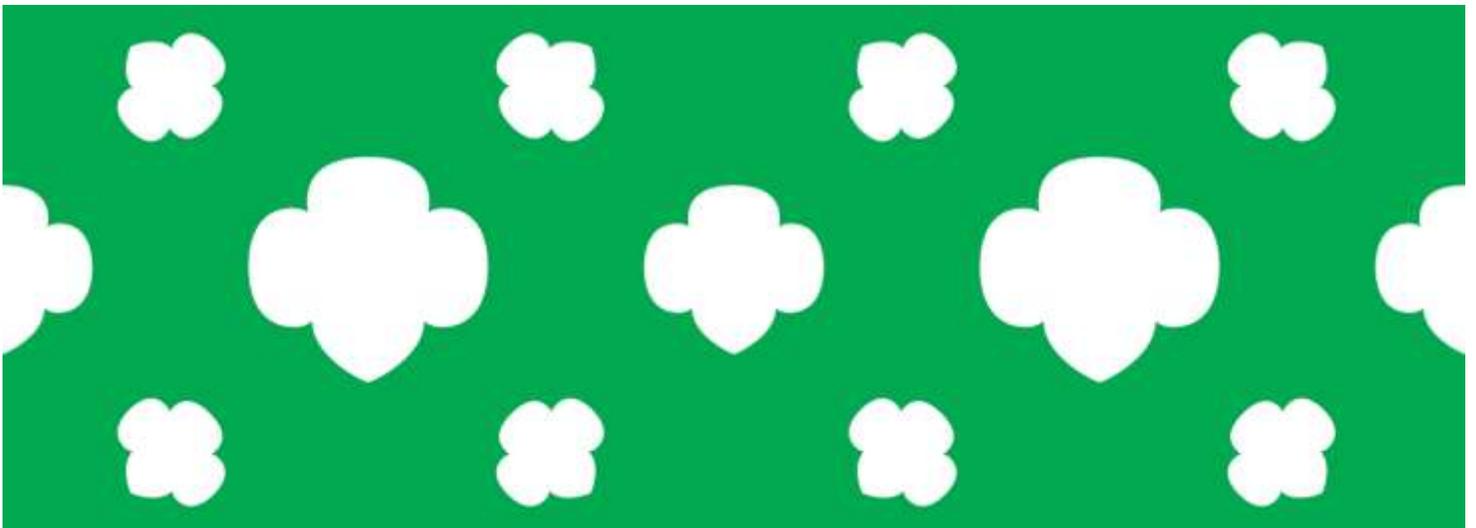


Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana

For Travel Volunteers **2020-2021**

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



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Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana

Geographic Subdivisions

Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana's jurisdiction includes the following counties:

Contact Information:

Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana, Inc.
5000 E Virginia Street, Suite 2
Evansville, IN 47715

Telephone: (812) 421-4970

Website: www.girlscouts-gssi.org

Email: support@girlscouts-gssi.org

Facebook Page for Council Updates:

Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana

Facebook Page for Leader Support:

Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana Volunteers



Office Hours:

Monday-Friday - 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Closed on Saturday and Sunday

Special extended hours during February and March.

See website for details.

Girl Scout Shop Hours:

(located at the council office)

January, February, June, July, November, December:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday - 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Thursday - 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Closed on Saturday and Sunday

Seasonal hours during the months of August, September, October, March, April, May:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday – 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday – 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Thursday – 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Closed on Saturday and Sunday except the first Saturday of the month – 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Special extended hours during February and March during the cookie sale.

*Exceptions to regular office and shop hours are announced on the council website www.girlscouts-gssi.org, in the e-newsletter, and GSSI social media.

GSSI Guide For Travel Volunteers

Some of the most memorable moments in a Girl Scout's life happen while taking trips. Travel offers a wealth of opportunities for girls to develop leadership, confidence, and practical life skills. This guide can help you and your girls prepare for local, regional, or international travel.

Review [GSSI Policies and Standards](#) that pertain to Travel located in the Policies and Standards Guide listed under [Resources](#) on GSSI's website, as well as, sections in the [Volunteer Essentials](#) and [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) that relate to your travel activity.

Review [COVID-19 Back-to-Troop Recommendations & Guidance](#), [GSSI COVID-19 Guidelines Chart](#), and [A Troop Leader's Guide to Permission Forms, 2020-2021](#) for specifics on Coronavirus updates and Permission Forms required.

