSUSA's [Blue Book of Basic Documents](#), [Volunteer Essentials](#), and [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#). These documents are published by GSUSA and are used throughout the national organization.

These policies and procedures will be reviewed annually. 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, clarifications, or recommendations and changes should be directed 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.

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. USAGSO is not its own council, it is an operating unit of GSUSA.

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.

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Commitment to Belonging

USAGSO is dedicated to creating a welcoming and inclusive community where all girls have the opportunity to participate, grow, and lead. We embrace and respect the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of our members, ensuring that our programs, leadership, and activities reflect the global community we serve.

We believe this commitment is essential to everything we do. Girl Scouting is for all girls, and those who take on volunteer leadership roles must uphold this principle, fostering an environment where every girl feels valued and supported.

Equal Opportunity

USAGSO maintains a strong policy of equal opportunity. In keeping with GSUSA's Blue Book of Basic Documents; we recruit, train, promote, and dismiss volunteers on the basis of competence and volunteer position performance, without regard to race, creed, color, ethnicity, religion, lineage or citizenship, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, familial status, age, socioeconomic background, source of income, disability, genetic information, predisposing genetic characteristics, carrier status, domestic violence victim status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Furthermore, to assure the membership of USAGSO reflects the diversity of population groups within its jurisdiction; USAGSO is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and outreach in the recruitment, selection, placement, development, and recognition of volunteers and in the extension of Girl Scouting to adults in all communities within its jurisdiction.

Adults and volunteers are responsible for making Girl Scouting a place where girls are as safe emotionally as they are physically. Girl Scouts welcomes all girls in grades K-12, regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, family structure, religion, and socioeconomic background. When scheduling, helping plan, and carrying out activities, carefully consider the needs of all girls involved (e.g. financial constraints, religious holidays, accessibility of appropriate transportation, and meeting places).

Any volunteer who engages in or encourages discrimination in any form is subject to release from their volunteer position at the discretion of USAGSO.

Membership Registration

All girls and adults participating in the Girl Scout Movement must be registered as members with GSUSA and pay the annual membership dues as outlined by GSUSA, except those adults who are lifetime members. At times there are adults who are working in an episodic capacity and membership is not a requirement. Members agree to abide by the policies, principles, and procedures of GSUSA and USAGSO.

Part 1: Volunteer General Information

Volunteer Requirements & Benefits

Basic Volunteer Requirements

- Membership Registration - Adult volunteers participating in the Girl Scout Movement must be registered as members with GSUSA and individually pay the annual membership dues, except those adults who are lifetime members or who are volunteering in an episodic capacity.
- Meets membership standard for Girl Scout adults' minimum age of 18 years
- Must complete and pass a criminal background check.
- Belief in the Girl Scout Mission.
- Acceptance of the Girl Scout Promise and Law.
- Time to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position.
- Completion of required training.
- An understanding that services are given without payment.
- Accept supervision and provide feedback.

Benefits to volunteers include:

- USAGSO newsletter and publications. Please note that volunteers need to opt in to receiving these communications in their myGS account
- Learning opportunities and support from USAGSO staff and Overseas Volunteer Partners.
- Supplementary accident insurance as part of GSUSA membership.
- Volunteer experience that may be useful for career development.

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Volunteers are a valuable resource to USAGSO, its staff, and members. Volunteers shall be extended the right to be given meaningful assignments, the right to be treated respectfully, the right to effective supervision, the right to full involvement and participation, and the right to appropriate recognition for work done.

In return, volunteers shall agree to perform their duties to the best of their abilities, to support the goals and policies and procedures of USAGSO and to ask for assistance and/or guidance from the service team or USAGSO staff if they find themselves in a situation that they are unsure of or may conflict with those goals and policies of USAGSO, as detailed in the Conflict Resolution section of this document.

Further, volunteers shall agree that they will not use the Girl Scout name, related activities, publications and/or facilities for public or private promotion of their own views and opinions on topics unrelated to Girl Scouting (including, but not limited to, views on sexual orientation, religion, family situations, politics, etc.)

