

## **Operational Volunteer Personnel Practices**

Please take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with the GSUSA and council policies and practices that guide and protect your status as a Girl Scout volunteer. The practices listed below pertain to all volunteers regardless of position or role.

All volunteers participating in the Girl Scout Movement shall meet GSUSA membership standards, be registered through the council as members of the Girl Scout Movement, and shall agree to abide by the policies and principles of GSUSA and the Girl Scout council.

### **Recruitment**

The recruitment process consists of a number of methods to attract qualified volunteers who will be matched to appropriate open or newly created positions. Each volunteer will be required to complete an application, provide references, sign agreements and undergo a background check prior to selection.

### **Selection**

Each volunteer is selected on the basis of ability to perform the volunteer position, volunteer and council need, ability and willingness to attend training, and qualifications for membership in the Girl Scout Movement. There shall be no discrimination against an otherwise qualified adult volunteer by reason of disability or on the basis of age. Furthermore, there shall be no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, sex, creed, national origin, religion, citizenship, ancestry, marital status, veteran status, socioeconomic status, or other characteristics protected by federal, state, or local law. Volunteers will receive an interview prior to selection.

### **Placement**

Every attempt will be made to place volunteers in positions that meet both their needs and the needs of the council. In instances where this is not possible, the needs of the council will take precedence over the needs of the individual. Individuals not placed in a position for which they applied may be recommended for other positions, and they may request reassignment.

Operational volunteers shall be appointed for a term not to exceed one year. (See “Reappointment” for additional information.)

### **Orientation**

All volunteers are provided with an overview of the Girl Scout purpose and organization, local council information, and the support systems available to help them in their work.

### **Guidance and Support**

All new volunteers will be assigned a mentor. The adult volunteer mentoring program is designed to provide individualized, one-on-one support to volunteers entering new positions until they feel secure and confident in their roles.

### **Adult Learning**

All volunteers will receive basic training for their position and will also be required to complete additional training that is designated as mandatory for the position within a specified time frame. Adult learning ensures that each volunteer has the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in her or his work.

### **Performance Appraisal**

Each volunteer shall be provided with the opportunity for a periodic performance appraisal and evaluation. The performance appraisal should include both a review of the volunteer's performance of position responsibilities and a discussion of any suggestions that the volunteer may have concerning the position or project with which the volunteer is connected. The performance appraisal session should also be utilized as an opportunity to ascertain the mutual interest of the council and volunteer in the volunteer's continued service in her or his position.

The position description and standards of performance for a volunteer position should form the basis of the performance appraisal. A confidential written record should be kept of each appraisal session.

Standards of performance shall be established for each volunteer position. These standards should list the responsibilities of the position, measurable indicators of whether responsibilities were accomplished, and appropriate timelines for accomplishment of responsibilities. Creation of these standards will be a joint function of staff and the volunteer assigned to the position, and a copy of the standards should be provided to the volunteer along with a copy of the position description at the beginning of her or his assignment.

### **Reappointment**

Prior to the completion of her or his term, each volunteer who is to be reappointed to the same position or rotated to a different position may receive confirmation of such reappointment or rotation. Reappointment is based on past performance, adherence to council and GSUSA policies and standards, support of the Girl Scout purpose, values, and council goals, as well as positive relationships with the community, parents, other volunteers, and employed staff. There will be mutual acceptance of position accountabilities, expectations, and time commitments.

### **Recognition**

Appreciation is an ongoing, everyday process for anyone, anywhere, anytime. Showing appreciation for one another is a good way to show respect, to relate to each other's strengths and to build mutual commitment. Giving and receiving recognition is an important component of the Volunteer Development System in Girl Scouting.

The Annual Meeting, Girl Scout service unit awards ceremonies, Girl Scout service unit meetings/events/encampments, council events/encampments, troop/group meetings or any other gathering of Girl Scouts are appropriate venues to recognize adults. The ultimate measure is always the impact on girls – how each service directly or indirectly supported or enhanced girls' experiences in Girl Scouting.

