



# Council Policies and Procedures

# Council Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures are designed to help volunteers carry out the Girl Scout program in a safe and secure environment. They are designed to protect girls and enhance the principles of Girl Scouting.

Policies are an official course of action that must be adhered to.

Policies are approved by the board of directors.

Procedures are guidelines or practices to ensure basic levels of health and safety for girls. Procedures do not require board approval.

Each volunteer is provided with access to the [Volunteer Essentials](#) to familiarize themselves with the policies, standards, and procedures of Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois (GSEIWI) and Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA).

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois has policies set by the council's board of directors that supplement the national policies and standards.

Both GSUSA and our council review their policies and procedures at regular intervals.

## Council Policies and Procedures

### **Adherence to GSUSA Policy and State and Federal Law**

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois accepts and supports GSUSA policies, standards, guidelines, and issue statements, as well as adheres to state and federal laws.

### **Girl Scout Property Use**

Council property may be used in accordance with council procedures by groups who have compatible philosophies with the Girl Scout movement.

**PROCEDURE:** Girl Scout camps are available for use by Girl Scouts and non-Girl Scouts. Reservations will be taken no more than 12-months in advance unless special arrangements are made.

### **Tobacco-Free Environment**

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois is a tobacco-free facility. Any use of tobacco is prohibited on Girl Scout premises. This includes all sites, owned, leased, and/or operated by the council.

### **Gun Free Environment**

Any place that girls gather in the name of Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois is considered a Gun-Free Environment.

Knowingly allowing the carrying of firearms by other Girl Scout members or non-Girl Scout members attending said Girl Scout function may be grounds for dismissal. Exceptions may be made if special permission is given by the council CEO, COO, or designee for group marksmanship activities or education.

### **Group Trips**

Any group planning a trip overnight or longer must obtain specific training and approval from the council using current procedures.

### **Group Camping**

Any group going camping must be accompanied by an adult who has completed troop camp training.

### **Group Treasuries**

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois is ultimately responsible for safeguarding all Girl Scout money in its jurisdiction, including money belonging to troops/groups. Therefore, all checking and savings accounts must be opened and deposited in accounts in the name of: Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois, Inc. service unit/group # \_\_\_\_\_

### **Disbanded Group Treasuries**

Group treasuries of inactive or disbanded troops must be returned to the council following procedures.

### **Group Money-Earning**

Activity Groups planning a money-earning activity, other than council-sponsored activities, must obtain approval in accordance with council procedures. Groups requesting money-earning activities must participate in the Cookie Program held during the current membership year. Email [Info@GirlScoutsToday.org](mailto:Info@GirlScoutsToday.org) to receive the group money earning application. Applications must be submitted to the council at least six weeks prior to activity approval.

## Council Policies and Procedures



### **Delinquent Accounts**

All delinquent accounts must be paid in full for any family member to qualify for financial assistance and participation in future product sales or money-earning activities.

### **Tax-Exempt Status**

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois is incorporated as 501(c)3 by the IRS. The council is the only tax-exempt entity. All charitable contributions and other assets received, in an amount to be established by procedure, must be received by the council and used for the purposes of Girl Scouting. Such assets are not the property of individuals, troops, or communities within the council.

### **Contracts**

All contracts entered into the name of Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois must be signed by the CEO, board chair, or their designee.

**PROCEDURE:** This covers all contracts regardless of whether a fee is involved. Email [Info@GirlScoutsToday.org](mailto:Info@GirlScoutsToday.org) for local designees.

### **Gifts/Contributions**

The board of directors has the right to refuse gifts or contributions that do not enhance and promote the Girl Scout mission or ensure the long-range financial viability of the council.

# Council Volunteer Development Policies

These policies reflect the beliefs and principles of Girl Scouts of the USA and Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois. The purpose of this document is to bring together the basic volunteer management policies of the council and guidelines for the implementation of sound volunteer practices.

These policies do not create a contract with any volunteer, expressed or implied, and may be changed at any time at the discretion of the Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois. A volunteer is free to resign at any time and for any reason with written/verbal notice.

## **Adult Volunteer Definition**

An adult volunteer can be any person, female or male 18 years of age or older, or a high school graduate, who, without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the council. An adult volunteer is a caring, responsible, and reliable individual concerned with the well-being of others, and who enjoys providing service to the Girl Scout community. All volunteers in a troop leadership position must be appointed prior to the performance of a task.

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois consists of volunteers who strengthen the council through two distinct types of service. Operational volunteers (i.e. leaders, co-leaders, service unit team members) are those involved in carrying out the specific, measurable objectives of the council. Policy-making volunteers include officers, board members, board committee members, and nominating committee members.