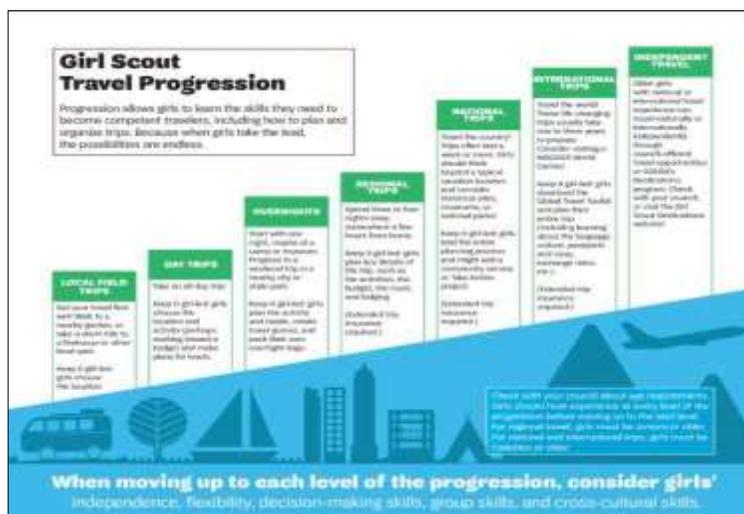
Traveling with Girls

Girl Scouts is a great place for girls to learn how to plan and take exciting trips, because travel is built on a progression of activities—one activity leads to the next. Daisies can begin with a discovery walk. As girls grow in their travel skills and can better manage the planning process, they progress to longer trips—even international ones!

For Daisies, this could mean a day trip to an arboretum as part of the Journey they are working on. For Seniors or Ambassadors, it might mean whitewater rafting in Costa Rica or exploring the Our Chalet World Center in Switzerland. Please see the [Girl Scout Guide to U.S. Travel](#).

Although many troops decide to travel together, Girl Scouts might join a trip with other girls from around their council, or form a new troop with other girls who like to travel. Girl Scouts of the USA offers individual Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors the chance to travel independently and meet other Girl Scouts from across the country through the Destinations program.

The [recommended progression of trips and travel](#) for Girl Scouts is included in this link:



Local Field Trips (Daisies and older): A walk to a nearby garden or a short ride by car or public transportation to a firehouse or courthouse is a great first step for Daisies. Keep it girl-led: girls can choose the location!

Day trip (Daisies and older): An all-day visit to a point of historical or natural interest (bringing their own lunch) or a daylong trip to a nearby city (stopping at a restaurant for a meal) allows younger girls to select locations and do much of the trip-planning, while never being too far from home. Keep it girl-led: girls can choose the location and an activity (maybe a badge activity?) and help make plans for lunch.

Note: Full-day trips may be very challenging for Daisies, especially for kindergarteners who have not experienced short trips. Make sure girls take some short trips before they progress to a full day trip.

Overnight & Weekend Trips (Daisies and older): A trip of one—or possibly two—nights away could start with one night camping or staying at a Girl Scout property and progress to a visit to a state or national park, or nearby city for sightseeing, staying in a hotel, motel, or campground— or even an overnight at a large museum! These short trips are just long enough to get girls excited about travel, but not long enough to generate homesickness. Keep it girl-led: girls plan the activity and meals, create travel games, and pack their own bags.

Note: A Daisy troop may participate in an overnight experience if the girls are ready. Brownie troops can participate up to two nights. For camp this differs: girls who have completed kindergarten may independently participate at day camp and in resident camp experiences lasting up to three nights. Girls who have completed first grade may independently participate in resident camp experiences lasting four or more nights.

Regional Trips (Juniors and older): Three or four nights camping or staying in a hotel, motel, or hostel within the girls' home region take girls up to a few hours away from home. Keep it girl-led: girls plan key details of the trip such as activities, the budget, the route, and lodging.

National trips (Cadettes and older): Travel anywhere in the country can often last a week or more. Try to steer clear of ordinary recreational trips girls might take with their families and consider those that offer some educational component—such as incredible cities, historic sites, and museums around the country. Perhaps the girls want to plan a trip to some national parks as part of the Girl Scout Ranger program. Keep it girl-led: girls lead the entire planning process and might plan to add a community service or Take Action project.

International trips (Cadettes and older): Travel around the world can require one to three years of preparation. Ensure passports, documentation, visas, and customs requirements are in order well in advance of your trip. International trips are available to Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors, but only to those who have successfully participated in a progression of overnight and extended trips within Girl Scouting. Keep it girl-led: girls download [the Global Travel Toolkit](#), and plan their entire trip – including learning about language, culture, passports & visas, exchange rates, etc.

Independent Travel (Cadettes and older): Older girls who already have national or international travel experience can travel independently through council-offered travel opportunities or GSUSA's Destinations program. For opportunities, check with your council and visit the [Destinations website](#).

