



Volunteer Procedures and Practices

August 2016

****NOTICE****

PLEASE READ THE DISCLAIMER AND THE VOLUNTEER PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES CAREFULLY. THE PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES CONTAIN SIGNIFICANT CHANGES.

DISCLAIMER

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THIS HANDBOOK DOES NOT CREATE A CONTRACT.

THIS HANDBOOK IS AN OVERVIEW AND ACTS AS A GUIDELINE OF THE CURRENT VOLUNTEER PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES OF THE GIRL SCOUTS OF EASTERN SOUTH CAROLINA (“GSESC”). THE PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES SET FORTH IN THIS HANDBOOK SUPERSEDE AND REPLACE ALL PRIOR PROCEDURES AND/OR PRACTICES, WRITTEN AND ORAL. FROM TIME TO TIME IT WILL BE NECESSARY, WITH OR WITHOUT NOTICE, FOR GSESC TO CHANGE, DELETE OR ADD TO THE PROVISIONS OF THIS HANDBOOK. CHANGES AND UPDATES WILL BE MADE IN WRITTEN FORM, APPROVED AND DISTRIBUTED BY SIGNATURE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.

THIS HANDBOOK IS NOT INTENDED TO CREATE, AND DOES NOT CREATE, A CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT, EXPRESS, IMPLIED, UNILATERAL OR OTHERWISE, BETWEEN YOU AND GSESC. NOTHING IN THIS HANDBOOK BINDS GSESC TO ANY SPECIFIC PROCEDURES, PRACTICES, CONDITIONS, BENEFITS, PRIVILEGES OR DEFINITE PERIOD OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE. NOTHING IN THE HANDBOOK GIVES THE VOLUNTEER A CONTRACTUAL RIGHT TO ANY BENEFITS OR PAYMENTS. EACH VOLUNTEER IS COMPLETELY FREE TO END THE VOLUNTEER RELATIONSHIP AT ANY TIME HE OR SHE CHOOSES; AND GSESC HAS THE SAME RIGHT TO END THE VOLUNTEER RELATIONSHIP AT ANY TIME, WITH OR WITHOUT NOTICE, REGARDLESS OF PERFORMANCE.

THIS DISCLAIMER EXPRESSES THE COMPLETE UNDERSTANDING CONCERNING YOUR VOLUNTEER SERVICES WITH GSESC. IT SUPERCEDES ANY AND ALL AGREEMENTS, ORAL OR WRITTEN, REGARDING VOLUNTEER SERVICE. NEITHER THIS HANDBOOK NOR ANY ORAL OR WRITTEN POLICY OR PROCEDURE, NOR ANY STATEMENT BY ANY GSESC EMPLOYEE, AGENT OR OFFICER CAN, OR WILL CHANGE THE VOLUNTEER RELATIONSHIP.

I, _____, have read this Disclaimer as well as the Operational PROCEDURES and Practices which has been provided to me. I understand that **THIS HANDBOOK AND ITS PROCEDURES ARE NOT A CONTRACT.** I understand and agree that Volunteers are not employees of GSESC; voluntary service may be terminated by GSESC or the Volunteer at any time with or without notice or reason.

Date

Volunteer Signature (Troop Co-Leader)

Date

Volunteer Signature (Troop Co-Leader)

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome Letter

Welcome to Girl Scouts of Eastern South Carolina!

We are excited to have you as part of the Girl Scouts of Eastern South Carolina (GSESC) Volunteer team. As a Volunteer, you share a commitment to our mission and contribute to the achievement of the organization's goals. The Girl Scout purpose is to inspire Girls with the highest ideals of character, conduct, patriotism, and service so that they may become happy, resourceful citizens. As part of the GSESC team, we hope you will discover that the pursuit of excellence is truly a rewarding aspect of your Volunteer experience with GSESC.

Welcome aboard! We thank you and look forward to your contributions.

GSUSA Highlights

History

Juliette Gordon Low, founder of Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA), was born October 31, 1860, in Savannah, Georgia. A sensitive and talented youngster, Daisy, as she was known to family and friends, developed what was to become a lifetime interest in the arts. She wrote poems and plays, sketched, acted, and later became a skilled painter and sculptor. Full of inspiration herself, it was her destiny to inspire others. On March 12, 1912, in Savannah, Juliette Low gathered 18 Girls together to organize the first two American Girl Guide Troops. Daisy Gordon, her niece, was the first registered member. The name of the rapidly growing organization was changed to Girl Scouts the following year. Within months, Girl members were hiking through the woods in their ankle-length blue uniforms, playing basketball in a curtained-off court, and going on camping trips. The following year saw the opening of a national headquarters in Washington, D.C., and the publication of the first Girl Scout handbook, *How Girls Can Help Their Country*, which featured knot-tying, first-aid, and outdoor cooking instructions.

