



^aGUIDE

to everything Girl Scout

SERVICE UNIT MANAGERS

need to know

THANK *you!*

On behalf of Girl Scouts of Minnesota and Wisconsin River Valleys, we would like to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude. The role of Service Unit manager is important, and your leadership is essential to a healthy Girl Scout program in your community. You have been appointed because we are confident in your skills, dedication, and enthusiasm for our mission to build Girl Scouts of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. It's a big job, but have no fear—we will be with you every step of the way! A volunteer engagement coordinator (a council staff member) will work closely with you and your local Service Unit team members to develop and maintain a supportive partnership.

We hope you find this guide to be a helpful tool as you learn about your role and plan your year. Feel free to read through it now, or scan through it to use as a reference later. If any questions come up as you review the guide, we are always happy to hear from you at girlscouts@girlscoutsvr.org or call us at 800-845-0787.

Thank you for all that you do!

Yours in Girl Scouting,
The Volunteer Engagement Team

Table of Contents

Section 1: Introduction

Mission, Promise, and Law.....	1
Girl Scouts River Valleys Map.....	2
Service Unit Overview.....	3
Service Unit Structure.....	4
Service Unit Manager Position Overview.....	5
Reflection.....	6
Service Unit Team Positions.....	7
Recruiting Your Team.....	13
Position Appointment and Reappointment.....	14
Girl Scout Year At-a-Glance.....	15
It's a Partnership! Working With Your Volunteer Engagement Coordinator.....	16
Girl Scout Programs and Events.....	17

Section 2: Managing the Service Unit

Facilitating Communications.....	18
Communications from Girl Scouts River Valleys.....	19
Managing Your Leader Meetings.....	20
Monthly Meeting Agenda Template.....	21
Service Unit Bank Accounts.....	22
Managing the Accounts.....	23
Delegating Tips.....	24
Conflict Resolution.....	25
Wrapping Up Your Year.....	26

Section 3: Supporting Volunteers

New Troop Leader Resources.....	27
Council Resources.....	28
Volunteer Appreciation.....	29

Glossary.....	30
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Girl Scout Mission, Promise, and Law

Girl Scouts bring their dreams to life and work together to build a better world. Through programs from coast to coast, Girl Scouts of all backgrounds and abilities can be unapologetically themselves as they discover their strengths and rise to meet new challenges—whether they want to climb to the top of a tree or the top of their class, lace up their boots for a hike or advocate for climate justice, or make their first best friends. Backed by trusted adult volunteers, mentors, and millions of alums, Girl Scouts lead the way as they find their voices and make changes that affect the issues most important to them. [Read more about who we are.](#)



Our Mission

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

Girl Scout Promise

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

**Members may substitute for the word God in accordance with their own spiritual beliefs.*

Girl Scout Law

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

Girl Scouts River Valleys Purpose

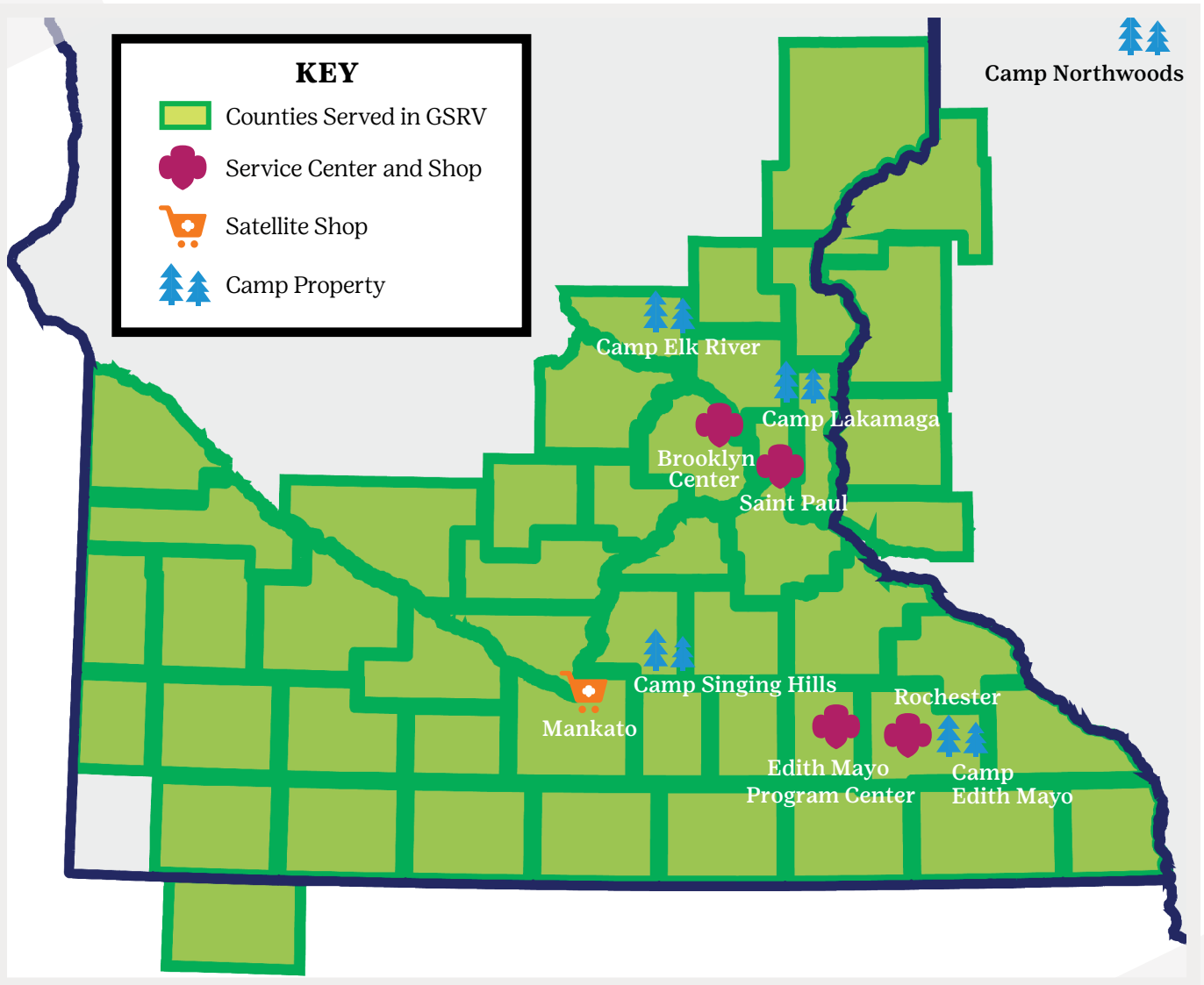
Girl Scouts River Valleys is committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and racial justice, and is working to boldly lead as an anti-racist organization that uplifts and empowers every Girl Scout to know their worth and lead in their world.

