

This edition supersedes all previous editions of the *Blue Book*.  
Girl Scouts of the USA  
420 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10018-2798

# Blue Book of basic documents 2006

**Note:** The *2006 Blue Book of Basic Documents* and *Leader's Digest: 2006 Blue Book of Basic Documents* reflect the policies and procedures in effect immediately following the 2005 GSUSA National Council Session. Changes in the "Credentials" section are based on official actions of the National Board of Directors at their meeting in March 2006. Due to the transformation of our Movement and the implementation of the CoreBusiness Strategy, changes to the *2006 Blue Book* will be necessary throughout the triennium. Our members will be notified whenever the National Board of Directors makes changes to the existing policies, and supplements with any such changes to the *2006 Blue Book* will be provided.

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**Chair, National Board of Directors**

Patricia Diaz Dennis

**Chief Executive Officer**

Kathy Cloninger

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# Constitution of Girl Scouts of the United States of America

Founded by Juliette Low, March 12, 1912

Chartered by special act of Congress

(Public Law 460; approved March 16, 1950)

Congressional Charter subsequently revised under Public Law 105-225;

approved August 12, 1998

## Preamble

### The 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 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.

### Beliefs and Principles

We, the members of Girl Scouts of the United States of America, united by a belief in God, hold that the Girl Scout Promise and Law is the cornerstone of our Movement, And inspired by the Founder of the Girl Scout Movement in the United States, Juliette Low, and by the aims of the Founder of the Scout Movement, Lord Baden-Powell, attest to the following:

#### **Mission**

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

#### **Spiritual Force**

The motivating force in Girl Scouting is spiritual. The ways in which members identify and fulfill their spiritual beliefs are personal and private.

#### **Open Membership**

The Girl Scout Movement is open to all girls and adults who accept the Girl Scout Promise and Law and meet membership requirements.

#### **Patriotism, Citizenship, and Community Service**

Local, national, and global service and action are core elements of the Girl Scout experience.

#### **Diversity and Pluralism**

Girl Scouts advance diversity and pluralism in our Movement and in the communities in which we live.

#### **Responsibility for the Movement and the Democratic Process**

The ultimate responsibility for the Girl Scout Movement rests with its members. We govern by an efficient and effective democratic process that demonstrates our leadership in a fast-changing world.

**Girl/Adult Partnership**

Adults partner with girls to guide and inspire growth and achievement. Volunteers are essential to the strength and capacity of our Movement.

**World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS)**

We are active partners in a worldwide sisterhood through our affiliation with WAGGGS. We work with WAGGGS to address the needs of girls and to build a network of global citizens.

**Community Partners**

We take an active leadership role and are collaborative partners in the community.

**Voice**

We are a premier voice for girls and an expert on their growth and development.

## Article I Name of the Corporation

The name of this corporation is Girl Scouts of the United States of America.

## Article II Purpose of the Corporation

The purpose of the corporation is to promote the Girl Scout Movement in the United States of America, which includes the United States, its territories, and possessions, by directing and coordinating the Movement and by providing and administering the Girl Scout program in accordance with the purposes set forth in its Congressional Charter.

## Article III The Girl Scout Program

Grounded in the Girl Scout Promise and Law, Girl Scouting is a nonformal, experiential, and cooperative education program that promotes girls' personal growth and leadership development. Partnering with caring adults, girls design fun and challenging activities that empower them and raise their voices within a local, national, and global sisterhood.

## Article IV The National Council

The membership of this corporation shall consist of the members for the time being of the National Council of Girl Scouts of the United States of America, and the corporation in meeting assembled shall be known as the National Council. The National Council shall have all the powers conferred by the Congressional Charter and by other applicable laws, and shall exercise these powers with due regard for its position as the coordinating head of the Girl Scout Movement in the United States.

Only citizens of the United States who are members of the Girl Scout Movement in the United States and who are 14 years of age or over may be members of the National Council.

The membership of the National Council shall consist of delegates elected by Girl Scout councils who are registered through such local councils; delegates from USA Girl Scouts Overseas, who are selected by a committee appointed by the National Board of Directors; members of the National Board of Directors and National Nominating Committee; Past Presidents of Girl Scouts of the United States of America; and such other persons as may be elected by the National Council; provided that the number of delegates from local councils and USA Girl Scouts Overseas shall not at any time exceed two thousand, and that at least four-fifths of the entire membership shall at all times consist of delegates from local councils and USA Girl Scouts Overseas.

Each local council to which a charter has been issued and remains in force shall be entitled to one delegate and, in addition, one further delegate for each eighteen hundred girls under its jurisdiction who are members registered with Girl Scouts of the United States of America as of September 30 of the year preceding the regular session of the National Council; USA Girl Scouts Overseas collectively shall be entitled to the number of delegates according to the same formula prescribed for local councils. The prescribed figure of eighteen hundred girls shall be adjusted up or down by three hundred or multiples thereof when necessary to keep the total number of local council and USA Girl Scouts Overseas delegates as close as possible to two thousand but not in excess of two thousand.

Executive staff members employed by any local council shall be eligible for election as delegates to the National Council, provided that the number of such executive staff members from any local council shall not exceed the number of volunteers elected for the same period as delegates from that local council. Subject to the requirements of the preceding sections of this article, delegates elected by local councils shall serve as members of the National Council for three years from the date of their election or until their successors are elected, provided they remain the delegates of the local council which elected them; delegates from USA Girl Scouts Overseas shall serve as members for three years from the date of their selection or until their successors are selected, provided they remain delegates from USA Girl Scouts Overseas; members of the National Board of Directors and National Nominating Committee shall be members of the National Council during their term of office; those persons elected by the National Council shall serve until the next regular session of the National Council.

. "Overseas" is a designation for the Girl Scouts of the USA program delivered outside the jurisdiction of a chartered Girl Scout council.

## Article V Sessions of the National Council

There shall be a regular session of the National Council held triennially at such time and place (not necessarily within the District of Columbia) as it may determine or as may be determined by the National Board of Directors in the absence of action by the National Council. Notice of the time, place, and purpose of such session shall be mailed not less than 60 days before the session to each local council, to each USA Girl Scouts Overseas committee, and to each member of the National Board of Directors and National Nominating Committee.

The National Council at its sessions shall hold elections, amend the Constitution, establish requirements for credentials, and shall determine the general lines of policy of the Girl Scout Movement and program by considering and acting upon proposals directed toward the fostering and improvement of Girl Scouting, by receiving and acting upon reports of its National Board of Directors, and by giving guidance to the National Board upon general lines of direction of the Movement and program.

Special sessions of the National Council shall be called by the President at any time upon written request of 20 members of the National Board of Directors or of 20 percent of the membership of the National Council, of which number one-tenth shall represent each of at least three geographical areas of the country as defined in the Bylaws. The purpose of such session shall be limited to the legitimate business of the National Council and shall be stated with the request. No other business shall be transacted except that for which the session has been called. Notice of a special session, stating the time, place, and purpose thereof, shall be mailed not less than 30 days before the session to each local council, to each delegate from USA Girl Scouts Overseas, to each member of the National Board of Directors and National Nominating Committee, and to each member elected by the National Council entitled to vote at such session.

Two hundred members of the National Council present in person shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at sessions of the National Council, provided, however, that delegates are present from one or more local councils in a majority of the geographical areas of the country as defined in the

Bylaws. In the absence of a quorum, a majority of those present at the time and place set for a session may take an adjournment from time to time until a quorum shall be present.

At sessions of the National Council each National Council member present in person shall be entitled to one vote. Elections to office and to the National Board of Directors shall be by ballot and a plurality of votes cast shall elect. Decision on annual membership dues shall be by ballot and shall require a majority of votes cast. All other matters shall be determined by a majority vote of the members present and voting, unless otherwise provided by this Constitution.

## Article VI Proposals to the National Council

Proposals directed toward the fostering and improvement of Girl Scouting that are to be acted upon by the National Council may be originated (a) by the National Board of Directors and (b) by local councils. Proposals shall be submitted according to the following procedures:

Proposals originated by the National Board of Directors: (1) such proposals shall be sent to local councils for consideration prior to the next session of the National Council, together with the recommendations of the National Board of Directors; (2) action shall be taken on such proposals by the National Council at its next session.

