



Service Unit Volunteer Manual

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*You can find this manual on our website, www.gssn.org. Click the “Forms” link and search for Service Unit Manual. *

Welcome

We are SO excited you've chosen to be part of a key element of the Girl Scout experience in your community! Volunteers are the heart of the Girl Scouts and we are happy to have you on board in this role. As a service unit (SU) team member, your role goes beyond planning programs and holding meetings; you are a direct representation of Girl Scouts. A well-functioning service unit not only provides program opportunities, but also increases awareness about the Girl Scout movement, supports Girl Scout volunteers in the area and increases the reach of Girl Scouting through membership, service and programming. These actions are critical to sustaining and expanding the Girl Scout movement throughout our council. **Thank you for taking this step into leadership with Girl Scouts of the Sierra Nevada and we look forward to seeing the amazing things you do as a service unit team member!**

General Overview

Girl Scouts of the Sierra Nevada (GSSN) is a volunteer-led organization. Approximately 4,500 girls are served by 2,000 volunteers in northern Nevada and northeastern California. Without you, our valued volunteers, Girl Scouts would not operate. In this spirit, the service unit was created to support all of the volunteers who deliver Girl Scouting each year. Service unit teams are appointed and trained volunteers who take on essential responsibilities to ensure their community is working towards the goal and mission of Girl Scouting. Each person who has stepped into a service unit leadership role should understand the role of the service unit team, the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, council goals and girl programming and this manual will help you do that.

What is a Service Unit?

A service unit is a subdivision of the council that includes girls, volunteers, parents, and community members who collaborate to achieve a common goal. The service unit team is a local extension of Girl Scouts of the Sierra Nevada and has several different functions.

Suggested Service Unit Team Member Positions

- Service Unit Manager
- Service Unit Secretary
- Service Unit Treasurer
- Service Unit Product Sales Coordinator
- Service Unit Recruiter
- Service Unit Events Coordinator
- Service Unit Delegate

Service Unit Structure

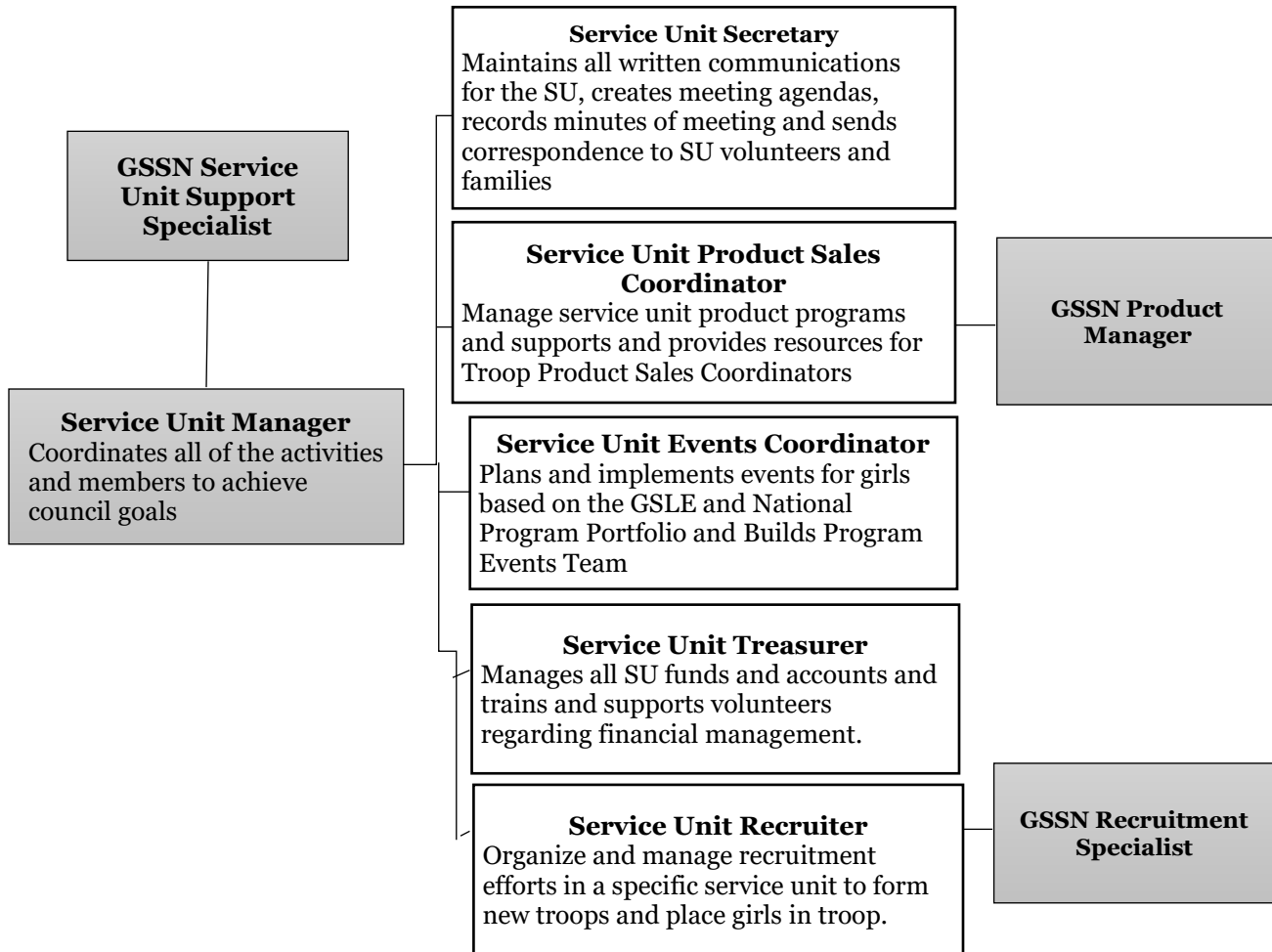
Girl Scout volunteers help develop **girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.** The service unit team makes it possible to provide an exceptional Girl Scout experience by being the vital "link" between GSSN, our volunteers and girls.

Thank you for your dedication to this mission!

GSSN Staff

Service Unit Overview

A typical service unit structure might look something like this:



What are the benefits of having a Service Unit Dream Team?

