

girl scouts  
of california's  
central coast

# Service Unit Manual



# GSCCC Service Unit Manual Purpose

This Service Unit Manual provides essential information on the structure, responsibilities, and best practices for Service Units, ensuring a well-supported and successful Girl Scout experience.

This manual is designed to:

**Clarify Roles & Responsibilities:** Define the key roles within the Service Unit, including the Service Unit Manager, Treasurer, Troop Leader Mentor, and various coordinators.

**Support Volunteers & Troop Leaders:** Offer guidance on recruitment, mentoring, training, and communication to help volunteers effectively support girls and troops.

**Ensure Financial Accountability:** Outline policies and procedures for managing Service Unit funds, including banking guidelines and compliance measures.

**Promote Effective Communication:** Provide tools and strategies to enhance communication across different volunteer generations and platforms.

**Encourage Community Engagement:** Highlight ways to connect with local organizations, plan events, and facilitate Girl Scout traditions.

**Foster a Strong Girl Scout Experience:** Reinforce the mission of building girls of courage, confidence, and character through well-organized and meaningful programming.

By following the guidelines set forth in this manual, Service Units can create a welcoming, efficient, and impactful environment for girls, volunteers, and families across our Council.

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# We Are Girl Scouts of California's Central Coast

Girl Scouts of California's Central Coast (GSCCC) was formed in October 2007 by the merger of two great Girl Scout Councils with rich histories: Girl Scouts of Monterey Bay and Tres Condados Girl Scout Council. Chartered by Girl Scouts of the USA to provide Girl Scouting in the counties of Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura, GSCCC encompasses some of the most beautiful and environmentally significant parts of the country. The council has a growing membership of over 5,700 girls, and over 4,500 adult volunteers who are the heartbeat of Girl Scouting along the central coast.

With program centers in Castroville, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Oxnard, and Thousand Oaks, GSCCC offers points of access for girls and volunteers to come together. The Monarch Breeding & Research Institute - Camp Arnaz Ventura offers a beautiful 36-acre camp, outdoor and program facility to serve girls, troops and Service Units, as well as other community organizations.

GSCCC is committed to making Girl Scouting available to girls in ways that impact their lives both in the moment and into the future. Girls participate in troops, individual projects, council events, day camps, and more. A variety of leadership, outdoor skills, and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) based programs and events provide girls with opportunities to learn and explore in fun and informative ways.

Girl Scouts create the world they want to live in and strive to make it better every single day. They explore their strengths, take on new challenges, and can always be themselves, regardless of background or ability.

Supported by adult volunteers and mentors right here in our community, as well as millions of alums around the globe, Girl Scouts lead the way as they discover who they are and how they can make the future a brighter place.

## Girl Scout Mission

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

## Girl Scout Promise and Law

Girl Scouts uphold the Promise and Law in everything they do. Often recited at the start of a troop meeting or gathering, the Girl Scout Promise and Law remind us to be honest, to help people at all times, and to make the world a better place.

### Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try:  
To serve God\* and my country,  
To help people at all times,  
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

\*Members may substitute for the word “God”  
in accordance with their own spiritual beliefs

### Girl Scout Law

I will do my best to be  
honest and fair,  
friendly and helpful,  
considerate and caring,  
courageous and strong,  
and responsible for what I say and do,  
and to respect myself and others,  
respect authority,  
use resources wisely,  
make the world a better place,  
and be a sister to every Girl Scout.

## Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA)

GSUSA is the largest organization for girls in the world. Today, there are 2.5 million Girl Scouts—1.7 million girl members and 750,000 adult members working primarily as volunteers. Juliette (Daisy) Gordon Low founded Girl Scouts on March 12, 1912, in Savannah, Georgia. Girl Scouts of the USA was chartered by the United States Congress on March 16, 1950. Headquartered in New York City, Girl Scouts has 111 chartered councils nationwide. These councils provide direct services to the girls and volunteers who work with them, and to the communities they serve. Girl Scouts is open to all girls from kindergarten through 12th grade.