## **Affirmative Action for Volunteers**

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, sexual orientation, marital status, or socioeconomic status. In addition, to ensure full equality of opportunity in all operations and activities of the organization, affirmative action policies and practices shall be utilized in the recruitment, selection, education, placement, and recognition of volunteers.

## **Conflict of Interest**

No individual connected to Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois shall use their affiliation with the council for personal or family gain, for the benefit of another individual or organization of which a member is affiliated, or for professional, political, or monetary gain without proper disclosure and council consent.

**Definition:** A conflict of interest exists when interests or concerns of any volunteer, any member of their family, party, group, or organization in which the volunteer is actively involved may be seen as competing with or conflicts with the interests or concerns of Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois.

## **Volunteer Membership**

The Girl Scout membership year is October 1-September 30. Girl Scout membership is open to any adult who accepts the organization's principles and beliefs and pays annual or lifetime membership dues.

## **Volunteer 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. Written position descriptions that define specific responsibilities and clarify expectations are available.

## **Volunteer Selection**

Upon successfully passing the screening process, every volunteer is selected on the basis of qualifications for membership, ability to perform the duties of the volunteer position, and the willingness and availability to participate in education for the position.

All active volunteers in a troop, service unit, or council leadership position and/or handle Girl Scout funds will be required to complete the background check and screening process prior to starting a volunteer position and every three years thereafter. The exception is volunteer facilitators working at council-owned camps, who will undergo an annual background check according to resident camp standards from the American Camp Association. Failure to cooperate can result in the volunteer not being placed in the position.

Volunteer screening consists of:

- A criminal background check
- National sex offender registry
- Any alternate forms requested by the council
- If there are questions surrounding incidents on the background check, references may be requested

Volunteers who have been inactive for one or more years will be required to reapply and be subject to a complete background check.

## **Volunteer Placement**

Girl Scout staff ensures the placement of volunteers in a role that fits with their skillset. 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.

Volunteers requiring background checks, whose records indicate a history of child abuse, violent crime, or sexual crimes will be denied a position. Following set council guidelines, volunteer applicants may be denied a position due to theft as well as drug and alcohol-related offenses. The response to any other reports will be at the discretion and judgment of the council. If an applicant or a member of their household has been convicted of a crime against a child, to the best of our ability, we will not knowingly place the applicant in a position that involves direct contact with girls (i.e. troop leader, troop assistant, etc.).

# Council Policies and Procedures

## **Volunteer Appointment**

Operational volunteers shall be appointed for a term as indicated in the position description.

## **Volunteer Training**

Volunteer training resources are available on [GirlScoutsToday.org](http://GirlScoutsToday.org). Each volunteer Troop Leader is required to complete a training series before meeting with girls. At least one trained volunteer must be in attendance at all troop meetings or activities as one of the required adults for ratio. Preparation for camping activities requires additional learning opportunities.

## **Reimbursement of Expenses**

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois will reimburse pre-approved voluntary expenses incurred when the volunteer is required by the council to act on behalf of the council doing business of the board, its committees, task groups, council-level education, or program delivery. The volunteer is required to keep accurate records of expenses and return to the appropriate staff along with documentation (i.e., receipts) of expenses.

Expenses will be reimbursed to volunteers on a monthly basis during regular pay-out periods. Expenses not reimbursed may be used as deductions (check with tax consultant). A cash advance, pre-approved by the appropriate staff, is available if necessary to prevent hardship for the volunteer.

## **Volunteer Reappointment**

Prior to the completion of her or his term, each volunteer who is to be re-appointed 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 girls, the community, parents, other volunteers, and employed staff.

A determination should be made by the volunteer's supervisor as to whether the volunteer should be retained in her/his present position, referred to a different position, or released. A background screening recheck is required every 3 years with the exception of volunteer facilitators working at council-owned camps who are required to do a background recheck every year.

## **Volunteer Performance Appraisal**

Each volunteer has the opportunity for an end-of-term review. The purpose of the review is to evaluate and to recognize both the individual's and the council's contribution to the position.

## **Volunteer Recognition**

Annually, volunteers are recognized for their accomplishments at a celebration. Find more information about volunteer recognition at [GirlScoutsToday.org](http://GirlScoutsToday.org).

## **Financial Assistance**

Financial assistance for membership is available to any adult volunteer.



# Community Values

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois is committed to providing diverse, equitable, and inclusive spaces where girls, volunteers, and staff know they belong.