Proposals originated by local councils: (1) such proposals shall be sent to the National Board of Directors by such date as shall be determined by the National Board of Directors; (2) the National Board of Directors, in its sole discretion, shall determine whether such proposals relate to matters which should properly be acted upon by the National Council, except that a proposal submitted by a minimum of 15 percent of all Girl Scout councils holding a charter issued by the National Board of Directors of Girl Scouts of the USA as of September 30 of the year preceding the regular session of the National Council shall be determined by the National Board of Directors to relate to matters which should properly be acted upon by the National Council; (3) proposals which the National Board determines relate to matters which should properly be acted upon by the National Council shall be sent to local councils for consideration prior to the next session of the National Council, together with the recommendations of the National Board of Directors; (4) action shall be taken on such proposals by the National Council at its next session.

Any proposal involving a constitutional amendment shall be governed by the provisions of the article on amendments.

## Article VII Local Girl Scout Councils

Local Girl Scout councils shall be organized to further the development of the Girl Scout Movement in the United States; to establish local responsibility for leadership, administration, and supervision of the program; and to develop, manage, and maintain Girl Scouting in accordance with the terms of their charters.

## Article VIII Credentials

The National Council shall establish requirements for certificates of membership, local council charters, and all other credentials.

The National Board of Directors shall administer the requirements for the credentials established by the National Council, and may establish standards and issue standards, procedures, and interpretations regarding such requirements provided such standards, procedures, and interpretations are consistent with the requirements established by the National Council.

The National Board of Directors, in its sole discretion, shall have the power to issue these credentials subject to the requirements established by the National Council, and to revoke them when, in its opinion, the terms and conditions thereof or requirements therefor are being violated or when the best interests of

Girl Scouting are not being furthered. Charters and other credentials shall be issued for no more than six years. Certificates of membership shall be issued for no more than one year, except for lifetime membership. All credentials shall bear the name of Juliette Low.

### Article IX Membership Dues

Every person accepting the principles of the Girl Scout Movement and desiring to be a member of the Girl Scout Movement in the United States of America shall pay annual or lifetime membership dues to Girl Scouts of the United States of America.

### Article X National Board of Directors

The affairs of the corporation between sessions of the National Council shall be managed by a National Board of Directors, except that the Bylaws may provide for an Executive Committee to exercise the powers of the National Board in the interim between its meetings.

The National Board of Directors shall consist of the President, the Vice Presidents, the Secretary, and the Treasurer; and 25 members-at-large. The Chair of the National Nominating Committee, if not already elected to the National Board, shall be ex officio a member of the National Board. The Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Financial Officer shall be ex officio members without vote. The National Board shall at all times be representative of the various geographical areas of the country.

All members-at-large of the National Board of Directors shall be elected by the National Council at each regular session to serve a three-year term beginning at the time of their installation at the session when elected and ending upon the installation of their successors at the next regular session of the National Council except that National Board members elected also as members of the National Nominating Committee shall have a three-year term to coincide with the term of National Nominating Committee members.

Of those nominated by the National Nominating Committee at least one-third shall be serving at the time of their nomination either a first or second term as members of the National Board of Directors. Members of the National Board of Directors shall serve for no more than three consecutive terms, except that, regardless of the number of terms any person shall have served as a member of the National Board of Directors, such person may be eligible to be a member of the National Board when serving as an officer of the corporation elected by the National Council or as Chair of the National Nominating Committee.

Any National Board member who is absent from two consecutive National Board meetings in their entirety without good cause, acceptable to the President or designee, shall be removed from the National Board by a majority vote of the National Board members present and voting at any regular meeting of the National Board of Directors.

Further, a National Board member may be removed with or without cause by a three-fourths vote of the total number of the National Board of Directors. The National Board shall have power to fill vacancies in its own membership until the next regular session of the National Council, including any vacancy created by the election of a member-at-large to another capacity on the National Board and installation in such capacity, except for the Chair of the National Nominating Committee. In filling vacancies the National Board shall conform to the requirements of Section 2 of this article.

In the event of an emergency which makes it impossible for the National Council to meet, all the powers of the National Council, except the conducting of elections, shall, to the extent permissible by law, be

automatically conferred on the National Board of Directors until such time as a session of the National Council can be held. Action taken by the National Board of Directors under these emergency powers shall be reported to the National Council at its next session. In such an emergency, the term of office of all members of the National Board of Directors and National Nominating Committee shall be extended until elections are held and successors installed at the next regular session of the National Council. Such an extended term shall be considered to be one term of office.

## Article XI Officers

The officers of the corporation shall be the President, who shall have the working title Chair of the National Board of Directors; the First and Second Vice Presidents, who shall have the working titles of Vice Chairs; the Secretary; the Treasurer; the Chief Executive Officer; the Chief Financial Officer; and such other officers as the Bylaws may provide.

. This amendment will take effect with the 2008–2011 triennium.

The President, the Vice Presidents, the Secretary, and the Treasurer shall be elected by the National Council at each regular session to serve a three-year term beginning at the time of the installation at the session when elected and ending upon the installation of their successors at the next regular session of the National Council. Each person shall serve no more than three consecutive terms in any one or any combination of these offices. Regardless of the number of consecutive terms any person shall have served in any one or any combination of these offices other than that of President, such person shall be eligible for two consecutive terms as President.

The Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Financial Officer shall be appointed by the National Board of Directors to hold office at its pleasure. Such other officers as the National Board of Directors may deem necessary may be elected or appointed by the National Board as provided in the Bylaws.

A vacancy among the officers of the corporation shall be filled by the National Board of Directors for the remainder of the unexpired term.

In recognition of distinguished service, all Past Presidents of Girl Scouts of the United States of America shall be honorary officers and members of the National Council with full voting rights. The Past Presidents shall be members ex officio of the National Board of Directors without vote except during any period when they may be serving as duly elected members of the National Board of Directors.

The National Council may elect distinguished citizens as honorary officers of the National Council.

## Article XII National Nominating Committee and Nominations

There shall be a National Nominating Committee consisting of seven members and the CEO of Girl Scouts of the USA who shall serve as an ex officio nonvoting member. The committee shall be representative of the various geographical areas of the country, and shall include at least two National Board members and at least three persons who are not National Board members.

Members of the committee shall be elected by the National Council to serve a three-year term beginning at the adjournment of the National Council when elected and ending with adjournment of the next regular session of the National Council. Members shall serve for no more than two consecutive terms. At least two members, but no more than three, shall serve a second consecutive term. The National Board of Directors shall have the power to fill vacancies in the committee. The requirements of Section 1 of this article shall be adhered to in filling vacancies. The committee shall present to the National Council, at its regular session, a single slate of nominations for President of the corporation, the Vice Presidents, the Secretary, the Treasurer, nominations for members-at-large of the National Board of Directors; and nominations for members of the National Nominating Committee, including a nominee to serve as Chair

of the National Nominating Committee. Nominations may be made from the floor at any regular session of the National Council provided that notice of such nominations and written consent of the nominee(s) are presented to the President at least two days prior to the election.

At a committee meeting held following the National Council Session, the committee shall elect a Vice Chair from among its membership. A vacancy in the office of Chair shall be filled by the Vice Chair until the next regular session of the National Council.

Any National Nominating Committee member who is absent from two consecutive National Nominating Committee meetings in their entirety without good cause, acceptable to the National Nominating Committee Chair, upon recommendation of the National Nominating Committee to the National Board of Directors, shall be removed from the National Nominating Committee by a majority vote of the National Board members present and voting at any regular meeting of the National Board of Directors. Further, upon recommendation of the National Nominating Committee to the National Board of Directors, a National Nominating Committee member may be removed with or without cause by a three fourths vote of the total number of the National Board of Directors.

### Article XIII Partial Terms

A person who has served more than half of a specific term, as that specific term is set forth in the Constitution or Bylaws, shall be considered to have served the full term.

### Article XIV Finance

Contributions for the purposes of this corporation shall be collected only as authorized by the National Council or the National Board of Directors.

Debts of the corporation shall be incurred only as directed by resolution of the National Council or the National Board of Directors.

The corporation shall not be liable for the debts of any local council or other unit holding a credential or any group of members of the Movement, or any representative of any such unit or group, or any representative of this corporation unless incurred by resolution of the National Council or National Board of Directors.