A service unit that has a manager, secretary, treasurer and product sales coordinator benefits the girls, volunteers and position holders in the service unit tremendously. Not every Service Unit team has all these positions filled. One requirement to be considered a functioning Service Unit is to have a manager, secretary, and treasurer.

- Position holders develop leadership skills in a supportive fun environment, make a difference in the lives of girls and gain transferable skills in budgeting, finance, management, and group dynamics.
- New volunteers have people to go to when they have questions and need support.
- A service unit team brings coordination and organization to service unit events, finances and meetings.

How long is the term of appointment for positions?

Ideally members of the service unit team hold their position for three years:

Year One - Focus on understanding the position from the previous office holder and Service Unit Support Specialist.

Year Two - Focus on implementing the team member's vision for their position.

Year Three - Focus on finding and coaching a new team member for the next year.

While this is the ideal model, we understand circumstances may prevent a team member from completing three years. At the very least, team members should commit to their position for one year.

Qualifications and core competencies for all positions

Anyone fulfilling a service unit team position should meet the qualifications listed below. Please consult with your Service Unit Support Specialist if clarification or assistance is needed to meet qualifications and core competencies.

- Discretion and positivity: Team members must be able to conduct interactions at meetings and with parents, girls and volunteers in a positive, helpful manner that reinforces the Girl Scout Promise and Law. **Team members cannot share negative personal opinions about volunteers or girls during meetings and events.**
- Girl focus: Empower girls to lead activities, learn by doing, and cooperate with others on current issues that involve their interests and needs, while having fun.
- Personal integrity: Demonstrate dependability, honesty, and credibility.
- Adaptability: Adjust, modify own behavior, and remain flexible and tolerant in response to changing situations and environments.
- Oral communication: Express ideas and facts clearly and accurately.
- Foster diversity: Understand, respect, and embrace differences.
- Computer skills: Access to e-mail and the Internet.

Additional requirements:

- Must be a registered member of Girl Scouts and an approved volunteer.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Ability to manage conflict in a professional manner.
- Experience in managing finances and budgets.
- Willingness to uphold the mission of Girl Scouts, and adhere to the Promise and Law.
- Maintain "good standing" with GSSN.
- Must be an appropriate role model for girls and adults and model leadership skills.

Service Unit Manager (SUM) Volunteer Position Description

Summary: Coordinates the activities and members of the service unit (SU) to achieve council goals.

Term of appointment: The Service Unit Manager is appointed for a one-year term that is renewable upon election by the service unit and adherence to GSSN and GSUSA policies and procedures. This position requires an average of 3 hours per week.

Supervision: The Service Unit Manager reports to the Service Unit Membership and Service Unit Support Specialist.

Support: The Service Unit Support Specialists will assist the Service Unit Manager in all dynamics of his/her work.

- Training opportunities to support his/her volunteer service.
- Online volunteer resource library with tools and resources and social media networking capabilities

Responsibilities:

Service Unit Team Business:

- Attend and conduct regularly scheduled service unit meetings.
- Conduct effective meetings that have a focus, stay positive, on topic and on time.
- Ensure volunteers and Juliettes receive regular communication from secretary/service unit team.
- Help the service unit team achieve its set goals.
- Create a welcoming environment for all volunteers—have introductions at every meeting.
- Facilitate a working relationship between council staff and service unit.
- Submit all required paperwork to council in a timely manner (i.e. Service Unit Financial Report, Service Unit trip activity report)
- Help manage service unit checking account and ensure a financial report is presented at all service unit meetings.
- Coordinate selection of service unit leadership positions. All positions are voted on by Service Unit membership and approved by GSSN.

Leader Support

- Connect new leaders with training/mentoring opportunities.
- Promote pluralism and diversity of thought among volunteers and at service unit meetings.
- Knowledge of or willingness to learn Volunteer Essentials, Volunteer Policies and Council/GSUSA safety policies and standards.
- Promote and support GSSN's Cookie Program and Fall Product Program in relationship to the volunteer position.
- Help with recruitment of girls and adults by acting as a spokesperson for Girl Scouts in your area and ensure there are recruitment opportunities in events.
- Identify recruitment opportunities and potential audiences.
- Develop a plan for leader appreciation and recognition.

Be a Girl Scout link to your community and to GSSN:

The Service Unit Manager is the “link” between staff, a community, and volunteers. Here are ways you can be that link:

- Attend meetings that will benefit your community and council.
- Assist in promoting the Annual Meeting.
- Work closely with the Service Unit Support Specialist and provide feedback to help improve the organization.
- Be on the lookout for ways to network in your community and market Girl Scouts

Service Unit Secretary (SUS) Volunteer Position Description

Summary: Maintains written communications for the service unit (SU) and records minutes of service unit meetings.

Term of appointment: The Service Unit Secretary is appointed for a one-year term that is renewable upon election by the service unit and adherence the GSSN and GSUSA policies and procedures. This position requires an average of 3 hours per month.

Supervision: The Service Unit Secretary reports to the Service Unit Manager.

Responsibilities:

Service Unit Team Business:

- Attend regularly scheduled service unit meetings.
- Handle all correspondence for the service unit.
- Perform administrative duties for the service unit i.e. copying, flyer distribution, email
- Create agendas with Service Unit Manager
- Email leaders in advance of service unit meeting to add anything to the agenda and then send it to all troop leaders.
- Maintain service unit distribution list for volunteers, service unit team and Juliettes.
- Maintain and monitor service unit social media accounts like Facebook or Shutterfly by adding new volunteers or parents, adding correspondence and event information and deleting or reporting inappropriate behavior or comments.
- Invite/remind all volunteers of monthly service unit meetings through Facebook, Email, Shutterfly or call
- Share minutes of monthly service unit meetings with all volunteers in the service unit within a week of the service unit meeting.
- Remain informed about and comply with the most current policies, procedures, and guidelines of Girl Scouts— GSSN and GSUSA
- Maintain and update service unit calendar with service unit and GSSN events, trainings and meetings.

Create effective agendas that:

- Provide structure for the meeting.
- Create action items and deadlines.
- Measure how far the service unit has come.
- Create ownership for agenda items and service unit responsibilities.
- Keep meetings on time!