In developing the Girl Scout Movement in the United States, Juliette Low brought Girls of all backgrounds into the outdoors, giving them the opportunity to learn about nature and develop self-reliance and resourcefulness. She encouraged Girls to prepare themselves not only for traditional homemaking roles, but also for possible future roles in the arts, sciences, business, and for active citizenship outside the home.

At the organization's founding in 1912, Juliette Gordon Low originated the practice of defying stereotypes. She was a visionary who blazed the way for Girls and women to embrace everything life offers. She not only offered Girls the opportunities that until then only boys were granted, she opened up those same possibilities to Girls of all ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, ability, and geographic groups. Just as it was for Juliette more than 100 years ago, so it is with us today: ensuring all Girls in America have access to Girl Scouting is vital.

We are the place where over 2.6 million Girls go to explore and discover their world, connect with others, and become leaders who take action to make their world a better place. Now headquartered in New York City, Girl Scouts of the USA is the world's largest voluntary organization for Girls. To date, GSUSA has positively influenced the lives of more than 50 million Girls and Adult women.

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.

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 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.

Council Introduction to Volunteers.

Girl Scouting is a membership organization. Girls join the Girl Scout movement in order to take part in the Girl Scout program; Adults join in order to make the program possible and available to Girls. Each Adult, regardless of the position she/he holds--Volunteer or staff, Council or national--contributes directly and/or indirectly to helping Girls.

Girl Scouts of Eastern South Carolina is chartered by Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. All operational Volunteers are to support and operate within the framework of the GSESC Council charter, articles of incorporation, bylaws, procedures, standards, goals and plan of work of the Girl Scouts of Eastern South Carolina and of the procedures, standards and corporate goals of Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.

Volunteer Philosophy

Girl Scouts of Eastern South Carolina believes the strength of the Girl Scout movement rests in the voluntary leadership of its Adult members. It is through this voluntary leadership that Girl Scouting serves Girls.

VOLUNTEER PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

Volunteer Definitions

Operational Volunteer: One appointed to the voluntary leadership position of Troop leader, co- Troop leader, member of the service team or membership extension or series Volunteer.

Volunteer: All other voluntary (non-employee) positions.

Volunteer Status: All Volunteer service is voluntary and without definite duration or pay. Volunteers are completely free to end the Volunteer relationship at any time and GSESC has the same right to end the Volunteer relationship at any time, with or without notice and regardless of performance.

***Background Checks

Each applicant for a Volunteer position is to complete a background check. When registering online as a member <https://Girlscouts.secure.force.com/> it will automatically prompt a background check be completed. When registering via paper form Volunteers are to go onto <http://www.verifiedvolunteers.com/> to submit the background check and use the Good Deed Code xqduqk4. **All registered Adults in a Troop are to complete a background check.**

Placement Procedures

For Volunteer satisfaction and/or effective utilization of the talents of the operational Volunteers, GSESC may assess individual skills and aspirations in relation to the duties and responsibilities of the Volunteer.

Selection Procedures

Adult Volunteers are selected on the basis of qualifications for membership, ability to perform the Volunteer duties, and willingness and availability to participate in required Adult development training. GSESC cannot guarantee that a Volunteer will be placed in a position, or in the position for which she/he applied. Some Volunteers may be referred to another position appropriate to her/his interests and skills. As much as possible and appropriate, GSESC attempts to find a rewarding position that will suit the applicant's interests, skills and personality.

Unfortunately, GSESC cannot place every Volunteer, and GSESC retains the sole discretion to determine, change, remove, end and deny placement at any time, with or without notice.

Appointment of Operational Volunteers

A Volunteer agreement is to be completed by the operational Volunteer at the time of appointment to an operational position. It may include appointment terms, specific expectations for operational Volunteer performance and the signatures for the operational Volunteer and her/his supervisor.