When thinking about progression, consider things like girls’:

- Ability to be away from parents and their homes
- Ability to adapt to unfamiliar surroundings and situations
- Ability to make decisions for themselves and the good of the group well and easily
- Ability to get along with each other and handle challenges
- Previous cross-cultural experiences, skills, interests, and language skills (where applicable)

Non–Girl Scouts. If you plan to include non–Girl Scouts on your trip, such as siblings, they should also be the same appropriate grade level in progression with travel experience. For example, an eight-year-old sibling of a Senior should not participate in an international trip. And remember, you will have to purchase **supplemental insurance** for nonmembers.

WAGGGS World Centers or your Girl Scout council may have additional or different guidelines regarding age requirements for international travel.

Learn More:

- **WAGGGS World Centers**
- **Girl Scout Guide to U.S. Travel**
- **International events through Girl Scouts**
- Girl Scouts’ **Destinations program**
- U.S. passports and international travel: **U.S. Department of State**
- Travelers’ health (vaccines, medicine, advice): **Centers for Disease Control**
- **Girl Scout Global Travel Toolkit**

Safety Activity Checkpoints

Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) found in the **Safety Activity Checkpoints** ahead of time before taking girls out for this activity. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong such as an accident, physical injury to a girl or adult, missing girl, or sudden illness.

Plan Transportation in Advance. Keep in mind that 15-passenger model vans have historically been flagged as a safety concern by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and are not allowed. Prior council level approval is required to determine if the vehicle is statutorily permitted and meets safety criteria. Always consult your council for prior approval before opting to rent or lease these vehicles to transport girls. Commercially operated shuttles (as with an airport service) are permitted.

For chartered buses and vehicles, always verify safety credentials, commercial driving licenses, and the use of seatbelts. Make certain proper insurance is in place by requesting a certificate of insurance with a minimum of \$1 million in auto liability coverage. School buses require a minimum of \$5 million in auto liability.

Choose accommodations wisely. Girl Scout groups may stay in a variety of overnight accommodations. Evaluate all options with a view to safety, cost, amenities, distance to planned sights or transportation, parking, and insurance. Consider:

- Girl Scout **camp**s and facilities, or **WAGGGS World Centers**.
- National, state, or local campgrounds, many of which offer cabins to rent. Try **reserveamerica.com**.
- Hostels. **HI USA** offers Girl Scout-ready hostels in the U.S.
- Hotels. Consider suites and adjoining rooms to enhance supervision.

Airbnb, VRBO and HomeAway. These are permitted; however, because these are privately owned properties, it can be difficult to qualify safety and credibility. For these reasons, additional steps for Airbnb, VRBO and Homeaway are required. Confirm the following ahead of time:

- The rental is for exclusive use of the home. No other renters will have access to the home during the rental period.
- The space has smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors, and fire extinguishers (these are noted as amenities on booking sites).
- The home and host have substantial, positive visitor reviews. Don't book places with negative, few or no reviews. Look for superhost status on Airbnb.
- The liability insurance from the host covers premises for commercial use, with a minimum of \$1,000,000 General Liability insurance.
- Check the host's profile or identity verification. You may be asked to do the same, as a renter.
- The local host or manager contact info is available for immediate needs. Share this information with an in-town contact (a person not on the trip).
- Check state laws to see if Airbnb, VRBO and Homeaway are mandated to meet hotel laws and standards so that you know there is an extra layer of protection.

Check accommodations on arrival. No matter what housing you book, inspect premises with the group immediately on arrival. Let the front desk or host know if you find any deficiencies.

Maintain a budget margin so that you can move to another location if you find a property unsafe. Here are several points to check upon arrival:

- All points of entry are secure and lockable.
- Stairs or fire escapes are identified and shown to girls
- Evacuation routes are clear and known to all.
- Basic safety systems are in place (as appropriate to the building and jurisdiction such as a fire extinguisher and smoke alarm).
- Location of local emergency services and how to reach them.
- Confirm any communication services (mobile carrier, wifi) are running and reliable.

Sleeping Arrangements.

See *Safety Standards and Guidelines at the beginning of **Safety Activity Checkpoints***.

On trips where male volunteers are part of a group, it is not appropriate for them to sleep in the same space as girl members. Always support and maintain an all-girl atmosphere for sleeping quarters. Men may participate only when sleeping quarters and bathrooms are available for their use.

Always avoid having men sleep in the same space as girls and women. An exception is made for family members during events such as parent-daughter or family overnights where one family may sleep together in an area specifically designated to accommodate families. Also please note the following:

- Each participant has her own bed. Parent/guardian permission must be obtained if girls are to share a bed.
- Girls and adult do not share a bed; however, some councils make exceptions for mothers and daughters.
- If possible, men should have their own designated bathroom. If a unisex bathroom is used, the door must have a working lock, or a system for notifying others that the bathroom is in use. This system should be reviewed and understood by all girls and adults.
- Men should not have to walk through the girls' sleeping area to get to the bathroom. When camping in tents or single room cabins, men must stay in a tent or a cabin that's separate from the girls or women.
- During family or "he and me" events (in which girls share sleeping accommodations with men), ensure the sleeping details are clearly explained in a parent/guardian permission slip.