Sample Agendas:

Simple SU Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Treasurer's report, recruiter's report
3. GSSN News
4. Old business
5. New business
6. Events
7. Goodbyes

Detailed SU Agenda

7:00	Welcome Introductions of all volunteers Investiture or rededication of new leaders
7:10	Service Team Reports Service Unit Secretary – minutes Service Unit Manager Service Unit Recruiter Service Unit Treasurer Service Unit Event Coordinator
7:30	GSSN News Report
7:45	Monthly focus E.G. Cookies, Safety Activity Checkpoints, mini training
8:00	Volunteer appreciation
8:05	Closing remarks Review any decisions made
8:30	Goodbyes

Service Unit Product Sales Coordinator Volunteer Position Description

Summary: Responsible for product sales for all pathways within the service unit ensuring that all troops and girls participate in goal setting and troop planning.

Term of appointment: The Service Unit Product Sales Coordinator is appointed for a one-year term that is renewable upon appointment by GSSN's Product Manager and adherence the GSSN and GSUSA policies and procedures. This position is active from October-May with varying hours during this period.

Supervision: The Service Unit Product Sales Coordinator reports to GSSN's Product Manager. The Service Unit Product Sales Coordinator agreement form is provided by and returned to the GSSN Product Manager.

Responsibilities:

Service Unit Business:

- Complete required position training for the Fall Product Program in August and the Cookie Program in October
- Attend regularly scheduled service unit meetings and track and report product sales in the service unit.
- Ensure all girls in troops and Juliettes are offered the opportunity to participate in the Fall and Cookie Program regardless if their troop leader is participating and encourage 100% participation in the product sale programs.
- Assist girls and troops in setting goals and set a service unit goal.
- Arrange for pick-up or delivery of product from the delivery company and ensure all troops receive product in a timely manner.
- Coordinate the Fall Product and Cookie Program kickoff events with the service unit team or encourage participation in the Reno/Sparks cookie kickoff task force.
- Encourage troops to participate in the cookie kickoff with prompt communication and delegation.
- Manage cookie cupboard, if appropriate, ensuring its security and the timely distribution of the cookies to troops
- Distribute recognitions to Troop Product Sales Coordinators (TPSC) in a timely manner.
- Respect all GSSN deadlines and policies.

Train and Support Troop Product Sales Coordinators (TPSC):

- Provide guidance to TPSCs on the online ordering system, forms process and deadlines.
- Assure that all TPSCs have completed the necessary trainings and have signed the TPSC agreement forms to receive product program materials.
- Communicate regularly with TPSCs throughout the program to answer questions, address concerns and elevate these to GSSN's Product Manager when appropriate.
- Assist with the coordination of managing troop inventory and help with the exchanges of cookies within the service unit troops.

Financial:

- Agree to the financial responsibility for all products until a signed receipt is obtained from the TPSC.
- Communicate all money deadlines to TPSC on or before all scheduled deadlines.
- Assist the TPSC with the submission of all Slow Pay paperwork by scheduled deadlines.
- Ensure sound financial policies and procedures for the sale are in place and service unit is in compliance

Service Unit Event Coordinator Volunteer Position Description

Summary: Plan and implement service unit (SU) programs for girls based on the Girl Scout Leadership Experience and National Program Portfolio.

Term of appointment: The Service Unit Events Coordinator is appointed for a one-year term that is renewable upon election by the service unit and adherence to GSSN and GSUSA policies and procedures. This position requires an average of 1-3 hours per month.

Supervision: The Service Unit Events Coordinator reports to the Service Unit Manager.

Responsibilities:

Service Unit Team Business:

- Attend regularly scheduled service unit meetings.
- Provide the status of event planning progress, ask for help where needed and provide event recaps and evaluations through email/service unit social media sites.
- Manage program event calendar.
- Work with the service unit team to host events that stay within the amount budgeted.

Build and Support Event Teams:

- Engage girls in event planning and implementation—events should have a girl-led element.
- Incorporate the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, as well as the National Program Portfolio (Leadership Journeys and The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting) into all activities and events.
- Develop and coordinate program activities that will provide progressive learning experiences for girls.
- Build event teams, delegate tasks, guide individuals/event team through the event planning process and review event plans and budgets.
- Promote events to volunteers and Girl Scout families in coordination with service unit team.
- Know and follow all safety guidelines as set forth by GSSN and GSUSA (Safety Activity Checkpoints, Volunteer Essentials, additional insurance, etc.)

Work Effectively with Volunteers:

- Clearly explain the work that needs to be accomplished and specify what results are expected.
- Establish a timeline for the completion of tasks.
- Follow-up with volunteers frequently throughout the process. Offer assistance/guidance if necessary.
- Mediate disagreements with volunteers privately
- Include volunteers in event planning who reflect the diversity of your service unit including differences in geography, age, religion, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, education level, physical abilities, socio-economic status, and experience with Girl Scouting.
- Review service unit and event team expectations of the event
- Create a sense of common purpose.

Be a Girl Scout link to your community and to GSSN:

- Ensure service unit events incorporate a recruitment element when appropriate and especially in the fall.
- Create community partnerships with educational facilities, religious institutions, cultural, business, social, service, fraternal, arts and professional groups to host events, provide event spaces or speakers and further promote Girl Scouts.

Service Unit Treasurer Volunteer Position Description

Summary: Manages all service unit (SU) funds and accounts. Also responsible for training and supporting fellow volunteers regarding financial management questions or concerns.

Term of appointment: The Service Unit Treasurer is appointed for a 1-year term that is renewable upon election by the service unit and adherence to GSSN and GSUSA policies and procedures. This position requires an average of 1 hour per week.

Supervision: The Service Unit Treasurer reports to the Service Unit Manager.

