

GIRL SCOUTS RIVER VALLEYS' Electioneering Guidelines



Girl Scouts River Valleys is committed to fostering an open and civil exchange of a diverse array of ideas, opinions, and viewpoints. We understand that members may hold strong political convictions concerning elections and may have questions about what is permitted and prohibited behavior when acting as a Girl Scout representative. This includes any time you are wearing a Girl Scout pin or uniform, attending troop or service unit events and meetings, participating in council events, or any time you are acting as a Girl Scout volunteer.

As a nonprofit organization, Girl Scouts River Valleys must follow regulations set by the Internal Revenue Service related to electioneering in order to maintain the council's tax-exempt status. Electioneering is defined as participating in the electoral process by promoting or opposing particular candidates for office. Girl Scouts River Valleys expects all employees, members, volunteers, troops, and service units to follow the electioneering guidelines set by Girl Scouts of the United States of America to protect the organization's non-profit status.

To help members better understand what is considered electioneering and what is not, we have assembled some examples of Girl Scouts members can and cannot do:

When acting as a Girl Scout representative, you cannot:

- Endorse any candidate for public office. This includes social media functions that may be viewed as endorsement, such as "liking," "friending," or "following" a candidate, within close timing to an election. (Note that you are free to use your personal social media accounts for these activities while not acting as a Girl Scout representative, but may not post or share on an account affiliated with Girl Scouts such as your troop or service unit.)
- Use official Girl Scout letterhead, Girl Scout logos, or insignia to write in support or opposition of a candidate.
- Distribute campaign materials, including fliers, postcards, newsletters, and signage.
- Participate in any election events or activities, including a campaign parade or rally.
- Host a flag ceremony to open a political campaign event.
- Wear campaign buttons on the Girl Scout uniform.
- Use troop funds, service unit funds, or Juliette program credits to make a financial contribution to a political party or candidate.

Girl Scout representatives are able to engage in the following activities:

- Educate Girl Scouts about the election process.
- Write, visit, or call your Members of Congress, Governor, state legislator and all other local policy makers in support of or opposition to legislation, especially when Girl Scout or girl issues arise.
- Go to the polls with an adult on Election Day.
- Share unbiased, nonpartisan voter guides that include all candidates and information presented in a neutral manner.
- Participate in or host "get out the vote" registration drives. Registration may not be limited to a particular political party or on behalf of a specific political party or candidate.

This article provides an overview of electioneering guidelines for Girl Scouts River Valleys members. It's not intended to be an inclusive list. If you have questions, please contact us at 800-845-0787.