girl scouts of the chesapeake bay

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GSCB Private Residence Authorization Policy

Girl Scouts of the USA and Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay consider the safety of their members a top priority. In assessing the risks associated with hosting meetings, events, or activities in private residences, specific criteria must be met. Girl Scouts does not recommend holding troop meetings in private homes. A private location or home should only be considered as a last choice and may only be used if the requirements below are met, if all troop caregivers are in agreement with the meeting location, have provided signed Permission Slips, and Council approval has been granted.

The following policy has been established regarding Troop meeting space meeting in private homes in accordance with the guidelines provided in GSUSA Safety Activity Checkpoints, and in alignment with Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay (GSCB) Council requirements.

- Volunteers seeking to obtain approval to meet in a private home must complete the GSCB Private Residence Authorization Form application and complete all requirement checks prior to meeting in the home.
- The private home must be the home of a registered council-approved volunteer.
- The homeowner must review with their personal homeowner's insurance carrier if there are any insurance implications or concerns with troop meetings in the home.
    - GSCB requires the volunteer to provide proof of your homeowners/renters insurance showing that the property is covered by a minimum of $1,000,000 personal liability coverage in homeowners'/renters' insurance or a separate insurance rider on the property.
- All adults living in the household will be required to submit a background check through our contracted partner Asurint.
    - No outside visitors may be in the house during the meeting or event.
    - Girl Scout members may not meet in a home where a registered sex offender resides.
- The adult volunteer-to-youth ratio is met during the meeting/activity.
- The property is accessible to any troop member with a disability. Members may not be excluded from joining a troop or attending a troop function at any location because of a disability.
- A first aid kit is on site.
- Any weapons, medications, controlled substances, cleaning products, and any poisonous substances must be stored in secure spaces, out of sight, and preferably locked.
- Animals/household pets should be kept in a place that is separate from the meeting space.
    - Animals present in the home should be disclosed to caregivers in advance.
- No one on the premises may consume or be under the influence of alcohol or impairing substances prior to or during the Girl Scout meeting/event.
- Smoking of any kind is strictly prohibited in front of children at all Girl Scout meetings/activities.
- All caregivers must complete a GSCB Permission Waiver to be kept in troop records, giving permission for their Girl Scout to meet in the private residence for the duration of the Girl Scout year. This should be repeated on an annual basis.
- The troop leader must also have up to date GSCB Health History Forms for all youth/adults who are attending.
- All additional policies apply in regard to supervision and acceptable behavior apply.
- In addition, an emergency evacuation plan must be created, with all exit routes listed, and practiced by all youth and volunteers who attend the meeting/event. In an emergency, please call 911 and ensure the situation is under control before informing the council. If an accident or an incident occurs, please submit a GSCB Incident Report.