Responsibilities:

Service Unit Team Business:

- Attend regularly scheduled service unit meetings and report all local account balances and the service unit trust balance.
- Assist the service unit in developing the annual service unit budget, which is due September 30 of each year to the Service Unit Support Specialist
- Record all service unit financial transactions and report this information at all service unit meetings.
- Receive, record and deposit all funds from service unit events.
- Ensure sound financial policies and procedures for all service unit accounts are in place and service unit is in compliance with GSSN service unit account policies found in the [Volunteer Essentials](#): Appendix C, Policy 6.1-6.11 and in the [Service Unit Manual: Service Unit Finances](#) .
- Ensure there are three signers from at least two different troops on the service unit checking account per GSSN policies.
- Ensure that the service unit is a good steward of funds to benefit the girls.
- Prepare deposits and writes checks from the service unit account. Disperses funds to service unit personnel as needed with appropriate approval and receipts.
- Immediately reports any financial discrepancy to GSSN staff.
- Facilitate the constructive exchange of ideas and viewpoints in the service unit regarding financial matters.
- Submit [Service Unit Yearly Financial Report](#) by September 30 every year.

Train and Support Troop Leaders/Treasurers

- Provide training and regular support for service unit members regarding financial management, starting a troop account, etc. This can be done through a formal training or informally through email, social media and service unit meeting updates.
- Understand troop level financials including proceeds from the Fall Product and the Cookie Program, troop financials, record keeping and application for additional money earning.
- Relate concerns regarding troop finances to GSSN within appropriate timeframe.
- Remind troop leaders/treasurers of [Troop Year End Financial Report](#) and answer questions leading up to the June 15 due date.
- Convey the importance of participating in the Fall Product and Cookie Program to troop leaders.

Service Unit Recruiter Volunteer Position Description

Summary: Organize and manage recruitment efforts in a specific Service Unit to form new troops and place girls in troop.

Term of appointment: The Service Unit Recruiter is appointed for a 1-year term that is renewable upon election by the service unit and adherence to GSSN and GSUSA policies and procedures. The position hours vary depending on the time of year and are greater during fall recruitment.

Supervision: The Service Unit Recruiter reports to the Service Unit Manager and GSSN's Recruitment Specialist.

Responsibilities:

Service Unit Team Business:

- Attend regularly scheduled service unit meetings.
- Provide the status of recruitment plans and events, ask for help where needed and provide event recaps and evaluations at service unit meetings and through email/service unit social media sites.
- Ensure the service unit incorporates recruitment into events.
- Keep open communication with existing troops and Recruitment Specialist in order to maintain an accurate list of troops accepting new girls.
- At ease with public speaking, networking and marketing Girl Scouts

Girl and Adult Recruitment:

- Work with GSSN's Recruitment Specialist to assist the service unit in meeting all membership goals and identify areas where troops and leaders are needed.
- Ensure all elementary schools have received communication about Girl Scouts at back-to-school nights, recruitment nights or through fliers.
- Collect a list of girls requesting troop placement, assist families with online registration at community events and share that list with council promptly.
- Provide potential members with a consistent message about Girl Scouting and the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.
- Familiar with all pathways available in order to serve each individual appropriately and to educate the community on participation options.
- Ensure the Girl Scout program is offered to all girls in grades K-12 through recruitment flyers, registration events, and other methods.

Be a Girl Scout link to your community and to GSSN:

- Identify sources for recruiting adult leadership who represent the diversity of the local community and plan appropriate events for recruiting new members and actively recruit new leaders.
- Familiar with community resources and needs in order to contribute to the development of a diverse Girl Scout membership and increase Girl Scout visibility in the community.
- Help service unit enhance community visibility and awareness of Girl Scouts by submitting articles to paper or online publications, creating displays in community locations and participating in community events.

Service Unit Finances

Service Unit Finance Guidelines

Service unit team members should be familiar with GSSN service unit account policies found in the [Volunteer Essentials](#): Appendix C, Policy 6.1-6.11.

- 1) The service unit gets its money from a portion of the cookie program.
- 2) Service unit finances should be reported at every service unit meeting.
- 3) The [Service Unit Yearly Financial Report](#), accompanied by a copy of the July, August and September banking statements, must be submitted to the GSSN September 30 every year. These reports are reviewed by Service Unit Treasurers, Service Unit Managers, and/or council staff and the manager needs to approve it.
- 4) The service unit should create and turn in a [service unit budget](#) by September 30 of every year to their Service Unit Support Specialist.
- 5) The service unit should be asking all leaders how they would like to see the service unit spend its money. Leaders can contribute to service unit budget decisions by phone, email, a meeting or a survey.
- 6) Leaders should have a say about what the service unit spends money on just, like all girls have a say with troop money.
- 7) Estimate expenses, revenues, recognitions and administrative costs for your budget by looking at past receipts. Base your budget on cookie program proceeds for that year.
- 8) Spend your money! The girls earned it, so they should reap the rewards.
- 9) Service unit fund decisions must be made by at least three service unit members and preferably more.

You are part of a non-profit meaning you shouldn't have a profit at the end of the year!

Reimbursements and Cash

- 1) If a volunteer or individual troop/group requires reimbursement for a pre-approved purchase and/or event expense, requests must be accompanied by a detailed receipt.
- 2) An ATM withdrawal receipt does not qualify as a receipt for reimbursement or justification for service unit purchases. All purchases made with cash require detailed receipts of the goods and services purchased.

What Should the Service Unit Spend its Money On?

- 1) Spend your money to supplement the cost of events, camporee, award ceremonies, recruitment events or costs, travel expenses, service unit training, international travel, the annual meeting, product sales kick-offs and leader appreciation. Some service units also give each troop a gift certificate to the Girl Scout shop with certain stipulations—ask the Shop for more details.
- 2) Volunteer appreciation events, when planned appropriately, are acceptable uses of service unit funds. This does not mean that the service unit should pay for a three-day vacation for every volunteer in the service unit. It does mean that you can host an end-of-the-year appreciation dinner. Providing volunteers with small mementos, tokens, or gifts is appropriate, but giving each a \$100 gift card to their favorite store in the mall would be considered excessive.
- 3) Please refrain from saving service unit money for “emergencies.” Make sure to use your service unit funds on the girls! Every service unit is different, so realistically assess what your minimum balance needs to be.
- 4) If the price of something like a camporee increases by \$20, expect to use more money in scholarships or reevaluate the event.
- 5) If the service unit can't cover the costs of an event, an admission price should be charged to break even.