Volunteer Agreement

USAGSO is committed to the highest ethical standards, and we expect all volunteers to act in the best interest of the organization and its mission. This mission demands that we, as stewards, act in an ethical manner to uphold the public trust and the values of responsibility, integrity, openness, honesty, accountability, and respect in all that we do in the name of Girl Scouts.

I agree to uphold these values, and I will:

1. Affirm the Girl Scout Promise and Law.
2. Take all required training and comply with USAGSO policies, procedures, and safety guidelines.
3. Welcome girls and adults from a variety of backgrounds and include them in activities. Make an intentional effort to learn about, experience, and appreciate cultures other than my own.
4. Honor the leadership role of the girls and support their decisions.
5. Act responsibly when overseeing Girl Scout funds, maintain accurate records, and file required reports. Girl Scout funds are only to be used in direct support of Girl Scout programs and to pay for appropriate Girl Scout expenses.
6. Model the behavior that shows respect for local laws and ordinances, as well as following USAGSO Volunteer Policies & Procedures, Volunteer Essentials, Safety Activity Checkpoints, and in GSUSA's Blue Book of Basic Documents.

Uniform Policy

Girl Scouts of the USA is a uniformed organization in which the uniform is a symbol of pride and respect and a mark of distinction. Although wearing a uniform is encouraged, it is not required for participation.

For adult members, the unifying look of the uniform is an official Girl Scout official scarf or tie for men, worn with official membership pins and combined with their own navy-blue business attire. Volunteers are encouraged to wear the Girl Scout pin along with a Girl Scout vest or other Girl Scout attire when they are not in uniform and participating in Girl Scout activities such as troop meetings and during cookie booths.

Part 2: Risk Management, Safety and Liability

Criminal Background Check Requirements & Process

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@girls Scouts.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.

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.

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.

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 the Girl Scouts office. Leave a brief message stating that “there has been an emergency” along with your name, telephone number and location.

Overseas Office Italy	Kristen Van Norman Kvannorman@girlscouts.org +39 344 470 0074
Stateside Office	Kelly Bullard kbullard@girlscouts.org +1.212.852.8598

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 able to answer any questions. Please direct your questions to the USAGSO office at overseascustomer@girlscouts.org Thank you for sharing our concern.”

Child Abuse Policy

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.

1. All USAGSO volunteers are required to complete the [Child Protection Training](#) in gsLearn within 60 days of assuming their role.
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 using the [USAGO Confidential Incident/Accident Report Form](#)
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.

Adult Learning & Training Policy

Part 3: Volunteer Management, Training & Support

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. Training 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 and must be completed within 90 days of assuming the role. 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.

1. USAGSO provides the opportunity for every adult in Girl Scouting to receive training that s/he

- needs 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.

First Aid / CPR Training

It is best practice to have at least one adult volunteer who is trained in first aid/CPR accompany the troop any time they leave their regular meeting place. For many activities, USAGSO requires that at least one adult volunteer be first aid/CPR certified. More information on which activities require an adult volunteer be first aid/CRP certified can be found in Safety Activity Checkpoints.

Volunteers can take advantage of first aid/CPR training offered by chapters of the American Red Cross, National Safety Council, EMP America, American Heart Association or other sponsoring organizations.

First aid/CPR training that is available entirely online does not satisfy USAGSO's requirements. Such courses do not offer enough opportunities to practice and receive feedback on your technique. If taking a course not offered by one of the organizations listed in the previous paragraph, or any course that has online components, get approval from USAGSO at overseascustomer@girlscouts.org.

OCMT Policies

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.

Disbanding/Merging Policy

OCMT's that are considering disbanding must first contact USAGSO for approval. Staff will discuss the situation and possible options for 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).

Committee Chair Policy

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

The OCC must

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).

To assume the role of the OCC, communities should follow this process

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 & Evaluation

Volunteer Recognition Policy

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

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.

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 overseascustomer@girlscouts.org. These recognition nominations are due to USAGSO in the first quarter of the calendar year and include the following:

- i. Appreciation Pin
- ii. Honor Pin
- iii. Thanks Badge
- iv. Thanks II Badge

Volunteer Conflict Resolution Policy

Conflicts and disagreements are an inevitable part of life, and when handled constructively can enhance communication and relationships.