DEI/ARJ resources for leaders:

- ◆ [Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)
- ◆ [GSRV Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Access & Racial Justice](#)
- ◆ [Being an Ally 101](#)
- ◆ [Being Inclusive](#)
- ◆ [A Good Time to Talk: Conversations on Race](#)
- ◆ [Help Your Kids Take Action Against Racism](#)
- ◆ [Supporting LGBTQ+ Girl Scouts](#)
- ◆ [Gender Diversity: Help Your Troop Feel Happy and Safe](#)
- ◆ [Include EVERY Girl: 5 Tips on How to Adapt for Disabilities](#)
- ◆ [3 Strategies to Becoming a Culturally Responsive Troop Leader](#)

Girl Scouts of Minnesota and Wisconsin River Valleys Map

Girl Scouts River Valleys supports Girl Scouts in southern Minnesota and western Wisconsin in 49 counties (even one in Iowa!). Visit our locations below including [service centers](#), [shops](#), and [camps](#):

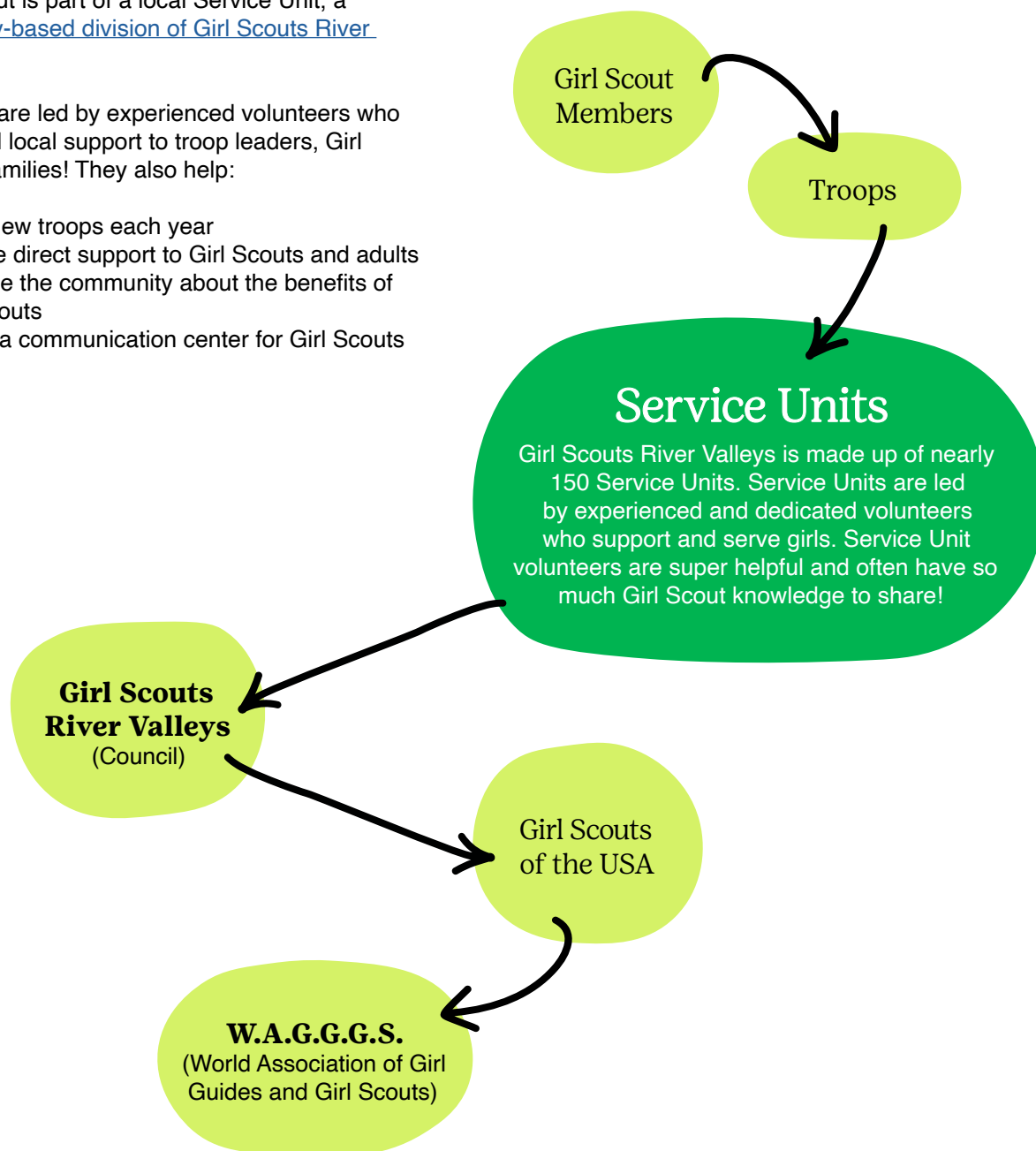


Service Unit Overview

Each Girl Scout is part of a local Service Unit, a [geographically-based division of Girl Scouts River Valleys](#).

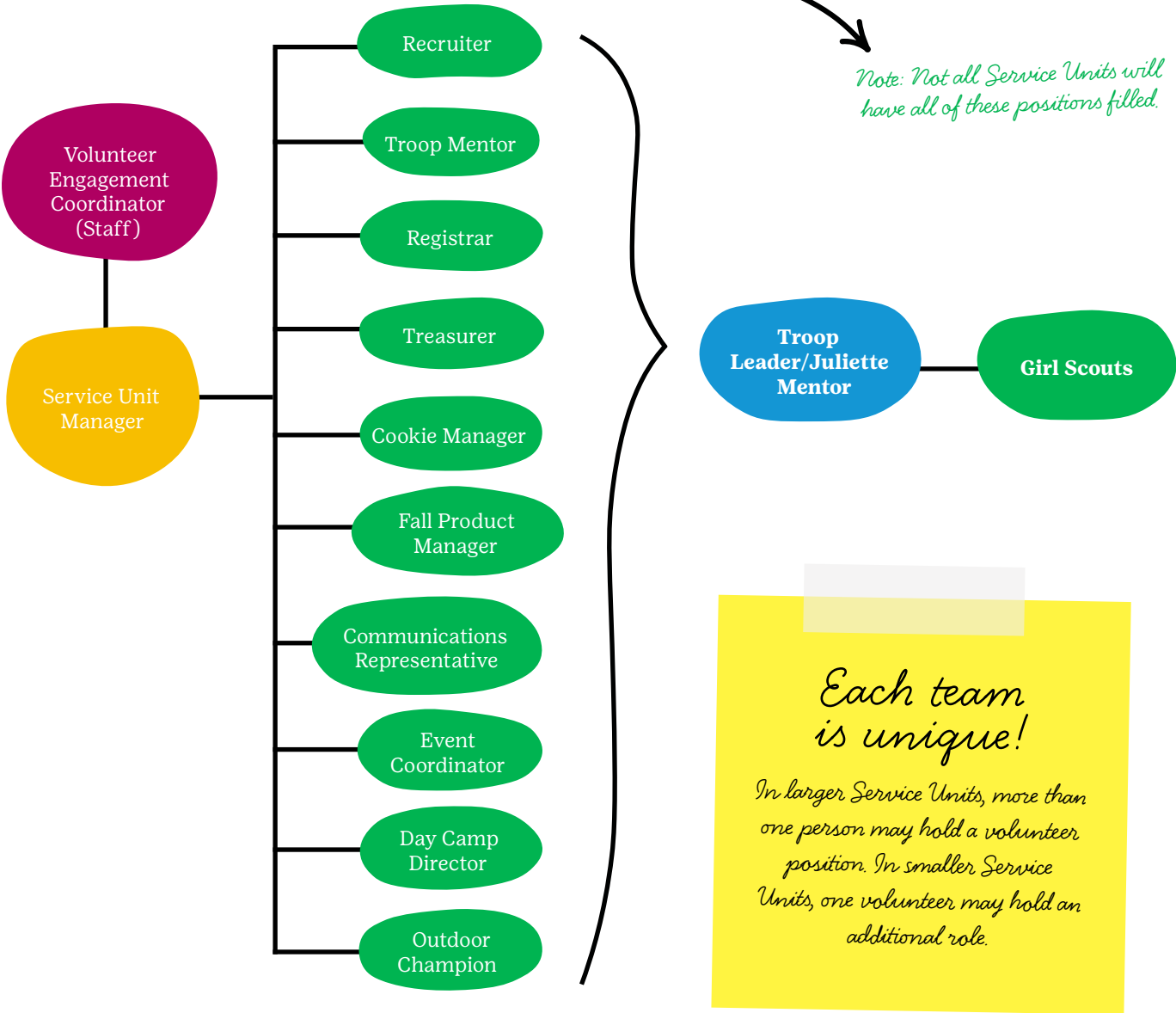
Service Units are led by experienced volunteers who provide critical local support to troop leaders, Girl Scouts, and families! They also help:

- Form new troops each year
- Provide direct support to Girl Scouts and adults
- Educate the community about the benefits of Girl Scouts
- Act as a communication center for Girl Scouts



Service Unit Structure

Your Service Unit is led by a team of volunteers who support troop leaders and are passionate about building courage, confidence, and character in Girl Scouts. Here is a breakdown of Service Unit [roles](#):



Service Unit Manager

Position Overview

Service Unit managers (like you!) provide the leadership and management of an assigned geographic area, ensuring the support of Girl Scout and adult membership and delivery of the **Girl Scout Leadership Experience**.

To get you started on planning your year, here's a list of responsibilities and a checklist of to-do's to get your Service Unit up and running for the year ahead!

Key Responsibilities:

- Communicate regularly with council staff.
- Schedule, plan, and facilitate regular Service Unit team/leader meetings.
- Share important Girl Scout information from **SUM Summaries** (Service Unit manager email) to your team.
- In collaboration with the Volunteer Engagement team, recruit, place, train, supervise, and recognize Service Unit team members.
- Monitor Service Unit finances in partnership with the Service Unit treasurer.
- Support Girl Scout **Juliettes** (individuals who participate outside of troops) in the Service Unit as necessary.
- Encourage all Service Unit team members to complete training for their position.
- Have a valid email address that can be shared with others (for Girl Scout-related business).
- Maintain positive relationships with staff, Service Unit team, parents, troop leaders, and community partners.

August–October

- Secure and confirm meeting space and time for all upcoming leader meetings.
- Welcome any new volunteers to Service Unit at leader meetings.
- Support recruitment efforts as needed.
- Recruit for open Service Unit positions.
- Highlight **Juliette Gordon Low's** Birthday (Oct. 31).

November–February

- Promote and ensure that all troops know about **cookie rallies**.
- Promote and ensure all troops know about **Snacks & Magazines Program**.
- Promote and ensure Service Unit representation at Girl Scouts River Valleys' **Annual Meeting**.
- Highlight **World Thinking Day** (February 22).

March–June

- Highlight/observe **Girl Scouts' Birthday** (March 12).
- Highlight/observe National Volunteers Week/Girl Scout Leader Day (April 22).
- Help identify and recruit for Service Unit team positions for upcoming year by June 30.
- Promote **Early Bird** membership registration at leader meetings.
- Celebrate success! Hold a Service Unit **Court of Awards/ Bridging** ceremony if possible.
- Hold an evaluation and planning meeting with team/volunteers/Girl Scouts River Valleys staff.
- Ensure treasurer submits the Girl Scout Finance Report by June 30.

*Find a full service unit calendar at:
gsrv.org/su-calendar*

Reflection

Evaluate and reflect on what you're thinking, feeling, and most excited for.

As a Service Unit manager, what are you most excited about this year?

Any hesitations?

Are there any changes you hope to make in your Service Unit? If yes, what? Who can help you?

What are your goals for the year?

What are the challenges and strengths specific to your Service Unit?

Any questions for your volunteer engagement coordinator?

*Revisit this page
at the end of the year to
look back and celebrate
your accomplish-
ments.*





*Training for positions
are available online.*

Service Unit Team Positions

Service Unit volunteers (annually appointed by council staff) are dedicated volunteers who are working to build the Girl Scout Leadership Experience in your community. Check out the available roles in the [volunteer catalog](#) and the role descriptions below.

Recruiter

Recruit volunteers and Girl Scouts and ensure that all Girl Scouts in the assigned service area have the opportunity to fully participate in Girl Scout programs and activities.

Upon Registration: Onboarding. Complete online orientation, training, and position agreement.

Recruit Volunteers to Help You Recruit: Mobilize people within the Service Unit, including Service Unit volunteers, troop leaders, and families, to help with recruitment and outreach.

August–September: Assist Girl Scouts River Valleys' recruitment team with back-to-school events, and consider hosting your own local sign-up event.

September–October: Host a troop formation rally. A great way to promote volunteerism and new troop formation.

Throughout the Season: Work closely with the registrar to verify new registrations and help develop your Service Unit's recruitment plan with the Service Unit manager and volunteer engagement coordinator.



*See new troop leader
resources on page 27.*



Troop Mentor

Welcome new troop leaders and connect them with the support they need including the Service Unit team, leader meetings, online training, and resources.

Upon Registration: Onboarding. Complete online orientation and position agreement.

September–November: Facilitate a new leader orientation for new troop leaders in your area.

September–October: Check in with new leaders to see if they have questions or concerns about the Snacks & Magazines program.

December–January: Check in with new leaders to see if they have questions or concerns about the Cookie Program.

March–May: Encourage and remind new troops to renew their memberships during the Early Bird campaign.

Throughout the year: Welcome call to new troop leaders. Call those new leaders and let them know about the amazing support you, your Service Unit, and the council has to offer.



Registrar

Assist the members in your Service Unit with registration and support accurate registrations for Snacks & Magazines, Cookie Program, and Early Bird membership renewal.

Upon Registration: Onboarding. Complete online orientation, training and position agreement.

August–September: Encourage Girl Scout registration. Girl Scouts River Valleys will provide access to [Looker](#), an online Roster database for you to maintain records.

September–October: Assist with member registration prior to Snacks & Magazines. Ensure Girl Scouts and troops who are interested in participating in the Snacks & Magazines sale are registered for the current membership year.

November–December: Assist with member registration prior to Cookie Program.

April–June: Encourage Early Bird registration. Send out reminders encouraging volunteers and families to become Early Birds by registering/renewing for the upcoming membership year.

Throughout the Year: Assist with maintaining troop records throughout the year by encouraging troops to update their [troop catalog listing](#) when they experience changes.



Treasurer

Provide general oversight and management of all Service Unit finances.

Upon Registration: Onboarding. Complete online orientation and position agreement.

September–October: Assist any new troops with setting up their bank account and ensure all troops that desire to sell Snacks & Magazines have a bank account.

November–January: Assist any new troops with setting up a bank account and ensure all troops that desire to sell cookies have a bank account.

May–July: Prepare and submit the Service Unit Finance Report by June 30. Send reminders to troops to fill out and submit finance reports by June 30. Assist disbanding troops with closing accounts and finalizing paperwork.

Throughout the Year: Manage Service Unit money. Provide a monthly Service Unit finance report to other volunteers. Collaborate with the Service Unit team to develop and maintain a budget throughout the year.





Cookie Manager

Coordinate the Cookie Program (largest girl-led entrepreneur program) at the Service Unit level including: training and mentoring troop cookie managers, leveling inventory among troops, assisting with cookie management software, and distributing rewards.

Upon Registration: Onboarding. Complete online orientation and position agreement.

November–December: Cookie Program training. Attend a virtual or in-person training given by Girl Scouts River Valleys and any additional online Cookie Program training.

