

Troop Leader Orientation Participant Guide



Welcome to Girl Scouts! Thank you for choosing to be a volunteer with Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan! We're excited to prepare you to make memories with your troop to build girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place. Troop Leader Orientation is a required training for all Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan troop leaders. We encourage you to complete this companion guide during your Troop Leader Orientation and keep it with you during Girl Scout activities your reference. Miss anything? Feel free to ask your training facilitator or email volunteerexp@gssem.org to check your answers.

The Girl Scout Movement

The Girl Scout mission is to build girls of _____, _____, _____, and _____ who make the world a better place.

This is _____, Girl Scouts' founder.



Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan has _____ service centers and _____ camps.

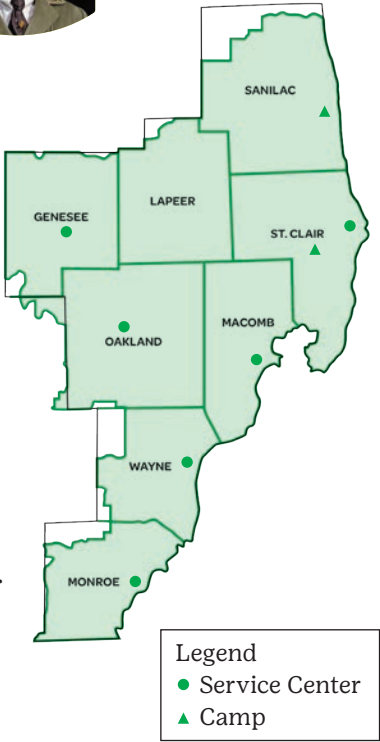
The Council Shops are located at the _____ and _____ Service Centers, but merchandise can also be purchased via curbside pickup and the online shop.

Circle one. Your **Recruitment Specialist / First Year Troop Support Specialist** will be your primary contact at Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan this year.

The _____ is an experienced volunteer who provides support to local volunteers. They host regular meetings for volunteers in your area which provide networking and learning opportunities for volunteers.

The Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan website is [www. _____ .org](http://www.girlscoutsofseemichigan.org).

The _____ newsletter comes out every two weeks on Fridays and contains timely reminders and upcoming events at Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan.



Girl Scouts consists of six age groups called program levels:



Circle One. Your leadership style **should** / **should not** change based on the girls' program level.

The National Program Portfolio, all of the achievements girls can earn in Girl Scouts, include the following. Match each achievement to its purpose:

Badges	Mostly related to leadership skills, but also include achievements like the Cookie Entrepreneurship Family Pin or the Community Service Bar.
National Leadership Journeys	Earned when girls explore a specific skill. Typically earned within two meetings.
Awards	Multi-session experiences which focus on community problem-solving through a Take Action Project

Circle One. Fun patches **are** / **are not** official insignia. They go on the **front** / **back** of the Girl Scout uniform.

The Girl Scout Experience comes to life through the Three _____.

1. _____ : Girl Scouts shape their own experiences.
2. _____ : Girl Scouts work together to learn new skills.
3. _____ : Girl Scouts learn through hands-on experiences.

The Girl Scout _____ and _____ are a code of conduct for girls and volunteers and demonstrates how Girl Scouts do things.

Getting Started

A _____ is a meeting with caregivers to set expectations for the troop and to register girls and adult volunteers. Your GSSEM Recruitment Specialist will assist you with this meeting.

Circle one. **Troop Support Volunteers** / **Troop Treasurers** provide activity support at meetings. This role requires a background check.

Troop Treasurers serve as an _____ on the troop bank account and compile an annual report on troop finances.

All troops must have a bank account to house money to fund the fun of Girl Scouts. Guidelines for setup are found in the _____ document.

GSSEM requires that all new troop leaders complete **at least one** Grade Level Essentials training. These trainings are found on GSSEM's learning management system called _____. All Grade Level Essentials trainings may be found on the learner dashboard.

Multiple choice: Troop leaders and co-leaders must complete their background check by:

- a. October 1
- b. The first meeting with girls
- c. The troop organization meeting
- d. Background checks are not required

Anatomy of a Troop Meeting

Match the meeting agenda item to its purpose:

Troop Business

The official start of a Girl Scout meeting.

