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Volunteer Policy

Volunteers should familiarize themselves with those GSUSA and council policies and practices that guide and protect their status as Girl Scout volunteers. The policies listed below pertain to all volunteers regardless of position or role.

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 or socioeconomic status. In addition, to ensure full equality of opportunity in all operations and activities of the organization, affirmative action 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 underrepresented population groups.

—*Blue Book of Basic Documents 2006*, p. 21

Membership Registration

All girls and adults participating in the Girl Scout Movement shall be registered as members with Girl Scouts of the United States of America and shall individually pay annual membership dues as set by the Girl Scouts of the USA, except those adults who are lifetime members or who are working in a temporary advisory or consultative capacity.

—*Blue Book of Basic Documents 2006*, pp. 20-21

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 will be completed prior to recruitment and used in the search. Each volunteer will also be required to complete an application, provide references, sign agreements, and in some cases, may undergo a background check, prior to selection. It is expected that active volunteers who come into direct contact with children will be subject to additional screening which may include a criminal background check. A delay in providing any requested information may delay the selection process. Confidentiality of the volunteers' information will be maintained according to Council's best practices.

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, sexual orientation, ancestry, marital status, veteran status, socioeconomic status, or other characteristics protected by federal, state, or local law.

Membership

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 Scouts Heart of New Jersey, Inc.

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.

Appointment

Operational volunteers shall be appointed for a term not to exceed one year. Term limits shall be established as deemed appropriate. (See "Reappointment" for additional information.)

Training

All volunteers must complete a Council orientation, and basic training for their position in addition to any other required training that is designated as mandatory for the position within a specified time frame. Training will ensure that each volunteer has the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in her or his work.

Orientation

Each volunteer is 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.

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.

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 should receive confirmation of such reappointment or rotation.

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

A conflict resolution procedure will be available to resolve volunteer disputes.

Recognition

The Council's formal recognition system will be consistent with the GSUSA publication *Adult Recognitions in Girl Scouting* (Cat. No. 26-458).

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 including but not limited

to the Council's Code of Conduct. 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 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, disability, marital status, citizenship, ancestry, veterans status, sexual or affectional orientation 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 manager or to the CEO. The supervisor, upon receiving such a complaint, must report the matter to the CEO, who will conduct an investigation and, depending on the findings, take appropriate corrective actions.

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, 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 manager or the CEO. Upon receiving a complaint, a manager will report the matter to the CEO. The CEO will conduct an investigation and, depending on the findings, take appropriate corrective action.

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.