

Girl Scouts – Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas
Approved Council Volunteer Policies and Procedures
as of March 21, 2009

A policy is an established course of action that must be followed. Any person who volunteers for Girl Scouts – Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas must accept and adhere to these policies.

Unless otherwise noted, “adult” is someone who is at least 18 years of age AND is no longer in high school.

Girl Scouts – Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas volunteer policies are adopted by and subject to modification by the Girl Scouts – Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas Board of Directors.

ADULT VOLUNTEERS

Policy Equal Opportunity – Affirmative Action

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 or ancestry, religion, citizenship, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or other characteristics protect by federal, state, or local law. In addition, to ensure full equality of opportunity in all operations and activities of the organization, equal opportunity policies and procedures shall be utilized in the recruitment, selection, training, placement, and recognition of volunteers. Special emphasis shall be placed upon securing representation of underutilized racial minorities.

Policy Nepotism

Individuals will not be barred from volunteer appointment by reason of kinship to an employee or other volunteer. However, there will be no direct supervisory relationship between members of the same family. Every volunteer is expected to follow guidelines found in Safety-Wise and council policies.

Policy Membership Registration

All volunteers participating in the Girl Scout Movement shall be registered as members with Girl Scouts of the United States of America and pay the individual annual or lifetime membership dues, except those adults who are working in a temporary advisory capacity or consultative capacity. Financial assistance for individual dues is available for those who need it providing council budget has the funding available. Adult members shall be eighteen years of age or older and meet the membership requirements stated in the Leader’s Digest.

Standard All volunteers shall agree to abide by the policies and principles of GSUSA and the Girl Scouts – Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas. GSDAOT will not sanction inappropriate conduct, which includes, but is not limited to the following Standards of conduct:

- Consumption of alcohol by volunteers during the time they are responsible for girl members.
- Possession, sale, or use of illegal drugs or the misuse of prescribed drugs.
- Performing volunteer duties under the influence of drugs, including alcohol.
- Abusive behavior including failure to provide adequate care, supervision, health and safety measures, as well as physical, sexual, verbal and emotional abuse or maltreatment of girl members.
- Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between volunteers and girl members, sexually abusive behavior toward girl members including indecent contact, exhibitionism, voyeurism, or involvement of girl members in pornographic activities or materials, or any display of sexual activity by volunteers in front of girl members.
- Sexual harassment including, but not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment for other volunteers, staff, or members.
- Profane/abusive language in the presence of girls, or toward any Girl Scout member or parent while conducting Girl Scout business.
- Discrimination or harassment against any volunteer or girl by reason of physical or mental disability, age, medical condition including genetic characteristics, race, color, ethnicity, sex, creed, national origin or ancestry, religion, citizenship, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws.
- Promoting religious, political, or personal preferences.
- Willfully or maliciously damaging the Council's property.
- Failing to maintain confidentiality of Council information.
- Willfully or maliciously damaging the reputation of the Council or any volunteer or employed staff member.
- Misappropriation of Council, service unit and or troop monies.
- Failing to observe and follow all applicable state and local laws.
- Refusal to comply with Council or GSUSA national policy and/or procedures.
- Willfully smoking in the presence of girls.

Girl Scouts – Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas will take the corrective action necessary, up to and including dismissal from a Girl Scout position, for non-compliance with GSUSA and Council policies and standards of conduct. Girl Scouts – Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas will take legal action when necessary if laws have been broken (i.e. theft of Girl Scout funds, writing bad checks on current or past Girl Scout accounts, crimes against children, etc.)

Policy

Recruitment and Placement of a Volunteer

Qualified volunteers will be matched to appropriate positions. Volunteer position descriptions will define specific responsibilities and clarify expectations.

Prior to selection and placement, each volunteer will be required to:

- Complete an application,
- Provide a minimum of two references, and
- Submit to a background check
- Complete training courses required for the volunteer position

Policy**Appointment**

Operational volunteers shall be appointed for a term not to exceed one year.

Policy**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 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.

Policy**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.

Standard

Each volunteer is selected on the basis of ability to perform the volunteer position, volunteer and council need, ability and willingness to attend training/learning opportunities, and qualifications for membership in the Girl Scout Movement.

Every attempt shall 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.