Closing Ceremony

Girl Scouts make decisions.

Clean Up

The optimal time to communicate important information to caregivers.

Arrival Activity

Simple activity to keep Girl Scouts occupied before the meeting starts.

Activities

When Girl Scouts work on badges, service projects, or do something fun.

Pick Up

Girl Scouts form a friendship circle and reflect.

Opening Ceremony

Girl Scouts work together to return their meeting space to the state in which they found it.

Activity plans for badges, journeys, and awards may be found on GSSEM's social network called _____.

Upcoming webinar dates for the Managing Girl Scout Behavior webinar: _____

Match the picture to the appropriate Girl Scout tradition

Girl Scout Sign



Quiet Sign



Friendship Circle



Communicating With Caregivers

Circle one. A team of supportive adults **are** / **are not** a key ingredient of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience and **should** / **should not** be included in troop activities.

Upcoming dates for the Engaging Girl Scout Families webinar: _____

Upcoming webinar dates for Difficult Conversations webinar: _____

Circle one. **gsLearn** / **Rallyhood** is your online Girl Scout community. Here you can find Girl Scout news, information on activities and programs, connect with your Service Unit and Community, and create an online space for your own troop.

Safety

Circle one. All Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan safety policies may be found in **Safety Activity Checkpoints / Volunteer Essentials**.

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

How many registered, background-checked volunteers are needed to supervise a troop meeting including 14 Daisies?

- a. 1 b. 2 c. 3 d. 4

How many registered, background-checked volunteers are needed to supervise that same troop of 14 Daisies on a troop outing?

- a. 2 b. 3 c. 4 d. 5

Circle one. Multi-level troops must follow the volunteer-to-girl safety ratio for the **youngest / oldest** level present.

To correct behavior, Girl Scout volunteers use _____ discipline. This form of correction focuses on understanding why a certain behavior was undesirable and girls' future growth.

Which document will tell you if you need a first-aider for an activity?

- a. New Leader's Guide To Success
- b. Camp Handbook
- c. Volunteer Essentials
- d. Safety Activity Checkpoints

Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan's policy on reporting _____ and _____ is found in the Safety Activity Checkpoints.

Earning & Managing Troop Funds

Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan has two product programs during the year: The _____ Product Program and the Girl Scout _____ Program.

Which of the following are not sold during the Fall Product Program? *Circle all that apply.*

- a. Candy
- b. Cookies
- c. Nuts
- d. Magazines

Troops set _____ during the Girl Scout Cookie Program to earn funds for troop activities.

Which type of volunteer manages the Girl Scout-sponsored product programs on behalf of the troop?

- a. Troop Treasurer
- b. Service Unit Manager
- c. Troop Family and Friends
- d. Troop Product Program Manager

Aside from collecting troop dues, _____ - _____ activities such as collecting donations over \$250, solicitation, sponsorship, and money-earning events that serve non-Girl Scouts require approval from GSSEM. Please refer to the [Money Earning Requirement Packet](#) for more information.

Where can you find all of Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan's financial policies?

- a. Blue Book of Basic Documents
- b. New Leader's Guide to Success
- c. Safety Activity Checkpoints
- d. Volunteer Essentials

Troops fill out a finance report every year. This report is due by June _____.

Completing a finance report is a condition of reappointment for Troop Leaders and Troop Treasurers.

Circle one. Troop funds **do** / **do not** belong to any individual Girl Scout. Individual "bank accounts" **may** / **may not** be created based on contributions to troop dues or performance in product programs.

Troop funds and personal funds should _____ co-mingle. Personal use of troop funds at any time is _____.

Which of the following can financial assistance from Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan pay for, for families who qualify? *Circle all that apply.*

- a. Camp registration
- b. Membership
- c. Program registration
- d. Troop Dues
- e. Uniforms

The Troop Finances Learning path on **MyGS** / **gsLearn** has helpful trainings for working with troop funds.