Service Unit Scholarships for Girls

- 1) Scholarships for things like camporees, lifetime memberships for graduating Girl Scouts or domestic or international travel for girls, must have written guidelines or an application created and voted on by the service unit and available to ALL girls. In other words, a scholarship can't be granted for just one troop or certain Girl Scouts.
- 2) The scholarship will be incorporated into the service unit's yearly budget.
- 3) The guidelines or application will become part of the service unit's bylaws and can be modified every year with a service unit vote.

GSSN's Sample Budget Worksheet

Below is a sample budget that can be found on our website under "Forms." Search for "Service Unit Sample Budget" or click the "Service Unit" category.

Potential Expenses:		
Expense	Calculations	Total Cost
Meeting space rental	Cost _____ x num ber of meetings _____	\$0.00
Equipment Rental	Cost _____ x num ber of uses _____	\$0.00
Leader Training	Cost per leader _____ x num ber of leaders _____	\$0.00
Office Supplies	Cost _____ x num ber of meetings _____	\$0.00
Copying	Cost per copy _____ x num ber of copies _____	\$0.00
Postage	Postage cost _____ x item s per mailing _____ x num ber of mailings _____	\$0.00
Troop Gift Certificates	Funds per troop _____ x num ber of new troops _____	\$0.00
Annual Meeting	Cost per delegate \$8 x num ber of delegates _____	\$0.00
Volunteer Holiday Dinner/Appreciation	Cost per volunteer _____ x num ber of volunteers _____	\$0.00
Volunteer Appreciation Dinner	Cost per volunteer _____ x num ber of volunteers _____	\$0.00
Volunteer Recognition	Cost per volunteer _____ x num ber of volunteers _____	\$0.00
Fall Product/Cookie Kickoff	Décor, patches, activity supplies, copies	\$0.00
Event 1		\$0.00
Event 2		\$0.00
Event 3		\$0.00
Event 4		\$0.00
Event 5		\$0.00
Camporee		\$0.00
Parade	Parade entry fee, décor	\$0.00
Other		\$0.00
Total	<i>This will automatically calculate</i>	\$0.00

Traditional Girl Scout Calendar

October

Fall Product Program
Juliette Gordon Low's birthday
Welcome back to troop rededication and investiture ceremonies
Nevada Day parade and celebration

November

Veteran's Day parade

December

Holiday party and community service projects
Community Christmas parades

January

Cookie Program begins

February

World Thinking Day
Cookie booth sales start

March

Girl Scout Week
Girl Scout Sunday and Girl Scout Sabbath
Cookie booths at local businesses

April

National volunteer appreciation month
Volunteer Recognition Awards event

May

All That Glitters Awards Ceremony
Early Bird renewal for next year
Bridging ceremonies

June, July, August

GSSN camp and day camp
Service unit camporees

September

Welcome back to Girl Scouts!

Service Unit Events

Questions to consider when planning:

- What is my event timeline?
- How will I involve girls in planning and carrying out this event?
- How will I incorporate the Girl Scout Leadership Experience?
- How will I incorporate Journeys and The Girls Guide to Girl Scouting?
- How many volunteers do I need? How will I recruit them?
- Will a troop put on this event?
- Is this event sustainable? Don't just repeat an event because it has always been done.
- How will I let girls and families know about the event? Submit your event to GSSN to be added to the website calendar by contacting us at girlscoutshelp@gssn.org.
- How will I know if this event was successful?
- Will we include a recruitment element in this event? This is highly recommended during the fall.

Quality programming should:

- Reflect the Promise and Law
- Try to incorporate one or more of the Girl Scout focus areas of STEM, community service and environmental leadership and responsibility.
- Have girl input (if not girl planned)
- Provide opportunity for participants to discover, connect, and take action
- Be appropriate to the age-level
- Include the Girl Scout Processes – girl led, learning by doing and cooperative learning
- Be inclusive of all members of the group
- Be fun!

Establishing a Participant Fee

Here is a suggested method to determine the per person fee for an event.

- A. Start with a knowledgeable estimate of the number of participants you plan to serve.
- B. Determine total costs.
- C. Subtract troop/service unit contribution and donation(s) from total costs for final cost.
- D. Divide final cost by the number of participants for the participant fee.

Total expenses = \$300.00 minus the service unit contribution of \$100.00 = \$200.00. Divide by the number of participants (20) = \$10.00 per participant.

- Is this cost too high or too low? Re-evaluate the participant fee. What can you do to make the cost reasonable for the participants?
- The troop or individual putting on the event needs to keep all receipts to be reimbursed by the service unit.

Event Insurance and Certificates of Liability

You should consider purchasing additional insurance for all of your events. **If you are having anyone at the event that is not a registered Girl Scout, extra insurance is needed.** There are several insurance plans that may be purchased, be aware that rates may change. These forms are available on the www.gssn.org website by clicking the "Forms" link on the top right-hand side. Download the Excel file and complete the form after choosing which insurance plan is best for your event.

To purchase the insurance, contact the council at least two weeks before the event. We recommend requesting insurance for multiple events at the same time to save time and money.

You may be asked to provide a **Certificate of Liability**. This can be provided at no charge by emailing a request to girlscoutshelp@gssn.org at least two weeks before your event. Include the name of the insured party or location, their physical address and who it should be emailed to.

Girl Involvement in Events

Girl involvement in planning and leading service unit events is not only possible; it is an essential component of a successful Girl Scout event. The key to successful girl planning is being aware of girls' current abilities and providing constructive mentoring throughout the process.

Girl Scout Grade Level Involvement, Examples & Other Ways to Involve Girls in Girl Scouts

<p>Girl Scout Daisy (Kindergarten-Grade 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop rules of conduct for the event • Choose between two or three items, such as food options and/or activity options <p>Girl Scout Brownie (Grades 2-3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the above • Choose the event's theme from three or four options • Make name tags and invitations • Lead a flag ceremony at the event <p>Girl Scout Junior (Grades 4-5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the above • Develop the theme of an event • Lead activities for Girl Scout Daisies and Girl Scout Brownies • Lead opening and closing ceremonies 	<p>Girl Scout Cadette (Grades 6-8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the above • Email, telephone, or personal contact with potential sites, vendors and/or volunteers • Plan songs, activities, skits and ceremonies • Share their skills and experiences • Those with Program Aide training can be given even more responsibility <p>Girl Scout Senior (Grades 9-10) and Girl Scout Ambassador (Grades 11-12)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the above • Total planning of events with adult support and advice
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Suggested Timeline

9–10 Weeks before the event the hosting troop or Service Unit Events Coordinator should:

1. Look for location, date and time of event.
2. Work on the budget for the event with the Service Unit Treasurer.

6–8 Weeks before the event

1. Present the flyer at the service unit Meeting.
2. Post event to social media groups
3. Email event info to leaders and service unit families—ask your Service Unit Support Specialist for distribution lists, and also to GSSN to add to the website calendar.
4. Begin keeping track of any registrations you receive.
5. Collect registration fees from leaders at every service unit meeting – discuss if refunds will be given.
6. Attend the Service Unit Meeting to give the team an update and request help.

