

GIRL SCOUTS – HOMESTEAD COUNCIL

Volunteer Policies

The strength of the Girl Scout Movement rests in the voluntary leadership of its adult members.

INTRODUCTION

This material is for the guidance of volunteers and staff working with volunteers. It provides guidance for volunteer recruitment, selection, appointment/reappointment, accountability, orientation, training, support, performance appraisal, recognition, problem solving, and release.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FOR VOLUNTEERS

Girl Scouts – Homestead Council remains committed to assuring that there shall be no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, sex, creed, religion, national origin, citizenship, ancestry, marital status, veteran status, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, disability, or age.

DEFINITIONS:

- ◆ **VOLUNTEER:** An adult Girl Scout member who willingly gives one's service without the expectation of monetary compensation.
- ◆ **OPERATIONAL VOLUNTEER:** An adult Girl Scout member who carries out activities to achieve the goals and objectives set forth by Girl Scouts – Homestead Council.
- ◆ **POLICY VOLUNTEER:** An adult Girl Scout member who helps determine and regularly reviews the policies of Girl Scouts – Homestead Council.

MEMBERSHIP

1. All adult volunteers must be 19 years of age or older, which is the age of majority in Nebraska.
2. All volunteers must be registered members of Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.
3. All volunteers must accept and be a role model of the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

UNIFORMS

1. A uniform is not required for participation in Girl Scouting. Purchase of a formal or informal Girl Scout uniform is encouraged and is at the volunteer's expense.
2. When participating in Girl Scout activities, volunteers should wear their Girl Scout Membership Pin and other Girl Scout insignia. To increase the public visibility of Girl Scouting, volunteers are also encouraged to promote their service to Girl Scouting by wearing their Girl Scout Membership Pin even when they are not participating in Girl Scouting.

RECRUITMENT

1. Girl Scouts – Homestead Council actively seeks volunteers of every racial, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic group.
2. Position descriptions will be available to ensure that Girl Scouts -- Homestead Council can recruit a pool of skilled prospective volunteers who are motivated to put their talents, skills, and abilities to work on behalf of the Council's goals and objectives.
3. Each volunteer will be required to complete an application, provide references, sign agreements, and undergo required background checks prior to selection.

SELECTION

1. Each volunteer is selected on the basis of ability to perform the volunteer position, meet volunteer and Council needs, personal skills and willingness to attend training, satisfactory completion of the Council's process for screening volunteers and qualifications for membership in the Girl Scout Movement.

2. There shall be no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, sex, creed, religion, national origin, citizenship, ancestry, marital status, veteran status, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, disability, or age.

SCREENING

As a means to assure a safe environment for all girl and adult members, Homestead Council will screen adult members in the following positions: leaders, assistant leaders, stipend leaders or volunteers, employees, board of directors members, CATRON volunteers, adult Council and troop trip participants and other positions deemed necessary by obtaining self-reported information, references, Nebraska reports of child abuse and neglect, and national criminal history.

An application and references will be provided at the time of application. Self-reported information and the release of Nebraska Central Register of Child Abuse and Neglect and information for conducting the criminal history check must be provided annually.

If an individual's name is on the Nebraska Central Register, they must be able to expunge their name within 30 days of notification by the Council.

An individual would not be placed into the position of leader, assistant leader, board member, trip participant, CATRON volunteer and other positions as deemed appropriate, if they are currently charged or have been indicted or convicted of any of the following crimes:

- Aggravated or armed robbery
- Arson
- Assault, first or second degree
- Child abandonment
- Child abuse
- Child molestation or debauching a minor
- Criminal non-support
- Domestic violence
- Exploitation of a minor involving drug offenses
- Felony controlled substances offences
- Felony violation of custody
- Incest
- Kidnapping
- Murder, first or second degree
- Robbery; Theft
- Sexual abuse of a minor
- Sexual assault
- Sexual exploitation of a minor, including child pornography
- Voluntary manslaughter

An individual would not be placed into any of the above mentioned positions if they are currently charged or have been indicted or convicted of any of the following crimes within the last five years:

- Burglary
- Driving under the influence
- Misdemeanor controlled substances offences
- Misdemeanor contributing to the delinquency of a child

PLACEMENT

1. Optimal placements occur when the needs of both the volunteer and the Council are met.
2. If an optimal placement is not possible, the needs of the Council take precedence over the needs of the individual.
3. Individuals not placed in a position for which they applied may be recommended for other positions.
4. Individuals not placed in a position for which they applied may request reassignment or decide not to serve.

APPOINTMENT

1. The volunteer will receive a written position description.
2. Operational volunteers shall be appointed for a term not to exceed one year.
3. Policy volunteers shall be appointed to terms of office as designated in the bylaws or by the Board of Directors.

ORIENTATION

Each volunteer shall be provided with an overview of the Girl Scout mission, information about the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A., Homestead Council, and the support systems available to help them with their work.

TRAINING

Volunteers shall complete training for their position as specified within Homestead Council policy, GSUSA policy or within their position description.

GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

1. Ongoing support is available to leaders, co-leaders, and assistant leaders through the Service Unit and the Council.
2. Ongoing support for other volunteer positions is available as appropriate and the volunteer is informed about how to access this support.

REAPPOINTMENT

Reappointment is based on past performance, adherence to Council and GSUSA policies and standards, support of the Girl Scout mission, values, and Council goals as well as positive relationships with the community, parents, other volunteers, and the employed staff.

RESIGNATION

Adult volunteers during their appointment to a Girl Scout volunteer position, who find that they cannot fulfill the responsibilities of the position, may resign by notifying the volunteer or staff member that appointed them to the position. A minimum of two weeks notice is preferred in order to ensure continuity of service to girls.