## **Commitment to Antiracism**

Volunteering with Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois is a commitment to the practice of anti-racism. Systemic racism affects everyone and requires care and commitment to dismantling and our council is actively evaluating procedures and training staff. We ask volunteers to commit to practicing anti-racism through a commitment to discover racial injustices, connect with members with an open heart and mind, and take action by taking responsibility for what you say and do and providing opportunities for girls to commit to anti-racist values as well.

## Creating an Inclusive Environment

Community values shape an inclusive and supportive environment for all supporters of Girl Scouts.

- Learn each troop member's name and correct pronunciation.
- Learn about the cultures and identities of the families in your Girl Scout community to understand and respect cultural differences. Be sure not to put anyone on the spot or ask them to educate you, reading books and articles are a great way to start.
- Welcome personal sharing about people's cultural traditions, languages they speak, and diverse family structures. Make this kind of sharing a consistent, reliable part of your time together.
- Occasionally ask the girls if anything is worrying or bothering them. Be a trusted adult they can come to with their needs and emotions.
- Embrace diverse gender expression by inviting members to share their gender pronouns aloud or on name tags. Be sure to explain that no one has to share if they don't want to. Make this conversation matter-of-fact and use a positive tone.
- Learn the most valuable ways to support members with disabilities, learning differences, and/or neurodiversity. Ask parents, "What can I do to support your child to learn/participate/feel successful in our group?" Ask adults, "Is there anything we can do to make this space more accessible to you?" Often, tools like visual aids, small items to fidget with, and regular breaks are examples of things that help create access. Don't assume what someone needs. Asking is the most respectful way.
- Provide a wide variety of activities for girls to engage in. Notice when children do not relate to an activity and get curious about why. (Not all kids are excited to earn badges, or engage in large group activities, for example). Find ways to connect with and relate to each child in your care.

## Council Policies and Procedures

### Supporting Every Girl

Our program is for any girl-identified youth, including cisgender girls and transgender girls who are in grades K-12 and have made the Girl Scout Promise, accept the Girl Scout Law, and pay annual membership dues.

If a girl who has previously been a Girl Scout begins to identify as gender non-conforming, gender creative, or non-binary, they will continue to be welcomed at Girl Scouts. We are loyal to the children and families who participate in our programs and are evolving our inclusive practices. Girl Scouts is a program that honors and celebrates the evidence-based need girls have to be together without boys present. These spaces provide safety, care, confidence-building opportunities, and a break from the dominant culture. We are proud to offer brave spaces for members and supporters to shine!

Family diversity will be embraced, respected, and normalized at Girl Scouts. We make room for children, adults, and families to have the choice and opportunity to share their full selves with pride.

We celebrate, welcome, and affirm people with disabilities and/or neurodivergence (such as people with learning differences, autism, or mental health factors). We strive to make our programs accessible for girls and families with disabilities and/or neurodivergence.

The intention of this Policy is to clearly inform all volunteers of our stance as an organization striving to be anti-racist, inclusive, diverse, and equitable to all members and program participants. We are deepening our tools, training, and policies to reflect these values and bring them into practice. As such, volunteers who are not actively practicing these same values and willing to follow our guidelines for physical and emotional safety, will not be a good fit for our organization. Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois reserves the right to release any volunteer from service if their actions are inconsistent with our clearly named policies, principles, and procedures.

We work with volunteers and families to identify accommodations that can be made in order to meet the needs of every girl, focusing on her strengths, gifts, and assets. Troop leaders must be thoughtful to meet each child's needs without excluding or stigmatizing anyone for their difference.

On the rare occasion that a troop leader is not able to meet the needs of one or more children in their troop, they should contact council staff for further guidance. A support plan may be coordinated to include added parent support or structural changes to group activities. Every possible effort will be made to keep each child who wants to participate in the group. We must guard against the hurt and stigmatization of not being included.

In the unlikely event that a child's needs are unable to be met by the troop, staff will work with the child and their family to find an alternate troop that may be a better fit. They can continue to participate as an individual member of Girl Scouts, or be issued a refund of membership dues and council service fees.

# Volunteer Responsibilities

Any serious accident or fatality must be reported immediately to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Council Chair by calling the telephone number, 309-764-8833.

Any motor vehicle used to transport Girl Scouts must be duly licensed, insured, and operated by a responsible adult with a valid driver's license.

Basic safety guidelines are provided in Volunteer Essentials and Safety Activity Checkpoints found on [GirlScoutsToday.org](http://GirlScoutsToday.org) and it is the responsibility of the troop leader to follow all safety guidelines as set forth by the Girl Scouts of the USA and Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois.