Background Checks

In order to ensure the safety and well-being of the girl members of Girl Scouts – Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas, the Council reserves the right to disqualify or restrict the duties of any person who has been convicted of certain crimes; who has pled guilty or no contest to certain crimes; and/or who has been placed on probation or deferred adjudication for certain crimes. All prospective Council volunteers must complete and sign a volunteer application form authorizing the Council or its agents to conduct a criminal background check. Without a completed and signed volunteer application form and records of a minimum of two positive references on file, a person cannot serve in a or be appointed to a volunteer position with the Council that works directly with girls.

The Council may conduct a criminal background check on any or all prospective troop/group leaders, co-leaders, any other adult volunteer who works directly with girls, and anyone handling Girl Scout funds. This criminal background check is one component of the Council's Volunteer application and Reference Procedure, the goal of which is to screen prospective volunteers and place capable and qualified adults in all direct services positions.

The criminal offenses that will disqualify a person from volunteer participation in the Council, as well as the process used to determine disqualification of a person from volunteer participation, are set out in greater detail below. As a general matter, the decision whether to exclude altogether or limit a prospective volunteer's participation in the Council is exclusively within the discretion of the Council. Factors to be considered by the Council in making such determinations include, but are not limited to, the nature and severity of the criminal conduct, and the length of time since the criminal conduct occurred. The Council's primary concern is always the safety and best interest of its girl members.

The following rules shall apply if the Council learns (via a criminal background check or otherwise) that a prospective volunteer has been convicted of, as pled guilty to, has received deferred adjudication for, or has pled no contest to one of the following crimes under the law:

A. Automatic Disqualifications

- Crimes against children
- Felony offenses against persons
- Felony offenses against the family
- Crimes defined as public indecency
- Crimes involving the use of weapons
- Arson
- Second or more offense DWI, DUI or possession of marijuana under 2 ounces
- Any violent crime or felony drug-related offense, other than those drug offenses specifically identified below.

B. Possible Disqualifications

- For a first offense DWI, DUI or possession of marijuana under two ounces, if it has been five years or more since the date of disposition, the decision whether to allow participation shall be within the absolute and exclusive discretion of the Council.

C. Limitation on Handling Money

- For crimes involving theft, fraud, and forgery, if it has been less than 10 years since disposition, that person will be restricted from management of Girl Scout funds.
- If it has been more than 10 years since disposition, it will be up to the absolute and exclusive discretion of the Council as to whether they will be allowed to manage Girl Scout funds.

D. Other

- For all other criminal offenses (except traffic violations classified as Class C misdemeanors), the Council shall review the applicant's situation on a case-by-case basis. The decision

whether to allow service shall be within the absolute discretion of the CEO.

- If a prospective or current volunteer is charged with any criminal offense, other than traffic violations classified as Class C misdemeanors, involvement with the Council as a volunteer will be suspended pending disposition of the case.

The Council will maintain the confidentiality of all criminal background check information, including information regarding disqualification decisions.

Policy

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 unlawful or unwelcome harassment, including implied or expressed forms of sexual harassment.

Policy

Sexual Harassment

It is against the council's policies for any individual, male or female, to sexually harass another volunteer, employee, or Girl Scout member of the same or opposite sex. The council reserves the right to refuse membership endorsement or reappointment, and to dismiss or suspend from affiliation with the council any volunteer who, in conducting Girl Scout program, sexually harasses another volunteer, employee, or Girl Scout member of the same or opposite sex.

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual acts or favors, abusing the dignity of another through insulting degrading sexual remarks or conduct and threats or suggestions that a volunteer's status is conditioned upon toleration of or acquiescence to sexual advances. Some examples of sexual harassment that could create a hostile environment include telling sexual jokes or stories; the presence of sexually explicit photographs or other materials; touching another person's clothing, hair or body; making sexual comments about another person's body; making sexual comments or innuendoes; asking questions about another person's social or sexual life; staring; leering; and making sexual gestures.

Policy

Hostility

Girl Scouts – Diamonds of Arkansas Oklahoma and Texas prohibits hostility in any Form against girl members, adult volunteers, staff members, visitors or anyone else having involvement with the council. Hostility under this policy is considered to include physical violence as well as harassment, intimidation, stalking, coercion, display of weapons, threats, and talking or joking about hostility whether in person or through some other means of communications such as writing, telephone, voice mail or electronic mail.

Standard

Any volunteer who feels that she or he has been subjected to harassment of any type, sexual harassment or hostility whether by another volunteer, council staff member, or any agent of the organization should promptly report such behavior to a director, vice president or to the CEO. Upon receiving a complaint, a director,

vice president will report the matter to the CEO. The CEO will conduct an investigation and, depending on the findings, take appropriate corrective action.