Try to make sure international permission slips are signed by both parents.

Discuss with your council about having both parents sign the permission slip and notarizing it. This is recommended by the U.S. Customs & Border Protection, and is strongly suggested as a best practice.

Take the insurance. When booking flights, consider cancellation insurance which primarily covers the cost for airfare in the event a trip is cancelled due to illness. Discuss this option with your council as it could be costly.

For trips longer than two nights, inquire with your council about accident **activity insurance**. You must enroll and purchase a specific policy from Mutual of Omaha to cover trips longer than two nights; trips longer than two nights are *not covered* on the basic plan.

When planning to travel internationally, discuss liability insurance and accident activity insurance for it with your council. You'll want to ensure that your council's liability policy does not have any specific exceptions or exclusion for international travel. For accident activity insurance, you must enroll and purchase a specific policy from Mutual of Omaha to cover international trips; international trips are not covered on the basic plan.

Verify leader/instructor knowledge, experience, judgment, and maturity. Ensure that at least one adult is trained or possesses knowledge, skills, and experience in the following areas:

- First aid
- Travel progression and readiness, including homesickness
- Trip planning in a girl-led environment
- Safety management
- Program activities specific to the trip
- Group dynamics and management
- Supervision of girls and adults
- If the trip is international, leader must have international travel experience

Prepare a pre-trip orientation. Make sure girls have a detailed itinerary, but do not post the itinerary on a publicly accessible website where others may be able to see it. Ensure that girl and adult participants, and girls' parents, receive information about health, first-aid and emergency procedures, plans for transportation and any geographic detail such as the terrain or environment. Also share basic operational procedures (e.g. using the buddy system at all times) and behavior expectations. You may want to work with your girls to create a group behavior contract, and have girls sign it. Another suggestion is to create a personal emergency action plan that each girl can write out herself and keep with her.

Make sure to discuss topics like:

- Who her buddy is—and how the buddy system works
- What to do if she is separated from the group, whether by accident or due to a crime
- What to do if she loses something significant: money, passport, luggage
- What to do if emergency help is needed
- How to perform basic first-aid procedures
- How to deal with a large crowd, if applicable
- What positive behaviors are expected of her and the consequences to self or others by not living up to those behaviors

International Travel. International travel involves increased travel precautions and requirements compared to domestic travel. The following Safety Checkpoints apply to International Travel:

- Register your trip with the U.S. government's **Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)** so that you will get updates about safety, and that the State Department knows where you are traveling.

- Read on the [Centers for Disease and Control Prevention](#) website about health concerns for the country. Make sure girls and parents/guardians review this information. Every participant travelling internationally should visit their doctor to discuss their travel health requirements and any vaccinations or medications necessary.
- Confirm the travel advisory level for the country via the U.S. State Department’s Bureau of Consular Affairs. Note that the State Department now classifies travel advisories with travel alert levels as follows:
 - Level 1 - Exercise Normal Precautions
 - Level 2 - Exercise Increased Precautions
 - Level 3 - Reconsider Travel
 - Level 4 - Do Not Travel
- Confirm that both girls and their parents/guardians have the advisory information and are aware of the travel alert level in the region you plan to visit. This can be reflected on a permission slip if your council chooses to handle it that way.
- Read information about safety issues and concerns carefully. Pay attention to the in- country travel alerts for the particular region you are interested in. For example, a certain country may be classified as a Level 2, but a particular state or region within that Level 2 country may be categorized as Level 3.
- Check the travel alert status periodically in the months/weeks/days leading up to your trip for any changes. For situations where there is a travel alert Level 1 or Level 2, take normal safety precautions to safeguard girls.
- Travel Alert 4. When the travel alert Level is 4 (“do not travel”), girls are not to travel to a location under any circumstances.
- Travel Alert 3. For situations where the travel alert is a 3 (“reconsider travel”), there are several steps that should be taken before moving forward:
 - Strongly consider selecting a different location.
 - If interest is high, have a conversation with your local safety or risk representative to fully understand the specific risk factors in play.
 - Contact the host destination facility and ask if they’re aware of the travel alert level and what extra security measures are in place, if any.
 - Inform girls and parents/guardians and determine if there is still a compelling interest to travel to this location, considering the travel alert level.
 - Get parents’/guardians’ explicit approval to travel to the location, in light of specific risk, in writing.
 - Have a conversation with your council and get approval from a legal perspective, from in-house legal or outside legal counsel.