## Service Unit Basics

A Girl Scout Service Unit (SU) is a geographic area designated for the purpose of delivering the Girl Scout program. These Service Units are usually based along school district or county boundaries and assigned by zip code to a Service Unit. Each Service Unit has a team who provides an essential support system that organizes training, mentoring, programs and support for volunteers, girls and caregivers called a Service Unit Team.

## What a Service Unit Team Does

- Collaborates with council staff to recruit new girls and adult members.
- Supports and develops volunteers and girls to keep troops engaged in a wider Girl Scout community.
- Recognizes volunteer contributions and efforts.
- Supports participation in the Fall Product Program and the iconic Girl Scout Cookie Program.
- Provides administrative support in financial reporting, assesses and approves activities for troops, and assists members in finding solutions.
- Engages with local community members and organizations to encourage overall support of the Girl Scout mission.

## What a Service Unit Team Provides

- **Recruitment Events:** Partner with council staff to provide support in recruiting new members.
- **Program Events:** Support troops in planning and holding events for girls, troops and families, such as a bridging ceremony, sing along, camporee, dance, parade, cookie rally, etc. Events vary by Service Unit.
- **Member Trainings:** Assist council in providing training and materials to support product programs, troop finances, safety guidelines and planning.
- **Member Recognitions:** Recognize volunteers and girls for contributions and successes within the Service Unit, including, but not limited to, Investiture/Rededication, Leader Appreciation Day, event planning or support and other contributions. Promote council recognitions for Adult Awards and Girl Scout of the Year at the annual Women of Distinction Event and board approved awards.
- **Product Programs:** Participate and support troops in Girl Scout product programs: Fall Product Program and Cookie Program.
- **Traditions:** Honor and support activities related to Girl Scout traditions such as Investiture/Rededication and Bridging ceremonies, World Thinking Day, SWAPs and Higher Awards: Gold, Silver, Bronze.
- **Outdoor Experiences:** Plan and hold an outdoor camporee or outdoor activities for girls and troops.
- **Community Service Projects:** Incorporate community service projects in Service Unit events and support troop community service efforts.



# Service Unit Team Roles and Responsibilities

A successful Service Unit (SU) relies on a dedicated team of volunteers who collaborate to support troop leaders, girls, and families. Each role is critical to ensuring the Service Unit functions smoothly and meets its goals.

## Core Team Positions

These roles are the foundation of the Service Unit and are essential to its success. They require commitment, organization, and collaboration.

### Service Unit Manager

The Service Unit Manager (SUM) oversees all Service Unit operations, ensuring alignment with council goals while facilitating team meetings and leader gatherings. This role involves developing and communicating the Service Unit's annual plan of work in collaboration with team members and the council. As a liaison between the Service Unit and the council, the SUM relays important updates, policies, and opportunities to volunteers and troop leaders. Maintaining clear and consistent communication, the SUM addresses issues within the Service Unit, including volunteer or troop disputes, with support from council staff when necessary. Additionally, the SUM fosters volunteer engagement by providing ongoing support and recognition to troop leaders. Encouraging a collaborative leadership style, they regularly seek input from team members and utilize tools such as shared calendars, email groups, and newsletters to ensure effective communication across the SU.

### Service Unit Treasurer

The Service Unit Treasurer (SUT) manages all financial aspects of the SU, ensuring transparency and compliance with council policies. This role includes maintaining the SU bank account, documenting all transactions, and monitoring the budget to align with the annual plan of work. The SUT assists troop leaders with financial reporting, bank account setup, and adherence to money-handling policies. The SUT receives all troop account monthly bank statements & reviews troop banking activity for unusual or non-Girl Scout activity. They also prepare and present financial reports at SU meetings and submit the annual financial report to the council by the required deadline. To ensure accurate recordkeeping, the SUT utilizes digital tools such as accounting software or council-provided templates. For further details, refer to the SU Banking Policies and Procedures section.

