



Service Unit Managers

Self Paced Training

Girl Scouts San Diego



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Service Unit Manager

As service unit manager, you serve as a valuable role model and community leader. During your time in this role, consider what you would like your legacy to be and what you want to pass on to the volunteers and girls in your community. You represent Girl Scouting in all that you say and do. With the abundance of resources available to you, the help of your team, and the support of your membership staff, you can achieve your goals, change girls' lives, and have fun.

Thank you for volunteering to fill this important position on your team. This course provides training in areas critical to successful management of a service unit.

TRAINING OBJECTIVES

After completing this training, you should understand:

- How to lead and build a successful service unit team
- Effective meeting facilitation
- Volunteer time management
- How to delegate for success
- Problem solving
- How to promote diversity and pluralism
- Community cultivation and recruitment strategies

HOW TO USE THIS TRAINING PACKAGE

Complete this training booklet at your own pace and keep it as a-reference. As you work, please review all links to additional resources and references, and write down any questions you want to discuss with your volunteer support coordinator.

To complete this course, you must meet with the volunteer support coordinator to sign the position description and discuss your questions.

Volunteer Support Structure

Service unit managers and team members are “administrative volunteers” — that is, they are involved with the day-to-day operation of Girl Scouts and follow volunteer policies, procedures, and standards.

Some volunteers are called “policy volunteers.” These include delegates and members of the board of directors. They are voting members of the council and gather input from members to help establish policies and goals for Girl Scouts locally.

Service unit

Service units are the key connections between troop leaders and staff. A well-run service unit delivers primary support to volunteers. Through the service unit, they can discuss ideas, challenges and solutions, or seek guidance on a wide variety of issues. Optimally, a service unit team provides ongoing mentoring, consulting and support to each leader, and also recruits new girls and adults. The team clarifies and explains Girl Scout policies and procedures, plans events that serve local girls’ needs, and assists parents and other members with conflict resolution. In addition, they keep troops up-to-date on upcoming events and activities.

Regional teams

Along with the service unit, volunteers and girls have the support of a region, each of which includes several service units in the same geographic area. Regional volunteers engage girls from different pathways of Girl Scouting — such as travel, camp, series and events — as well as Independent Girl Members.

Membership staff

Your membership staff are a very important part of your service team. The role of the membership staff is to:

- Act as a consultant and advisor to the service unit and region
- Serve as the service unit’s liaison to Girl Scouts San Diego
- Formulate and meet goals and objectives as part of the service unit team
- Help maintain Girl Scouts’ presence in the community, which contributes to leadership, recruitment and retention of Girl Scout members
- Work with the service unit manager and others to recruit, place and supervise service unit team members
- Provide leadership and direction to the service unit manager

The assigned volunteer support coordinator and membership development coordinator will work closely with your team. Also available to you is the regional manager, who oversees membership support and development efforts. For further clarification on contacting specific staff members, please see *Staff Support: Who Do I Call?*

Membership staff serves as Girl Scout representatives in your community. In partnership with the service unit team, they help promote the benefits of Girl Scouting. Getting in touch with might be a little tricky from time to time. Staff are often in the field working, at evening meetings

with volunteers, or meeting with community partners or school officials. Email is an effective way to communicate with staff if you are unable to reach them by phone. If you are not familiar with your membership staff you can locate their emails and phone numbers [here](#).

Service unit manager

The service unit manager is a vital part of our council structure. Take a moment to read *Position Description for Service Unit Manager* now. Are there any duties listed that you didn't know about? Do you understand what is expected of you? What do you think are some of the important things for a service unit manager to do? Do you know your own leadership style? Your volunteer support coordinator is here to help support and clarify your role.

As service unit manager, you will:

- Manage and supervise the service unit team to ensure all positions are operating effectively to fulfill the mission of Girl Scouting Understand the responsibilities of team positions and how to communicate accountability
- Analyze service unit needs to determine volunteer requirements. Recruit, assign and appoint service unit volunteers as needed in partnership with membership staff
- Ensure your service unit reaches its membership goals through year-round recruitment and retention efforts
- Plan and conduct regularly scheduled service unit meetings and create a service unit calendar with your team

To get a better idea of the different positions in the service unit, view *Service Unit Team Function and Composition*.

Policy and standards

As a service unit manager, you are responsible for following the policies of the organization and ensuring they are followed by the troops in your service unit. It is important that you do not alter them, so that all Girl Scout volunteers have clear, consistent information. Service units do not establish policies, though they may adopt specific methods that let them operate effectively. View [Volunteer Policies, Procedures, and Standards](#) for a full list of policies. You will also want to become familiar with [Financial Guidelines](#) and [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) and help other volunteers understand them. Don't forget to familiarize yourself with [Volunteer Essentials](#), this is a great tool for all volunteers, new and returning.

Goals and action plan

Girl Scouts is the hallmark of leadership for girls to apply their skills, talents, and passions to help others and make the world a better place. Together, we can make sure every girl has the opportunity to be part of the world's best leadership experience. As the service unit manager and liaison to your community, you will partner with your membership staff to carry out the service unit's action plan, and help to achieve the strategic goals adopted by the Girl Scouts San Diego board of directors. Please review *Strategic Goals* now.