### **Uniforms**

A uniform is not required for participation in Girl Scouting. Purchase of a uniform is at the volunteer's expense and is encouraged. Volunteers are encouraged to wear the Girl Scout Membership Pin when they are not in uniform.

### **Conflict Resolution/Dispute**

The conflict resolution process is based on the fundamental values of respect for the individual and fairness. The policy exists so members of the organization can air their grievances and have avenues to solving them. All volunteers may use the conflict resolution procedure. Every volunteer may expect a fair resolution of her or his dispute without fear of jeopardizing her or his volunteer status. Informal counseling by volunteer and staff personnel is the first step in resolving a situation involving a conflict or dispute. The initiation of the conflict resolution procedure, however, will not restrict the council from taking immediate and appropriate action with respect to the volunteer. The procedure is as follows:

*Step 1.* If an informal resolution is not possible and a further hearing is desired, the person filing the complaint must do so in writing, citing the issue. The signed and dated document must be specifically titled "Conflict Resolution/Dispute Request," identify the person with whom the conflict is registered, and cite the policy or procedure that has allegedly been misapplied. A copy should be sent to the identified person's supervisor. Within 10 working days, the supervisor will call a conference of all parties involved in the dispute and attempt to resolve the conflict. A written summary of the conference will be distributed to all parties.

*Step 2.* If the volunteer is not satisfied with the disposition of the conflict resolution, the council staff member or the council staff member's supervisor will meet with the volunteer within ten (10) working days following her or his initial conference.

*Step 3.* In the event that the dispute is not resolved in Step 2, the staff member prepares a written report on the situation, including recommendations, and sends a copy to the chief executive officer.

OR

*Step 4.* The chief executive officer will appoint a dispute/complaint resolution review team. (The review team will comprise a management representative, an employee not involved in the conflict resolution process, and a council volunteer selected by the complainant.) The dispute review team will review the documentation on file and meet with the individuals involved. The review team may seek additional information, if necessary, to aid it in making a final decision. The team will provide the chief executive officer with a written report of its findings and recommendations within 10 working days of the review hearing. Copies will also be issued to the volunteer and immediate supervisor.

If the recommended resolution is not acceptable to the volunteer or any of the supervisors involved, a request to submit the recommended resolution to the chief executive officer for a final and binding decision will be made. The chief executive officer may exercise the following:

1. Accept the Dispute Resolution Team's recommended solution.
2. Provide an alternative final and binding decision.

This is the council's final decision. It is the responsibility of the chief executive officer to implement the decision.

### **Release**

Either the council or the volunteer may initiate a release from a position. A volunteer is requested to give as much notice as possible when resigning. A minimum of two weeks is requested.

Situations may arise that make it necessary to release an individual from a position. The council may release an individual because of, among other things, restructuring of positions, elimination of the volunteer position in which the individual serves, the volunteer's inability or failure to complete the requirements of the position, or the refusal to comply with council or Girl Scouts of the USA policies. Release from the position does not cancel membership with Girl Scouts of the USA unless it is determined that she or he is unable to meet the membership requirement.

### **Harassment**

The council is committed to an environment and climate in which relationships are characterized by dignity, respect, courtesy, and equitable treatment. It is the policy of the organization to provide all volunteers with an environment free from all forms of harassment, including implied or expressed forms of sexual harassment.

The council expressly prohibits any form of harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, marital status, citizenship, ancestry, veterans status, or any other characteristic.

Any volunteer who feels that she or he has been subjected to harassment of any type, whether by another volunteer, council staff member, or any agent of the organization, should promptly report the incident to a supervisor or to the chief executive officer. The supervisor, upon receiving such a complaint, must report the matter to the chief executive officer who will conduct an investigation and, depending on the findings, take appropriate corrective actions.