Upcoming Managing Troop Finances webinar dates: _____

Required Actions

These steps are required for all Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan Troop Leaders and their troops:

- ☐ **Complete a background check with Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan.** Please contact customercare@gssem.org if you need assistance completing your background check.
- ☐ **Complete Troop Leader Orientation** within 60 days of your appointment. This training may be completed as a live webinar or asynchronously via gsLearn.
- ☐ **Sign the Troop Leader Volunteer Position Description.** Signing this document indicates that you understand the responsibilities of being a troop leader with Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan.
- ☐ **Complete at least one Grade Level Essentials training on gsLearn** within 60 days of your appointment. These trainings may be found on gsLearn, which is accessible via your My GS member profile.
- ☐ Review [Volunteer Essentials](#) and the [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) to familiarize yourself with Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan's policies.
- ☐ **Establish a troop bank account.** Bank accounts are required for all Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan troops. Please refer to the [Troop Banking Package](#) for information on how to set up your troop's bank account. Please list your authorized signers below for your reference:

Authorized Signer #1 Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Authorized Signer #2 Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Need to change authorized signers on your troop bank account? Please contact gssem-finance@gssem.org for next steps.

- ☐ **Complete the two required forms for participating in Girl Scout product programs.** If your troop plans to participate in the Fall Product Program or the Girl Scout Cookie program, someone from your troop must complete the [Troop ACH Debit Authorization Form](#) and the [Troop Agreement to Assume Debt](#) in order to receive product from GSSEM. These forms are completed once per year, typically in the fall, and are applicable for both the Fall Product Program and Girl Scout Cookie Program for the membership year in which they were signed.

Recommended Actions

Though not required, Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan recommends these actions to help you have a successful first year of Girl Scouts:

As Soon As Possible

- **Take the [First Four Meetings Short & Snappy](#) on gsLearn.** This 20-minute training explains a plan on how to structure your first four meetings.
- **Accept the invitation to Rallyhood sent to your email.** Rallyhood is a social network for Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan that contains information about council programs, trainings, and resources such as activity plans for troop meetings. Your service unit also has a Rally where local leaders can connect with one another. Please contact volunteerexp@gssem.org to have another invitation sent to you.
- **Determine an amount and schedule for collecting troop dues.** Troop dues typically pay for troop supplies.
- **Purchase a carbon-copy receipt book for your troop.** Write receipts for funds your troop receives to you better keep track of troop finances.
- **Create a ledger to keep track of your troop's incomes and expenses.** You may use the [Troop Annual Finance Report](#) as a ledger or create your own.

Within 30 Days Of Your First Troop Meeting

- **Visit a Troop Leader Network Rally on [Rallyhood](#)** to download a badge, journey, or award activity plan.
- **Introduce yourself on your Service Unit's Rally on Rallyhood.**
- **Conduct an [investiture ceremony](#) to welcome your troop to Girl Scouts.** This ceremony is typically done after a troop learns and understands the Girl Scout promise and law, or after about 3 to 6 meetings. Learn more about this ceremony in the [First Four Meetings Short & Snappy](#).

Within 60 Days Of Your First Troop Meeting

- **Attend a New Leader Roundtable.** These virtual gatherings with other new leaders led by your First Year Troop Support Specialist are a great place to ask questions and connect with other new leaders like you!
- **Take two Short & Snappy trainings on gsLearn.** We recommend Co-Leadership Short & Snappy (13 min.) which goes over how to work effectively with other troop leaders, and **Troop Dues** (10 min.), which explains what troop dues are and how to collect them.
- **Take your troop to a Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan event.** Check out the [event calendar](#) for information about council events.

Within 3 Months Of Your First Troop Meeting

- **Attend a Service Unit Meeting.** Connect with your Service Unit Manager to learn when your Service Unit or Community meets.
- Complete 2 more Short & Snappy trainings on gsLearn. We recommend **Girl Decision Making** (3 min.) which covers how troop governance empowers Girl Scouts to make decisions and **Managing Troop Finances** (8 min.) which explains the basics of managing troop finances.

