



## Parades and Other Large Gatherings

**Activity Permitted for:** D, B, J, C, S, A

### Council Approval:

- Local Community-Organized Parades: Not Required
- Troop/Group participation in Other Large Gatherings: Varies; Depends upon activities as per Council Policy P1; [Activity/Trip Permission \(2129\)](#)
- Other Large Gatherings (facilitated by Girl Scouts): Required for Council-wide or local Service Unit Program Events [Application for Event Approval \(#1073\)](#) and [Event Report \(#2503a\)](#)

### Vendor Approval:

- Local Community-Organized Parades: Not Required
- Other Large Gatherings (facilitated by Girl Scouts): Varies; depends upon activities being provided

**Required Training:** 281 GS 201 Trips & Overnights (gsLearn) for troops or groups participating in parades or other large gatherings; GS 106 Program Event Planning for Girl Scout-facilitated council-wide or overnight events; GS 107 Service Unit Program Event Planning required for Girl Scout-facilitated one-day service unit program events. See below for prerequisite training. *See below for required training and prerequisites details.*

## About Parades

Girl Scouts participating in community parades that are organized by a community or organization outside of Girl Scouts does not require council or vendor approval. Large gatherings such as Girl Scout program events that are facilitated by Adventurers, service unit volunteers, troops, or groups and are open to participants council wide or are service unit-specific require additional training and council approval. Whether you are participating in a parade or planning a Girl Scout event, series, or other large group gathering, it is important to represent Girl Scouts in the best possible way and encourage girls to plan the festivities.

### Include Girl Scout Members with Disabilities

Talk to Girl Scout members with disabilities and their caregivers. Ask about needs and accommodations. Always be sure to contact the location and/or the instructor in advance to ensure they are able to accommodate those with disabilities.

**Equity.** In addition to physical and social-emotional disabilities, consider the history, culture, and past experiences of the Girl Scout members in your troop that could affect their ability to equally participate in an activity. Work with members and families to understand how an activity is perceived. Ensure that all Girl Scout members and their families feel comfortable and have access to whatever is needed to

fully participate, such as proper equipment, prior experiences, and the skills needed to enjoy the activity.

**Infectious Disease Guidelines.** Girl Scouts use a commonsense approach to health and safety. Before participating in Girl Scouting activities, members are to undergo health checks at home for any symptoms such as fever of 100.4 (or need for fever-reducing medications) chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, stomach aches, nausea, or vomiting. Members with any of these symptoms or in need of fever-reducing medication **MUST** stay home until fully recovered.

**Emergency Action Plan (EAP).** Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) before taking girls out for any activity and review it with the girls so they too are prepared. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong such as an accident, physical injury to a girl, missing girl, sudden illness, or sudden weather or water emergencies.

## Parades and Other Large Gathering Checkpoints

**Vendor Approval Not Required for Community-Organized Parades.** *Vendor approval is dependent upon activities being provided at Other Large Gatherings, Council-wide or local Service Unit Program Events.*

If vendor approval is needed, review Vendor Approval section under the *Standard Safety Guidelines for vendor approval timelines*. Connect with your Girl Scout council for approved vendor suggestions to ensure they are properly insured. If it is not, allow enough time to have the vendor approved. The owner operator should be able to confirm one million dollars General Liability insurance upon request. For privately/locally owned businesses, the council will request a certificate of insurance to document evidence of the insurance coverage and name the council as additional insured. Most facilities will accommodate this request if they are able to administratively. [See High Adventure Approved Vendors List \(#2127\)](#).

**Required Prerequisite Training:** Troop/Group Program leaders must complete GSUSA's online leadership courses and GSVSC's 281 GS 201 Trips & Overnights course in gsLearn. Adult volunteer chaperones must complete GSVSC's 281 GS 104 Orientation for Support Volunteers online course in gsLearn.

**Required Training for (Girl-Scout Facilitated) Other Large Gatherings, Council-wide or local Service Unit Program Events:** GS 106 Program Event Planning for Girl Scout-facilitated council-wide or overnight events; GS 107 Service Unit Program Event Planning required for Girl Scout-Facilitated one-day service unit program events. Adventurer Coordinators must complete all prerequisite training, GS 106 Program Event Planning, Adventurer Coordinator training typically held during Wild Women's Weekend, as well as hold certifications required by specific high adventure activities as outlined in Safety Activity Checkpoints.

**Respect parade and large group gathering standards.** Local regulations and permit procedures are observed for public gatherings, facility use, food handling, certificates of insurance and sales or excise tax. Guidelines for personal protection are observed. Local authorities are contacted for safety and security suggestions and assistance applicable to the parade or event. For safety reasons, name tags or other personal identification are not worn in public places. GSUSA and council guidelines on publicity, photo releases, and interviews are observed.

**Select a safe location.** The location for any community event, large group gathering, or parade is inspected in advance, with consideration for the following, as appropriate:

- Accessibility to the group and to the public.
- Suitability to event size, age groups, and kinds of activities.
- Parking availability.
- Availability of restrooms.
- Security arrangements, including availability of police protection.

- Lighting for evening and indoor events.
- Vulnerability to inclement weather.
- Proximity to medical facilities and available First Aiders suitable for event size, age groups, and kinds of activities.
- Fire safety, which includes not exceeding the occupancy limits for indoor activities or events; sufficient emergency exits, which are well marked and operational; and having an emergency evacuation plan in place.
- A food-preparation area used for large groups of people meets state and local standards and includes sufficient potable water and restrooms for participants.
- Provisions are made for garbage removal and site cleanup.

**Consider the following:**

- Need, interest, and readiness of the girls.
- The sponsor of the event or activity.
- The needs of the community to be served.
- Scheduling issues.
- GSUSA and council guidelines on fund-raising, endorsements, collaborating with other organizations and maintaining nonprofit status.

**Make appropriate plans for parade floats.** Floats drawn by trucks and automobiles must be covered by automobile insurance in the name of the vehicle owners. Float construction is safe, using non-toxic or flame-retardant materials, and secured to the body of the float and the vehicle. Floats are equipped with portable ABC fire extinguishers.

**Adults and girls pick a place to meet in case of separation** from the supervising adult or the group.

**No leaning over the edges and legs and arms do not hang outside of the float.** When sitting on a moving float, girls are to remain securely seated with no legs dangling over the side.

**Riders on floats have secure seating, or a secure handhold or safety harness is used if standing.** Floats are not overcrowded. Participants do not walk close to moving floats. An adult accompanies girls on any moving float.

**Any coupling of a trailer to a vehicle is appropriate to the load and has a safety chain.**

**Nothing is distributed to onlookers from a moving vehicle or a float.**

**Prepare for emergencies.** Ensure the presence of a first aid kit and a first aider with a current certificate in First Aid, including Adult and Child CPR or CPR/AED, who is prepared for cases of abrasions, sprains, and fractures. Emergency transportation is available; if any part of the activity is located 30 minutes or more from emergency medical services, ensure the presence of a first aider and plan for emergency medical routes, consider heavily trafficked routes depending on the day and time.

**Take safety precautions.** Instructions are given on safe pedestrian practices, when applicable. Adults must know where girls are, always. Advance arrangements are made for picking up the girls after the event and parents and girls understand the arrangements.

**Gear for Parades and Other Large Group Gatherings**

- Girl Scout uniform, pin, or some other means of group identification.
- Comfortable walking shoes.

**Recommended Gear**

- Sunscreen (SPF of at least 15) and lip balm.
- Sunglasses.
- Reusable water bottle and water for filling bottles.