### Membership Connection Committee

The Membership Connection Committee (MCC) is an advisory committee to the Board of Directors, serving as the vital link between Girl Scout members and Council leadership. Composed of appointed volunteers and girl members from across all SUs, the MCC ensures geographic and demographic representation. Members participate in a minimum of four meetings, gather input from the community, and provide feedback on policy, governance, and strategic direction. Members act as voting representatives of their SUs. The MCC also supports the nomination of delegates to the National Council of GSUSA and helps set annual committee goals to further GSCCC's mission.

### Product Program Coordinators

Facilitates the Fall Product and Cookie Programs within the Service Unit. Organize training sessions for troop product managers on council guidelines, sales strategies, and safety protocols. Coordinate product deliveries, distribution, and booth sales schedules. Track sales data and provide regular updates to the Service Unit and council. Share success stories and recognize top-selling troops and individuals. Create a centralized communication hub (e.g., a shared folder or group chat) for product program updates and resources. Host a Cookie Rally to generate excitement and educate girls and leaders about sales techniques.

## Additional Team Positions

### **Troop Leader Mentor**

Provides guidance and mentorship to new troop leaders to ensure a positive start to their Girl Scout journey. Conducts orientation sessions for new leaders, covering council policies, troop management, and program planning. Acts as a point of contact for questions and challenges faced by new leaders. Shares best practices and resources for troop activities, badge work, and outings. Pairs new leaders with experienced mentors to create a network of support. Schedules regular check-ins to address concerns and celebrate successes.

### **Recognition Coordinator**

Oversees adult volunteer and girl recognition within the Service Unit. Organizes recognition events, such as Leader Appreciation Day or year-end ceremonies. Nominates volunteers for council and national awards. Celebrates girl achievements like earning Gold, Silver, or Bronze Awards. Coordinate ceremonies for bridging, investiture, and rededication. Uses both formal and informal methods of appreciation, such as thank-you notes, social media shout-outs, and small gifts. Keeps a record of volunteers' contributions to ensure fair recognition.

### **Event Coordinator**

Plans and executes Service Unit events that align with Girl Scout traditions and goals. Develops themes, secures venues, and manages logistics for SU events like camporees, bridging ceremonies, or World Thinking Day. Ensures all events adhere to council safety guidelines and obtain necessary approvals. Collaborates with other team members to advertise events through newsletters, social media, and troop leader meetings. Creates an event planning checklist to stay organized and meet deadlines. Solicits feedback after events to identify areas for improvement.

### **Learning Facilitator**

Plays a crucial role in training and mentoring volunteers, ensuring they have the knowledge and skills necessary to lead Girl Scout troops effectively. Responsibilities include conducting in-person and virtual training sessions for all volunteers; ensuring leaders understand Girl Scout policies, safety guidelines, and program opportunities; providing ongoing support, answering questions, and sharing best practices; collaborating with the council to implement updated training materials and resources; encouraging continuous learning and leadership development among volunteers.

### **Camp Manager**

Oversees the planning and execution of day camps and Camporees, ensuring girls experience fun, educational, and safe outdoor adventures. Responsibilities include planning and organizing Service Unit day camps and Camporees, including securing locations, scheduling activities, and managing logistics; recruiting and training volunteers to support camp operations; ensuring all camp activities align with Girl Scout safety standards and outdoor education goals; managing camp registration, communications, and participant assignments; working with the council to secure necessary permits, insurance, and training for camp staff.

### **Juliette Manager**

Supports independent Girl Scouts (Juliettes) who are not part of a traditional troop, helping them stay engaged in Girl Scouting. Responsibilities include serving as a point of contact for Juliettes and their families, providing guidance on earning badges, awards, and participating in council events; offering mentorship and program support to help Juliettes navigate their Girl Scout journey; assisting with product program participation, ensuring Juliettes have the resources needed for cookie and fall product programs; helping coordinate opportunities for Juliettes to connect with traditional troops or participate in events; tracking and celebrating the achievements of Juliettes within the Service Unit.

### **Registrar**

Ensures efficient membership management by assisting with registration, renewals, and troop placement within the Service Unit. Responsibilities include supporting new and returning families with the Girl Scout registration process; working closely with the council to maintain accurate membership records; assisting in placing girls into appropriate troops based on availability and interests; monitoring membership trends within the Service Unit and collaborating on recruitment strategies; providing leaders with updated rosters and membership status reports as needed.