- Confirm that you have senior management approval within your council prior to moving forward with your plans.

Try to make sure international permission slips are signed by both parents. Discuss with your council about having both parents sign the permission slip and notarizing it. This is recommended by the U.S. Customs & Border Protection, and is strongly suggested as a best practice.

Finally, when travelling, be sure to follow the **Safety Activity Checkpoints** for specific activities you plan to do on your trip.

Girl Scout Connections

It's easy to tie eye-opening travel opportunities into the leadership training and skill building your girls are doing in Girl Scouts! Your girls can use their creativity to connect any leadership **Journey** theme into an idea for travel. For example, girls learn where their food comes from in the *Sow What?* Journey. That would connect well with a trip focusing on sustainable agriculture and, naturally, sampling tasty food!

There are abundant opportunities to build real skills through earning **badges** too. The most obvious example is the Senior Traveler badge, but there are plenty more, such as Eco Camper, New Cuisines, Coding for Good, and, of course, all the financial badges that help girls budget and earn money for their trips.

Want to include Girl Scout traditions into your trip? Look no farther than **the Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace** in Savannah, Georgia! Your girls also have the chance to deepen their connections to Girl Scouts around the world by visiting one of the WAGGGS (World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts) **World Centers**, which offer low-cost accommodations and special programs in five locations around the world.

And if your girls are looking to stay closer to home this year – ask about council-owned camps and other facilities that can be rented out.

As your girls excitedly plan their next trip, remember limit your role to facilitating the girls' brainstorming and planning, never doing the work for them. Share your ideas and insight, ask tough questions when you have to, and support all their decisions with enthusiasm and encouragement!

Include Girls with Disabilities

Communicate with girls with disabilities and/or their caregivers to assess any needs and accommodations. A great reference to learn more about travelling with disabilities is the Open Doors organization. Visit **Open Doors Organization**.

Seeking Council Permission

Before most trips, you and the girls will need to obtain council permission for travel outside the council or for any overnight trips. A **Special Activities Application** must be submitted four (4) weeks before sending permission forms home. In addition, if planning a trip of more than three (3) days and two (2) nights, an **Extended Trip Itinerary and Budget** must also be submitted. Both forms are on the council website **www.girlscouts-gssi.org**. Any trip involving an overnight stay requires an adult with current *On the Go* certification. Remember that all adults traveling with girls must be background screened, and in most cases, must also be registered members.

Encourage the girls to submit much of the information themselves, including the following:

- A detailed itinerary, including specific activities involved, mode of travel, and all dates/times
- Location and type of premises to be used
- Numbers of girls who will be participating (parental permissions must be obtained)
- Names and contact information for the volunteers participating
- Any other groups, organizations, consultants, or resource people who will be involved
- Participants' skill levels, if applicable (language skills, backpacking or camping experience, and so on)
- Any specialized equipment that will be used, if applicable
- Required agreements or contracts (for example, hiring a bus, use of premises)

Involving Chaperones

There are different adult supervision requirements for Girl Scout troop meetings as compared to events outside of the regular Girl Scout troop meeting such as outings, activities, camping and travel. Activities and travel outside of the regular troop meeting space require more adult supervision.

To determine how many volunteer chaperones the girls will need with them on the trip, see the chart below. As you ask for chaperones, be sure to look for ones who are committed to:

- Being a positive role model
- Respecting all girls and adults equally, with no preferential treatment
- Creating a safe space for girls
- Prioritizing the safety of all girls
- Supporting and reinforcing a group agreement
- Handling pressure and stress by modeling flexibility and a sense of humor
- Creating an experience for and with girls
- Getting fit (appropriate to the trip)

Be sure every chaperone reviews and follows the **12 Girl Scout Safety Guidelines**. For international trips, chaperones should have previous international travel experience.

Knowing How Many Volunteers You Need

	Group Meetings		Events, Travel, and Camping	
	TWO unrelated volunteers (at least one of who is female) for up to this number of girls:	ONE additional volunteer to each additional number of girls:	TWO unrelated volunteers (at least one of who is female) for up to this number of girls:	ONE additional volunteer to each additional number of girls:
Daisies Grades K-1	12	1-6	6	1-4
Brownies Grades 2-3	20	1-8	12	1-6
Juniors Grades 4-5	25	1-10	16	1-8
Cadettes Grades 6-8	25	1-12	20	1-10
Seniors Grades 9-10	30	1-15	24	1-12
Ambassadors Grades 11-12	30	1-15	24	1-12

Transporting Girls

How parents decide to transport girls between their homes and Girl Scout meeting places is each parent's decision and responsibility. For planned Girl Scout field trips and other activities—outside the normal time and place—in which a group will be transported in private vehicles:

- Every driver must be a registered, background-checked member (approved volunteer) at least 21 years old, and have a good driving record (more specific, without driving restrictions), a valid license, and a registered/insured vehicle.
- Girls never drive other girls during activities or field trips.
- If a group is traveling in one vehicle, there must be at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers in the vehicle, one of whom is female.
- If a group is traveling in more than one vehicle, the entire group must consist of at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers, one of whom is female.

