



Volunteer Policies

**Girl Scouts - North Carolina
Coastal Pines**

Amended: November 19, 2009

Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines

Volunteer Policies

Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines abides by the policies and standards of Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. as set forth in the *Blue Book of Basic Documents* and *Safety-Wise*. A policy is a binding course of action established by the Board of Directors to be followed in a recurring situation. A standard is an established model or example. A policy states what must be done; a standard is a guide for doing it well. The following policies were amended effective November 19, 2009.

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I. POLICIES FOR VOLUNTEERS

A. MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION

All girls and adults participating in the Girl Scout movement shall be registered as members of Girl Scouts of the United States of America and individually pay the annual or lifetime registration fee except those adults who are working in a temporary advisory or consultative capacity. Financial assistance is available.

B. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY

Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines conducts criminal background checks on staff and adults in designated volunteer positions.

1. Each applicant who seeks to act as a volunteer in the following positions: *board member, troop/group leader/advisor, assistant leader/advisor, service unit manager, administrative volunteers, product sales managers, troop outdoor trained adult, event director, all camp and day camp volunteers, Juliette liaison, overnight chaperone/adult, mentor for Girl Scouts, or any troop/group or other entity sponsored by or affiliated with it* shall be required to disclose in writing the details of any crimes for which the applicant has been convicted or to which the applicant has pleaded guilty or no contest.
2. Each applicant shall give written authorization for the Council to obtain a criminal background check as may be required by the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act, 15 USC 1681-1681u, or other applicable law, as currently in effect and as it may be amended from time to time. The Council will make available a copy of her/his rights under the FCRA. In order to obtain a criminal background check, applicants must be registered members of Girl Scouts of the USA.
3. **Criminal Offenses.** If the Council learns that an applicant or volunteer has been convicted of, has pleaded guilty to, or has pleaded no contest to a misdemeanor or felony under the laws of the State of North Carolina (or any political subdivision), another state (or any political subdivision), or the United States laws, the following shall apply:
 - a. For crimes against children, offenses against persons, offenses against the family, crimes involving weapons, arson, any violent crime or drug-related offense other than as provided in Section 3b, the person will not be allowed to volunteer or serve in any capacity. The Council reserves the right to consider applicants on a case-by-case basis.
 - b. Registered Sex Offender Policy – Status as a registered sex offender is cause for automatic disqualification for any volunteer or staff position at Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines.

A registered sex offender in the household is cause for automatic disqualification for any volunteer position.

Girl Scout Troop meetings may not be held in, nor troop records or personal information on Girl Scouts be stored in, a residence where a known sex offender lives.
 - c. 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, then the decision whether to allow service shall be within the absolute and exclusive discretion of the Chief Executive Officer. Other than a first offense the disposition of which occurred five or more years earlier, that person shall not be allowed to volunteer or serve in any capacity.
 - d. Any person convicted in the past five years for shoplifting, fraud, false pretense, embezzlement, worthless checks or related offenses will be restricted from the

management of Girl Scout money. At the discretion of the CEO, persons convicted of such offenses shall not be allowed to volunteer or serve in any capacity.

- e. For any other criminal offenses, regardless of whether it is classified as a felony or as a misdemeanor, including driving violations, that person shall have his or her case reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The decision whether to allow a person to volunteer or give service or have restricted service shall be within the absolute and exclusive discretion of the CEO.
4. If charges are pending related to any criminal offense other than minor traffic violations, and known to the Council, involvement with the Council as a volunteer will be temporarily suspended pending disposition of the case and service (or continued service) with the Council shall be within the absolute and exclusive discretion of the CEO.
5. **Contest of Criminal History.** Any applicant or volunteer who disputes and desires to contest any information that appears on the criminal history record report must file with the Council written notice challenging the accuracy of the report within 10 days following the submission of each notice. The individual must take all steps necessary to challenge the report and provide the Council with sufficient documentation, satisfactory to the Council in its sole discretion, that the report is in error and that steps are being taken to correct the report. Upon resolution of the matter with the agency providing the report, the individual may submit a certified copy of the corrected criminal history record report to the Council. All costs associated with an appeal of the criminal history report provided to the Council shall be borne by the individual. Further, it is the responsibility of the individual contesting the report, not the Council, to take all action necessary to contest or correct the criminal history report. Notwithstanding an "individual" contest of information contained in the criminal history report, the Council is entitled to and shall rely upon the information contained in the criminal history report until such time as a corrected criminal history report has been provided. The Council does not control the information that is contained in criminal history reports, and the Council shall have no liability to any person for the information contained in such reports or for its actions taken in reliance upon such reports.
6. **Continued Service.** Each volunteer as a condition of continued volunteer services consents to a periodic review of his or her criminal background. Upon request of the Council, each volunteer shall give written authorization for a criminal background check when requested.
7. **Volunteer Appeal Process.** For all decisions related to section 3, a written letter of appeal may be sent within 30 days of notification of adverse action to the CEO through Volunteer Services. The CEO shall make a final determination regarding the appeal within 30 days. Written notification of the decision will be sent to the volunteer. All appeal decisions are final.