November–January: Before-the-sale preparations. Facilitate an in-person or virtual training for troop cookie managers to prepare them for the sale and hand out cookie sale materials.

February–March: Manage troops during the sale. Monitor the Service Unit to ensure that troops properly manage inventory, allocate cookies to Girl Scouts, and facilitate the movement of inventory among troops to minimize cookie returns at the end of the sale.

March–May: Wrap-up after the sale. Monitor all troops within the Service Unit to ensure that they submit girl rewards on time, follow the cookie return policy, and submit Financial/Inventory Issue Form (if necessary).

Fall Product Manager

Promote and oversee the fall product program (Snacks & Magazines) by educating and supporting troops, managing orders via online ordering systems, and supporting delivery.

Upon Registration: Onboarding. Complete online orientation and position agreement.

September: Training and seller registration. Take our online Snacks & Magazines training. Familiarize yourself with the Service Unit and Troop Snacks & Magazines Guide.

September: Before-the-sale preparations. Make sure all troop fall product managers complete the online training. Assemble and distribute sale materials to participating troops.

October: Support participating troops. Girl Scouts can begin taking in-person and online orders. Ensure they are following sales dates and adhering to banking procedures.

October–December: Wrap-up after the sale. Snacks and rewards will be delivered to the fall product manager, then distributed to troop fall product managers.



Communications Representative

Enhance public awareness and support of Girl Scouts through regular two-way communication with local media and community contacts. Serve as a link between the community and Girl Scouts River Valleys' communications department.

Upon Registration: Onboarding. Complete online orientation, training and position agreement.

September–October: Get to know the Girl Scout brand. Read our Brand and Communications Resources article which includes resources like our style guide, logo files, photography, and more!

August–October: Promote the fall product program: Snacks & Magazines.

November–April: Promote the Cookie Program.

Throughout the Year: Create a communication plan for sharing information with council, local news outlets, and within your Service Unit. As shareable events happen, spread the word! To submit a story to council, visit gsrv.gs/YourStory.



Event Coordinator

Supervise the coordination of Service Unit events to ensure safety, risk management, adherence to policies, and connection to Girl Scout Leadership Experience outcomes.

Upon Registration: Onboarding. Complete online orientation, training and position agreement.

September–October: Create an event plan. It's helpful to start the year by creating a system for planning events in your Service Unit. This is a great time to think ahead about event-related insurance and earning money to pay for events.

September: Help host a Snacks & Magazines kick-off. Check in with the Service Unit fall product manager if they would like help planning and hosting an optional kick-off event.

January–February: Help host a cookie rally.



Outdoor Champion

Teach, support, and mentor troop leaders and other volunteers who are ready to lead Girl Scouts in nature activities, outdoor skills, and outdoor badges. An outdoor champion should be confident in their ability to lead a small group of adults through outdoor training activities, and should be passionate about getting outside!

Upon Registration: Onboarding. Complete online orientation and position agreement. Complete Outdoor Champion training with Girl Scouts River Valleys staff.

Throughout the Year: Promote and support outdoor activities. Regularly attend Service Unit team and leader meetings to promote and advise volunteers on how to go camping at Girl Scouts River Valleys camps as well as local, state, and national campgrounds. Additionally, you can encourage leaders to participate in Service Unit and council-sponsored outdoor events.

As outdoor-related events are being planned, be sure to follow guidelines found in Volunteer Essentials, Safety-Wise, and Safety Activity Checkpoints.

Day Camp Director

Plan and direct all phases of a [volunteer-led day camp](#).

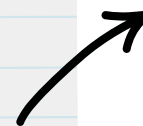
Responsibilities:

- Complete all required training as sponsored by Girl Scouts River Valleys.
- Maintain ongoing communication with the staff camp director and other council staff.
- Supervise the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the day camp program in designated Service Unit or area.
- Ensure the Girl Scout Mission, Promise, and Law is the basis for decision-making and delivery of the day camp program.
- Recruit, train, supervise, and provide ongoing support to the Day Camp Leadership Team.
- Ensure the Girl Scout Leadership Experience is the starting point for all day camp programming activities.
- Work within the risk management expectations as outlined in the Safety Activity Checkpoints and the Department of Health for the protection and safety of all day camp participants and volunteers.
- Ensure accurate reporting of day camp finances including records of income and expenses.
- Review and submit all end-of-season and program notes on time.
- Follow Girl Scouts of the USA and Girl Scouts River Valleys' policies, standards, and procedures.



*Learn more at:
Volunteers.*

*[Volunteers.GirlScoutsRSV.org/
day-camp](https://volunteers.girlscoutsRSV.org/day-camp)*



Delegates

Help shape and drive the governance of Girl Scouts River Valleys. A delegate is a voting member at the Annual Meeting and serves as the primary communication between your Girl Scout members, your community, and River Valleys' Board of Directors.

Upon Registration: Get elected or reelected. Complete the Delegate Submission Form.

September–October: Listen to your peers. To effectively represent the concerns and satisfactions of your whole Service Unit, attend meetings within your Service Unit and talk to your peers.

September–January: Prepare for your vote. In mid-December, you will receive a voting packet which outlines the annual meeting agenda, volunteer recognition lunch program, breakouts, and much more. Familiarize yourself with the parliamentary procedure.

February: Vote at the Annual Meeting.



See full Service Unit
volunteer role
descriptions at:
[Volunteers.](#)
[GirlScoutsRV.org](#)

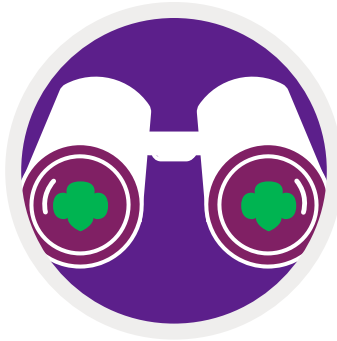
*We know your enthusiasm
will sell Girl Scouting!*

Recruiting Your Team

Service teams thrive when there is a committed and diverse pool of adults to be considered for positions. It's important to identify individuals who understand and can commit to fulfilling the Service Unit team position requirements. To get you started, here are some tips on recruiting superstar volunteers:



Familiarize yourself with the requirements needed for each of the volunteer positions.



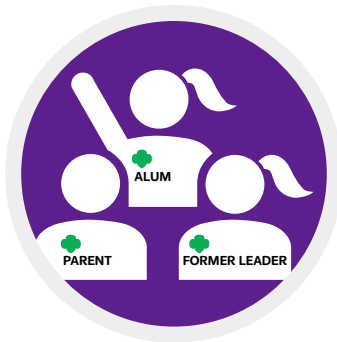
Observe the skills and abilities of others as they work in the Service Unit.



Consider skills an individual may want to develop that could apply in their career.



Make a personal request with a specific job in mind.



Consider recruiting former troop leaders, lifetime members, alums, and community members.



Be honest about the time commitment that the position will require.

Sometimes, you will have open positions in your Service Unit team and may need help getting those volunteer roles filled. Never fear, your volunteer engagement coordinator will help you recruit new team members! They will help guide and support your search for volunteers and give you advice along the way.



Position Appointment and Reappointment

Appointment/Reappointment Criteria

Girl Scouts River Valleys appoints/re-appoints a Service Unit volunteer based on the successful completion of position accountabilities, established goals, and meeting the overall criteria for appointment/reappointment (listed below). Volunteers can renew their position each year, subject to Girl Scouts River Valleys discretion.