### Article XV Insignia

The official emblem of the Girl Scout Movement in the United States is the trefoil. The badges, insignia, and uniforms of Girl Scouts of the United States of America shall be protected to the fullest extent possible and shall be made available to and used only by members registered with Girl Scouts of the United States of America, or persons authorized by the National Board of Directors.

### Article XVI Bylaws

The National Council or the National Board of Directors shall have power to adopt Bylaws not inconsistent with this Constitution, the Congressional Charter, or other applicable laws.

### Article XVII Amendments

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at any session of the National Council, provided that the National Board of Directors, in its sole discretion, shall have deemed the proposed amendment appropriate as an amendment and provided that it shall have been included in the call of the session together with the National Board's recommendation thereon. An amendment to an amendment properly before any session of the National Council may be made by a majority vote of those present and voting in accordance with the rules governing the session, provided the proposed amendment

thereto does not alter the intent or increase the scope of the amendment acted upon by the National Board of Directors.

# Bylaws

## of Girl Scouts of the United States of America

### Article I Meetings of the National Board of Directors

The National Board of Directors (hereinafter referred to as the “National Board”) shall hold at least two regular meetings a year. Meetings shall be held at such date, time, and place as the National Board may direct. Notice of date, time, and place of each meeting shall be provided to each member of the National Board not less than 10 days before the meeting.

Special meetings may be called by the President and shall be called by the President upon the request of at least 10 members of the National Board. Notice of date, time, place, and purpose of a special meeting shall be provided in advance to each member of the National Board.

A majority of the National Board members must be present (in person or linked by telecommunication or by means such that all members participating in the meeting are able to hear one another) to constitute a quorum.

### Article II Officers

The officers shall perform the duties prescribed in this Article and such other duties as are prescribed for the office in the Constitution or Bylaws of GSUSA, by the National Board, the Executive Committee, the National Council, the President, and in the adopted parliamentary authority, as well as such other duties as are usual to this office.

The President, who shall have the working title of Chair of the National Board, shall:  
be the principal officer of the corporation;

preside at all meetings of the National Council, the National Board, and the Executive Committee, except at such meetings for which the duty of presiding is delegated to the First Vice President, the Second Vice President, the Secretary, or the Treasurer;

see that the lines of direction given by the National Council and the action of the National Board are carried into effect;

. Revised by National Board of Directors in June 2005.

report to the National Council and the National Board as to the conduct and management of the affairs of the corporation; and

serve ex officio as a member of all committees established by the National Board.

The First Vice President, who shall have the working title of First Vice Chair, shall:

assist the President with any and all duties assigned by the President;

preside at meetings of the National Council, the National Board, or the Executive Committee in the absence or inability of the President, or when delegated the responsibility of presiding; and in the event of the vacancy in the office of President, succeed to the office for the unexpired term.

The Second Vice President, who shall have the working title of Second Vice Chair, shall:

assist the President with any and all duties assigned by the President;

preside at meetings of the National Council, the National Board, or the Executive Committee in the absence of the President and First Vice President or in the President’s and First Vice President’s inability to preside or when delegated the responsibility of presiding; and, in the event of the vacancy in both the offices of President and First Vice President, succeed to the office of President for the unexpired term.

The Secretary shall:

ensure that proper notice is given for all meetings of the National Council, the National Board,

and the Executive Committee; ensure that minutes of all meetings of the National Council, the National Board, and the Executive Committee are kept; have responsibility for the seal of the corporation and ensure its safekeeping; and preside at meetings of the National Council, the National Board, or the Executive Committee when delegated the responsibility of presiding.

The Treasurer shall:

provide effective stewardship, control, and oversight of the corporation's finances; execute directives of the National Board in connection with all financial issues including, but not limited to: the receipt, custody, disbursement, and borrowing of money; the receipt, custody, and disposal of securities; execute, in the name of the corporation, all contracts or other instruments authorized by the National Board; serve as a member, but not chair, of the Finance Committee; and preside at meetings of the National Council, the National Board, or the Executive Committee, when delegated the responsibility of presiding.

The Chief Executive Officer, hereinafter referred to as the "CEO," shall:

be responsible to the National Board;

serve ex officio without vote as a member of the National Board; and

perform such duties as prescribed by the National Board.

The Chief Financial Officer, hereinafter referred to as the "CFO," shall:

be responsible to the National Board and to the CEO; maintain budgetary control of the finances of the corporation, ensuring that no obligations are incurred in the name of the corporation, except for the purpose of the corporation pursuant to proper authorization; manage the accounts and all financial records; prepare and issue financial statements and reports; serve ex officio without vote as a member of the National Board; and perform such other duties as prescribed by the National Board or the CEO.

### Article III International Commissioner

The President shall appoint from among the members of the National Board the International Commissioner, who shall assist the President in the work with the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.

### Article IV Executive Committee

**Composition.** The Executive Committee shall consist of no more than 11 members, as follows:

The President, the First Vice President, the Second Vice President, the Secretary, and the Treasurer;

The Chair of the National Nominating Committee; The International Commissioner;

Up to four members-at-large, appointed by the President;

The CEO and CFO, who shall serve as ex officio members without vote.

#### **Duties.**

**Authority Between Board Meetings.** The Executive Committee shall exercise the authority of the National Board between meetings of the National Board, except that the Executive Committee shall not: determine what reports and proposals are to be submitted to the National Council; approve the budget; adopt or amend the Bylaws of GSUSA; except in the case of an emergency when these powers are deemed to be delegated.

**Reports.** The Executive Committee shall submit to the National Board reports of all actions taken between meetings of the National Board.

**Meetings.** The Executive Committee shall meet as needed. Notice of date, time, and place of such meetings shall be provided in advance to each member of the Executive Committee. Such meetings shall be called by the Chair. Special meetings may be called by either the Chair or upon the written request of at least four members. Notice of date, time, place, and purpose of a special meeting shall be provided in advance to each member of the Executive Committee.

**Quorum.** A majority of the Executive Committee members then in office must be present (in person or

linked by telecommunication or by means such that all members participating in the meeting are able to hear one another) to constitute a quorum for transaction of business.

### Article V Committees

The National Board has the authority to establish standing and other committees. The National Board shall establish the functions of these committees, which shall operate under the general supervision of the National Board. Except where otherwise provided in the Constitution and Bylaws, the chairs of committees established by the National Board shall be appointed by the President from members of the National Board, and approved by either the Executive Committee or the National Board, for a term beginning at the time of the approval of the appointment and ending at the close of the next regular session of the National Council. No individual shall serve as the chair of the same committee for more than two consecutive terms. Members of committees established by the National Board shall be appointed by the President, in consultation with the chair of the respective committee, for a term beginning at the time of the approval of the appointment and ending at the close of the next regular session of the National Council. No individual shall serve as a member of the same committee for more than three consecutive terms. Members of committees need not be members of the National Board.

### Article VI Finance

The fiscal year of the corporation shall begin on October 1 and shall end on September 30.

Certified public accountants shall be retained by the National Board to make an annual examination of the financial accounts of the corporation. The certified public accountants shall submit a report of this examination to the National Board.

All persons having access to or responsibility for the handling of monies and securities shall be bonded.

a. The National Board shall designate the monetary limit at which transactions as defined in 4c, in amounts equal to or in excess of the limit, shall require the signature/approval of the Treasurer, or one of the Treasurer's nominees, and the signature/approval of the CFO, or one of the CFO's nominees, such nominees having been approved by either the Executive Committee or the National Board. Transactions as defined in 4c and in an amount less than the monetary limit designated by the National Board shall require the signature/approval of the Treasurer, or one of the Treasurer's nominees, or the signature/ approval of the CFO, or one of the CFO's nominees, such nominees having been approved by either the Executive Committee or the National Board.

Transactions shall include checks, drafts, notes, orders, sales of securities, electronic funds transactions, and other forms of electronic commerce that the National Board may deem appropriate. The National Board shall approve means other than original signatures by which approval is effected. Access to securities held by the corporation shall be by two persons, namely the Treasurer or President, or their approved nominees, and by the CFO or the CFO's nominees, such nominees having been approved by either the Executive Committee or the National Board.