# Service Unit Banking Policies and Procedures

All bank accounts must be opened at a Council approved bank, Wells Fargo, Mechanics Bank, and US Bank. There are no exceptions. Each bank has their own process regarding how to open accounts—check with your Council representative who will assist you with the Council's Bank Account Certificate of Authorization (BACA) process.

All bank account signers must be current registered Girl Scout members and have cleared the background check and completed the GSUSA Mandated Reporter Training (GSUSA Girl Scouts Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Course).

All signers must also pass the bank's criminal background check (performed by the bank after you submit your paperwork). Those that do not pass may not sign on troop or Service Unit accounts.

All accounts must be opened using GSCCC's Tax ID number and under GSCCC's name, which is on our BACA form.

At least 3 signers are required on all Service Unit bank accounts. The Service Unit Treasurer and the Service Unit Manager are required to be on the account. The third signer should be someone else from the Service Unit Team. They may not be related by marriage, relationship, or biology.

No checks should be signed by the person to whom the check is being issued. In this case, one of the other authorized signers should sign the check.

Any check over \$500.00 is required to have two signatures.

Service Units should have a debit card issued in connection with their bank account with a limit not exceeding \$500 per day. Debit cards may be used for approved Council activities according to Volunteer Essentials. Debit cards are encouraged to be used for all online payments and Girl Scout activities. No cash withdrawals allowed with the Service Unit debit card.

All statements must be sent to the Service Unit address. Online banking is permitted and encouraged. Service Unit account address blocks should read: GSCCC Name of Service Unit, or name of day camp Mailing Address designated by Service Unit.

For best internal control process, the review of the statements should be by a signer who is not the primary user of the checkbook or debit card.

All receipts must be kept by the Service Unit and available for review—receipts/records must be retained for 4 years while bank statements/checks retained for 7 years.

Service Units must annually submit a Service Unit Financial Report to Council through Cognito Forms, no later than October 31st.

## Managing Service Unit Funds

Funds should only be used for Service Unit expenses/activities, which may include awards, supplies, activity fees, adult training expenses, and similar expenses.

The Service Unit Team should be involved in preparing and executing the budget for management of the funds.

Service Unit funds must never be used by signers for personal expenses.

Receipts and a clear description of the expense should be maintained for all purchases.

Deposits should be made in a timely fashion. A record of the source of the funds should be maintained.

GSCCC has the right to audit the Service Unit checking accounts at any time and may freeze and/or close accounts if there is a concern that funds are being abused.

Accounts With No Activity: Troop bank accounts with no memberships will be closed pursuant to the Council's Troop Banking Policy. All remaining funds will be transferred to the council pursuant to GSUSA's Blue Book.

Service Unit banks accounts with no activity for the prior 12 months will be frozen until Council reviews the Service Unit account and determines why no funds are being spent throughout the year.

Thank you for adhering to these policies. GSCCC reserves the right to step in and close accounts if there is a misappropriation or policy violations. If you have any questions, please feel free to email GSCCC at [info@girlscoutscce.org](mailto:info@girlscoutscce.org).

The above can also be found on our website [Service Unit Banking Policies and Procedures.pdf](#)

## Communication

Establishing clear communication channels with adult volunteers and girls is an essential part of being successful.

Generation	Preferred Communication	Social Media Platforms	Messaging
<b>Baby Boomers 1946-1964</b>	Phone Calls, Face-to-face, Emails	Facebook	Clear, direct, respectful
<b>Gen X 1965-1980</b>	Email, phone calls, text	Facebook, LinkedIn	Efficient, concise, professional
<b>Gen Y/Millennials 1981-1996</b>	Text, social media, DMs, email	Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, LinkedIn	Personalized, engaging, creative, visual, authentic
<b>Gen Z 1997 - 2012</b>	Text, social media, Messaging Apps	TikTok, Snapchat, Instagram	Authentic, brief, visual
<b>Generation Alpha 2013 – 2025</b>	Text, social media, apps	TikTok, YouTube, Instagram	Fun, interactive, visual