Membership

Girl Scouts in the United States are part of a worldwide movement of Girls and Adults dedicated to the acceptance of the Girl Scout Promise and Law. As a condition of appointment, operational Volunteers must subscribe to the Girl Scout Promise and Law and be registered members of Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.

Volunteer Position Descriptions

Girl Scouts of Eastern South Carolina provides written position descriptions for all operational Volunteer positions and certain other Volunteer positions. To provide better services to Girls and a clear understanding of position expectations and accountabilities, position descriptions may be reviewed and revised periodically as ways of working and operating procedures change. Position descriptions may be used for recruitment, selection and appointment; for understanding of work to be done and qualifications needed; and, from the prospective Volunteer, for understanding of responsibility and accountability.

Uniforms

Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. authorized uniforms are symbols and marks of distinction. Members of Girl Scouts provide their own uniforms. Members of Girl Scouts are readily identified by uniforms worn when attending official functions. A uniform is not required for participation in Girl Scout activities; however, it is particularly suitable for almost all Council functions. Operational Volunteers are encouraged to wear the Girl Scout pin when they are not in uniform.

Volunteer-Related Position Expenses

Operational Volunteers are encouraged to keep a record of expenses incurred while performing Girl Scout responsibilities, e.g., uniforms, gasoline. Many of these expenses may be applied as income tax deductions. Volunteers should check with the Internal Revenue Service or their tax consultant for allowable deductions.

Volunteering with Girl Scouts is a voluntary service, and **no** Volunteer, operational or otherwise, should expect, receive or solicit any monetary reimbursement for services.

Accident and Liability Insurance

Any motor vehicle used to transport Girl Scouts to be duly licensed, insured, safety tested and operated by a responsible person with a valid driver's license. South Carolina state law requires bodily injury and property damage liability as well as personal injury protection or its equivalent be provided on privately owned or rented vehicles. If you will drive as a Volunteer and have any concern about meeting this requirement, it is your responsibility to consult the Volunteer Support Specialist in your area. Volunteers who transport children other than their own have to be registered Girl Scouts Adults.

In addition, all registered members, including Volunteers, are currently protected under Girl Scout Activity Accident Insurance, basic coverage. This plan provides certain coverage for accident-related medical expenses to members while participating in or traveling to and from and participation in approved, supervised Girl Scout activities, e.g., day camp, Troop camp, weekend trips (of two nights or less) and regular Troop meetings. This basic coverage becomes null and void if a Troop does not follow the guidelines for approval of a trip and/or the leaders have not taken the required training. Liability and sickness insurance is required of all Troops traveling outside the U.S.A. Girl Scouts of Eastern South Carolina does not assume responsibility for insuring a Volunteer's personal effects or for routine or emergency medical care except as covered under such basic accident insurance plan as is in effect.

****Training and Skills Development**

Girl Scouts of Eastern South Carolina is committed to Adult development. It is considered in the best interest of Girl Scouting to provide opportunities, as possible, for Volunteers to grow in competency and skills. By assisting individuals to reach their full potential, the organization fulfills its needs for increasing effectiveness as a voluntary organization. Adult development and training is the process by which each Volunteer is assisted with clarifying her/his personal Volunteer goals. "Introduction to Girl Scouting", "Girl Scouting 101" and "Leadership Essentials" are required before Co-Leaders begin meeting with their Troop. Co-Leaders are expected to register for (and complete) these required trainings within one month's time. "Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Training" through "**Now Hear This**" is required for Co-Leaders within the first 6 months of meeting with the Girls. Troops will not be recognized as registered if these training requirements are not met. This means a Troop will not be able to participate in any Council sponsored Event, program or product sales nor will they be covered under liability or accident insurance for Troop meetings until the training requirements are met. Co-Leaders are also responsible for ensuring that either they or another Adult member of the Troop has taken Troop required trainings such as "Planning Trips with Girls", "Troop Camping", "First Aid and CPR, etc.

The Council constantly strives to provide a climate conducive to the development of each person's potential. In pursuit of this endeavor, training may be made available on many levels and to meet ongoing needs of Volunteers as they develop and grow in a position. As a condition of service, GSESC **requires** all

operational Volunteers to participate in training for the position accepted and all other Volunteers to take appropriate training within the time frame indicated by their appropriate positions.

In addition to Council training, operational Volunteers may take other trainings, including those offered by GSUSA national centers or others, with Council endorsement.