Plan for safe driving:

- Review and implement the standards in the Checklist for Drivers, below.
- Share the Checklist for Drivers with all drivers, in advance.

- Build possible delays into your schedule. Allowing time for traffic or other delays will help prevent urgency and stress, which can be dangerous when driving.
- Provide directions for each vehicle.
- For driving trips of more than a few hours, plan a stop where all cars can gather up. This will avoid having drivers follow too closely, or worry about being separated from the group.
- Anticipate stops every couple of hours, for drivers to rest and refresh. Let drivers know they can stop more often, if needed.
- Arrange for relief drivers if trips will last 6 hours or more.
- In each vehicle, there should be a first aid kit, and the permission and health history forms for each person in that car.

When borrowing or renting vehicles, drivers may rent cars or minivans in their own names, without council staff signature. Make sure the car is adequately insured; consult the driver's auto insurance company. Know who is responsible for damage to, or loss of, the vehicle. Be sure the vehicle is used only for Girl Scout purposes, as non-related use can compromise coverage.

Note, you must check with GSSI to determine specific rules about renting large vehicles. GSSI does not allow the use of 15-passenger vans to transport girls.

Check with council to make sure you are following accepted practices when using private transportation. This ensures that both you and GSSI are protected by liability insurance in the event of an accident. Each driver of motorized private transportation must be at least **21** years old and hold a valid operator's license appropriate to the vehicle. In addition, state laws must be followed, even if they are more stringent than the guidelines here.

Please keep in mind the following non-negotiable points regarding private transportation:

- Even though written agreements are always required when renting or chartering, you are *not* authorized to sign an agreement or contract, except for rental car agreements, even if there is no cost associated with the rental. Such agreements must instead be signed by the person designated by GSSI.
- Check with the council to make sure you are following accepted practices when using private transportation. This ensures that both you and GSSI are protected by liability insurance in the event of an accident.
- If GSSI has given permission to use a rented car, read all rental agreements to be sure you comply with their terms and avoid surprises. For example, in many cases the minimum age of drivers is 25, and the maximum age is often under 70. In addition, make sure the car is adequately insured and you know who is responsible for damage to, or loss of, the vehicle. Finally, ensure you have a good paper trail that shows the vehicle rental is Girl Scout-related.

Chartered vehicles—such as buses—are contracted, usually with the driver or operator, for a group's exclusive use. Volunteers may not sign contracts for charters, even if there is no cost.

- Consideration must be given to the size of the bus. There must be a seat for every passenger.
- Insurance carried by the bus company must be verified.
- The bus company supplies the vehicle and the driver.
- Verification of the current safety inspection is required.
- An agreement or contract, signed by a person authorized by the board of directors, is required.

Procedure for Chartering a Bus

Notify GSSI that you would like to hire a bus. You and GSSI will follow these procedures:

- Check on the safety and maintenance practices of the company.
- Check the current year's insurance information is on file for the company or owner.
- If the information is on file and current (*Certificate of Insurance* still valid and inspection time limit still valid), proceed with making final arrangements for the trip after council endorsement, if required.
- If there is no information on file, GSSI will contact the company.
- When the requested information arrives, GSSI will place it in the insurance file.
- GSSI will notify your group to proceed with final arrangements for the trip.
- Before boarding chartered transportation, the adult in charge must verify with the driver that the vehicle(s) were inspected on the day of departure.

School Buses

- School bus use is allowed though certain guidelines must be met. Contact GSSI for assistance in identifying possible providers.
- Provider must have \$5,000,000 of liability insurance.
- Insurance carried by a school district does not always apply to the use of a bus by outside groups or for travel outside the school district.
- Additional primary insurance may need to be purchased to cover a bus used by Girl Scouts.
- The driver must be experienced, have worker's compensation, and be properly licensed.
- The bus must meet state and federal safety standards.
- There may be no real cost savings over a charter bus.