C. NON-DISCRIMINATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines is committed to reflect the diverse populations of the communities we serve. The Council offers volunteer opportunities to qualified individuals without discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, creed, religion, age, disability, or socio-economic status.

The Council does not discriminate on the basis of infection, disease or disability including Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). No individual who is otherwise qualified will be denied volunteer opportunities.

D. SELECTION, APPOINTMENT, AND TRAINING

Volunteers are selected on the basis of qualifications for membership, ability to perform the position's requirements, and willingness and availability to participate in appropriate training.

Prior to appointment, candidates for volunteer positions must complete the application process, which includes completing a volunteer application form listing references, interview, and background check if required for the position. A copy of Council volunteer policies is available on the Council Web site, www.nccoastalpines.org.

A volunteer agreement will be completed at the time of appointment. It will include the term of appointment, any specific expectations for performance, and the signatures of the volunteer and supervisor, as well as a description of the position. Volunteers must complete training as specified in the volunteer position description and volunteer agreement, within six months of appointment.

E. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Volunteers are encouraged to resolve conflicts between themselves and others in carrying out their Girl Scout responsibilities through direct, open, rational, and calm communications with those involved. If the conflict is not resolved, supervisory personnel should be consulted.

F. TERMINATION OF VOLUNTEER APPOINTMENT

Either the volunteer or the Council may terminate the appointment at any time for any reason prior to the end of the term. Membership in Girl Scouts is not affected.

G. TROOP/GROUP LEADERSHIP

Troops being led by multiple members of a family require an additional non-related female adult as part of the leadership team.

H. MEN IN GIRL SCOUTING

Every position in Girl Scouting is open to men as well as women. Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines believes that female role models are especially important to girls during their developing years. For this reason, male volunteers are asked to work as part of leadership teams that include women.

I. ADULT RECOGNITIONS

Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines will maintain the integrity of all awards and recognitions by a system of recommendation, documentation and presentation that is clearly defined and in compliance with guidelines established by the Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines and Girl Scouts of the USA.

J. UNIFORMS

A uniform is not required for participation in Girl Scouting. Girl Scout members are encouraged to wear the membership pin when participating in Girl Scout activities.

II. PROTECTION FOR GIRLS AND ADULTS

A. ABUSIVE CONDUCT AND CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines will not condone nor tolerate any conduct which could be considered mentally, physically, verbally or sexually abusive to another member. Among the activities prohibited are:

- overt display of sexual activity between and/or among staff and volunteers;
- sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between employed staff or volunteers and girl members;
- public or private promotion of sexual orientation and/or practices;
- infliction of sexually abusive behavior upon girl members, including sexual touching and bodily contact, exhibitionism, voyeurism, and/or involvement of girl members in pornographic activities or materials;
- infliction of physically abusive behavior, bodily injury, upon girl members;
- physical neglect of girl members, including failure to provide adequate safety measures, care, and supervision in relation to Girl Scout activities;
- emotional maltreatment of girl members, including verbal abuse and/or verbal attacks.

Child abuse or neglect carries legal consequences beyond the Council. In addition to suspension from participation in Girl Scout activities, persons suspected of child abuse or neglect must be reported to the proper local authorities for investigation according to the terms of the law. Anyone suspecting child abuse or neglect is required by law to report it to the director of the Department of Social Services in the county in which the child lives or is located. Contact information can be found online at the NC Division of Social Services web site.