### Article VII Indemnification

This corporation shall indemnify directors and officers against losses actually and reasonably incurred in connection with the defense of any action, suit, or proceeding relating to the performance of their duties to the extent permitted by law.

### Article VIII *Blue Book of Basic Documents*

A *Blue Book of Basic Documents* shall be published and distributed, which shall contain the Congressional Charter, the Constitution and Bylaws, requirements for credentials as established by the National Council, and such other material as the National Board shall direct.

## Article IX Geographical Areas

Geographical areas, as referenced in the Constitution of GSUSA, shall consist of the following:

**Geographical Area 1:** Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, Puerto Rico, and the United States Virgin Islands

**Geographical Area 2:** Delaware, District of Columbia, Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia

**Geographical Area 3:** Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee

**Geographical Area 4:** Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin

**Geographical Area 5:** Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and Wyoming

**Geographical Area 6:** Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, American Samoa, Guam, and Northern Mariana Islands

## Article X Parliamentary Authority

The current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall be the parliamentary authority of Girl Scouts of the USA.

## Article XI Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended by a majority of those present (in person or linked by telecommunication as described under Article I, Section 3, of the Bylaws) and voting at any meeting of the National Board, or present and voting at any meeting of the National Council, provided that the proposed amendment shall have been included in the call for the meeting.

# Policies of Girl Scouts of the United States of America

## Endorsements/Trademark/ Marketing/Internet Sales

### Permission for Commercial Endorsements

Permission to endorse commercial products or to give endorsement of such by implication must be obtained from Girl Scouts of the United States of America and shall be granted only when such endorsement is in keeping with Girl Scout principles and activities.

### Authorization of Books, Plays, Motion Pictures, Radio and TV Programs about Girl Scouting

A book, play, motion picture, or radio or television program about Girl Scouts or Girl Scouting shall be accepted as authorized by Girl Scouts of the United States of America only when the script, manuscript, or proof has been approved by Girl Scouts of the United States of America.

### Individual Testimonials

Individual members of the Girl Scout Movement shall not allow their names, in their Girl Scout capacities, to be used in advertising testimonials directly or indirectly endorsing any product or service.

#### **Political and Legislative Activity**

Girl Scouts of the United States of America and any Girl Scout council or other organization holding a Girl Scouts of the United States of America credential may not, nor may they authorize anyone on their behalf to, participate or intervene directly or indirectly in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office; or participate in any legislative activity or function which contravenes the laws governing tax-exempt organizations.

#### **Girl Scout Trademark**

Every product sold in connection with a Girl Scout council-sponsored product sale shall bear the Girl Scout name and service mark, either on the product or on its packaging. Every item bearing any of the registered Girl Scout names, logos, or marks purchased or developed for resale, including items to be sold in council-sponsored product sales, shall be purchased (1) from a GSUSA-licensed vendor, (2) from Girl Scout Merchandise, or (3) produced with prior approval from GSUSA *when items are not readily available from a licensed supplier*. Every . "Resale" is defined as any item resold or given away in connection with an event for which a fee, price, or admission is paid. This includes, but is not limited to, product sales. item bearing the Girl Scout name and service mark, including items for resale or non-resale by councils, shall conform to the Girl Scout *Graphic Guidelines* published by GSUSA. Items used for both resale and non-resale shall adhere to the stipulations stated above for resale items.

#### **Cause-Related Marketing**

GSUSA may develop alliances and relationships with corporations and businesses for the purposes of advancing Girl Scouting. A Girl Scout council may develop similar alliances with businesses within its jurisdiction, or may work in partnership with GSUSA to develop strategic alliances outside of its jurisdiction. These corporations must have policies and operations compatible with the values of Girl Scouting. The guiding principles for such relationships shall be as follows: the Girl Scout image will be preserved and enhanced; significant revenue and/or visibility will be generated; program activities will be enriched;

membership outreach efforts will be supported; and the integrity and financial well-being of GSUSA and Girl Scout councils will be maintained or enriched.

### **Internet Sales**

Sales on a website on the Internet of any products sold in council-sponsored product sales, such as Girl Scout cookies, candy, nuts, calendars, or magazine subscriptions, may not be conducted by anyone at any time. Sales on the Internet of Girl Scout merchandise, such as uniforms, insignia, publications, and equipment, may only be conducted by duly authorized and licensed Girl Scout councils, council shops, retail agencies, and/or GSUSA-licensed vendors. Permission to sell on the Internet must be obtained from GSUSA. For safety and security reasons, sales on the Internet for any Girl Scout troop/group money-earning activities may not be conducted by individual girls, parents, or other adults.

### **Fundraising**

#### **Fundraising Methods**

All fundraising methods employed by Girl Scout groups must be in keeping with the principles for which the organization stands.

#### **Fundraising by Girl Scouts of the United States of America and Girl Scout Councils**

Fundraising to promote the interests of the Girl Scout Movement may be conducted by Girl Scouts of the United States of America and Girl Scout councils both independently and collaboratively. GSUSA and councils are encouraged to work together to maximize contributions to Girl Scouting.

#### **Solicitation of Corporations and Foundations**

GSUSA requests for funding shall be initiated only after consultation with the council serving the jurisdiction where the funding source directs that solicitations be received. Prior to solicitation of a corporation or foundation located outside a council's jurisdiction, the initiating council shall consult with the council serving the jurisdiction where the funding source directs that solicitations be received.

#### **Control of Funds**

All money raised, or earned, and other assets received in the name of and for the benefit of Girl Scouting must be authorized by a Girl Scout council or Girl Scouts of the United States of America and used

for the purposes of Girl Scouting. Such monies and other assets become the property of and are administered by the Girl Scout council or Girl Scouts of the USA. Such assets are not the property of individuals, geographic units, or communities within a Girl Scout council.

### **Family Solicitation**

Financial support for Girl Scout councils is derived from the broader community. Local councils are encouraged to solicit the families of girl members for voluntary financial support as one part of an overall fundraising campaign. This may be done at the time of membership registration. Any such family

contribution shall be voluntary, not a prerequisite for membership, and not considered a fee for local council services.

### **Solicitation of Contributions**

Adult members in their Girl Scout capacities may not solicit financial contributions for purposes other than Girl Scouting. Adults may engage in combined fundraising efforts authorized by the Girl Scout council and in which the local council is a beneficiary. Girl members may not engage in any direct solicitation for money.

### **Juliette Low World Friendship Fund**

All monies collected for the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund must be used “for the promotion of Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting throughout the world as a contribution toward world peace and goodwill” and shall be administered by the National Board of Directors of Girl Scouts of the United States of America in its sole discretion. (The resolution creating the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund was adopted by the National Council, October 1927.)

## **Girl Scout Council/International**

### **Girl Scout Council Authority and Responsibility**

Within the terms of its charter, a Girl Scout council shall have the authority and responsibility to: provide and safeguard the Girl Scout program, build an organization to serve its membership, secure and direct personnel, extend membership opportunities to all girls within its jurisdiction, finance its work, and develop its community and public relationships;

*however, a Girl Scout council shall not have the authority to establish any form of local council membership dues, nor shall a Girl Scout council use membership dues collected from girls and adults registering with GSUSA through the council as a source of investment income. The local council shall be accountable to the National Board of Directors of Girl Scouts of the United States of America for the proper exercise of this authority.*

### **Troops and Communities Within a Girl Scout Council Jurisdiction**

When a Girl Scout council is chartered and the territory in which it is to operate has been decided upon, all Girl Scout troops in all the communities within that territory shall be under its jurisdiction, and the Girl Scouts of the United States of America shall act through the local council in its relations with these troops and communities.

### **Administration of Girl Scout Camping**

All types of Girl Scout camping must be under the administration of a Girl Scout council, federation, or group licensed by Girl Scouts of the United States of America, except that troop camping by a USA Girl Scouts Overseas troop may be authorized by its troop committee.

### **USA Girl Scouts Overseas Committee Responsibility**

*(for troops living outside the jurisdiction of a chartered Girl Scout council as members of USA Girl Scouts Overseas)*

Every USA Girl Scouts Overseas troop must be affiliated with a USA Girl Scouts Overseas Committee, which shall accept responsibility for: seeing that overseas committee members, leaders, and girls affiliating with the troop meet individual membership requirements; seeing that each person affiliating with the troop subscribes to the purpose, adheres to the policies, and maintains the standards of Girl Scouts of the USA; securing and endorsing the leaders of the troop; and seeing that the work of the troop is financed and authorizing the methods and manner of collecting funds raised in the name of the troop.