RECOGNITION

1. The Council's formal recognition system will be consistent with the GSUSA recognition system.
2. Formal recognition events are used to honor volunteers at the troop level, service unit, and council level.
3. Volunteer experience is valuable to the volunteer as an individual and may be used by the individual volunteer for resume and references outside of Girl Scouting.
 - a) Girl Scouts – Homestead Council maintains a file of volunteer applications. This file is located at the Resource Center and is confidential.
 - b) Additions are made for volunteer records, recognitions, training records, etc.
 - c) The file is available for review and update.

ACCOUNTABILITIES:

1. All troop leaders, co-leaders, assistant leaders, staff, board members and other volunteers as defined within their position description must annually complete a release for the Nebraska Child Abuse and Neglect Central Register. (Form #322). Screening occurs annually using the Central Register. Volunteers or staff whose name appears on the Register must have their names expunged or be released from their positions in Girl Scouting.
2. All troop leaders, co-leaders and assistant leaders must annually complete and sign their Leadership Agreement (Form #210).
3. All troop leaders, co-leaders and assistant leaders will complete the required training for their position.
4. All volunteers must accept the responsibility of being a positive role model and assure that their personal conduct will exemplify the Girl Scout Promise, the Girl Scout Law and the principles of Girl Scouting.
5. All volunteers will support and work within the framework of the articles of incorporation, the bylaws, policies, standards, and goals of Girl Scouts – Homestead Council and Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.
6. All volunteers will support the organizational commitment to Affirmative Action and diversity.

INSURANCE

1. All registered members are protected under Girl Scout Activity Accident Insurance, Basic Coverage. This plan provides coverage for accident-related medical expenses to members traveling to and from or participating in approved supervised Girl Scout activities of two nights or less. (See VIP)
2. The organization does not assume responsibility for replacement or insuring a volunteer's personal effects.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. The role of the volunteer in providing a healthy and safe Girl Scout environment is twofold: 1) the prevention of injury and illness to participants in a Girl Scout activity and 2) acting in a manner that shows concern for the health and welfare of the individuals for whom they are responsible.
2. Volunteers shall not use tobacco products while on Council premises nor in the presence of girls during Girl Scout activities.
3. Volunteers shall not use alcohol in the presence of girls during Girl Scout activities.
4. Volunteers shall not use nonprescribed controlled substances on Council premises nor in the presence of girls during Girl Scout activities.
5. Weapons, firearms or ammunition are not allowed at Girl Scout activities, unless part of a structured program activity. (See SAFETY-WISE)
6. Fireworks are never allowed on Council premises nor at a Girl Scout sponsored activity.

USE OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Any motor vehicles used to transport Girl Scouts must be duly licensed, insured and operated by a responsible adult with a valid driver's license. The driver of the vehicle is responsible for insurance coverage as required by law on any vehicle used to transport Girl Scouts. (Refer to SAFETY-WISE.)

CHILD ABUSE

The Nebraska Child Protective Act requires the reporting of all suspected child abuse. The law provides immunity from liability for individuals participating in this type of reporting. (Refer to VIP.)

HARASSMENT

1. Girl Scout volunteers and staff must at all times serve as appropriate role models for girls, demonstrating behavior that is compatible with the values and traditions of Girl Scouting.
2. Girl Scouts – Homestead Council is committed to an environment and climate in which relationships are characterized by dignity, respect, courtesy and equitable treatment.
3. It is the policy of the organization to provide all volunteers and members with an environment free from all forms of unlawful or unwelcome harassment, including implied or expressed forms of sexual harassment.
4. Any volunteer or member who feels that she or he has been subject to harassment, of any type, while engaged in a Girl Scout activity should promptly report the incident to the Executive Director or the Council President. The Executive Director or President will take appropriate measures to resolve or correct the situation in an expeditious manner.
5. Anyone who hears a report of harassment, of any type, from anyone engaged in a Girl Scout activity should promptly report the incident to the Executive Director or the Council President. The Executive Director or President will take appropriate measures to resolve or correct the situation in an expeditious manner.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

INFORMAL PROCESS

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

5. Policy volunteers with concerns involving a paid staff member should express their concern to the Council President.

FORMAL PROCESS

1. Any volunteers may use the conflict resolution procedure.
2. A written description of the concern and actions to date should be directed to the Executive Director who shall appoint a Volunteer Relations Group within five working days. This group shall convene within one week to review the complaint, investigate the written description, and report conclusions to the appropriate individuals within two weeks. This group's decision is final and conclusions will be kept confidential. If the concern is directed at the Executive Director, the Council President shall guide this process.
3. The initiation of the conflict resolution procedure will not restrict Girl Scouts – Homestead Council from taking immediate and appropriate action with respect to the volunteer.

APPOINTMENT, REAPPOINTMENT AND TERMINATION FROM A VOLUNTEER POSITION

The Council reserves the right to refuse appointment or reappointment, and to dismiss or suspend from affiliation with the Council any volunteer who:

1. Conducts the Girl Scout program in a manner inconsistent with the principles of the Girl Scout Movement, GSUSA policies or Council policies.
2. Does not complete and sign a release to obtain information, on an annual basis, from the Nebraska Child Abuse and Neglect Central Register.
3. Is unable or unwilling to expunge their name from the Nebraska Child Abuse and Neglect Central Register if a report is found within 30 days of notification.
4. Does not provide information necessary for the Council to complete volunteer screening process or receives a unfavorable report via the screening process.
5. Is a member of an organization whose policies are in conflict with the Girl Scout Promise and Law and Girl Scout principles.
6. Harasses another person.
7. Misuses troop or Council funds.
8. Does not fulfill training requirements.
9. Cannot perform the accountabilities listed within the volunteer position description.
10. Is consistently absent or tardy from required troop meetings.