Policy

Conflict Resolution

Girl Scouts – Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas will have a conflict resolution procedure. The procedure exists so members of the organization can air their grievances and have avenues for solving them. Every volunteer may expect a fair resolution of her or his dispute with 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.

Standard

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 ten (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 CEO.

Or

Step 4. The CEO will appoint a dispute/complaint resolution review team. (The review team will be comprised of 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/executive director with a written report of its findings and recommendations within ten (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 CEO for a final and binding decision will be made. The CEO 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 CEO to implement the decision.

Policy

Concealed Weapons

The possession (or use) of any concealed weapon on Council owned or leased properties, during any Girl Scout activity or in the presence of girl members is strictly prohibited.

Policy

Substance Abuse

Possession, sale or use of illegal drugs or intoxicants or the misuse of prescribed drugs is prohibited while serving girls or in the presence of girls.

Policy

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited on council property except in designated areas. According to *Safety-Wise*, smoking is identified as a behavior that may threaten the health and welfare of girls and is prohibited when acting in an official Girl Scout capacity, while serving girls, or in the presence of girls.

Policy

Child Abuse

The council supports and maintains environments that are free of child abuse and Neglect as defined by the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act.

Child abuse and neglect are unlawful acts, and it is against the council's policy for any volunteer, male or female, to physically, sexually, mentally, emotionally, or verbally abuse or neglect any girl member.

The council reserves the right to refuse membership endorsement or reappointment, and to dismiss or to exclude from affiliation with the council, any volunteer implementing Girl Scout program who is found guilty of child abuse and neglect or has been convicted of child abuse and neglect.

All volunteers of Girl Scouts – DAOT shall immediately report any incidents or strong suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate agency and inform Girl Scouts – DAOT.

ADULT DEVELOPMENT

Girl Scouts – Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas values adult development to ensure safety and high quality programs for girls while providing opportunities for personal development for adults.

Policy

Orientation

Each volunteer is provided with an overview of the Girl Scout purpose and organization, Girl Scouts – Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas, and the support systems available to help them in their position. Volunteers will be required to complete the orientation process.

Policy Training
All volunteers will receive basic training/learning opportunities for their position and will also be required to complete additional training/learning opportunities that are designated as mandatory for the position within a specified time frame. Training/learning opportunities will ensure that each volunteer has the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in her or his position.

Policy Recognitions
GSDAOT will follow a system of recognitions that is outlined in council adult recognition guidelines and GSUSA's publication, Adult Recognition in Girl Scouting.

TROOP/SERVICE UNIT POLICIES

Safety-Wise
Girl Scouts – Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas (GSDAOT) views Safety-Wise as the minimum safety and program standards by which Girl Scouting will operate in the council. GSDAOT may choose to develop polices more strict than outlined in Safety-Wise.

Policy Troop/Group Registration/Re-Registration
A troop shall be defined as comprising of a minimum of five girls and two unrelated adults, one of which must be female. (Unrelated is defined as not related by blood, marriage or household.)

Standard Troop/groups with less than five girls, but at least three girls (from more than one family), must be actively recruiting for more girls or be open to accepting more girls.

Policy Service Unit
A Service Unit is a group of volunteers representing at a minimum of five troops within a defined geographic area, a minimum of three service team members that are non related and not registered or sharing in the responsibilities of the same troop.

Policy Troop Travel
At least one registered adult accompanying the troop/group must have completed the required Council training.

Any adult traveling with girls must be a registered Girl Scout and successfully complete the volunteer application process and background check.

Girl Scout travel and overnight activities must be pre-approved by the appropriate persons according to the Council procedures.

Girl Scout troops/groups traveling by car must adhere to state laws and safe-driving practices at all times.

The number of occupants in the car shall not exceed the intended capacity of the vehicle and each occupant shall have her/his own seat and is buckled into a seatbelt.

Car seats and booster seats shall be used as defined by state law.

Standard

A driver shall:

- Be a registered adult Girl Scout and successfully complete the volunteer application process and background check,
- Have a first aid kit in the vehicle,
- Have in possession of the driver a signed parent/guardian permission form for each girl in the vehicle
- Not use a cell phone while driving,
- Provide proof of a valid driver's license, proof of liability insurance in compliance with state law; and sign the appropriate paperwork,
- Be in possession of the council after-hours emergency contact information.

Policy

Insurance

All Girl Scout activities must be covered by the appropriate insurance.