### **Letter of Introduction for International Travel**

Any member of the Girl Scout Movement traveling in a foreign country, in order to be recognized officially as a Girl Scout by other Girl Guide or Girl Scout associations, must have a letter of introduction from

Girl Scouts of the United States of America. Members registered through a local council or with a USA Girl Scouts Overseas troop must have the approval of the local council or the USA Girl Scouts Overseas committee before receiving such a letter.

### **Membership Registration/ Security of Membership Data Membership Registration**

All girls and adults participating in the Girl Scout Movement shall be registered as members with Girl Scouts of the United States of America and individually pay the \$10 annual membership dues, except those adults who are lifetime members or who are working in a temporary advisory or consultative capacity.

### **Security of Girl Scout Membership Data and Restricted Use of Membership and Mailing Lists**

The release and distribution of any Girl Scout membership list to a Girl Scout council or non-Girl Scout entity, or the release of any data or information on Girl Scout members, is prohibited except upon approval by the Girl Scouts of the United States of America. All Girl Scout councils and USA Girl Scouts Overseas locations accessing or transmitting membership information electronically must be in compliance with this security policy and all other GSUSA security procedures, policies, and standards, as well as all applicable local, state, and federal laws.

### **Security of Membership Data**

Girl Scout councils and USA Girl Scouts Overseas use one of several methods for registering members with Girl Scouts of the USA: the GSUSA Membership Management System, WinPCMS, or a thirdparty system, and the following procedures are in effect:

To obtain and retain access to the GSUSA Membership Management System, every Girl Scout council must sign a written GSUSA Membership Management Systems Use Agreement, which defines the terms and conditions established by GSUSA.

To obtain and retain access to the Council Data Interface System (CDIS), the Girl Scout council and its vendor must sign a nondisclosure agreement.

Every Girl Scout council and USA Girl Scouts Overseas location must abide by GSUSA's security policies, standards, and confidentiality

and nondisclosure agreements.

Every Girl Scout council must consent to periodic audits by GSUSA, such as the council performance assessment, to ensure compliance with technical configuration standards, security policies, and GSUSA and governmental security and privacy standards.

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## Pluralism and Diversity/ Human Resources

### Pluralism and Diversity in Girl Membership

All Girl Scout councils and USA Girl Scouts Overseas committees shall be responsible for seeing that membership is reflective of the pluralistic nature of their populations and that membership is extended to all girls in all population segments and geographic areas in their jurisdictions. A girl who meets or can meet membership requirements shall not be denied admission or access to Girl Scout program because of race, color, ethnicity, creed, national origin, socioeconomic status, or disability. Reasonable accommodations shall be made for girls with disabilities to ensure that girls have access to activities.

### Selection of Adults

Every adult volunteer and executive staff member in Girl Scouting must be selected on the basis of qualifications for membership, ability to perform the job, and willingness and availability to participate in training for it. In selection of adults, there shall be no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, sex, creed, national origin, or socioeconomic status. There shall be no discrimination against an otherwise qualified individual by reason of disability or on the basis of age. Members of Girl Scout council boards of directors and the National Board of Directors shall be selected so that the boards of directors represent diverse population groups and can bring to their deliberations a variety of points of view and life experiences, as well as access to cultural, religious, educational, civic, and economic resources. Executive staff shall be selected as needed to provide managerial and specialist expertise, research capability, and continuity to support the delivery of program to girls through volunteers.

### Affirmative Action for Volunteers

There shall be no discrimination against an otherwise qualified adult volunteer by reason of disability

or on the basis of age. Furthermore, there shall be no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, sex, creed, national origin, or socioeconomic status. In addition, to ensure full equality of opportunity in all operations and activities of the organization, affirmative action policies and procedures shall be utilized in the recruitment, selection, training, placement, and recognition of volunteers. Special emphasis shall be placed upon securing representation of underrepresented population groups.

### **EEO/Affirmative Action for Employed Staff**

There shall be no discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, age, disability, national origin, citizenship, or marital status. In addition, to ensure full equality of opportunity in all operations and activities of the organization, every staff member employed in Girl Scouting shall be selected under fair employment procedures that provide equal employment opportunities to all people. There shall be special efforts in affirmative action in the recruitment, hiring, training, and promotion of persons from underutilized ethnically and racially diverse groups and individuals with disabilities, and to make reasonable accommodations for physical and mental limitations of employees and applicants consistent with performance of essential job functions and the effective operations of the business.

### **Grievance/Separation of Employed Staff**

Every person employed in Girl Scouting shall be protected by fair personnel policies and procedures, including formal problem resolution procedures.

### **Health and Safety**

Girl Scouts of the United States of America, local councils, other units holding a credential, and USA Girl Scouts Overseas committees shall be responsible for seeing that all activities are planned and carried out so as to safeguard the health, safety, and general well-being of the participants.

### **Selection of National Meeting Places**

Gatherings planned and held by the national Girl Scout organization for nationwide attendance shall be held in communities where individuals attending will have freedom of choice in seating, eating, and living accommodations in hotels and buildings engaged by the organization.

## Spirituality/Religion

### Flexibility in Wording for Spiritual Beliefs in the Girl Scout Promise

Girl Scouts of the USA makes no attempt to define or interpret the word “God” in the Girl Scout Promise. It looks to individual members to establish for themselves the nature of their spiritual beliefs. When making the Girl Scout Promise, individuals may substitute wording appropriate to their own spiritual beliefs for the word “God.”

### Place of Religion in the Girl Scout Program

Girls are encouraged and helped through the Girl Scout program to become better members of their own religious group, but every Girl Scout group must recognize that religious instruction is the responsibility of parents and religious leaders.

### Respect for Religious Opinions and Practices

Every Girl Scout group shall respect the varying religious opinions and practices of its membership in planning and conducting activities.

### Troops Sponsored by Religious Groups

When a Girl Scout troop is sponsored by one religious group, members of different faiths or religious affiliations within the troop shall not be required to take part in religious observance of the sponsoring group.

# Credentials (See Constitution, Article VIII)

## Certificate of Membership

A certificate of membership is issued to each girl or adult who meets the requirements for membership. Credentials that the National Board of Directors issues, other than the certificate of membership, include the Girl Scout council charter, the Girl Scout license, and the federation certificate (not in use at present).

Girl Scouts of the United States of America authorizes USA Girl Scouts Overseas in communities outside the U.S.A. where there is no chartered Girl Scout council. These troops are known collectively as USA Girl Scouts Overseas.

## Membership Requirements

**Membership as a Girl Scout** is granted to any girl who:

has made the Girl Scout Promise and accepted the Girl Scout Law;  
has paid annual membership dues;  
meets applicable membership standards.

**Membership as a Girl Scout adult** is granted to any person who:

accepts the principles and beliefs as stated in the Preamble of the Constitution;  
has paid annual or lifetime membership dues;  
meets applicable membership standards.

**Lifetime membership as a Girl Scout adult** is granted to any person (18 years of age or older or a high school graduate or equivalent) who:

accepts the principles and beliefs as stated in the Preamble of the Constitution;  
has paid lifetime membership dues of 25 times the annual membership dues; lifetime membership dues of 13 times the annual membership dues shall be offered to any girl who is a registered Senior Girl Scout at the time . See page 22, "Flexibility in Wording for Spiritual Beliefs in the Girl Scout Promise."  
of her high school graduation or equivalent, and be available to her before the girl's current membership expires;  
meets applicable membership standards.

### **Applicable Membership Standards**

Membership standards are not credentials. They are included here only for ready reference in relation to membership requirements. Applicable membership standards are as follows:

#### **Current Girl Scout Membership Levels**

Daisy Girl Scout age 5–6 OR  
in kindergarten-grade 1

Brownie Girl Scout age 6–7–8 OR  
grade 1–2–3

Junior Girl Scout age 8–9–10–11 OR  
grade 3–4–5–6

Cadette Girl Scout age 11–12–13–14 OR  
grade 6–7–8–9

Senior Girl Scout age 14–15–16–17 OR  
grade 9–10–11–12

#### **Girl Scout Membership Levels**

**Effective October 1, 2008**

kindergarten–1 Girl Scout Daisy

grade 2–3 Girl Scout Brownie

grade 4–5 Girl Scout Junior

grade 6–8 Girl Scout Cadette

grade 9–10 Girl Scout Senior

grade 11–12 Girl Scout Ambassador

### **Girl Scout Adults**

Minimum age—18 years of age or a high school graduate or equivalent.