2 – 4 Weeks before the event

1. Attend any service unit and team meetings with updates and reminders.
2. Make sure all supplies are ordered.
3. Prep anything to be distributed at the event including **event evaluations**.
4. Confirm the location.
5. Purchase any additional insurance from GSSN if necessary.
6. Order the patch.
7. Make a list of tasks that can be completed by volunteers. Recruit teen Girl Scouts, leaders, and parents to volunteer during the event.

Week of the event

1. Make any last minute preparations including enough check-in volunteers for the event.
2. Print evaluations and check-in forms for the girls and leaders to fill out at the event.

After the event

1. Meet with the SUEC or event committee members to review the participants' evaluations, evaluate the event, and make recommendations for improving future events.
2. Send thank-you notes to all donors, resource people and/or speakers, volunteers, and facility staff.

Event Evaluation Form

Event Coordinator: _____ Event: _____

Service Unit: _____ Event date: _____

Location of event: _____ Registration: _____ girls _____ adults

Actual attendance: Girl Scout Daisies: _____ Girl Scout Brownies: _____ Girl Scout

Juniors: _____ Girl Scout Cadettes: _____ Girl Scout Seniors: _____ Girl Scout

Ambassadors: _____ Adults: _____

Description of event activities:

Explain how this event fulfilled one or more of the three Keys to Leadership.

Discover:

Connect:

Take Action:

How was girl planning and girl involvement implemented?

How was inclusion accomplished?

Cost per girl: _____ Includes:

Cost per adult: _____ Includes:

Was the cost too low, too high, or just right?

Did the event accomplish its goals?

What was especially successful about this event?

What were some challenges or problems that required special attention?

Advice for future event committees of similar events.

Please submit this form to the Service Unit Manager no later than two weeks after the event.

Commitment to Pluralism & Diversity

See Diversity

- Be aware of cultural, economic, age and gender diversity. Girls don't look alike and neither do volunteers.
- Take into account people's different interests—they may be different from yours and that's okay.
- Don't assume everyone knows Girl Scout jargon i.e. Journeys, Petals, “My GS”, GSLE—explain them

And Embrace It

- Welcome and recruit non-traditional volunteers like men, foster parents, college students, retirees, people without children.
- Make new traditions; just because you've done something in years past, doesn't mean you can't try something new.
- Discover the untapped markets in your area for recruiting.

Speak Kindness

Create the environment you wish you had when you went to your first service unit meeting! The team should continuously ask itself:

- Do you introduce newcomers every meeting and explain the format of the meeting?
- Do you regularly thank individuals and recognize achievements?
- Are your meetings comprised of positivity and creativity or complaining?
- Does what you say reflect the Girl Scout Promise and Law? Remember it starts at the top.
- Are service unit problems solved as a group?
- Do new leaders come back to your meetings? If you put yourself in their place, what would you notice about your service unit?

Never criticize someone over email/social media or in front of other people.

Who Else Can You Include?

Everyone can get to know the community better. Your service unit should strive to speak with other community groups regularly and spread Girl Scout enthusiasm. Explore:

- Educational facilities
- Religious institutions
- Ethnic and cultural groups
- Social, service, fraternal and professional groups
- Community leaders
- Youth programs-especially those for girls
- Business, industrial and labor groups

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Statement

Girl Scouts of the Sierra Nevada Council fosters belonging and respect for all girls. We empower all girls, volunteers and staff to fulfill their potential and make the world a better place. Our Girl Scout Promise drives us to provide diverse, equitable and inclusive experiences where all girls, volunteers and staff are confident they belong. We stand firm in these commitments and united by these ideals.

Confidentiality & Neutrality

As a service unit team member, you will be leading fellow volunteers through their Girl Scout volunteer experience. Please respect all personal information that is shared with you and don't share it with other volunteers, community members, or friends. Examples of information **not to be shared**:

- Any volunteer's personal or health issues
- Negative opinions shared about fellow volunteers
- Any personal opinions you have about your assigned volunteers
- Evaluation results or performance corrections of volunteers
- Any contact information (addresses, emails, and phone numbers) to anyone outside of the service unit
- Volunteer performance, interventions or concerns with other volunteers
- Confidential information and paperwork—paperwork should always be kept secure

If the volunteer shares concerns about or witnesses:

- Abuse or neglect
- Inappropriate behavior by a GS volunteer (drug or alcohol use while volunteering, violence, etc.)
- Concerns regarding theft of Girl Scout money or equipment

These concerns should be shared with your Service Unit Support Specialist immediately.

Confidentiality is forfeited if the girls, volunteers, or staff are in any immediate danger.

As a service unit team member, you will find that you may be put in difficult situations between volunteers, volunteers and staff, or volunteers and council. As a service unit team member, you are expected to remain neutral in any conflict. This includes:

- Not taking one side over the other
- Taking time to know both sides of the story and not jump to conclusions
- Not engaging in gossip
- Offering positive solutions or action steps to problems as they arise and elevating concerns to the Service Unit Manager or council level when appropriate
- Helping build an enthusiastic and positive volunteer community that is focused on service

As a service unit team member, your input and ideas are crucial to building a successful council. As with any large organization, we cannot always agree on every issue. We count on you to support the council and the goals of Girl Scouts of the Sierra Nevada. We rely on your honest feedback and hope you can offer real solutions should a situation arise. We look forward to hearing from you!