Taxis and ride-sharing services, including Uber and Lyft, may be used with these guidelines:

- An adult rides in each vehicle with girls when multiple vehicles are being used.
- Wait for your ride in a safe place. For taxis, when possible, call (or ask your hotel to call), rather than hailing from the street. Use a taxi stand at airports. Stand away from traffic while waiting.
- For taxis: Check that the taxi is appropriately marked.
- For ride-sharing services:
 - Check that the vehicle's license plate, make and model match what is shown in the app.
 - Compare the app's photo with the driver. Ask for their name and be sure it matches the app.
 - Ask, "who are you here to pick up?" They should have your first name, but not other info about you.
- If you feel uncomfortable for any reason, do not get in the vehicle. If you become uncomfortable, end the ride. Report your experience to the taxi service or ride-sharing app.
- Send your in-town contact the name of the driver and your destination. Most apps have a sharing feature for this purpose.
- Don't share information about the group or where you are staying to any stranger.
- Each passenger must wear a seat belt. Enter and exit curbside.
- In foreign countries, consult a local expert about how to best call for taxis or rides. Reputable practices vary.

Recreational vehicles, campers, and trailers. Whether privately-owned or rented--may be used if the driver has the appropriate training and license for the vehicle. Passengers must use seat belts when the vehicle is in motion, and may not ride in a trailer or in the bed of a truck.

Commercial and common-carrier transportation is available to the general public. They include buses, trains, airlines, ferries, and similar modes of transportation. In the United States, these are regulated and can be considered safe. Girls can compare fares and schedules and make decisions with adult support.

When traveling internationally, consider the transportation options available in the host country and determine safety and accessibility specific to the location.

Checklist for Drivers

When driving a car, RV, or camper, take the following precautions and ask all other drivers to do the same:

- Ensure all drivers are adults at least 21 years old.
- Girls should not be transporting other girls.
- Never transport girls in flatbed or panel trucks, in the bed of a pickup, or in a camper-trailer.

- Keep directions and a road map in the car, along with a first-aid kit, a flashlight, and emergency contact numbers
- Check your lights, signals, tires, windshield wipers, horns, and fluid levels before each trip and recheck them periodically on long trips.
- Load gear appropriately. Heavy objects and luggage can affect vehicle stability and handling. Avoid overloading, especially on the top or back of vehicles.
- Keep all necessary papers up to date including, but not limited to: your driver's license, vehicle registration, any state or local inspections, and insurance coverage.
- Wear your seat belt at all times, and insist that all passengers do the same. Girls under 12 must ride in the back seats.
- Girl under 12 must ride in the back seats. Use car seats and boosters as required in your state.
- Follow all the established rules of the road in your state including the speed limit. Some additional guidelines include:
 - Keep at least a two-car-length distance between you and the car ahead of you
 - Do not talk or text on a cell phone or other device
 - Do not use ear buds or headphones
 - Turn your lights on when your windshield wipers are on.
- Know what to do in case of breakdown or accident. It's smart to have reflectors, a flashlight, a few tools, and a good spare tire.
- Take time to familiarize yourself with any new or rented vehicle.
- Take a break when you need it. The volunteer in charge of your trip will plan occasional stops, but it's okay to pull over to a safe place whenever you are too tired to continue. Relief drivers are planned for long drives.
- Do NOT drive when you are tired or taking medication that makes you drowsy.
- All drivers should complete GSSI's **Vehicle Information Form** and adhere to the "Safe Driver Pledge".

Checklist for Girls

Girls need to adhere to the following checklist when being transported. You may decide to create a contract listing the following items, which girls sign before leaving on any trip. Girls will:

- Follow all rules and instructions for this trip.
- Assist with reading signs and maps, when asked.
- Keep seat belts fastened at all times.

- Refrain from arguing, yelling, and throwing things.
- Play games or listen to music quietly with other passengers, being considerate of the driver and other passengers.
- Stay with the group during stops.
- Alert your driver and an adult volunteer about a missing buddy, an obstacle, or an open door or trunk.

Tips for Girls Traveling Alone

If a Girl Scout Cadette, Senior, or Ambassador will be traveling alone during any part of a trip, use the opportunity to help her feel comfortable with and capable of being on her own. Always talk first with her parents to assess her maturity and ability to handle herself, and have them complete an emergency form. If she is flying, discuss the possibility of booking a nonstop flight to make her trip less stressful, and ask parents to consider contacting the airline, which can make special arrangements for any unaccompanied minor. With the girl herself, develop a trip plan, discuss security and safety, and talk about avoiding excess communication with strangers, **not** wearing a nametag, and avoiding exposing money or other items (such as smartphones or iPads) that are attractive to pickpockets.