## Membership Dues and Procedures for Registration

In order to be a member of the Girl Scout Movement in the United States of America, a person must register with and pay annual or lifetime membership dues to Girl Scouts of the United States of America. This is done locally through the Girl Scout council or USA Girl Scouts Overseas committee with which she or he is affiliated or through national headquarters if she or he has no council affiliation. Girl Scout councils account for membership dues in the custodian fund and transmit to GSUSA within the calendar month all monies received for membership

10. Changes approved by National Board of Directors in August 2006.

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dues. These funds are not to be invested by the council for the purpose of generating income for the council.

The **Girl Scout membership year** is October 1 through September 30.

**New members** of Girl Scout troops/groups, both girls and adults, pay \$10 when they initially become members of the Movement.

**Continuing members** of Girl Scout troops/groups, both girls and adults, pay \$10 when they renew their membership at the beginning of each membership year.

**Nontroop-affiliated girl and adult members** on both local council and national levels also pay \$10 dues each membership year.

**Lifetime members** pay 25 times the annual membership dues at the time they become lifetime members.

When a member transfers from one troop/group or position to another or to another local council, the member does not re-register until her/his current membership expires at the beginning of the next membership year.

The national organization determines the system and method for registering members through Girl Scout councils. Each Girl Scout council verifies the accuracy of the troop/group and/or individual member information and forwards it with the membership

dues directly to national headquarters.

National Board members, National Board standing committee members, other national volunteers, and other adult members who have their contact only with the national organization use registration forms received from the national organization. They forward the completed registration forms and dues directly to national headquarters.

USA Girl Scouts Overseas use registration forms received from the national organization. They also forward the completed registration forms and dues directly to national headquarters.

The membership dues of one person may not be transferred to the credit of another person. Membership dues are not refundable.

Adults serving in more than one Girl Scout position pay membership dues only once annually.

### **Girl Scout Council Charter**

A Girl Scout council charter is a credential issued by the National Board of Directors of Girl Scouts of the USA in accordance with the Constitution of Girl Scouts of the USA, Article VII and Article VIII. A Girl Scout council charter defines the relationship between a council and Girl Scouts of the USA. It binds the elements of Girl Scouting across the nation into one large and cohesive Girl Scout Movement and gives us a common purpose.

A Girl Scout council charter is issued by the National Board of Directors of Girl Scouts of the USA to an organization exclusively devoted to the Girl Scout Movement in the United States, granting it the right to develop, manage, and maintain Girl Scouting in a specified area of jurisdiction, which is established by the National Board of Directors, and to call itself a Girl Scout council. A Girl Scout council charter is issued for no more than four years.

### **Requirements for a Girl Scout Council Charter**

To receive and retain a charter, a Girl Scout council agrees:

to subscribe to the purpose, adhere to the policies, and be guided by the standards of Girl Scouts of the USA.

to develop, manage, and maintain Girl Scouting throughout the areas of its jurisdiction, in

such manner and subject to such limitations as prescribed in the Constitution, Bylaws, and policies of Girl Scouts of the USA.

to participate in the activities and business of Girl Scouts of the USA.

to make reports of its work to Girl Scouts of the USA; pay its charter fee;<sup>11</sup> have at all times a registered board of directors; and make sure that all persons affiliating with the council meet individual membership requirements.

11. During the realignment process, the initial charter fee for newly formed councils will be waived.

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**The Charter, When Issued to a Girl Scout Council, Will Confer the Following Rights:**

the right to be identified with the Girl Scout Movement in the United States of America, which is directed and coordinated by Girl Scouts of the USA, a member of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.

the right to use the words “Girl Scouts” as part of the designation of the council.

the right to use Girl Scout program and the right to use Girl Scout insignia in connection with that program.

the right to use the trademark “Girl Scouts” and the service mark, as defined in Girl Scouts of the USA’s *Graphic Guidelines*, on products or merchandise obtained and used for the day-to-day operations of the council, including stationery, office supplies, items with council and camp names, and symbols, brochures, newsletters, and such items as Girl Scouts of the USA may hereinafter designate. Any other use of marks or insignia owned by Girl Scouts of the USA on products or merchandise must be approved by Girl Scouts of the USA. This includes but is not limited to merchandise to be sold by the council. This right is nonexclusive and nontransferable.

the right to develop, manage, and maintain Girl Scouting throughout the jurisdiction of the council.

the right to receive services from Girl Scouts of the USA.

the right, through delegates elected to the National Council of Girl Scouts of the USA, to participate in the business of Girl Scouts of the USA.

**In Accepting a Charter, a Girl Scout Council Assumes the Following Obligations**

We understand and agree that, in carrying out the terms and other obligations of the charter applied for, we will act in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of Girl Scouts of the USA and that the rights and responsibilities granted in the charter are limited to the aforesaid Constitution and Bylaws.

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We also understand and agree that the rights and responsibilities granted by the charter cannot be delegated, nor can the jurisdiction for which the charter is sought be changed without the written authorization of Girl Scouts of the USA.

By agreeing to adhere to the policies of Girl Scouts of the USA, we understand and agree to operate as a council in accordance with and to be limited by policies so identified, published, and distributed to councils by Girl Scouts of the USA, accepting them as binding on the council, on all its members, officers, employees, and those affiliating with it. By agreeing to be guided by the standards of Girl Scouts of the USA, we understand that as a council we have committed ourselves and those affiliating with us to follow and be guided by the standards published from time to time by Girl Scouts of the USA.

We understand and agree that it is the council's responsibility to see that each person affiliating with it meets at all times the individual

membership requirements established by Girl Scouts of the USA, and to register with Girl Scouts of the USA all girls and adults participating in Girl Scouting within its jurisdiction, whether in troops or in any other capacity, except those adults working in a temporary advisory or consultative capacity. We understand and agree that the charter applied for may be revoked or terminated by Girl Scouts of the USA under the provisions of its Constitution, that the rights conferred by the charter cease to exist upon termination or revocation of the charter, and that upon revocation or termination of the charter, the council can no longer and, therefore, will not exercise any of the rights granted to it therein. We understand and agree that the council's articles of incorporation and bylaws that are attached to the Application for a Girl Scout Council Charter are a part of this application. Furthermore, we agree that any changes or amendments to these documents will be filed with Girl Scouts of the USA in a timely manner.

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We understand and agree to pay the council's charter fee as indicated on the Application for a Girl Scout Council Charter.<sup>12</sup>

### **Procedures for Reviewing and Issuing Girl Scout Council Charters** **Special Provisions for Period of Realignment:**

During the realignment period, the National Board of Directors may extend a Girl Scout council's charter, as needed, to accommodate the council realignment process. The National Board of Directors may also issue such charters, as necessary, to newly realigned councils upon their completion of the realignment process, including their submission of an Application for a Girl Scout Council Charter. Girl Scouts of the USA establishes the process and procedure for reviewing and issuing council charters, which is as follows:

There is an annual assessment of council performance, called a "Scorecard," with

respect to the criteria and standards for an effective Girl Scout council. Girl Scouts of the USA works in partnership with councils in this process. Eighteen months prior to the expiration of a council's charter, the council receives from Girl Scouts of the USA an Application for a Girl Scout Council Charter. The council's most recently completed Scorecard is one of the documents utilized in this process.

A GSUSA team assigned to the council completes the Scorecard, based on GSUSA membership data and audits and other documents submitted by the council, including a Scorecard Worksheet. The completed Scorecard is submitted to the council's board chair and the council's CEO for review. The GSUSA team arranges a conference call to discuss the Scorecard results with the council's board chair and the council's CEO. The GSUSA team completes a written report of the assessment, which is sent to the council's board chair and its CEO and to the CEO of Girl Scouts of the USA. The CEO of Girl Scouts of the USA provides a report to the National Board of Directors. During the realignment process, the initial charter fee for newly formed councils will be waived.