Within 6 Months Of Your First Troop Meeting

- **Learn about Girl Scout traditions.** Check out the Girl Scout Ceremonies and Girl Scout Bridging Ceremonies Short & Snappies to learn more!
- Complete one more Short & Snappy training on gsLearn. We recommend **Girl Led Discussions** (15 min.) which demonstrates how to encourage your Girl Scouts to share their ideas with the troop.
- **Sign up for a live webinar** like Managing Troop Finances, Engaging Girl Scout Families, Managing Girl Scout Behavior, Key Policies, Troop Travel, or Difficult Conversations via the event calendar.

Within Your First Year

- **Celebrate your troop's accomplishments with a bridging ceremony or court of awards.** Celebrate. Bridging ceremonies are typically held in late spring or early summer. Refer to the [Girl Scout Bridging Guide](#) for more information on organizing a bridging ceremony for your troop.
- **Share finances with caregivers at least 3 times.** Since caregivers contribute to troop funds with troop dues, make sure they are aware how their contributions are being used.

Important Dates

October 1 – Beginning of the Girl Scout membership year. Check the [event calendar](#) for information about the Membership Year Kickoff in October.

October 31 – Girl Scout Founder's Day. Celebrate Juliette Gordon Low's birthday on this day!

February 22 – World Thinking Day. On this day, Girl Scouts and Girl Guides across the globe celebrate international friendship. Check out World Thinking Day activities on [GSUSA's website](#).

Week of March 12 – Girl Scout Week. Girl Scouts' birthday, March 12, commemorates the day in 1912 when Juliette Gordon Low officially registered the organization's first 18 members in Savannah, Georgia.

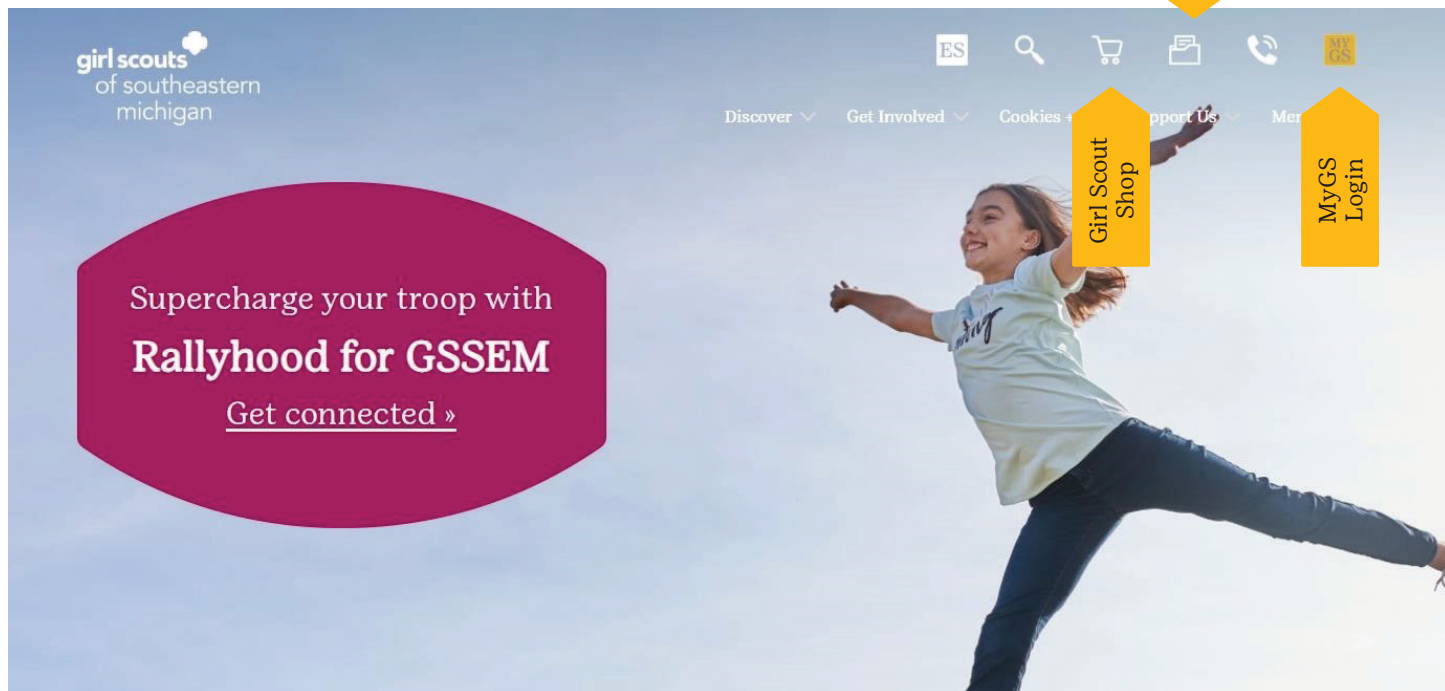
April 22 – Girl Scout Leader's Day. On this day, we celebrate the contributions of our incredible troop leaders!