Travel Security and Safety Tips

Share these safety tips with girls before you leave on any trip that involves a stay at a hotel, motel, hostel, or dormitory:

- Always lock the door behind you, using the deadbolt and the chain or anchor.
- Do not open the door for strangers; if hotel staff claims to be at the door, call the front desk to confirm.
- Don't mention or display your room number when in the presence of strangers.
- Never leave jewelry, cameras, electronics, cash, or credit cards in your room.
- Never leave luggage unattended in the hotel lobby (or in an airport or train or bus station).
- When arriving at the hotel, locate emergency exits.
- Keep a small flashlight on your bedside table, along with a small bag with your room key, wallet, passport, and cell phone. Take the flashlight and bag with you if you have to leave the room in an emergency.
- If a fire alarm goes off, get out as quickly as possible. Don't stop to pack your suitcase.
- Before leaving your room, feel the door: If it is warm, do not open it. Stay in your room and stuff towels around the door. Call the hotel operator immediately. If the door is cool, proceed slowly out the door, looking for flames or smoke. Repeat these instructions for any door you encounter.
- Contact the front desk to make sure girls' rooms are cleared of any minibars or refrigerators. Also be sure the hotel doesn't provide access to inappropriate movies on TVs and does not allow long-distance calls. Alert the hotel management that underage girls are staying in the hotel, and ask them to contact you if any girls are seen out of their rooms after bedtime.

Financing Your Trip

Refer to Money-Earning Basics in **GSSI's New Leader Guide 2020-2021** for more information on financing your trip. Remember to complete a **Money Earning Project Application** for earning money and to include and **Extended Trip Itinerary and Budget** when completing your **Special Activities Application** all found on our website www.girlscouts-gssi.org.

In the event of an emergency:

- Call for appropriate help (911, police, fire or medical). Always notify police about motor vehicle accidents, serious accidents, or fatalities.
- Administer first aid.
- During business hours, Mon-Fri, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm CST, call 812-421-4970. After business hours, call 812-484-6806.
- Move non-injured persons away from the scene as appropriate. Keep other girls safe and occupied.
- Assign a responsible adult to remain at the scene.
- Permit no one to disturb victim or surroundings until appropriate authority assumes responsibility.
- Do not share information about the accident with anyone but the police, your council, and authorities.
- Media: Do not notify or make statements to them. Refer all inquiries to Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana council.
- Submit an **Incident Report** form according to the instructions on the form to GSSI within 24 hours.

GSSI Permissions and Certifications

The grid below was designed as a visual supplement to *Safety Activity Checkpoints*, *Volunteer Essentials*, and *GSSI Standards and Policies*. For each type of activity (listed in the left column), the grid indicates the types of documentation and training (if any) that are required prior to the activity. The *Annual Permission Form* and the *Special Activities Application* are at www.girlscouts-gssi.org under **Resources**.

GSSI Permissions and Certifications							
Activity	Annual Permission Form	Special Activity Application	Additional Insurance	Basic Outdoor Skill Certification	On the Go Certification	Troop Camp Training Certification	First Aid/CPR Certification
Troop Meeting	†						Recommended ⁴
Day Field Trip	•	If outside GSSI	1				4
Overnight	√	•	1		•		4
Extended trip ²	√	•	•		•		•
Camping	√	•	1	•	•	•	•
Outdoor cooking Or campfires	•	•	1	•		Required for advanced cooking methods.	•
Activity with Unusual risk ³	•	•	1				4
International Trip ²	√	•	•		•		•

Annual Permission Forms are always required.

• = **required** form/application/training

† For regular meetings in the usual location and at the usual time, the Girl Scout registration is sufficient permission. The volunteer in charge of a meeting or event must have all the girls' Annual Permission Forms, since this form includes a summary of girls' emergency and medical information.

√ Requires an **Overnight Permission Form** in addition to the Annual Permission Form.

¹Additional insurance must be purchased any time non-GS (adults or children) are participating in an activity. If an activity lasts more than 3 days/2 nights basic Girl Scout insurance does not cover the event and additional insurance must be purchased for all participants.

² An extended trip is defined as a trip lasting more than 3 days and 2 nights and requires *Extended Trip Application* in addition to *Special Activity Application*.

³ Activities with Unusual Risk may include (but are not limited to) skating, water activities, horseback riding, hayrides, and more. Most activities involving over two feet of water require a certified life guard and watchers. Examples: wading in a creek, fishing from a pier, swimming in the hotel pool, pool party at leader's house, field trip to Burdette or local pool etc. Specific water activities may have other requirements. See *Safety Activity Checkpoints* at www.girlscouts-gssi.org. Verify with location whether they provide certified lifeguards.

⁴ Girl Scouts recommends that at least one adult volunteer in any group be first-aid/CPR certified. Activities can take place in a variety of locations, which is why first-aid requirements are based on the nature and remoteness of the activity—as noted in the *Safety Activity Checkpoints* for that activity.