## **Volunteer Financial Responsibility**

Because all debts incurred in the name of Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois are the responsibility of the adult who incurs them, any adult volunteer may be subject to removal, small claims action, collection, arrest/prosecution, or any other action deemed necessary by the council if the volunteer has:

- Knowingly written a personal or troop check with insufficient funds (NSF) or on a closed account to Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois or to anyone else on behalf of a Girl Scout troop.
- Failed to pay an outstanding debt to Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois or any of its units, whether the debt is for a personal expense, a Girl Scout product sale, or a troop expense.
- Misused troop or service unit funds.
- Taken money from a troop account that does not cover legitimate troop expenses.
- Failed to remit all funds due to Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois or any of its units.
- Failed to submit appropriate troop, special event, or service unit assets to the council, as applicable (i.e. disbanding a troop).

All adults handling money must be registered members of Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois and submit to a background check.

## **Harassment**

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois 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 and staff with an environment free from all forms of unlawful or unwelcome 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, marital status, citizenship, ancestry, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law. 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 council Vice President, COO, or CEO. The staff member, upon receiving a complaint, must report the matter to the CEO, who will conduct an investigation and take the appropriate actions.

### **Sexual Harassment**

It is against the council's policies for any individual, 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 programs, 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, requests for sexual acts or favors, abusing the dignity of another through insulting or 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 work environment include telling of sexual jokes or stories; the presence of sexually explicit photographs or other materials; touching of another person's clothing, hair, or body; making sexual comments about another person's body; making sexual comments or innuendoes; asking personal questions about another person's social or sexual life; staring; leering, and making sexual gestures.

Any volunteer who feels that she or he has been sexually harassed should promptly report such behavior to a council Vice President, COO, or CEO.

### **Child Abuse**

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois support and maintain environments that are free of child abuse and neglect. The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act ("the Act") defines child abuse and neglect as "the physical or mental injury, sexual abuse as exploitation, negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child under the age of 18, or the age specified by the child protection law of the state in question, by a person who is responsible for the child's welfare, under circumstances that indicate that the child's health or welfare is harmed or threatened."

The Act defines sexual abuse as "the use, persuasion, or coercion of any child to engage in any sexually explicit conduct (or any simulation of such conduct) for the purpose of producing any visual depiction of such conduct or rape, molestation, prostitution, or incest with children."

Child abuse and neglect are unlawful acts. 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.

In accordance with the policy, Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois reserves the right to refuse membership or reappointment, and to dismiss or to exclude from affiliation with the council any volunteer who is found guilty of child abuse or neglect or similar activities prohibited by law.

## Council Policies and Procedures



### **Prohibiting the Abuse or Mistreatment of Members**

The Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois has zero tolerance for abuse and will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of members in its programs. Any mistreatment or abuse by an employee or volunteer will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or volunteer service and cooperation with law enforcement

### **Prohibiting the Abuse or Mistreatment of One Member by Another Member**

The Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois has zero tolerance for abuse, mistreatment, or sexual activity among members within the camp/council. This council is committed to providing all Girl Scout members with a safe environment and will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of one member by another member. Conduct by members that rises to the level of abuse, mistreatment, or sexual activity will result in intervention or disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal from the program. In addition, our council will not tolerate any behavior that is classified under the definition of bullying, and to the extent that such actions are disruptive, the council will take the necessary steps to eliminate such behavior.

## Council Policies and Procedures



Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois will consider any of the above mentioned prohibitions as the basis for disciplinary action.

Any volunteer who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect or believe, that a girl member is an abused or neglected child, should report such knowledge or suspicion to the proper community authority.

Any volunteer who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that child abuse has occurred during a Girl Scout activity or by an individual within the Girl Scout organization must complete an incident report (within 24 hours of the incident) and submit it to the council CEO or designee. The CEO will contact authorities immediately.

### **Child Protection and Safety**

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois seeks to ensure the safety of the girls it serves and the volunteers who carry out the program. To do so, volunteers will comply with the application and screening process, as well as all of the Volunteer Development System Procedures, council policies and GSUSA policies and standards, including Volunteer Essentials and Safety Activity Checkpoints found on [www.GirlScoutsToday.org](http://www.GirlScoutsToday.org).

### **Workplace Hostility**

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois strictly prohibits hostility in any form against another volunteer member, girl members, staff, visitors, and 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 email.

All employees and volunteers are responsible for helping to avoid hostility by promptly reporting any incident that involves or is suspected of involving a violation of this policy. Volunteers are encouraged to report actual or possible hostility to either the administrative volunteer to whom they are accountable, CEO, or designee. Any such reports will be promptly investigated, using the utmost discretion consistent with the need to resolve the problem. If an employee or volunteer is determined to have violated this policy, immediate and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including dismissal of a volunteer or employee and the involvement of appropriate law enforcement authorities, as needed.