National Council Session

National Council Session delegates elected by the Girl Scouts of Eastern South Carolina may be provided all or part of travel, room and per diem expenses entailed in attending the National Council Session upon timely production of acceptable documentation.

Educational Opportunities

Travel scholarships may be available to help selected Adults defray the cost of attendance at Girl Scout training courses or special Events held outside the Council jurisdiction. Applications may be obtained from the North Charleston Service Center. Consideration is given for financial assistance according to such factors as the type and cost of the Event, the amount budgeted for the fiscal year, and the number of eligible applicants. In order for an Adult to receive financial assistance from the Council, among other factors, the Adult must have been a registered member for at least one year and have a working knowledge of Girl Scout program and procedures.

Recognition and Appreciation

Volunteers serve Girl Scouting because they believe in the philosophy of the movement, receive satisfaction from giving service to others, and achieve personal growth and development. There are, however, times and circumstances that call for a special expression of appreciation.

The most frequent and meaningful recognition comes from those close to Volunteer, who are able to see the effort that has been put into the position. For the vast majority of Volunteers it is this recognition that counts, and the supervisor can see that the recognition happens. The supervisor has a key role in initiating either Service Unit or Council-wide recognition for exceptional performance.

Tokens of appreciation may range from a brief note of thanks to a lasting memento. Giving should be motivated by a sincere desire to express thanks rather than tradition or custom. Special expressions of appreciation should be given on the basis of performance. The following chart describes some appropriate recognitions for Adults:

Performance

Sample Recognitions

Duties well done, training or certification completed, small successes and achievements.

A thank you note or phone call, flowers, a certificate or congratulatory card, a formal letter, position pin, homemade gift or card, etc.

Duties done especially well, advanced or specialized training completed, duties done for a long period of time.

Any of the above, plus a local newspaper or Council article, a tribute at a local Event, membership numerals or a small gift or plaque.

Exceptional performance done with dedication

Any of the above, plus a tribute at an area or Council-wide Event, a Council certificate of appreciation.

Significantly outstanding contribution to Girl Scouting in the Council.

Council Award & GSUSA Award

Service significantly above and beyond the call of duty, outstanding contribution that has effect throughout the Girl Scout movement

Council Award & GSUSA Award

****Volunteer Evaluation**

Volunteer evaluation is a constructive tool used to assess strengths, weaknesses, Volunteer performance-related problems or the need for change in Volunteer duties. Additionally, ongoing feedback concerning Volunteer performance may be based on mutual agreement of desired goals and objectives. In view of the purpose of the Girl Scout movement and membership requirement, evaluations of Adults in Girl Scouting are made on two broad bases: the individual's ability to carry out the Volunteer assignment and the individual's

This is not a contract

*****Updated Information**

August 2016

performance as it is consistent with the philosophy and purposes of Girl Scouting. Each Volunteer (Co-Leaders, Service Team Member, Trainer) is expected to complete an annual evaluation by September 30th.

Volunteer Records

Limited storage space prohibits maintenance of lengthy personnel records for operational Volunteers. Adult registration forms and records of training course attendance are kept for a three-year period. Individuals are urged to use the Volunteer Position Record or some other means of recording years of membership, positions held, training taken and other data pertinent to Girl Scout membership and service.

Confidentiality

Information learned while serving as a Volunteer is the exclusive (intellectual) property of GSESC and should be carefully guarded. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, non-public technical, business and financial information and plans, as well as private information about Councils, Volunteers, customers, suppliers, and employees. Confidential information may not be disclosed to unauthorized persons, including competitors, reporters, or to other Volunteers whose duties do not require use of such information. Volunteers may also be responsible for the internal security of such information.

Only designated individuals are authorized to speak on behalf of GSESC. All media inquires should be directed to the Communication and Marketing Department or the Chief Executive Officer.

****Volunteer Position Performance:**

All Volunteers are expected to meet the Council's standards for Volunteer performance, as specified in the position description. When a Volunteer's performance does not meet appropriate standards, ordinarily she/he will be given a reasonable opportunity to correct the problem.

Progressive discipline ensures three stages. The three stages of the process are verbal counseling, written warning, and termination. At each stage the supervisor ordinarily would:

- Identify the problematic behavior or performance.
- Inform the Volunteer of performance expectations.
- Inform the Volunteer of the consequences e. g. further discipline, termination from the position.