B. HARASSMENT

Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines is committed to an environment in which relationships are characterized by dignity, courtesy, respect and equitable treatment. It is the policy of the organization to provide all members with an environment free from all forms of unlawful harassment, including harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, socio-economic status or other protected class characteristics.

C. SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines strictly prohibits the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, or other intoxicating substances, abuse of legal drugs, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegally used drugs or other intoxicating substances at Girl Scout functions or activities. Use of alcohol, illegal drugs or the use of other intoxicating substances is always prohibited on all Council premises. With approval from the Board President and the CEO, alcohol may be served at approved adult functions.

Any permanent staff housing on Council property is considered to be a private residence. Council employee behavior is governed by Council Personnel and Housing policies.

D. TOBACCO FREE ZONE

To promote good health and safety, there will be no smoking or use of tobacco products in the presence of girls or in areas or vehicles where girls can be exposed to second-hand smoke. Smoking and other tobacco use is prohibited at all council properties and in all Council buildings, vehicles, and premises including leased and/or operated sites, including all council service centers, offices and council camp properties.

E. FIREARMS AND WEAPONS

The possession and use of firearms and weapons is prohibited on Council properties, unless approved by the Council for specific program activities or possessed and used by law enforcement officials in the course of their duties. Concealed weapons are prohibited.

F. INTERNET USAGE

For the safety of girls and adults, it is imperative that we as an organization protect the privacy of our girls. Refrain from including the following information on personal or troop Web sites or personal blogs unless they are password protected: girl's last names, girl's Web site addresses, email addresses, and physical addresses or other contact information of minors. Do not include addresses/ times of meeting places for troops or area events. Without permission from the parents/guardians please do not include photograph of girls. As a volunteer of this organization, we expect volunteers to uphold the Girl Scout Promise and Law in your troop electronic communication as you would in other forms of communication. This includes but is not limited to, social media sites such as Face Book, MySpace, Twitter, LinkedIn or personal/public blogs.

Email distribution lists of Girl Scout volunteers or girl members should only be used for Girl Scout business and not for personal or business promotions.

G. CRISIS COMMUNICATION

The procedures outlined in "The Council Crisis Management System" shall be followed in any crisis situation. Only the CEO or designee shall communicate with the media to address ANY situation of a serious or controversial nature that potentially affects the Council liability or the integrity of Girl Scouting.

III. PROGRAM-RELATED POLICIES

A. TROOP CAMPING AND TRIPS

Written permission must be obtained in advance for: swimming, boating, any *overnight* activity or trip of one or more nights to any destination or for any activity requiring additional certification (per *Safety-Wise*).

B. SENSITIVE ISSUES

Before programs dealing with sensitive issues are offered to girls, notice of the program and content must be given to parents and written permission obtained for a girl's participation.

C. TRANSPORTING GIRLS

All vehicles used to transport girls must be duly licensed, inspected, insured, and operated by a licensed adult age 21 or older. Each person must have her own seat and seat belt within the passenger compartment of private vehicles. Seat belts must be worn whenever the vehicle is in motion. Girls under 12 years of age should sit in the back seat whenever possible to reduce the possibility of injury during the deployment of an airbag in the front passenger seat. A child less than eight years of age and less than 80 pounds in weight shall be properly secured in a weight-appropriate child passenger restraint system.

In accordance with our Council travel guidelines, "It is strongly suggested that for every 3 standard passenger vehicles the troop take at least one additional adult who is a licensed driver, age 21 or older, who can act in a relief driving capacity."

D. FACILITY USE POLICY

Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines facilities are primarily for the use of Girl Scouts. Non-Girl Scout use of Council facilities that is consistent with the purposes and principles of Girl Scouts and that do not interfere with Girl Scout programming may be authorized.

IV. FINANCIAL POLICIES

A. FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines Board of Directors has the legal responsibility for the solicitation and management of all Girl Scout funds.