- Complete a Girl Scout membership registration.
- Accept and support the Girl Scout Promise and Law.
- Have an approved criminal background check (conducted every three years).
- Complete training.
- Agree to fulfill the responsibilities of the volunteer position (completed online).
- Have a satisfactory performance overall.

New Service Unit managers, treasurers, and recruiters are required to complete an interview with Girl Scouts River Valleys staff prior to appointment.



Girl Scout Year

September

- Snacks & Magazines Program begins
- Renew your membership and prep for a great Girl Scout year

October

- Our new Girl Scout year officially begins: **Oct. 1**
- Founder's Day: **Oct. 31**
Honors Juliette Gordon Low's birthday
- International Day of the Girl
Oct. 11

November

- Cookie manager training begins

December

- Stop by your local Girl Scouts River Valleys shop for holiday gifts

January

- Nominate a volunteer for an Adult Award:
gsrv.gs/adult-awards

February

- Cookie Program begins
- Start promoting summer camp
- Attend the Annual Meeting
- World Thinking Day: **Feb. 22**
(Host a World Thinking Day event for your Service Unit and connect with international Girl Scout sisters)

March

Girl Scout Week includes:

- Girl Scout birthday: **Mar. 12**
- Girl Scout Sunday and Girl Scout Sabbath *(Give girls an opportunity to attend their place of worship and be recognized as a Girl Scout)*

April

- Girl Scout Leader's Day: **Apr. 22**
(A special day to thank volunteers for all they do)

May

- Renew your membership during Early Bird
- Complete Service Unit Year-end evaluations

June

- Highest Awards Ceremonies
(Celebrate the incredible work of our Gold and Silver Award earners)
- Summer camp begins

July

- Consider hosting a volunteer-led day camp

August

- We're gearing up for the new year by forming new troops, recruiting volunteers and girls!
- Attend Fall Launch

It's a Partnership!

Working With Your Volunteer Engagement Coordinator

Your **volunteer engagement coordinator** (council staff) is responsible for the support of Girl Scout membership and programs in assigned communities of the council's jurisdiction. This is done in partnership with Service Unit managers (You!) and members of your Service Unit team.

Developing a partnership with your volunteer engagement coordinator:

- 1. Build Trust.** One person may develop trust by just having a friendly conversation with someone, while another person may need more time to evolve to this level. As a volunteer Service Unit manager, you should bring a positive attitude, leadership knowledge, skills, and experience to enhance and add value to the partnership. (We promise to do the same!)
- 2. Set goals and expectations.** Goal-setting is helpful in determining realistic responsibilities of both partners. What do we expect from you? What do you expect from us? It's important we have a clear understanding on both sides so we can support each other as we work to achieve our goals for the Service Unit.
- 3. Communicate openly and frequently.** A successful partnership has open and frequent communication. Communication can be in the form of telephone calls, email, or setting appointments for personal visits, but it is important that communication occurs regularly. Developing clear expectations and standards for communication will not only provide support to you in your role, but will keep you in the know about council information.
 - Make sure you discuss any conflicts and/or issues facing the Service Unit.
 - Identify areas for growth with your volunteer engagement coordinator.
 - Identify needs of additional support with your volunteer engagement coordinator.
 - Share the Service Unit's successes with Girl Scouts River Valleys via Facebook (@GirlScoutsRV) or send an email to your volunteer engagement coordinator. (We love to hear how things are going!)



All volunteer engagement staff have earned a certificate in volunteer leadership from MAVA (Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration).

*Find out who your
volunteer engagement
coordinator is at:
gsrv.gs/su-support*

Girl Scout Programs and Events

The National Program Portfolio

The National Program Portfolio has two main parts—the National Leadership **Journeys** and ***The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting***. The National Program Portfolio is designed to help Girl Scouts develop as leaders and build confidence by learning new skills and ensures that Girl Scouts at every **program grade level** are sharing a powerful, national experience—Girl Scouts together changing the world!

There are seven different Leadership Journey series:

- It's Your Story—Tell It!
- It's Your Planet—Love It!
- It's Your World—Change It!
- Outdoor Leadership Journeys
- Think Like and Engineer
- Think Like a Programmer
- Think Like a Citizen Scientist

The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting is where Girl Scouts (and adults) can find exciting badges, information on bridging, **Highest Awards**, Girl Scout history, traditions, and much more!

Council Programs

Girl Scouts River Valleys offers a wide variety of programs and events that enrich Girl Scouts' experiences in Girl Scouting. Programs and events are listed on the council website (GirlScoutsRV.org) and our [Events Catalog](#). Troop leaders are also informed of special programs and promotions via email updates. Programs, activities, and badge/patch-earning events include:

- Product Program (Snacks & Magazines and the Cookie Program)
- Girl Scout Camp: Day, Troop, and Resident Camps
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) events
- Community programs and resources
- Outdoor programs and activities
- Girl Scout travel opportunities (Getaways and Destinations)
- Highest Awards ceremonies

Service Unit Programs and Events

Your Service Unit can plan programs annually for Girl Scouts and their families in your area. Service Unit event coordinators oversee all events and activities to make sure they are following safety checkpoints and standards of good programming, and they are focused on the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

Service Unit programs and events help Girl Scouts see beyond the troop and connect with other Girl Scouts and adults in their communities. Events commonly hosted by Service Units include: community-wide service projects, summer day camps, family events, cookie rallies, World Thinking Day celebrations, and more! Training, forms, and program planning guides and support are offered by the council. Visit us at: Volunteers.GirlScoutsRV.org/service-units/



Facilitating Communications

Communication is the key to Service Unit success. As lives become busier and technology advances, individual volunteers may have different preferred communication methods. That's why it's important that Service Unit managers keep the lines of communication open and utilize text, email, Rallyhood, or whatever works best for your team!

While you hold the responsibility for facilitating communication, each team member is responsible for creating an environment that allows all volunteers' voices to be heard. And don't forget, Girl Scouts River Valleys is here to help! We have resources available, and we're just a phone call away if you want personal support.

Tips for good communication:

- There should be a forum for open discussion.
- Discuss expectations for communication and different roles.
- Recognize the different needs, motivations, and availability of volunteers.
- Identify who the volunteers can go to for help if they have questions (including GSRV!).
- Address conflicts immediately when presented by team members (See page 26 for more!)
- Contact your volunteer engagement coordinator for guidance and support.



What's Rallyhood?

- [Rallyhood](#) is an all-in-one platform for Girl Scout communication and collaboration, combining many of the tools Girl Scout Service Units and troop leaders use to communicate with other volunteers and families; manage event promotion, registration, and payment; share photos; post, respond, and collaborate with other volunteers and parents and more.

Communications From Girl Scouts River Valleys

You'll receive communication from your volunteer engagement coordinator throughout the year, but Girl Scouts River Valleys also sends emails to our members and volunteers (filled with updates, resources, and exciting opportunities!).

Below are the email series* we send out:

SUM Summaries

Sent to: Service Unit managers on the third Wednesday of the month.



Leading the Troops

Sent to: Troop leaders and troop mentors on the second Wednesday of the month.



Connections

Sent to: All Girl Scouts River Valleys members on the first and third Fridays of the month.



In a Nutshell

Sent to: Service Unit and troop volunteers bi-weekly on Thursdays (October–December).



The Cookie Press (Service Unit edition!)

Sent to: Service Unit managers and Service Unit cookie managers every Thursday (November–April).



Recruiter Round-Up


Sent to: Service Unit recruiters and Service Unit managers on Mondays, 1–2 times a month (July–November).