For purposes of this policy, a conflict is defined as any kind of disagreement between two or more people.

USAGSO is committed to providing individuals with the right to a safe and neutral process to resolve conflicts. Recognizing that everyone has both a personal interest in and a share of the responsibility for resolving conflicts in which she or he is involved, USAGSO uses a progressive conflict resolution process for volunteers.

The most effective way of resolving complaints and concerns is usually through calm, open discussion between the individuals involved by telephone or in person. For this reason, prior to any kind of escalation, the involved parties are encouraged to try to resolve the matter informally among themselves. E-mail exchanges, text messages, and social media communication are generally not conducive to a prompt and efficient resolution and, therefore, are not considered an effective way of resolving conflict and should be avoided.

Below are potential scenarios and steps to follow before escalating a conflict or concern.

Please use the [Conflict Management Template](#) to guide the conversation.

- **Girls in a Troop:** Has the troop leader addressed this situation? Has the troop leader worked with the girls, parents, and other troop volunteers to resolve this matter? If it cannot be resolved at the troop level, has the Overseas Committee Chair (OCC) been asked to assist as a mediator for the troop?
- **Adults Within a Troop:** Has the troop leader addressed the situation? Has the troop leader mediated with the parties involved? If it cannot be resolved at the troop level, has the OCC been asked to assist as a mediator for the troop?
- **Volunteers:** Has the troop leader/OCMT member/volunteer worked to address the situation? If it cannot be resolved between the volunteers, has the OCC been asked to assist as a mediator for the troop?
- **OCMT:** Has members of the OCMT worked together to address the situation? If it cannot be resolved between OCMT members, has the OCC been asked to assist as a mediator? If the OCC cannot mediate, has the USAGSO membership manager been asked to mediate the conflict?

Conflict/Problem Resolution Procedures

If all the steps above have been taken to resolve the conflict informally but the matter has not been resolved, then the appropriate members of USAGSO staff should be informed. You will be asked to provide the member of USAGSO staff with a completed [Conflict Management Template](#).

Upon USAGSO staff being notified and given the Conflict Management Template, the information gathering process will begin. This process can include phone calls, e-mails, and/or in person meetings with all parties involved. Please note that this information

gathering can take a minimum of 10 business days. Once all information has been gathered, USAGSO staff will provide a resolution to all affected parties.

If deemed necessary by USAGSO staff, a mediator from outside USAGSO may be brought in to assist in resolving any situation.

Volunteer Resignation

A volunteer may resign from her/his volunteer position at any time following these steps:

1. Prior to giving notice, we encourage her/him to discuss the reason(s) with their USAGSO Community Membership Manager.
2. At least two weeks prior to leaving, the volunteer should submit a written resignation outlining the specific position(s) from which she/he is resigning and the reason(s) for leaving.
3. When applicable, we ask that the volunteer assist in identifying a replacement and communicating her/his decision with members of the Girl Scout community.

The volunteer may be required to balance Girl Scout funds/accounts and return property and records. The volunteer and their USAGSO Community Membership Manager will be responsible for completing all necessary steps to ensure a smooth transition.

Volunteer Redirect / Release

Either USAGSO or the volunteer may initiate a redirect or release from a volunteer position prior to the end of the term of appointment for any reason. Situations may arise in which USAGSO may initiate a release of a volunteer from a position prior to the end of the term of appointment. Any action to release a volunteer will receive careful and detailed consideration.

All volunteers who are redirected or released will be notified in writing. USAGSO will maintain confidentiality; however, it may be necessary to notify other approved volunteers and/or members impacted by the change in volunteer status.

Volunteers who are released or redirected from their volunteer position are no longer approved volunteers with USAGSO. They are still considered members of GSUSA and USAGSO unless it is determined that they are not able to meet the membership requirements related to accepting the principles and beliefs of the Girl Scout Movement or by supporting the mission and values of the organization.