June 31 – Annual Troop Finance Report due. Download a copy at www.gssem.org/financereport.

September 30 – End of the Girl Scout membership year. Confirm that yourself and your troop have purchased memberships for the next membership year.

Resources

Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan website: www.gssem.org



Troop Management Resources

MyGS – gateway to personal and troop registration information and gsLearn: www.gssem.org/mygs

Forms – important documents for getting your troop started: www.gssem.org/forms

- Ways to Help the Troop: for caregivers to indicate how they will support the troop.
- Parent/Guardian Agreement: a code of conduct for caregivers.
- Troop Member Agreement: a code of conduct for Girl Scout members.

Rallyhood – create a web page for your troop and connect with GSSEM: rallyhood.com or get the app

- Check out the Troop Leader Network Rallies for badge, journey, and award meeting plans.

Calendar of Events – check regularly for fun Girl Scout events: www.gssem.org/calendar

Council Shop – purchase Girl Scout insignia and gear: www.gssem.org/shop

- Order curbside pickup at one of GSSEM's service centers at www.gssem.org/curbside
- View [insignia placement guides](#) to see where everything on a Girl Scout uniform goes.

Learning Page – your gateway to volunteer trainings at GSSEM: www.gssem.org/learning

First Four Meetings Short & Snappy – a guide to your first four troop meetings: www.gssem.org/first4

GSUSA Badge Explorer – badge and award requirements for year planning: girlscouts.org/badgeexplorer

Policy Resources

Troop Leader Volunteer Position Description – *your duties as a troop leader:* www.gssem.org/vpd

Volunteer Essentials – *for policies on troop management, including troop finances:* www.gssem.org/ve

Safety Activity Checkpoints – *for safety policies and safety recommendations:* www.gssem.org/safety

Managing Troop Finances

Troop Banking Package – *for establishing your troop's bank account:* www.gssem.org/troopbanking

Financial Assistance – *aid for girls to participate in Girl Scouting:* www.gssem.org/fa

Money Earning Request – *for permission for money-earning activities:* www.gssem.org/moneyearning

Cookie Resources

Cookie Resources – *gateway to all resources for the Girl Scout Cookie Program:* www.gssem.org/csr

ACH Debit Authorization Form – *authorization to collect money owed for cookies. Required to receive product for Girl Scout-sponsored product programs:* www.gssem.org/banking

Agreement To Assume Debt – *acknowledges important GSSEM product program policies and procedures. Required to receive product for Girl Scout-sponsored product programs:* www.gssem.org/responsibility

Cookie Kit – *request essential documents and materials for selling cookies:* www.gssem.org/cookiekit

Helpful Contacts

Member Support Team – *for questions about leading a troop:* troopsupport@gssem.org

- Your First Year Troop Support Specialist is your primary contact at Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan. You may contact them with any questions related to Girl Scouts.

Customer Care Team – *for help with registration and background checks:* customercare@gssem.org

Finance Team – *for information about bank accounts and managing finances:* gssem-finance@gssem.org

Product Program Team – *for information on Girl Scout product programs:* productsales@gssem.org

Volunteer Experience Team – *to request a troop Rally in Rallyhood:* volunteerexp@gssem.org