*Contact us if your volunteers are not
receiving emails relating to their role.
We don't want them to miss out!*

*Audience, schedule, and frequency are subject to change.





Remember! A successful meeting should include team and skill building and task completion.

Managing Your Leader Meetings

Make them great and keep leaders coming back

Service Units can meet monthly, every other month, quarterly—it's up to you and your team to determine a frequency that works best for your Service Unit. Service Unit meetings are a valuable opportunity to share updates, generate ideas, and build relationships.

Call the Meeting:

- Coordinate with Service Unit team members to select a meeting date and time.
- Determine your space! Find a physical space such as a school or business, or use Zoom to [facilitate a meeting virtually](#).
 - Request a Service Unit zoom account [here](#).
- Consider using multiple communication channels to maximize how many volunteers you reach; email, Rallyhood, or social media! Setting a standard date and time is beneficial in establishing regular attendance.
 - Make arrangements if equipment is needed (projector, markers, laptop, screen, etc.)
 - Allot time for open floor discussions.
- Send out a recap of your meeting so volunteers who couldn't make it can stay up to date with what is happening in your Service Unit!

Work Together to Set the Agenda:

- Solicit topics from team members to be discussed.
- Determine best order of topics and how much time is needed.
- Conduct meetings in an efficient manner with a defined timeline.
- Ensure that team members are connected with each other and are empowered to deliver presentations and make informed decisions.

Set the Climate:

- Greet volunteers as they arrive (and try to say "goodbye" when they leave).
- If you're hosting a virtual meeting, allot time for [an icebreaker](#) to warm up the room!
- Arrange with troop mentors for introduction of new volunteers.
- Make sure all necessary handouts are present.
- Arrange for a note-taker, if needed.

Conduct the Meeting:

- Start on time.
- Adhere to the agenda.
- Guide discussion.
- Summarize the conclusions reached.
- Develop rapport.
- Don't read to them.
- Keep it short.
- Speak clearly (vary your speed/pitch, don't rush).
- Have other team members present, involve the audience if possible.
- Smile and look at your audience.
- Have fun!
- End on time.

Pro tip!

Download the monthly meeting agenda (PDF) provided in SUM Summaries. Feel free to customize it, it's fillable! See example on page 22.

Monthly Agenda

_____ Service Unit

We'll send you a monthly agenda (PDF) in each SUM Summaries email issue.

Time	Topic	Presenter

Council News & Updates	
Mark Your Calendars: Council Upcoming Events & More See our full volunteer calendar at: gsrv.gs/volunteer-calendar	

Service Unit News & Updates	
Service Unit Upcoming Events	

Service Unit Bank Accounts

Each Service Unit must have a checking account. This account must be used solely in support of the Girl Scout program. Here are a few procedures to follow:

- There must be at least two authorized signers, none of whom are related to each other, on Service Unit accounts. These signers may include, but are not limited to the Service Unit manager/the Service Unit treasurer.
- All volunteers that handle money must be currently registered Girl Scout members and have successfully completed the volunteer onboarding process and background screening prior to opening the bank account.
- Service Unit bank accounts and the funds therein are subject to being randomly audited by Girl Scouts River Valleys.
- Reimbursement from Service Unit accounts should be only made with appropriate supporting documentation and receipts.
- The annual [Service Unit Finance Report](#), accompanied by a copy of the May 31 banking statement, must be submitted online by June 30. These reports are reviewed by Service Unit treasurers, Service Unit managers, and council staff.
- The Service Unit exists to support troop/group programming. In order to cover related administrative costs and create opportunities for inter-troop/group activities, Service Units will need to develop an operating budget. This budget will reflect anticipated income and expenses for the upcoming Girl Scout year. Keep in mind that your volunteer engagement coordinator is [here to help with this process](#) as needed!
- All bank statements, check registers, and supporting documentation (receipts, invoices, canceled checks, etc.) must be maintained for seven years by the Service Unit manager or treasurer.
- Service Units may not hold money-earning events or activities.



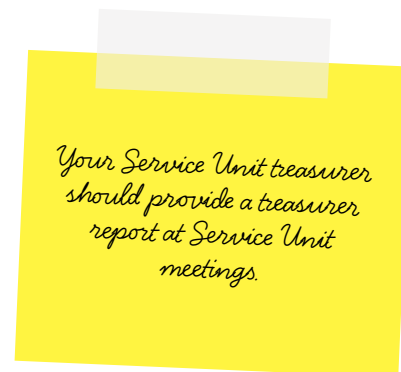
Each Service Unit can receive an annual funding check in the fall from Girl Scouts River Valleys to offset administrative costs. Funding depends on submission of finance report and size of the Service Unit..



Managing the Accounts

The Service Unit manager or treasurer is responsible for coordinating deposits, expenditures, and financial reporting for and to the Service Unit. Since the money belongs to the Service Unit, it is important that the management of funds is transparent for the volunteers as well as the council.

Purchasing supplies and requesting reimbursements correctly for Service Units is an essential part of [managing your bank account](#). Follow these guidelines to keep the process easy for you and your Service Unit:



Purchases

Whenever possible, purchase supplies, equipment, goods, and services with the Service Unit debit card. Use the Sales Tax Exempt form for all purchases (except in Girl Scout shops). It is also important to only use the Service Unit bank account for appropriate Service Unit expenses, including but not limited to:

- Supplies, goods, and services purchased for Service Unit use
- Service Unit events and field trips
- Volunteer recognitions (i.e., leader recognition awards and pins)
- Purchase of food for Service Unit meetings

Debit Cards

Each Service Unit may obtain a debit card to be used for payments. The card is for official Girl Scout business only.

- Debit cards should only be issued to currently registered Service Unit managers or treasurers that have completed a background check.
- The card holder is responsible for obtaining purchase receipts, securing the card, and is legally responsible for the transactions posted to the card.
- Debit card expenditures should be reconciled monthly to ensure that there are no unauthorized expenditures to the account.
- Inappropriate debit card usage will result in forfeiture of the debit card privilege.
- Credit cards will not be authorized, since borrowing money is not allowed for Service Unit accounts.



Delegating Tips

(You don't have to go at it alone!)

As a Service Unit manager, you can begin supporting your team by delegating tasks. Not only is it okay to ask for help, it's important to delegate work to allow team members to become comfortable in their position, build skills, and demonstrate their leadership abilities in the Service Unit.

How do you make delegation work?

- Maintain regular communication
- Be interested in other ideas and viewpoints
- Assign tasks based on strengths and interests
- Practice letting go with smaller tasks
- Set expectations and priorities

Pitfalls to avoid:

- Coercing volunteers into jobs they'd rather not do
- Letting someone continue in a job when nothing is getting done
- Asking the wrong person to do the job
- Asking the same people repeatedly
- Trying to answer every question

Remember to keep team members engaged. Support them by allowing them to answer questions, and share their expertise.

EXAMINE YOUR UNDERSTANDING

What does delegating mean to you?

1. Name a time when you should have delegated and did not. What were the results?

2. Name a time you successfully delegated. What were the results?

3. If I do all or many of the jobs myself, what message will that send to my team members? Will I burn out?



Conflict Resolution

In this section, we will provide some useful conflict resolution tools. Please keep in mind that Girl Scouts River Valleys staff is here to support and help resolve any conflict that arises.