USA Girl Scouts Overseas may release a volunteer because of, but not limited to:

- Restructuring of positions or elimination of the volunteer position in which the individual serves.
- The volunteer's inability or failure to complete the requirements of the position.
- Conduct not consistent with the principles of the Girl Scout Movement.
- Not demonstrating the core values of the Girl Scout mission. This may include but is not limited to: speaking poorly of girls, parents, volunteers, or USAGSO staff
- Failure to support USAGSO policies, activities, and/or goals.
- Refusal to comply with USAGSO or Girl Scouts of the USA policies and procedures. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - o Unauthorized possession of dangerous weapons on Girl Scout property or while conducting volunteer activities, as stated in the policy prohibiting weapons.
 - o Willful violation of security or safety rules; negligence or any careless action, which endangers the life or safety of a girl or another adult.
 - o Failure to ask permission for additional money-earning events or submit annual financial reports
 - o Failure to submit an [Activity and Trip Application Form](#) and/or follow Safety Activity Checkpoints.
- Acts of discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, ethnicity, religion, lineage or citizenship, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, familial status, age, socioeconomic background, source of income, disability, genetic information, predisposing genetic characteristics, carrier status, domestic violence victim status, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- Membership in an organization whose goals are not compatible with those of GSUSA or USAGSO.
- Abuse, neglect, mishandling, or mistreatment of girls or adults.
- Conviction of a felony or engaging in criminal conduct, acts of violence, or making threats of violence towards anyone.
- Being intoxicated or under the influence of controlled substance drugs while volunteering; use, possession or sale of controlled substance drugs in any quantity while on Girl Scout premises and/or while conducting volunteer activities except medications prescribed by a physician which do not impair volunteer performance.
- Breach of confidentiality of personal or health information.
- Refusal to participate in conflict resolution procedures with USAGSO staff and other volunteers or parents.
- Misappropriation of funds or debt incurred to USAGSO or the volunteers Girl Scout Community

Part 4: Finance

USA Girl Scouts Overseas (USAGSO) follows the financial guidelines established by GSUSA and the Internal Revenue Service. USAGSO is responsible for the safekeeping 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.

Policies & Procedures

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 fiscal management. Upon clearing of his/her/their debt obligations, his/her/their continuation in their current position will be reviewed by the OCMT or USAGSO staff.

Procedure

- 1) Upon notification from an OCMT member or another volunteer of a volunteer debt, a USAGSO staff member will send the debtor a letter giving him/her/them 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. After submission to the collection agency, 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/they 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.

Troop/Group Bank Account Policy

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

OCMT Bank Account Policy

Any OCMTs 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:

1. Funds should be kept in a secure, locked location.
2. If the location is a volunteer's home, this should be added to the homeowner's or renter's insurance policy in case of fire or theft.
3. The OCMT Treasurer will keep a detailed log of all financial transactions, including any funds received and funds going out.
4. 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.
5. 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 safekeeping.

OCMTs shall keep only enough money in the account to provide programs for Girl Scouts and general cash flow as necessary with a maximum of 10,000USD plus 50.00USD per registered girl to be carried over to the next Girl Scout year. Amounts equal to or greater than this amount should have a specific, written plan including budget, dates, and who will be included in the event and be submitted with the year-end financial report and audit to USAGSO. Exceptions may be reviewed and approved by USAGSO staff. If not approved for roll-over, the community will be given a deadline to spend the money. Remember: money in the community's bank account is there to support Girl Scouts and Girl Scout activities in the year they were earned or deposited.

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 programs, adult development, youth and/or adult registration fees, and administrative costs of the organization.
2. The OCMT Treasurer is responsible for ensuring 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.
3. The Treasurer should be the custodian on the bank account. The OCC and another background checked volunteer (preferably an OCMT member) should be two additional approved signers on the bank account. The two additional signers must not be from the same household. Additionally, the Treasurer and OCC should not be from the same household.

OCMT Digital Payment Policy

OCMTs 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. OCMTs who fail to turn in their EOY finances by June 30th will not be eligible for community level microgrant funding the following membership year. OCMTs may request an extension by contacting their USAGSO Membership Manager or overseascustomer@girlscouts.org.