Each operational Volunteer shall be provided with the opportunity for regular review and evaluation.

****Grievance:**

A grievance is a complaint related to a Volunteer's position not being properly administered. The grievance procedure is a systematic process to ensure the objective hearing and orderly handling of Volunteer grievance.

All operational Volunteers may use the grievance procedure. Every Volunteer may expect a fair resolution of her or his grievance without fear of jeopardizing her or his Volunteer status. The Council also maintains an open door policy regarding Volunteer concerns.

- **Step 1:**
The Volunteer requests a conference with the Regional Director of Membership within 10 working days. The Volunteer cites the policy or procedure that has allegedly been misapplied, misinterpreted, or violated.
- **Step 2:**
If the Volunteer is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance, the Council staff member or, if appropriate, the Chief of Staff will meet with the Volunteer within 10 working days following her or his initial conference.
- **Step 3:**
In the Event, the grievance is not resolved in Step 2; the staff member prepares a written report on the situation, including recommendations for her or his supervisor, and sends a copy to the Chief of Staff.

- **Step 4:**

The Regional Director of Membership and the Chief of Staff decide on what additional action to take, using one or more of the following options:

- Accept the staff member's report and recommendations.
- Meet with the Volunteer and hear the grievance complaint.
- Appoint a review team to meet with the Volunteer.

- **Step 5:**

Should the Volunteer find the results of any of these options unacceptable, the Chief Executive Officer will make the final decision to the resolution of the case and see this decision is implemented.

- **Step 6:**

They may take the grievance to the Board of Directors.

****Reappointment/Referral:**

The Council has the right to reappoint Volunteers to their current position, refer them to another position, or not appoint or reappoint to any position. Reappointment or rotation to a different position is based on past performance, adherence to GSUSA and GSESC Council policies, and positive relationships with the community, parents, Girls, other Volunteers, and employed staff.

****Termination:**

Any Volunteer may terminate her or his services upon written notification to Council. The Council may terminate the services of a Volunteer because of restructuring of Volunteer positions, the elimination of the Volunteer position in which a person serves, the inability or failure to complete the requirements of the position, the refusal to comply with Council or GSUSA policies, and the refusal to support the mission and values of the organization.

An Adult Volunteer who is terminated from her or his Girl Scout position may continue her or his Adult membership with GSUSA unless it is determined that she or he does not meet the membership requirements specifically concerning principles and beliefs of the Girl Scouts. When this is the case, her or his Girl Scout membership will not be renewed.

SAFETY EXPECTATIONS

Safety

Maintaining a safe Girl Scouting environment is a goal for all and requires the continuous cooperation of all. Volunteers are expected to report any suspected unsafe conditions and all accidents or injuries regardless of how insignificant that occur during Girl scouting activities immediately to the Volunteer Support Specialist, and the Chief of Staff. It is the responsibility of each Volunteer to accept and follow established safety procedures as well as exercise good judgment and common sense.

If you are ever in doubt regarding the safe way to perform a task, please consult the Volunteer Support Specialist for the area or the Chief of Staff. GSESC does not intend for any Volunteer to perform any task that is dangerous to her/his, safety or security. We strongly encourage Volunteer participation and input on health and safety matters.

Smoke Free Program Delivery

Smoking is prohibited in all service centers, satellite offices and program delivery sites and facilities including, but not limited to, offices, restrooms, meeting rooms, dining areas and living quarters. Smoking is also prohibited on or off trails, or at any time when Girls are present.

Substance Abuse

GSESC's goal is to establish and maintain a Girl Scouting environment that is free from the related risks and effects of alcohol and drug abuse.

GSESC has adopted a zero tolerance policy and reserves the right and discretion to take actions it determines appropriate based solely on its reasonable suspicion of current use or being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol while serving as a Volunteer for GSESC. The use, distribution, manufacture, dispensation, sale or possession of illegal drugs and/or alcohol, or the misuse of prescribed drugs, cannot be tolerated at any time.

on GSESC's premises, in the conduct of GSESC's business, or off premises, or during non-volunteer hours if it affects an individual's performance.

GSESC may approve certain Events which allow Adult social consumption of alcoholic beverages. When attending such Events, Volunteers are expected to act responsibly by exercising moderation and discretion, by maintaining professionalism and by securing alternative transportation to avoid potentially impaired driving, as appropriate.