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Board of Directors. If the council is not engaged in realignment, the assessment will be the basis for charter action.

The CEO of Girl Scouts of the USA makes a recommendation to the National Board of Directors for action on a council's charter. The National Board of Directors reviews the recommendation and takes action on the issuance of the council charter for up to four years.

Following action by the National Board of Directors on the renewal of the council charter, a letter is sent from the National Secretary to the chair of the board and the CEO of each council receiving a charter.

Upon the National Board of Directors' approval

for the issuance of the council's charter, Girl Scouts of the USA processes the charter application and sends the charter certificate to the council.

In the event the analysis of a council's performance indicates that it is not developing, managing, or maintaining Girl Scouting throughout the area of its jurisdiction or fully meeting charter requirements, the council may receive a charter with qualifications.

In cases where a council is receiving a charter with qualifications, each member of the council's board of directors and the council's CEO are informed about the council's charter status. Qualifications are defined and annual benchmarks for progress are set. Insufficient progress toward meeting council performance standards in any year of the charter may lead to non-issuance of a succeeding charter.

### **Procedures for a Performance Audit**

The Performance Audit, which is initiated by the National Board of Directors, provides a process for review when the monitoring of required reports or other evidence indicates a sharp decrease in the level of the council's performance, as defined by the criteria and standards for an effective Girl Scout

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council and critical priorities, or if the welfare of Girl Scouting is threatened by a council's blatant disregard for policies or other obligations.

A Performance Audit will proceed as follows:

The National Board of Directors advises the council that a Performance Audit will be completed to address specific concerns. The specific concerns and a timeline for the review will be included in the communication.

Upon receiving notification of a Performance Audit, the Girl Scout council's board of directors appoints a council review team of three to five members, including at least one officer or other member of the council's board of directors, and the council's CEO as a resource person.

A national team that includes at least one

National Operational Volunteer will conduct an on-site visit and review.

At least one month prior to the scheduled on-site visit, the council review team submits data relevant to the identified concerns to the national team.

During the on-site visit and review, the council team and the national team review all of the relevant data. The national team gives an oral report on the team's conclusions to the council's board of directors.

The national team prepares a written report of its findings and makes recommendations to the CEO of Girl Scouts of the USA, who, in turn, makes a recommendation to the National Board of Directors. The National Board of Directors takes the action required. Action related to the council taken by the National Board of Directors will be communicated to the council's board chair, board of directors, and CEO.

### Procedures for Non-Issuance or Revocation of Charters

The National Board of Directors takes action on the recommendation of the CEO of Girl Scouts of the USA, if any of the following circumstances occurs in a council:

- A.** Deficiency in respect to its resources, finances, personnel, administrators, manner of supervising the program, effectiveness in its attempt to reach and serve all girls within its jurisdiction, or otherwise, such that, in the opinion of the National Board of Directors, it appears that such council is unable adequately to develop, manage, or maintain Girl Scouting within its jurisdiction; or
- B.** Any act or omission, or any course of conduct that, in the opinion of the National Board of Directors, is not in the best interests of Girl Scouting; or
- C.** Failure to comply with any policy, credential standard, or directive issued or established by or under the authority of the National Board of Directors; or

**D.** Violation of any term, condition, or requirement of its charter.

The National Board of Directors gives notice to the council involved, indicating the nature of the issues or concerns. The notice shall also state a reasonable time within which the council shall respond in writing.

The National Board of Directors shall provide to such council an opportunity to be heard by a team named by the National Board. The team shall receive and evaluate any and all information provided by the council, at such place and in such fair manner as the team shall prescribe, and shall then report its findings and recommendations to such council and to the National Board.

The National Board shall thereupon determine, in its sole discretion, whether the charter shall be issued or revoked, or may take such other action as it deems appropriate.

## Procedures for Changing a Girl Scout Council Jurisdiction<sup>13</sup>

In all matters concerning jurisdictional lines, the National Board of Directors has the authority to make the final decision, either during the term of a charter or upon issuance of a new charter.

### Section I

When two or more councils agree, during the realignment period, to participate in a realignment process:

Each council's board of directors must approve the change.

The councils create a Council Realignment Committee (CRC), which includes the board chairs and CEOs of the councils that are combining jurisdictions. The CRC develops a plan and timeline for carrying out the proposed changes in jurisdiction for approval by the boards of all the councils.

Councils convene membership (delegate) meetings to approve the CRC recommendation for board structure, to elect the nominating committee, and to give the CRC authority to act as a temporary board, if needed. A combined delegate meeting of all the councils is convened at a later point to adopt articles of incorporation and bylaws, to elect the board

of directors, and to take any action needed to establish the council's incorporation.

The application is processed and the necessary changes in the official records of Girl Scouts of the USA are made. Girl Scouts of the USA notifies each council board chair of the approval of changes in jurisdiction. The councils notify their membership of the changes in jurisdictions.

## **Section II**

When two or more Girl Scout councils agree to combine jurisdictions to create a new council: Each council's board of directors must approve the decision to engage in the jurisdictional change, which must be carried out in

13. All actions taken must be consistent with state law. compliance with the council's bylaws and the laws of the state in which the council is incorporated.

The councils develop a plan and timeline for carrying out the proposed changes in jurisdiction.

Each council's board of directors must vote on the plan of merger, consolidation, or other corporate reorganization and distribution of assets, and refer it to the council's membership for a vote according to the laws of the state of incorporation.

Following the completion of the process to establish the new council, an Application for a Charter for a New Girl Scout Council is submitted to Girl Scouts of the USA for action by the National Board of Directors.

Following approval of the National Board of Directors, Girl Scouts of the USA processes the application, makes the necessary changes in the official records, and notifies each council chair of the board and CEO of the approval of changes in jurisdiction. The councils notify their membership of the changes in jurisdiction.

## **Section III**

When two or more Girl Scout councils agree to transfer a part of one council jurisdiction to another council:

Each council's board of directors must approve the jurisdictional change.

An Application for Change in Girl Scout Council Jurisdiction is completed by each

council and sent to Girl Scouts of the USA. Girl Scouts of the USA records the changes in jurisdiction in the official records.

Notification of the decision related to the changes of jurisdiction is sent to board chairs of the councils involved. The councils shall notify their membership of the changes in jurisdictions.

**Note:** This process may be initiated by a single Girl Scout council, by several Girl Scout councils together, or by an individual community within a Girl Scout council. If an individual community within a Girl Scout council wishes to be removed from the council's jurisdiction and added to that of another council, the community initiates the request by sending it, in writing, to its own council board chair.

#### **Section IV**

The following steps are taken if or when agreement cannot be reached between the boards of directors of the Girl Scout councils to combine or transfer jurisdiction:

A board chair of at least one affected council must notify Girl Scouts of the USA that their boards are unable to reach agreement on the combination or transfer of jurisdiction.

A national team, including a National Operational Volunteer, will invite all affected councils to provide information on how the requested change will impact the delivery of Girl Scout program. Community leaders from the affected councils also may be invited to provide their reaction to the requested change. A summary of the data collected will be shared with each council board involved in the process. Using the data provided from council and community sources, the national team will develop a recommendation for jurisdictional boundaries and forward it to the affected councils. The national team completes an Application for Change in Girl Scout Council Jurisdiction pursuant to the recommendations. After the Application for Change in Girl Scout Council Jurisdiction is completed, the CEO of Girl Scouts of the USA reviews the application and recommends action to the National Board of Directors.

Following action by the National Board of

Directors, Girl Scouts of the USA records the changes in jurisdiction in the official records of Girl Scouts of the USA. The action of the National Board of Directors shall be considered final. Notification is sent to each affected council board chair. The councils shall notify their membership of the change in jurisdiction.

### Procedure for Changing a Girl Scout Council Name

To select or change its name, a council should follow the procedure outlined below (Girl Scouts of the USA will provide guidelines for a council to select or change its name):

The council submits a proposed name (and up to two alternates) to Girl Scouts of the USA for review.

Girl Scouts of the USA notifies the council that the name(s) are consistent with the guidelines. The council starts proper legal proceedings to effect the change in name in the state in which the council is incorporated.