- Each OCMT must maintain a financial record of income and expense during the year.

- OCMTs handling the equivalent of 1,000USD or greater during the year must also conduct and submit an audit with the year-end financial report.

Procedure for submitting EOY Finances

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.
2. Failure to submit financial reports by the USAGSO deadline will result in the OCMT being ineligible for microgrant support and honor community.

Troop Financial Report Policy

1. Each troop/group must maintain records of its financial activities and file an Annual Troop Report with their OCMT. Troops/groups should maintain a financial record of income and expenses during the year. 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 by June 30.

Procedure for submitting Troop Financial Reports

1. The Troop Leader or his/her/their 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. The application should include a detailed outline of what the funds will be used for and when they will be spent. Roll-over funds should not exceed 50USD per Girl Scout.
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. USAGSO 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. Youth members may not engage in any direct solicitation for money except for Girl Scouts earning the Gold Award (GSUSA Blue Book of Basic Documents).

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 1,000USD 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 Gold Award and troop service projects do not incur any processing or handling fees by USAGSO. For Gold Award projects, the Girl Scout 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 for soliciting donations

1. Contact USAGSO for approval of solicitation request (financial or in-kind) and when unsolicited financial gifts are received.
2. 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.
3. Checks should be made out to: USA Girl Scouts Overseas Attn: Kelly Bullard, Executive Director 420th Avenue New York, NY 10018. As required by GSUSA Basic Blue Book of Documents, USAGSO must be a beneficiary of the solicitation (EIN: 13-1624016)

Procedure for planning a fundraising event

1. Submit a [Fundraising Request Form](#)
2. USAGSO staff will review the request and provide approval, guidance, and/or disapproval by [9](#)

email.

3. 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.
4. Checks should be made out to: USA Girl Scouts Overseas Attn: Kelly Bullard, Executive Director 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.

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 and private organization office (if applicable) approval if the troop is part of an OCMT. If the troop is not part of an OCMT, they must receive permission from USAGSO.
5. USAGSO is not responsible for any debts incurred by troops/groups when they undertake a troop/group money-earning project.
6. Girl Scouts' money earning for Highest Awards and 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 for Troop/Girl Money Earning

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 Girl Scouts and adults. If there is no local OCMT, money earning requests must be submitted to USAGSO using **this form** and approval must be granted by USAGSO before the project may be conducted by Girl Scouts and adults.
2. Money earning projects are to be suitable to the ages and abilities of the Girl Scouts and are to be planned and carried out by them.
3. Adults may assist Girl Scouts in their troop/group money earning projects but may not conduct independent money earning for the troop/group or individual Girl Scouts.

Part 5: 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.

Alcohol & Drug Use

No volunteer may purchase, consume, possess or be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs/substances, or prescription or over-the-counter medications which impair performance or judgment on USAGSO property, in the presence of girls, during any USAGSO-sanctioned activity (including volunteer meetings), while conducting USAGSO business, or in Girl Scout branded clothing.

Violators of the alcohol and drug policy will be asked to leave USAGSO property or activity site. Any violation of this policy will be grounds for appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including removal from volunteer role.

Alcoholic beverages may be served to/consumed by adults of legal age at USAGSO events when girls are not present only when previously approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

Tobacco/Smoking/Vaping 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

When girls are present at a Girl Scout event, adults are prohibited from using alcohol at any time. 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.

Weapons Policy

Firearms and/or weapons are prohibited while on USAGSO's property (owned or leased), driving a rented or leased vehicle, or at meetings, events, or trips. Weapons include firearms, knives, explosives, and other items with the potential to inflict harm. Any violation of this policy will be grounds for appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including removal from volunteer role.

Excluded from this provision, would be any equipment that a volunteer would use in a typical camping environment while engaged in camping activities or by a trained adult while conducting a USAGSO-approved Girl Scout program activity and must be used according to the guidelines for such in Safety Activity Checkpoints.

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.

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 for reporting harassment

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.