Violence

GSESC cannot condone violent, abusive, or threatening behavior in the Girl Scouting environment. This includes any acts or threats of violence by its Volunteers or against its Volunteers on GSESC premises or while they are engaged in business with or on behalf of GSESC, on or off GSESC premises.

In furtherance of this policy, Volunteers are expected to warn or advise their supervisor, Chief of Staff or the Chief Executive Officer of any suspicious activity, situations or incidents that concern them involving other Volunteers, employees, and/or former employees. This includes, for example, threats or acts of violence, aggressive behavior, offensive acts and threatening or offensive comments or remarks. GSESC does not condone any form of retaliation against any Volunteer for making a report under this policy.

Searches

In the interest of a safe and drug free Girl Scouting environment or to safeguard property, GSESC may search any time, at its discretion and without notice, for illegal drugs, alcohol, weapons, personal property of GSESC or others, etc. in GSESC's facilities or on or about a Volunteer while a Volunteer is serving.

Desks, lockers, computers and other storage devices or equipment may be provided for the convenience of Volunteers, but remain the sole property of GSESC. Accordingly, any agent or representative of GSESC can inspect them, as well as any articles found within them, at any time, either with or without prior notice. At its discretion, GSESC may also question Volunteers. Volunteers are expected to cooperate in the conducting of such searches.

Upon determination of reasonable suspicion, GSESC may also inspect without notice any packages, parcels, purses, handbags, briefcases, tool boxes, desks, lockers or any other possessions or articles carried to and from GSESC's property.

****Crisis Communication**

Girl Scouts of Eastern South Carolina has established written emergency procedures that should be followed during a crisis situation; in addition, any serious accident or fatality is to be reported immediately to the Chief of Staff, Melissa Cox at (843) 552-9910 X 2280 or (843) 830-7277 or Chief Executive Officer, Loretta Graham at 843-552-9910 or (843) 614-2417.

IMPORTANT PROCEDURES AND CHILD PROTECTION

There are four major types of child abuse recognized by South Carolina Law: Neglect, Physical, Emotional and Sexual. Neglect has four subcategories: Physical, Medical, Educational, and Emotional. South Carolina Law states that it is abuse or neglect when a child is injured by an intentional act, or omission of an act (failure to protect).

Neglect: (There are four sub types of neglect) Neglect is failure on the part of the parent to provide for the child's basic needs, including, but not limited to:

- *Physical:* lack of appropriate supervision, exposure to unsanitary or hazardous living conditions or failure to provide necessary food or shelter
- *Medical:* failure to provide necessary dental, medical or mental health treatment
- *Educational:* failure to educate a child or attend to special education needs
- *Emotional:* inattention to a child's emotional needs, exposure to parental substance abuse or domestic violence

PLEASE NOTE: What appears to be physical, medical or educational neglect may actually be a family in need of resources.

Physical abuse is characterized by any type of damage to the skin, including, but not limited to: punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, throwing, stabbing, choking, hitting (with a hand, stick, strap, or other object), burning, or otherwise harming a child.

Emotional abuse is any pattern of behavior that impairs a child's emotional development or sense of self-worth. This includes, but is not limited to: constant criticism, threats, rejection, bullying, ignoring, isolating, corrupting, as well as withholding love, support, or guidance.

Sexual Abuse is any sexual or sexually provocative behavior by an Adult toward a child, whether or not the child gives consent. This includes but is not limited to: fondling, penetration, incest, rape, sodomy, indecent exposure, commercial exploitation through prostitution, exposure to and/or production of pornographic materials, communicating in a sexual manner by phone or internet

If you suspect child abuse: You should make a report if you have **reason to believe** a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected. Reason to believe does not require conclusive proof, or proof beyond a reasonable doubt.

If a child discloses abuse to you: It is important for you to remain calm and in control of your feelings in order to assure the child that you **believe** them, and that something will be done to keep him or her safe. **Listen;** do not question the child, unless you know how to do a Minimal Facts Interview. Do not remove clothing to examine the child's body unless you are a medical professional. **Do not** confront the alleged perpetrator, or share with him/her what the child disclosed to you.

Immediately: Document what the child said to you and make the report to the proper authority. You will be asked to provide the information the child shared with you, the child's name, address, parent's name(s), names of siblings and any other people living in the home (if known).

- Contact DSS if the alleged perpetrator is an Adult who is a parent or other primary care giver.
- Contact local law enforcement if the alleged perpetrator is anyone else.