When the council receives permission or approval from its state of incorporation to use the new corporate name, the council notifies Girl Scouts of the USA that the corporate name has been approved by the state on a specified date and sends the amended articles of incorporation to Girl Scouts of the USA.

## Criteria and Standards for an Effective Girl Scout Council

The criteria and standards for an effective Girl Scout council are established by the National Board of Directors to delineate the way in which Girl Scout councils are expected to fulfill their charter requirements. The criteria and standards emanate from the major beliefs and principles of the Girl Scout Movement

as expressed in the Congressional Charter and the Constitution of Girl Scouts of the United States of America. The criteria cover broad areas of a council's responsibility and serve as broad categories of measurement. The standards are developed within the context of each criterion. They are the foundation on which all the work of the council should be built and the prime resource for all organizational review and appraisal. Essential to the chartering process, they also are an enduring point of reference for the desired level of performance.

### **Criterion I: Membership Extension and Access to Girl Scout Program**

An effective Girl Scout council ensures that Girl Scout program is delivered to girls in all segments of its jurisdiction.

#### **Standard 1**

Based on a thorough understanding of the populations within its jurisdiction, the council attracts and retains membership from all areas of its jurisdiction and all segments of its population.

#### **Standard 2**

The council develops the structure and systems, including electronic means, for girls to participate in Girl Scouting using current Girl Scout materials, with program enrichments that meet the needs and interests of girls in the jurisdiction.

#### **Standard 3**

Program activities throughout every part of the council demonstrate the beliefs and principles of the Girl Scout Movement, as embodied in the Girl Scout Promise and Law and the four Program Goals for girls.

#### **Standard 4**

Requirements that ensure the protection of the health, safety, and security of participants are evident in all program activities, including those that use electronic means.

#### **Standard 5**

Through a comprehensive adult development system, the council recruits, screens, trains, provides support for, and addresses needs of adults who work directly with girls.

#### **Standard 6**

The council has a comprehensive communications and community relations plan that promotes and

safeguards the Girl Scout brand image and that includes electronic transmission as a means of keeping all segments of the population well informed about the basic messages of Girl Scouting.

## Criterion II: Maintaining Organizational Integrity

An effective Girl Scout council sustains the purpose of the Girl Scout Movement by conducting its business through the democratic process, consistent with the charter requirements, policies, and standards of Girl Scouts of the USA.

### Standard 1

The council board of directors ensures compliance with policies, standards, and procedures as stated in the *Blue Book of Basic Documents* and other GSUSA publications.

### Standard 2

The council fulfills its corporate obligations as required by local, state, and federal law, and through the rights and obligations defined in the Girl Scout council charter.

### Standard 3

The council has a nominating committee, elected by the corporation, that annually proposes a full single slate of nominees with the experience and skills necessary to provide leadership and direction to the council, and reflecting the diversity of the jurisdiction, for election by the membership body.

### Standard 4

The council actively seeks to strengthen the democratic process to ensure that the membership is involved in direction setting and influencing major policy decisions.

## Criterion III: The Development and Stewardship of Resources

An effective Girl Scout council has sufficient resources and assumes responsibility for managing them, in order to ensure the continuation and expansion of Girl Scouting in the council's jurisdiction.

### Standard 1

The council's human resources policies and practices attract, develop, and retain operational volunteers and employed staff reflecting all areas of its jurisdiction and all segments of its population.

### Standard 2

The council board ensures that all adults carry out their responsibility to raise funds to support the council's work, using methods in keeping with the principles, policies, standards, and goals of Girl Scouts of the USA.

### Standard 3

The council board carries out, in a timely manner, its stewardship responsibilities with respect to development and management of all council assets: human, fiscal, and property.

### Standard 4

The council board exercises financial leadership to provide for the perpetuation of Girl Scouting within its jurisdiction.

### Standard 5

The council utilizes an integrated corporate planning/management system to maximize the effective and responsible development and use of resources.

### Standard 6

The council receives financial support as a result of being actively involved and recognized as a critical resource in the community.

## Congressional Charter of Girl Scouts of the United States of America

Girl Scouts was first incorporated in 1915 under the corporate laws of the District of Columbia. A Congressional Charter was conferred upon Girl Scouts of the United States of America in 1950 by a special act of Congress.

In 1998, Congress revised the language of all congressional charters, including the charter conferred upon Girl Scouts of the United States of America in 1950. The purpose was to ensure uniformity rather than make

substantial changes in the content. Legislation was introduced and legislation HR. 1085/S.2264 was approved

by Congress and signed into Public Law 105-225 on August 12, 1998.

### Chapter 803 –

### Girl Scouts of the United States of America

#### Sec.

80301. Organization.

80302. Purposes.

80303. Governing body.

80304. Powers.

80305. Exclusive right to emblems, badges, marks, and words.

80306. Restrictions.

80307. Annual report.

## § 80301. Organization

(a) **Federal charter.**—Girl Scouts of the United States of America (in this chapter, the “corporation”) is a body corporate and politic of the District of Columbia.

(b) **Domicile.**—The domicile of the corporation is the District of Columbia.

(c) **Perpetual existence.**—Except as otherwise provided, the corporation has perpetual existence.

## § 80302. Purposes

The purposes of the corporation are—

(1) to promote the qualities of truth, loyalty, helpfulness, friendliness, courtesy, purity, kindness, obedience, cheerfulness, thriftiness, and kindred virtues among girls, as a preparation for their responsibilities in the home

and for service to the community;

(2) to direct and coordinate the Girl Scout movement in the United States and territories and possessions of the United States; and

(3) to fix and maintain standards for the movement that will inspire the rising generation with the highest ideals of character, patriotism, conduct, and attainment.

## § 80303. Governing Body

(a) **National Council.**—

(1) There shall be a National Council of Girl Scouts. The number, qualifications, and term of office of members

of the Council are as provided in the constitution of the corporation, except that members of the Council must be citizens of the United States.

(2) The Council may adopt and amend a constitution and bylaws and elect a board of directors, officers, and agents.

(3) The constitution may prescribe the number of members of the Council necessary for a quorum. That number may be less than a majority of the entire Council.

(4) Meetings of the Council shall be held as provided in the constitution to hold elections and receive reports

of the officers and board of directors. Special meetings may be called as provided in the constitution.

(b) **Board of directors.**—

(1) To the extent provided in the constitution and bylaws, the board of directors shall have the powers of the

Council and manage the activities of the corporation between meetings of the Council. The number, qualifications,

and term of office of directors are as provided in the constitution.

(2) The constitution may prescribe the number of directors necessary for a quorum. That number shall be at least 20 or two-fifths of the entire board.

(c) **Executive and other committees.**—The bylaws may provide for—

(1) an executive committee to carry out the powers of the board of directors between meetings of the board; and

(2) other committees to operate under the general supervision of the board of directors.

(d) **Location of meetings and records.**—The Council and the board of directors may hold meetings and keep the seal and records of the corporation in or outside the District of Columbia.

## § 80304. Powers

The corporation may—

(1) adopt and amend a constitution, bylaws, and regulations, including regulations for the election of associates

and successors;

- (2) adopt and alter a seal;
- (3) have offices and conduct its activities in the District of Columbia and in the States, territories, and possessions of the United States;
- (4) acquire, own, lease, encumber, and transfer property, and use any income from the property, as necessary to carry out the purposes of the corporation;
- (5) sue and be sued within the jurisdiction of the United States; and

(6) do any other act necessary to carry out this chapter and the purposes of the corporation.

### § 80305. Exclusive right to emblems, badges, marks, and words

The corporation has the exclusive right to use all emblems and badges, descriptive or designating marks, and

words or phrases the corporation adopts, including the badge of the Girl Scouts, Incorporated, referred to in

the Act of August 12, 1937 (ch. 590, 50 Stat. 623), and to authorize their use, during the life of the corporation,

in connection with the manufacture, advertisement, and sale of equipment and merchandise. This section does not affect any vested rights.

### § 80306. Restrictions

(a) **Profit.**—The corporation may not operate for profit.

(b) **Political activities.**—The corporation shall be nonpolitical and nonsectarian.

### § 80307. Annual report

Not later than April 1 of each year, the corporation shall submit a report to Congress on the activities of the corporation during the prior fiscal year. The report shall be printed each year, with accompanying illustrations,

as a separate House document of the session of the Congress to which the report is submitted.

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