Consistent communication with volunteers is just one way to be successful. Here are others:

- Understand and support the Girl Scout mission, vision, and values
- Promote the Girl Scout Leadership Experience

- Provide timely and effective communication
- Provide guidance, not directive
- Be willing to invest time, energy, and personal know-how to assist the growth of others
- Be discreet and maintain confidences

Remember the internet is an open forum and its benefits of easy access and sharing of information can also attract those who would use that information to cause harm. To ensure the girls' safety:

Girls must be 13 years and older and have parental permission to be involved in a project that involves creating/maintaining a troop web page or social media profile.

All girls need to sign the "Internet Safety Pledge" before participating in any troop/Service Unit or organized online activity. Girls and volunteers make great partners to ensure that Girl Scout environments and activities are safe. Before girls explore the internet, they need to sign the GSUSA Online Safety Pledge, [Internet Safety Pledge](#).

If you wish to post Girl Scouts' names on a web site, use first names only (no last names). Remember: do not identify the Girl Scouts pictured in any photos you post online! Never identify the schools, addresses, phone number, or e-mail addresses of Girl Scouts. Must have a signed media release before any photos are posted.

## Grievance Procedure

Girl Scouts of California's Central Coast (GSCCC) maintains an open-door policy regarding volunteer concerns and grievances. This is a documented process which ensures an objective, confidential, and orderly handling of grievances. Complaints are thoroughly and promptly investigated. Most concerns can be resolved within the troop or service unit when they are discussed and worked out between the individuals involved. If these efforts do not resolve the conflict, it should be brought to the attention of the Service Unit Manager. Most conflicts will be resolved through informal conferences and communications, the goal of which is to resolve the conflict. If a volunteer, parent or service unit team is unable to resolve a complaint through informal efforts, they may initiate the Volunteer Grievance Procedure. Depending on the severity of the incident, GSCCC has the authority to take immediate action, including coaching the individual, creating an improvement plan to outline expectations, or the immediate removal of a volunteer from a leadership role (Leader, co-leader, cookie chair, treasurer, etc.).

### **Step 1: Initiate the Grievance Process**

- Ensure that you have exhausted all efforts to resolve this issue with your troop parents, Troop Leader, Service Unit Manager, etc.
- Submit an email to [info@girlscoutscoc.org](mailto:info@girlscoutscoc.org) attention, include citing the specific policy and/or procedure that has been violated, as applicable.

- If applicable, the GSCCC representative will provide a grievance form via email to obtain more information. Upon return of the grievance form, GSCCC follow up with the volunteer/parent in writing within 3 business working days of its receipt with recommendations for resolution.

## **Step 2: Escalate, as Necessary**

- If the volunteer/parent is not satisfied with the response after Step 1, the volunteer/parent can submit a request for an appeal to [info@girlscoutsgccc.org](mailto:info@girlscoutsgccc.org) (subject: Escalation) along with any additional information. Upon receiving the "escalation" request, Program Center Manager will respond within 5 business working days after receipt.
- The Program Center Manager will request a meeting with the Chief People & Culture Officer (CPCO) to review the issue and render a determination. The CPCO will have access to all the records of the issue in order to reach a decision. The CPCO may conduct face to face or virtual meetings. All the information will be confidential. Volunteer Essentials, Safety Activity Checkpoints and GSCCC policies and procedures will be used to guide the process. The CPCO will provide a recommendation and a final written decision will be provided to the volunteer/parent within 10 business working days. Any decision rendered is final.
- The CPCO will maintain all documentation of the grievance in accordance with the council's confidentiality policy.

## **Tips and Tools**

One of the most important functions of a Service Unit team is to provide leader support so that as they work with girls, they have the resources they need to deliver a high-quality Girl Scout program in a safe setting.

Sharing your knowledge and experience by answering questions and clarifying information helps leaders become successful in Girl Scouting and gain a sense of pride. Our website is a great place to start.

### **GSCCC Website**

There is a wealth of information accessible to all volunteers on the website: [Girl Scouts of California's Central Coast](#).