Defining Conflict

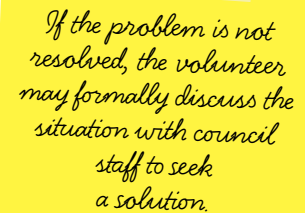
Defining conflict and understanding why it occurs is the first step to preventing it or learning how to handle it. Some typical definitions or types of conflict include:

- Differences of opinion
- Disagreements on how to handle issues
- Complaints about performance or direction
- Financial disagreements
- Criticism of behaviors or attitudes

Conflict Management Behaviors

The following behaviors can be useful in helping you effectively deal with conflict:

- Use “I” statements. Let the other party know how you feel when the conflict is occurring, as well as your reaction to the conflict. Also let the other person know which of your rights you feel is being ignored in the conflict. Example: “*I don’t like it when you don’t follow through on your assigned tasks. It makes it difficult for me to do my job, if yours isn’t getting done. This behavior is not considerate to me or my time.*”
- Be assertive, not aggressive. Speak about your feelings and your reactions. Keep the statements focused on how you are behaving, thinking, and feeling rather than on how the other is acting. Try to take the emotions out of it and focus on the issue or behavior that has caused the conflict.
- Speak calmly and rationally. In this way you will be listened to, and you will be able to maintain better control of yourself. Otherwise, the other person may take on a defensive attitude.
- Avoid blaming. This will keep the communication flow going. It encourages understanding and empathy. It recognizes that for a conflict to exist there must be at least two parties who are adversely affected by the conflict.
- Create an atmosphere of cooperation. In an attempt to create an environment of cooperation after a conflict, all parties involved must feel that they are being listened to and understood, and that their rights are being respected. They must have a desire to work things out, and they must be committed to the process of working through the problems.



If the problem is not resolved, the volunteer may formally discuss the situation with council staff to seek a solution.

Wrapping Up Your Year

1. Service Unit Evaluations—Reflect and Connect:

To help in the planning and evaluation process, and get the most out of your time, we recommend using the [Service Unit Planning & Evaluation Packet](#) as your guide and customize it for your Service Unit as needed. After connecting with your team, anyone on the team can complete the Service Unit Planning Evaluation Form to share with your [volunteer engagement coordinator](#).



2. Submit a Girl Scout Finance Report:

All Service Units must complete and submit an annual finance report. Reports are submitted online and are required in order to receive funding and bonuses from Girl Scout River Valleys. The Service Unit manager ensures the Service Unit finance report is submitted in the absence of a Treasurer. Find the online report at gsrv.gs/girl-scout-finance-report.



New Troop Leader Resources

Being a brand-new troop leader is exciting! At the same time, it can also be a bit overwhelming. It's important that new leaders have a solid foundational knowledge so they can confidently deliver fun, safe, and meaningful Girl Scout experiences. That's why we have a few resources you can share with new leaders with helpful advice on getting their troop going and leading with gusto!

The Troop Mentor

The troop mentor's role is rewarding, fun, and important. The troop mentor welcomes new leaders and introduces them to resources and support including: the Service Unit team, leader meetings, troop support, and online trainings and resources.

New Leader Guide

The [New Leader Guide](#) is a handy resource for new leaders and includes a troop leader checklist, history on Girl Scouts and our leading lady (Juliette Gordon Low), traditions and lingo, tips from troop leaders who have been in their shoes, and more!



New Leader Cohort

Brand new leaders are invited to join a [new leader cohort](#) to jumpstart their Girl Scout year alongside other new leaders. Invitations are sent directly to new leaders via email after their registration is fully processed. Led by Girl Scouts River Valleys staff, new leaders receive training, meeting plans, and a whole network of support. Training is offered through virtual group meetings or in-person meetups. See upcoming training dates in gsEvents.

Volunteer Toolkit

The [Volunteer Toolkit \(VTK\)](#) is a digital resource developed by Girl Scouts of the USA specifically for troop leaders where they can view their troop roster, plan meetings, access program resources, send meeting reminders, and more. While this tool is available to all leaders, new troop leaders may find it especially helpful in planning out their year. Think of it as the “administrative assistant” to the troop leader! Troop leaders can access VTK by logging into MyGS.

Subscribe to:
in the **loop**
a helpful blog for
troop leaders:
[gsrv.gs/
in-the-loop](https://gsrv.gs/in-the-loop)

*Share it with all of your troop leaders, it's full of
useful tips and stories from the field!*

Council Resources

for all volunteers

Girl Scouts River Valleys' website (GirlScoutsRV.org) is your portal to lots of resources for Girl Scouts and adults. This is a great place to find the council's calendar of events, activities listed by grade level, training opportunities for adults, and more! Our website is a treasure trove full of information, so we picked out a few things that might help you along the way. The following resources are located on the council website and are available for all volunteers.

Volunteer References:

Girl Scouts River Valleys Policies | gsrv.gs/reference-policies

Girl Scouts River Valleys policies are your primary source of guidance when it comes to knowing your responsibilities as a volunteer.

Volunteer Essentials | gsrv.gs/volunteer-essentials-pdf

Volunteer Essentials is a manual of Girl Scout program and activity guidelines published by Girl Scouts of the USA for volunteers to use as needed. Think of Volunteer Essentials as your encyclopedia to Girl Scout volunteering. It's there when you need it. But, rest assured, there's no need for you to read the entire document.

Health, Safety, and Using Safety-Wise | Volunteers.GirlScoutsRV.org/safety-wise

Safety-Wise is a section of Volunteer Essentials that is a good reference for knowing your responsibilities for keeping Girl Scouts safe. Safety-Wise includes checklists and resources to help you know what is required for Girl Scout activities. You can find Safety-Wise and other information about keeping Girl Scouts safe on the Health, Safety, and Using Safety-Wise page of the volunteer website.

Volunteer Site:

Volunteer Website | Volunteers.GirlScoutsRV.org

Your one-stop shop for all-things volunteer-related! You'll find nuggets of good information like reference articles, forms, position overviews, and volunteer training resources—we even have a full Service Unit directory.

Committees and Advisory Groups

Committees and advisory groups are made up of volunteers such as members of the elected Board of Directors, Alums, and community members with particular expertise and a shared passion for the Girl Scout mission. In addition to these groups, volunteer committees and advisory groups contribute significantly to the success of Girl Scouts River Valleys. Learn more [here](#).

Service Unit Volunteer Online Meet-Ups:

Join us for up-to-date Girl Scouts River Valleys news relating to Service Units. On the 3rd Tuesday of every month, we cover different topics and give volunteers an opportunity for discussion. All Service Unit volunteers will receive Zoom invitations and recaps via email.

Volunteer Appreciation

We wouldn't (and couldn't!) be able to serve the thousands of Girl Scouts at Girl Scouts River Valleys without the support, dedication, and commitment of our Girl Scout volunteers. If you know of any volunteers who go above and beyond their role description, please nominate them for an adult award, or informally recognize them through a small token of appreciation or shout-out—they'll appreciate the recognition!

Adult Awards and Pins

Adult awards (including pins) are available to formally recognize exemplary, measurable service of adult Girl Scouts who go "above and beyond" the expectations of their volunteer position. Volunteers, as well as Girl Scouts and their families, may nominate someone for an award. Learn more about adult awards at gsrv.gs/adult-awards.

Informal Volunteer Recognition

Thanking and celebrating your fellow service team volunteers and troop leaders doesn't need to be time-consuming or expensive. Most people love a simple and heartfelt thank you note with a personalized message. Other ideas include:

- Giving a small or homemade gift.
- Bringing snacks to a leader meeting.
- Sharing positive feedback.
- Promoting them to new roles.

Check out other ideas for formal/informal volunteer recognition and appreciation (including our Pinterest Volunteer Appreciation board at gsrv.gs/adult-awards).