And **AFTER** making the report to the proper authority, if this involves a Girl member of GSESC:

- Contact GSESC, following the procedure on the emergency card. Fill out the First Report of Accident/Injury report, and fax to the North Charleston Service Center ASAP.

DSS will, within 24 hours of the receipt of the report, commence an investigation. If you are concerned about the child's immediate welfare, in addition to contacting DSS, contact local law enforcement. Law Enforcement Officers are authorized to place children in EPC when the officer has probable cause to believe that by reason of abuse or neglect the child is in substantial and imminent danger.

South Carolina Law requires certain professionals to report child abuse and neglect when it is suspected, and there are legal penalties when a Mandated Reporter does not report. GSESC encourages all staff, Volunteers and Board Members who are Adult members registered with GSESC to act "as if" they are mandated Reporters in order to protect children from child abuse and neglect.

Note that the SC Senate and House are in the process of adding camp counselor, scout leader and any other person whose duties require direct contact or supervision of children to the list of mandatory reporters.

By South Carolina Code 63-7-310 the following professionals are required to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect.

- physician, nurse, dentist, optometrist
- medical examiner, coroner, and their employees
- any other medical, emergency medical services, mental health or allied health professional
- member of the clergy, Christian Science Practitioners, religious healers
- school teacher, counselor, principal, assistant principal, school attendance officer
- social or public assistance worker
- substance abuse treatment staff
- child care worker in a child care center or foster care facility
- foster parent
- police or law enforcement officer, juvenile justice worker
- undertaker, funeral home director and employees
- persons responsible for processing of films
- computer technician
- judge
- Volunteer non-attorney guardian ad litem

No Retaliation

Retaliation against any Girl Scout member, Volunteer or employee for filing a complaint, participating in or cooperating with an investigation is strictly prohibited. GSESC does not tolerate adverse treatment of employees or Girl Scout members **(including Volunteers)** because they report child abuse or provide information related to such complaints. After a report, GSESC may make follow up inquiries to determine that any prohibited activity has in fact ended and retaliation has not occurred.

A Final Word About Adult/Girl Scout Sexual Relationships

As GSESC encourages friendships between staff/administration/Volunteers and Girl Scouts, GSESC strives to differentiate appropriate friendships from amorous and/or erotic relationships between Girl Scouts who are children/minors and Adult staff/administration/Volunteers. Such relationships, whether consensual or not, are always unacceptable. Implicit in the idea of professionalism is the recognition by those in positions of authority that in their relationships with Girl Scouts who are children/minors, there is always an element of power. Because the power in relationships between staff members **(including Volunteers)** and such Girl Scouts is always fundamentally asymmetric in nature, it is incumbent on those with authority not to abuse, nor seem to abuse, the authority with which they are entrusted.

Anti-Retaliation

GSESC strives to provide employees and Volunteers with confidential, non-threatening alternatives for reporting their concerns or information regarding any legally protected rights without fear of retaliation. GSESC does not tolerate retaliation against anyone for stepping forward in good faith to address discrimination, harassment or abuse as may be defined in this handbook or by law in accordance with internal reporting responsibilities.

Volunteers who perceive any implication or threat of retaliation because they have voiced or supported a complaint involving anyone's legally protected rights should immediately report as detailed in this handbook

in the section entitled, "Reporting Responsibilities and Complaint Resolution for Protected Status Discrimination, Harassment, Child Abuse and/or Retaliation".

Reporting Responsibilities and Complaint Resolution for Protected Status Discrimination/Harassment/Abuse and/or Retaliation

Any Volunteer who believes that any administrator's, supervisor's, co-worker's, employee's, Girl Scout's, Volunteer's or third party's actions or words constitute legally protected status discrimination, harassment, child abuse and/or retaliation toward himself/herself or toward another has a responsibility to report the situation immediately to the Chief Executive Officer, or in the case of the Chief Executive Officer's absence, conflict or other concern, to Chief of Staff. In the case of conflict or other concern regarding reporting to the Chief Executive Officer, a report of such discrimination, harassment or abuse may also be made to the Board Chair. This reporting responsibility specifically includes supervisors or those in positions of authority to whom such a report may be made.