Furthermore, retaliation against anyone who has reported a possible or actual violation of this policy is strictly prohibited and, if it occurs, will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including discharge of the employee or termination of volunteer status.



# Council Policies and Procedures

## **Volunteer Release**

The council or an operational volunteer, or the administrative volunteer to whom they report, may initiate separation of service prior to the end of the term of appointment. 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. Release from the position does not cancel membership with the Girl Scouts of the USA unless it is determined that she or he is unable to meet the membership requirement.

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois may release a volunteer for any reason, including but not limited to:

- Restructuring or elimination of volunteer positions in which the individual serves.
- The inability or failure to complete the requirements of the position.
- Misappropriation of funds.
- The refusal to comply with council or Girl Scouts of the USA policies, principles and beliefs.
- The use of illegal drugs, consumption of alcohol, or smoking in the presence of girl members or in potential view of girl members (parking lot, vehicle, etc.).
- The use of foul language in the presence of girls.
- The hazing or initiation activity that causes undue physical or emotional abuse or distress.
- The appearance of the volunteer or a member of their household on the sex offender list.
- Appearance on a child abuse registry in any state.
- After conducting a background screening, anything on the grounds for disqualification under the Volunteer Background Check Guidelines.
- Inappropriate behavior including, but not limited to, physical violence, abuse, carrying firearms, knowingly allowing firearms at a Girl Scout function, stalking, threatening, menacing, lying, harassment, or falsification of documents.
- Documented instances showing a pattern of disrespect towards volunteers and staff.

The council shall provide written notice to any volunteer of a separation decision made by the Board of Directors, the CEO, or her/his designee.

## **Volunteer Conflict Resolution**

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 solve them.

All volunteers may use the conflict resolution process. 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 process, however, will not restrict the council from taking immediate and appropriate action with respect to the volunteer.

## **Volunteer Counseling Process**

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 solve them.

All volunteers may use the conflict resolution process. Every volunteer may expect a fair resolution of their dispute without the fear of jeopardizing their 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 process, however, will not restrict the council from taking immediate and appropriate action with respect to the volunteer.

## **Counseling Process**

Step 1. Identify the problem.

- Identify the negative behavior that is unacceptable.
- Determine with whom the behavior surfaces and how frequently.

Step 2. Examine the relationship.

- Determine why the behavior occurs and why it negatively impacts the situation.

Step 3. Determine the costs.

- Determine if the behavior carries a cost, such as lost productivity, lower morale, and/or general discomfort. If there is not an identifiable cost, the behavior should be ignored.

Step 4. Seek a solution with a signed agreement.

- Arrange for a private meeting to address the issue, selecting a time when all parties are calm.
- Adequately prepare for the discussion, providing documentation of all behaviors and issues at hand.
- Focus on delivering a factual account, relate the difficult behavior and why it is a concern.
- Avoid opinions and focus on the behavior that needs correcting.
- Avoid references to the individual's personality.
- State the change in behavior that you are seeking in clear, concise statements.
- Use active listening skills to check your understanding of the problem and its causes.
- Active listening includes asking questions to clarify and restating major points.
- Solicit ideas on how to achieve the change. Express confidence in the person's ability to change behavior.
- Agree upon an action plan. Document specific action steps and timetable for completion.
- Set up a follow-up date if necessary.
- After the agreed-upon time and support have been given to the volunteer, if the behavior has not improved and no further solution can be found, it may be necessary to appoint the volunteer to another position or to release them from volunteer service.
- Documentation of all meetings, phone calls, correspondences, and agreements should be kept, dated, and placed in the volunteer's file.

## Council Policies and Procedures

### Grievance Process

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 practice that has allegedly been misapplied. A copy should be sent to the identified person’s supervisor. Within ten (10) working days, the supervisor, or their designee 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 of the situation, including recommendations, and sends a copy to the CEO or designee.

OR

Step 4. The CEO or designee 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 in making a final decision. The team will provide the CEO or designee 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 or designee for a final and binding decision will be made.

The CEO or designee may exercise the following options:

- Accept the dispute resolution team’s recommended solution.
- Provide an alternative final and binding decision. This is the council’s final decision. It is the responsibility of the CEO or designee to implement the decision.

We are so happy to have your support and commitment to building an equitable, inclusive, and safe community at Girl Scouts. By following this Volunteer Policy together, we are taking charge of the physical and emotional safety of our girls while making the world a better place for all people.

Thank you for your commitment to this work!