To celebrate YOU as a Girl Scout volunteer, we want you to join us for Fall Launch in the summer! We'll come together to learn and have a good ol' green time (more info will be sent to you).

Volunteer Years of Service Pins and Membership Numeral Pins recognize adult members and volunteers who have been involved in Girl Scouts for at least five years. Learn more [here](#).

Glossary



Annual Meeting

The yearly gathering of the council's governing body, including delegates selected from Service Units, delegates-at-large appointed by the council's Board of Directors, and members of the Board Development Committee.

Badges

Girl Scouts earn badges in a variety of skill areas to help them grow into well-rounded adults. Badges are official awards worn on the front of the sash or vest.

Bridging

When a Girl Scout graduates from one program grade-level to another (Daisy to Brownie, Junior to Cadette, etc.). Bridging ceremonies typically take place toward the end of a membership year and are sometimes combined with a Court of Awards ceremony.

Court of Awards

A ceremony to present badges and earned recognitions at any grade level typically held at the end of the school year.

Cookie Go Day

The day the cookie program begins each year.

Cookie Program

The largest girl-led entrepreneurial program in the world which generates immeasurable benefits for Girl Scouts, their councils, and communities nationwide. At Girl Scouts River Valleys, cookies are available for Girl Scouts to sell in February and March.

Cookie Rallies

An optional activity that can be planned by the Service Unit team, a troop in the Service Unit, or even older Girl Scouts to build excitement around the upcoming cookie sale. They can be held any time on or before Cookie Go Day.

Delegate

A voting member at the Annual Meeting who serves as a primary communication between their local Service Unit, Girl Scout members, community networks, and Girl Scouts River Valleys' Board of Directors. Alternate delegates are not voting members, but take the primary delegate's position should they resign.

Early Bird

Girl Scouts River Valleys' spring Early Bird renewal season is an opportunity for current Girl Scout members to renew their membership for the upcoming Girl Scout year (and get in on some great perks!). Service Unit Volunteers are strongly encouraged to register and renew their role during the Early Bird registration period.



Girl Scouts' Birthday

March 12, 1912 marks the day when Juliette Gordon Low first registered the organization's 18 Girl Scouts in Savannah, GA.

**Girl Scout
Leadership Experience
(GSLE)**

Girl Scout programming centers on what we call the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, or GSLE—a collection of engaging, challenging, and fun activities like earning badges, going on awesome trips, selling cookies, exploring science, getting outdoors, and doing community service projects. Activities are girl-led, which gives Girl Scouts the opportunity to learn by doing in a cooperative learning environment.

Girl-led

An idea that Girl Scouts of every grade level take an active role in determining what, where, when, why, and how they'll structure activities. Adults provide guidance, ensuring that planning, organization, and set-up are age-appropriate. Evaluation of all activities is done jointly with Girl Scouts and is integral to a high-quality Girl Scout experience.

**Girl Scout Leadership Outcomes
(GSLE Outcomes)**

Girl Scouts benefit from the GSLE in five important ways: Strong sense of self, positive values, challenge seeking, healthy relationships, and community problem solving.

**Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.
(GSUSA)**

National organization of Girl Scouts headquartered in New York, NY. Membership dues are paid to GSUSA. Their website is www.girlscouts.org.

Girl Scout Member

Any Girl Scout, volunteer or parent adult who is registered for the current Girl Scout year is considered a member.

**Girl Scouts River Valleys
(GSRV)**

We are one of 111 Girl Scout councils that make up the national Girl Scout Movement.

Girl Scout Week

Annual celebration during the week of March 12 (the Girl Scout Birthday) to celebrate the beginning of Girl Scouts in the USA.



**Highest Awards
(Bronze, Silver,
and Gold)**

The highest awards that a Junior (Bronze), Cadette (Silver), and Senior/Ambassador (Gold) can earn by completing a Take Action project with their community.

Journeys

The key program component to the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Journeys are an extended engagement with a topic that teach today's Girl Scouts what it takes to be a leader. There are seven Journey series that teach the three keys to leadership: Discover, Connect, and Take Action. Also known as Journey Awards.

Juliettes

Juliette Girl Scouts are registered Girl Scout members, in grades K-12, who are not affiliated with a troop. Juliettes complete Girl Scout activities individually with the guidance of an adult mentor.

Juliette Gordon Low



Born on October 31, 1860, Juliette was a compassionate, curious, and independent woman and was interested in nature, art, animals, and athletics. In 1912, she founded the Girl Scout organization.

Looker

An online tool that core Service Unit volunteers can use to access real time membership data for their Service Unit.

MyGS

Where troop leaders and members login online to renew their Girl Scout membership, volunteer roles, and member details.

Patches/Fun Patch

Unofficial recognitions for participation in a troop/group or council-wide event that are worn on the back of the sash or vest.

Program Grade Level (PGL)

Girl Scouting is divided into six different program grade levels: Daisy (K–1), Brownie (2–3), Junior (4–5), Cadette (6–8), Senior (9–10), and Ambassador (11–12).

Safety Activity Checkpoints

A GSUSA reference guide that outlines policies and guidelines for specific Girl Scouting activities. These guidelines include how to safely prepare, lead, and participate in a variety of activities such as swimming, hiking, horseback riding, hayrides, and theme parks.

Service Unit Position Agreement

An online form that all service unit team members are required to complete agreeing to their position description(s) each year.

Snacks & Magazines

The Snacks & Magazines sale (also known as Fall Product Program) lasts for four weeks beginning the end of September and ending near the end of October. Girl Scouts can sell magazine subscriptions, nuts, and chocolates online or in-person. Sales are limited to family and friends and it's a great way to add to the troop treasury, or for new troops to earn start-up funds.

SUM Summaries

An e-newsletter crafted just for Service Unit managers to provide relevant and timely information so they feel supported, equipped, and prepared for their volunteer role. It is sent the fourth Wednesday of every month to Service Unit managers.

S.W.A.P.S.

“SWAPS” is a clever acronym for “Special Whatchamacallits Affectionately Pinned Somewhere.” SWAPS are small tokens or keepsakes that are traded amongst Girl Scouts (and adults) and serve as a reminder of a special event.



The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting

A guidebook for each program grade level full of information about being a Girl Scout and how to earn legacy badges.

Troops

Groups of Girl Scouts who are led by a troop leader and gather together to participate in Girl Scout activities like earning badges, going on field trips, and exploring the outdoors.

Troop Catalog

The online troop catalog is where Girl Scout families go to find local troop options for their Girl Scouts.

Troop Leader

A Girl Scout volunteer and leader of a troop who helps deliver the Girl Scout Leadership Experience to all Girl Scouts.

Volunteer Engagement Coordinator

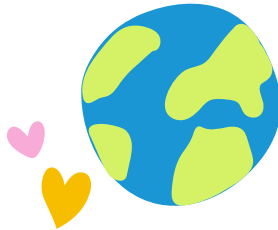
A council staff member who supports volunteers in a specific region within Girl Scouts River Valleys' council.

W.A.G.G.S.
**(World Association of
Girl Guides and Girl Scouts)**

Worldwide organization of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts with over 146 member countries to which GSUSA belongs. WAGGGS headquarters are in London, England.

World Thinking Day

Celebrated since 1926, World Thinking Day (Feb. 22) is a day of international friendship, supporting causes that affect Girl Scouts, and fundraising for 10 million Girl Guides and Girl Scouts around the world. Activities traditionally teach about the cultures and traditions of WAGGGS member countries.





GirlScoutsRV.org | 800-845-0787