

HONORING GIRLS WITH GSUSA NATIONAL LIFESAVING AWARDS

COUNCIL PROCEDURES

The 1913 handbook, *How Girls Can Help Their Country*, lists two medals girls could earn for meritorious deeds related to saving a life: the Bronze Cross – presented when a girl had shown special heroism or had faced extraordinary risk of her own life to save another’s life – and the Silver Cross – presented for gallantry with considerable risk to a girl’s life. Today, girls continue to earn Lifesaving Awards: the Bronze Cross and the Medal of Honor, for these deeds.

Girl Scouts of the USA has designed procedures to help Girl Scout councils formally recognize acts of heroism by Girl Scouts. As part of the Lifesaving Award procedures, councils will approve the recommendation for the award as well as purchase the medals.

Councils needing additional copies of these procedures can visit Pearl, [Life Saving Awards Procedures](#).

PROCEDURES FOR LIFESAVING AWARDS

1. An act of rescue is brought to the attention of the council by the adult volunteer.
2. An appropriate person in the council is appointed to work with the volunteer in collecting full information—such as signed statements by the rescuer, rescued person, and at least two witnesses—as rapidly as possible; to draft a summary; and to present these documents to whoever the council has designated to review the case.
3. It is important that the documentation process begin *immediately* after the rescue and proceed as quickly as possible. The decision to recommend a girl for an award must be reached no longer than **six months** after the event. If more time is allowed to elapse, persons involved may not be available and the facts recalled may become less accurate.
4. A recommendation is made by the council for final approval by GSUSA. The council forwards the entire application and supporting documents to GSUSA and maintains a copy for its files.
5. Upon receipt of the paperwork from the council and GSUSA approval, the GSUSA CEO sends a congratulatory letter to the council for presentation to the girl.
6. Council orders the Bronze Cross, UPC #09971, or the Medal of Honor, UPC #09972, from Girl Scout Merchandise and presents the award to the girl.

Please submit entire application, including signature page, to:

Girl Scouts of the USA
420 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10018-2796
Attn: Lifesaving Awards, 15th Floor