Policy

Finances

All troops, groups and service units shall be required to establish a bank account.

Each, troop, group and service unit shall maintain accurate records of income and expenses and shall submit financial reports as required by Council procedures.

Adult(s) in charge of troops, group, service unit funds and/or bank accounts shall be held accountable for those funds at all times.

Any volunteer owing a debt to Girl Scouts – Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas may be removed from her or his volunteer position and may be subject to legal action.

If any Girl Scout funds and/or property are lost, stolen or misappropriated, an investigation shall be conducted and parties involved may be subject to legal action.

Reimbursements for expenditures from the council budget must be approved in advance by the appropriate person.

No Girl Scout volunteer shall enter into any agreement or contract that is binding on the Council or includes a hold harmless clause.

Troops/groups shall follow the Council's disbanded troop/group procedures in regards to remaining funds.

Money earned is property of the troop/group and at no time does the girl or her family receive troop funds directly. If a girl transfers her membership to another troop within the Council she may be entitled to a portion of remaining troop's funds that were earned during her tenure with the troop to follow her to the new troop.

Standard

Troop Funds

The troop leader shall keep a troop finance report up to date.

- The Annual Finance Report is due May 31, to be turned into the Service Unit Treasurer or Council staff designate with a copy of the April bank statement and original receipts attached.
- After the Finance Report is audited and approved a copy of the approved Finance Report with the original receipts will be returned to the troop leader.
- The Council Vice President of Finance will make random audits throughout the year on troop accounts. A letter will be sent out asking for financial information to be submitted to be audited.

Disbanded Troop Funds

If possible, before disbanding, the troop should decide with the currently registered girls what to do with the troop's funds. Funds shall be used for troop activities, and according to GSUSA policy may not be refunded directly to girls or their family.

A final Finance Report with a Disbanded Troop Form should be submitted to the Service Unit Treasurer or Council Staff designate showing how all monies were used. If all money is not used for activities with the girls, the remaining troop funds shall be distributed in a timely manner as follows:

- If no girls from the troop want to continue, the funds will be transferred to the service unit account. The money will be held as temporary restricted funds by the service unit for a period of one year. After a period of one year all remaining monies will revert to the service unit restricted funds to start new troops.
- If there is not a functioning service unit, the money will be held as temporary restricted funds by the Council for a period of one year. After a period of one year all remaining monies will revert to the Council assistance fund.
- If girls join other troops, the money will be divided proportionately, and put into the troop accounts the girls are joining.
- If a girl becomes an Independent/Juliette registered Girl Scout, her portion of disbanded troop funds will be held by the service unit on behalf of that girl. Money for an individual Girl Scout will be held until she uses it or does not re-register. The money in a girl's account can be used to help pay or defray the cost of membership fees, registration event fees, camp, uniform or program books, and Girl Scout earned recognitions. If an individual Girl Scout re-registers with a troop, it is the girl's parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the council in writing to transfer any money in held in her name to her new troop. If a girl does not re-register all remaining monies shall go to the service unit account to be used to open new troop accounts. If there is not a functioning service unit, the money will remain with the Council and be held as temporary

restricted funds by the Council for one year. After one year all remaining monies will revert to the Council assistance fund.

- If a troop disbands, all money, property and equipment must be returned to the Service Unit within 30 days of disbanding.

SERVICE UNIT FUNDS

The Board of Directors recognizes the need for individual service units to maintain nominal balances to fund local activities for girls and adults.

- The service unit treasurer must submit an Annual Finance Report along with the service unit budget for the next membership year to their Council Membership/Marketing Specialist by July 31. A copy of the June bank statement and original receipts should be attached to the Finance Report. The budget should be approved by a majority of the service unit.
- The day-to-day custodianship of these funds is the responsibility of the service unit treasurer. The Council Membership/Marketing Specialist shall oversee these funds by reviewing monthly bank statements and an annual review of the service unit Finance Report. The Vice President of Finance may do random audits of service unit accounts.
- The service unit may decide how its money is used for well-balanced program activities. However, service unit funds may not be used for any non-Girl Scout purposes. Under no circumstances shall the money be divided among members of the service unit for personal use nor may the service unit treasurer use the funds for her/his personal use.
- A service unit may possess money, property, and equipment, donated or purchased, but they must be held in the name of Girl Scouts – Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas.
- If a service unit is disbanded and merged to another service unit, all money, property and equipment will be transferred to the merged service unit.