Conflict Management

When volunteer performance problems or grievances arise, volunteers should bring these matters to the attention of those who supervise their work and should consult the [Volunteer Essentials](#) especially Chapter 3 and Appendix C and D which address conflict and volunteer conduct.

Part of your responsibilities will be to help resolve conflict among your volunteers. Below are definitions, information and helpful tools for conflict resolution. Your Service Unit Support Specialist will help guide and support you in handling conflict situations.

Definition

A “conflict” is defined as any kind of disagreement between two or more volunteers and/or parents; and/or a dispute over the interpretation of one or more council policies.

Policy

All volunteers shall have the opportunity to present their concerns and work to resolve the issues in a timely manner using the council’s conflict resolution procedures.

Procedure

Volunteers are first expected to discuss concerns with the individuals involved when a conflict arises. A problem-solving tone should be adopted during these discussions. If this does not resolve the issue, then the parties should jointly discuss the situation with their assigned Service Unit Support Specialist for support and guidance.

Helpful steps in the resolution of problems:

1. Gather the facts and share with those involved. If the conflict is between you and another party, objectively state the words you heard or behavior you observed. Focus on the issue, not the person.
2. Determine if this problem can be resolved with those involved or if another resource or process is needed. If all parties agree, initiate discussion that reveals both parties’ assumptions, interests, positions, expectations and needs. Look for common ground to agree on. Have a frank, confidential discussion with all parties involved:
 - Listen carefully to understand all sides of the issue.
 - Come to consensus in defining the issue/problem.
 - Take notes on common interests to use as the basis for resolution (and your suggested resolution, if one is made).
 - Then, leave the problem behind.
3. Recommend possible solutions together and decide on a new plan of action. Jointly seek many approaches before reaching an agreement on a solution.
4. Leave the discussion with the same understanding about next steps. Summarize what was heard and agreed to. Make sure to write it down.
 - Develop a written plan of action with those involved including a time frame for resolution. Give a copy of the plan to each party.
 - Be sure the plan is consistent with GSSN Volunteer Policies and conflict resolution practices.
5. Indicate that the issue is resolved and decide whether or not to check in at a later date. Document the outcome in writing.

Recruitment and Retention Strategies

Girl Scout Informational Night Recruitment

A Girl Scout Informational Night is an event that begins at a specific time and includes a presentation to parents/ guardians to sell the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. It also engages girls so that they want to join Girl Scouts.

Open House Recruitment

Open House Recruitment is an event held so that prospective members can learn about the Girl Scouts mission, vision, and purpose in hopes of attracting new members. The room layout includes areas for Troops, Program, Volunteer, Product Sales, Membership Registration and Girl Activity.

School Based Recruitment

A successful and growing Girl Scout community requires getting the message to girls and adults within the schools. Special attention should be given to building positive relationships with school administrators and parent/teacher organizations. Recruitments at or through the school can take many forms depending on the school district's policies. Some methods might include:

- Principal Visit
- Classroom Visit
- Open House/Back to School night
- PTA/PTO Presentation

Community Organization Recruitment

This recruitment strategy is designed with the intent to attract adult volunteers for roles with camp, events, series, service unit teams, before or after school programs and other non-troop roles. The service unit should work with their service unit team and the recruitment department at council to select and coordinate recruitments with community organizations. These community organizations may employ current volunteers or have an interest in community involvement/development with the Girl Scouts.

Council-Wide Early Bird Renewal

This campaign is developed, marketed and facilitated by the recruitment department at the council. The Early Bird renewal period gives current Girl Scouts the opportunity to renew their membership for the upcoming Girl Scout year (October through September) before June 15. The role of the service unit team and the service unit is to hold events that promote early registration and provide methods for registering. Some events that could be held include:

- An early registration troop meeting, an early registration open house hosted by the service unit, or a retention meeting for service unit members and troop leaders.

Pre-Cookie Season Retention

This strategy takes place before the cookie program starts and targets girls who were registered last year and haven't renewed for the current year.

Retaining Girls with a Bridging Ceremony

Take an opportunity to show girls who are moving to the next grade level program what Girl Scouting has to offer over the next few years. This strategy would be especially useful if the service unit notices a decreased retention of girls at a specific grade level.

Mentoring Leaders

Both new and experienced leaders can benefit from a mentor or coach relationship. In addition to upholding the Girl Scout tradition of role modeling and mentorship, the practice promotes camaraderie and sense of belonging, assures that girls are getting the best possible Girl Scout experience and increases volunteer and girl retention. Whether the mentor or coach is one person or many, an experienced troop leader or a Girl Scout alumna, they are an invaluable resource for all leaders.

New Leader Mentor/Coach

The primary role of a Mentor/Coach is to be a friend to a newly recruited troop leader or team of leaders. This is the person who can sit with them at the monthly service unit meetings, introduce them to other volunteers and help them understand how everyone is there to help them succeed. A Mentor or Coach can also offer to help the new leader in other ways, such as:

Help establish the troop

- Assist with organizing and providing information at the first parent/troop meeting
- Invite them to watch a troop meeting
- Show them the Volunteer Toolkit
- Let them know where or from whom they can get commonly needed troop supplies

Act as a resource for leaders once the troop is meeting:

- Assist them in finding meeting places, field trip and community service opportunities and other community support
- Explain and encourage participation in service unit and council-wide events and activities
- Ensure that they know about bridging preparation activities and their importance and provide each troop with the resources and assistance needed to achieve bridging and other goals
- Help them through cookie season. Give recommendations about cookie booths, teaching the girls the five skills and where to sell. Answer questions about SNAP and record keeping

What does the mentor/coach model look like?

A good mentorship model in a service unit needs to do the following:

- 1) Have at least one in-person meeting between the mentor and the new leader. This can be done before or after a service unit meeting.
- 2) Monthly calls or emails to new leaders during their first year to see how they're doing or if they need help. Remind them of the service unit meeting, the monthly Leader and Member Connect e-newsletter and any upcoming events. This can be done by one or multiple people and may not be necessary during the summer.
- 3) Introduce of new leaders at their first service unit meetings.
- 4) Familiarize the new leader with the service unit, its procedures and events.