B. CONTROL OF FUNDS

All money raised or earned, and other assets received in the name of and for the benefit of Girl Scouting, must be authorized by a Girl Scout Council or Girl Scouts of the USA and used for the purposes of Girl Scouting. Such monies and other assets become the property of and are administered by the Girl Scout Council or Girl Scouts of the USA. Such assets are not the property of individuals, geographic units, or communities within a Girl Scout Council.

C. COUNCIL FUND DEVELOPMENT

“Fund-raising” or “fund development” refers to any of various methods of soliciting contributed funds. Council Fund Development includes special event fundraising and solicitation of foundations, corporations, and individuals.

All solicitation of funds must be part of the Council’s coordinated effort to create reliable, renewable, and growing sources of funding to meet the needs of girls throughout the Council’s 41-county jurisdiction both now and in the future.

D. FAMILY SOLICITATION

Financial support for the Council is derived from the broader community. The families of girl members will be solicited for voluntary financial support as one part of the overall fund-raising campaign. Any such family contribution shall be voluntary, not a prerequisite for membership, and not considered a fee for services.

E. SOLICITATION OF CONTRIBUTIONS

Girl Scouts (adults or girls) in their Girl Scout capacities may not solicit money for other organizations. Girls may not engage in any direct solicitation for money. Adults may only engage in fund-raising efforts authorized by the Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines.

Troops, groups, individual members, geographic units, communities, and other Girl Scout volunteer representatives within the Council are not permitted to directly solicit foundations, corporations, or individuals.

F. MONEY-EARNING ACTIVITIES

“Money-earning” refers to activities following a planned budget and carried out by girls and adults, in partnership, to earn money for the group treasury. Troops, groups, individual members, geographic units, communities, and other Girl Scout volunteer representatives within the Council are not permitted to directly solicit foundations, corporations, or individuals.

Troop money-earning activities must receive written approval from the Service Unit Manager.

All Girl Scout Troops are encouraged to participate in Council-sponsored product sale programs.

Troops wishing to conduct money-earning projects other than the Council-sponsored product sale(s) must have participated in the most recent product sale if eligible at the time. Additional money-earning projects must be approved in writing by the designated Council representative.

No troop, group, geographic unit, or community money-earning projects or money-earning projects by other Girl Scout volunteer representatives shall be held during:

- United Way Campaign in the county or area (*unless approved by the local United Way*);
- local solicitation activities or events in support of the council-sponsored Annual Campaign;
- council-sponsored product sale, beginning with the first day of order taking and ending with the last day of deliveries.

No adult who is delinquent in returning funds due to Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines will be allowed to participate in product sales or other money-earning projects, or be responsible for any Girl Scout monies.

G. EMPLOYER BENEFIT PROGRAMS

Several corporations such as GlaxoSmithKline, and Verizon recognize employee volunteer hours by making a financial contribution to the troop/group for which the employee volunteers. The Internal Revenue code requires that the check be made out to the 501(c)(3) – Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines. The corporation sends the check to the Council with a designation for the Troop/group. The Council then sends a check to the troop/group.

Each corporation has its own guidelines and application process for employee volunteer service.

H. REQUIRED IRS REPORTING

The Internal Revenue Code (Sec. 170 (f)(8)) requires that Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines acknowledge single donations of services, goods, materials, equipment, or money with a value of \$250 or more.

Troops, groups, geographic units, community or Girl Scout volunteer representatives must report all donations with a \$250 value or greater to the Council office within 30 days of receipt.

I. TROOP BANKING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

Each troop is required to establish a troop bank account under the name of “Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines, Girl Scout Troop #_____” and using the Council’s Federal Tax Identification Number. At least three adult signers are required to open an account.

All troop signers are responsible for safeguarding and maintaining the troop’s treasury to include ensuring adequate funds to cover any payments drawn on the troop account and maintaining all troop financial records. As with any banking account, signers are legally responsible for all account transactions and should verify account balances before disbursing funds.

Troop funds shall be reported on the Troop Financial Report annually, at the time a troop disbands, or as requested. Troop banking account records should be shared with and available to all girls and parents in the troop, with periodic reports.

Bank accounts of disbanded troops must be closed and all funds remitted to the Council and held for one year pending reorganization of that troop. Council will distribute troop funds to active troop(s) to which girls of disbanded troops have been transferred.

See the Council’s Troop Banking Policies and Guidelines for more detailed information.