A complaint or report of legally protected status discrimination, harassment, abuse and retaliation may be made by anyone affected by or observing such behavior. While the initial complaint may be made verbally, GSESC may request a signed written complaint/report to follow. Although failure to immediately receive the complaint in writing does not prevent investigation, delay or lack of substantiated detail may hamper the investigation and appropriate resolution. A complaint of alleged protected status discrimination, harassment/retaliation (including sexual/gender harassment) or Girl Scout and/or Girl Scout related child abuse should include all appropriate times, places, and dates.

Upon receipt of the report, GSESC may take such immediate actions as it deems appropriate. This may include notifying the individual charged and/or the parents, if a Girl Scout who is a child/minor is involved, that a complaint has been lodged. Impracticality of immediate parent notification does not prevent GSESC from taking such immediate action as it deems appropriate, including but not limited to separating, suspending and/or questioning and/or preliminary disciplinary action of the individual[s] involved.

GSESC conducts a prompt investigation of any allegations of protected status discrimination, Girl Scout related child abuse (as determined appropriate) sexual discrimination/harassment or discrimination/harassment of a similarly offensive nature based on legally protected status, including (for employees only) gender, age, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, military service/obligation or protected activity (i.e., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the statutory complaint process) and/or retaliation for bringing or participating in such a claim. The Chief Executive Officer, or, in case of his/her absence or conflict, Chief of Staff or the Board/Board Chair may designate a member of the staff/administration or outside investigator to investigate and document the Events specific to the charges ("the designee"), as determined appropriate. During the investigation, anyone who is alleged to have committed acts of protected status discrimination/harassment/retaliation or abuse may be contacted and permitted to respond to specific allegations.

As to any GSESC Girl Scout member (Girl or Volunteer) or third party who is the subject of any investigation, GSESC and/or its designee has full discretion to seek such additional information, recommendations, input and/or assistance as it determines to be appropriate. Further, GSESC has full authority to take such disciplinary and/or corrective action as it deems appropriate at any stage of the investigation. Upon review of the investigation and/or documentation, the Chief Executive Officer, Chief of Staff or Board/Board Chair, as determined appropriate, determines the seriousness of the circumstances, and may take such action as GSESC deems appropriate, including, remedial and/or preventive measures. At the conclusion of the investigation, should GSESC determine the matter calls for discipline and/or remedial, preventive or additional action as to a GSESC employee, Girl Scout member (Girl or Volunteer) or third party, such action and/or communication as the GSESC deems appropriate may follow.

Any Girl Scout member (Girl or Volunteer) who is found to be involved in protected status discrimination, harassment, child abuse or activity which could be perceived as abusive toward a child or children or discriminatory, harassing or retaliatory toward an employee is subject to appropriate disciplinary or corrective action to be determined at the sole discretion of GSESC.

Information provided is kept as confidential as possible in keeping with an investigation that is as thorough as GSESC determines necessary and appropriate to the charge. Additionally, once a complaint of Girl Scouting related child abuse, protected status discrimination or harassment has been filed, the Chief Executive Officer or GSESC designee may periodically keep the accuser, the accused, the reporting party

and, as determined appropriate, Board/Board Chair informed as the investigation and decision processes unfold. When a final determination is made, the Chief Executive Officer or GSESC designee may inform the accuser, accused, reporting party and/or Board/Board Chair, as determined appropriate, of the ultimate resolution and/or action to be taken. In all cases, the Chief Executive Officer or GSESC designee may also keep other concerned persons informed.

All Girl Scout members (Girls and Volunteers), as applicable, are expected to cooperate in any investigation. Information provided to the person or persons investigating is to be kept as confidential as possible in keeping with a thorough investigation and need to know.

Please know that requirements related to the filing of claims with any state or federal enforcement agencies, including time deadlines, are not changed by this internal reporting and resolution process. It is, however, GSESC's hope that all will access and find the internal procedure satisfactory. **GSESC asks that Girl Scout members (Girls and Volunteers) and/or anyone else concerned bring any difficulties in using the procedure directly to the attention of the Chief Executive Officer, or in the case of conflict or absence, to the Board/Board Chair.**

Any good faith report of concerns of protected status discrimination and/or harassment and/or retaliation and/or abuse, experienced or observed, should be made without fear of retaliation by GSESC. Retaliation against any Girl Scout member (Girls or Volunteers) for filing a complaint or participating in an investigation in good faith is strictly prohibited and cannot be tolerated. Any incident of retaliation as above should also be reported using this policy.