Ideal mentor/coach skills and experience

When assigning a mentor or coach to a new leader or level, it can be useful to look for the following skills and knowledge:

- Able to develop a rapport with new leader
- Knowledgeable about providing safe, quality programs for girls
- Understand how to use Safety Activity Checkpoints, Volunteer Essentials and other council resources
- Able to promote membership retention and diversity
- Listening Skills
- Understand the importance of confidentiality
- Can give ideas for working with parents

Resources

GSSN service unit training videos are located on our website: www.gssn.org/volunteers

- **Service unit short training videos:** Four short videos that cover the following topics: meeting attendance, budgeting, planning the year and incorporating the GSLE into service unit events.
 - GSSN.org> Volunteers> Online Support for Volunteers> Support Your Service Unit (bottom of page)
 - YouTube: GSSN's channel name is Sierra Nevada

Forms and position descriptions are located on our website: www.gssn.org

Find all of the following by going to GSSN.org> Forms> Options> Check the "Service Unit" category.

More resources on our website: www.gssn.org

- **The GSSN Member Connect Newsletter** (formerly GSSN Essentials) is emailed to you at the beginning of each month. It is a **must read** about upcoming events and highlights our girls' most recent accomplishments.
- **"MyGS"** is our online registration and volunteer support portal. The Volunteer Toolkit in your "MyGS" will help you plan an entire year of awards and activities and access a troop roster. You can also email families meeting reminders through the Volunteer Toolkit. The Member Profile section of the "MyGS" is where you renew everyone's membership.
- You'll also find the **Volunteer Essentials**, the manual for running your troop, and **Safety Activity Checkpoints**, which is a must read for anyone planning troop adventures.
- **Universal Permission Slips and Health History Forms** are very important! You must have one for EACH girl anytime your troop gets together. They can be downloaded from the website "Forms" section.

GSSN Service Unit Manager Facebook Page

- This is a page for Service Unit Managers to network, share information and events. New managers can contact their Service Unit Support Specialist to be placed in the group.

Equipment Rental

- The council has resource items available for rental including bridges, cookie costumes, Girl Scout feather flags and vinyl banners, state and American flags and resources to supplement programs or outdoor experiences. Contact the shop at Shop@GSSN.org to reserve equipment. It is the responsibility of the person checking out the item(s) to clean all items and replace lost or damaged equipment.

GSSN Staff

- GSSN staff will be meeting with you throughout the year at your service unit meetings. Want them to bring more info on a specific topic? Just ask!
- GSSN council staff will help you with volunteer training, troop programming, financials and any other troop related questions. Contact them at girlscoutshelp@gssn.org or 775-322-0642.

Girl Scouts of the Sierra Nevada

Volunteer Agreement and Code of Conduct

Girl Scouts of the Sierra Nevada (GSSN) supports adults who prepare girls to seek and meet the challenges of an ever-changing society. GSSN agrees to treat volunteers with respect and dignity and to protect confidential information, and further agrees to provide a position description, orientation, learning opportunities and support necessary for the volunteer position.

The 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.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Statement

Girl Scouts of the Sierra Nevada Council fosters belonging and respect for all girls. We empower all girls, volunteers and staff to fulfill their potential and make the world a better place. Our Girl Scout Promise drives us to provide diverse, equitable and inclusive experiences where all girls, volunteers and staff are confident they belong. We stand firm in these commitments and united by these ideals.

The 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 I 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.

GSSN is committed to the highest ethical standards and we expect all volunteers to act in the best interest of the organization and its mission. This mission demands that we, as stewards, act in an ethical manner to uphold the public trust and the values of responsibility, integrity, openness, honesty, accountability, and respect in all that we do in the name of Girl Scouts.

I agree to uphold these values and I will:

1. Affirm the Girl Scout Promise and Law and accept the GSSN Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Statement.
2. Take all required trainings and comply with all Girl Scout policies and procedures and safety guidelines.
3. Welcome girls and adults from a variety of backgrounds and include them in my group activities. Make an intentional effort to learn about, experience, and appreciate cultures other than my own.
4. Behave in a manner that models the ideals and values of the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Ensure all verbal or written communications (including telephone conversations, emails, texts, newsletters, electronic media and announcements) do not contain profanity or condescending remarks. Refrain from inappropriate displays of anger, aggression or berating of individuals in public or private. Refer to a staff person regarding all sensitive issues or media statements.
5. Honor the leadership of the girls and support their decisions.
6. Act responsibly when overseeing Girl Scout funds, maintain accurate records and file required reports. Girl Scout funds are only to be used in direct support of Girl Scout programs and to pay for appropriate Girl Scout expenses.

7.Honor the confidentiality of volunteers, families and girl members.

8.Not use any volunteer position for personal, political or monetary gain.

I understand that if I do not comply with the above standards or if I participate in illegal activities, abuse or mistreat girls, parents, volunteers or staff, or otherwise act in a way that negatively impacts the image or goals of GSSN, I may be terminated from a leadership position or from any volunteer role with GSSN.



Service Unit Manager Agreement

I have read and understand my duties as a Service Unit Manager and I agree to fulfill my position responsibilities.

I will be Service Unit Manager from:

_____ - _____

Service Unit Manager Signature

Service Unit Support Specialist

Service Unit Secretary Agreement

I have read and understand my duties as a Service Unit Secretary, and I agree to fulfill my position responsibilities.

I will be Service Unit Secretary from:

_____ - _____

Service Unit Secretary Signature

Service Unit Manager Signature

Service Unit Support Specialist

Service Unit Events Coordinator Agreement

I have read and understand my duties as Service Unit Events Coordinator and I agree to fulfill my position responsibilities.

I will be Service Unit Events Coordinator from:

_____ - _____

Service Unit Events Coordinator Signature

Service Unit Manager Signature

Service Unit Support Specialist



Service Unit Treasurer Agreement

I have read and understand my duties as Service Unit Treasurer and I agree to fulfill my position responsibilities.

I will be Service Unit Treasurer from:

Service Unit Treasurer Signature

Service Unit Manager Signature

Service Unit Support Specialist

Service Unit Recruiter Agreement

I have read and understand my duties as Service Unit Recruiter, and I agree to fulfill my position responsibilities.

I will be Service Unit Recruiter from:

_____ - _____

Service Unit Recruiter Signature

Service Unit Manager Signature

Service Unit Support Specialist