When goal setting and building diversity in your community, it is important that all girls can benefit from Girl Scouts. Your volunteer support coordinator will provide data on local demographics. Try to determine which of these groups are well represented within your service unit; what might your service unit gain from improving representation of all groups within your community? Think about how increasing the awareness of diversity among Girl Scout members supports and carries out the mission of the Girl Scout movement.

The President's Award application is a good planning tool. It provides the criteria a service unit must meet to earn the award, so it's a useful guide for making and achieving goals. See [President's Award](#) criteria.

When you meet with membership staff to set goals, you will review membership benchmark goals for your service unit and monitor your progress for the year. You will set objectives for your events and plan annual campaigns to promote girl and adult membership. Your service unit team, including membership staff, will help support all your efforts. You will receive past and present reports about girl retention and participation by school and program age level.

We encourage all members, renewing and new, to register online; the service unit registrar is responsible for collecting any paper registration forms and submitting them. The service unit registrar receives regular updates of registered members in the service unit. Work together to ensure leaders receive instructions for maintaining accurate troop membership records in their online accounts.

Planning and meetings

Planning the year

Service unit teams meet each summer to develop a master calendar. This will make it easier for volunteers to plan their personal and troop schedules.

Consider the following:

- Renewal and recruitment events
- Team/service unit meetings
- Cookie sale/fall product sale
- Encampments
- Service unit hosted events
- Special events (OTM Sendoff, Volunteer Conference and Celebration, Urban Campout)
- Girl Scout days (Thinking Day, Girl Scout Week, Girl Scout Birthday, Juliette Low Birthday, Volunteer appreciation week, and National Leader's Day)
- SHARE Campaign

As you plan, solicit ideas and information from your entire service unit team and involved members. We recommend that service unit team members not plan all events, but establish committees consisting of troop leaders and interested parents (with input from girls) for each one, so work is evenly distributed. Girls should participate as much as possible, supervised by adults, and all events should contain solid program content. The Service Unit Manager *Guide to Success* and [President's Award](#) will aid you in planning for the year.

Service unit meetings

You will lead the service unit leader and team meetings. Many service unit managers set up a system so leaders and volunteers unable to attend the meeting will still receive the information. Develop an email list for your service unit and designate an email distribution person; email is a good way to remind leaders of upcoming events or meetings and to send information. Some service units create a website for volunteers and parents.

Service unit teams may meet monthly or quarterly to plan and evaluate the service unit's progress. You and your team can choose the best time, whether before or after leader meetings, or on a separate night.

Several things contribute to successful meetings. Good meetings start with good agendas. Print out the agenda, or post it on a large board for everyone to see (be sure the lettering is large enough to read from anywhere in the room).

Your job as the facilitator of the meeting is to keep things on track, and following your agenda will make it easier. Determine if the topic needs to be discussed at that moment; focus on items that are of interest to the whole audience.

Start the meeting punctually to let people know you value their time. Some service units reward those who arrive on time with a ticket for a drawing held during the meeting. The winner receives a small prize. A one-hour meeting should be sufficient for volunteers and guests to give reports, update the leaders on agenda items, and provide program ideas. Take a look at ideas and tips on *Fun Ways to Make Your Service Unit Meeting Well Attended*.

Remember:

- Start on time
- End on time
- Keep the meeting moving along

The following ideas can make meetings run smoothly:

- Help leaders meet new people: Have them sit by troop program age level one month, by school the next.
- If there are children at meetings, older girls can provide child care as a service project.

- Make sure leaders always leave the meeting with something to use in their troop — a craft, a song or a service project. Put a different person in charge of supplying this agenda item each month.
- Remember to have fun! Keep things positive and upbeat.

Volunteer time management

Everyone is busy. Most volunteers are juggling many interests. A service unit manager needs to be very organized and able to manage time wisely to fit it all in.

As a service unit manager, you may sometimes feel overwhelmed with demands. Good delegating and time management skills will help. Remember, you have an entire team to assist you.

One of the first steps in time management is to get organized:

1. Establish and prioritize goals
2. Outline “to do” items
3. Rank and place items on a timetable
4. Schedule and complete work
5. Avoid procrastinating

Planning your time means identifying and setting priorities, scheduling time for thinking and reflection, and using your most productive time of day for difficult or unpleasant tasks.

Don't be afraid to establish limits for yourself — let others know when you will return calls, and set family time, paperwork time, meeting schedule, etc. Customize how Girl Scouting fits into your life to get the greatest satisfaction and most fun out of the experience. “Using resources wisely” includes *your* time and energy. Find ways to balance your manager position with the rest of your life. Effective managers set limits on the time they are going to spend in the role from the very beginning.

Delegation

The purpose of delegation is to distribute the leadership workload and function, ensuring the success of the service unit. Effective delegation is part of effective management. The service unit benefits from increased efficiency when many team members share responsibilities. Delegation instills a sense of belonging and importance in volunteers who take on additional tasks, and also offers opportunities for growth and development. When delegating:

- Consider the importance of the task
- Decide which volunteers are most capable of handling the task
- Clarify what the task is, and set expectations
- Have the person taking on the task commit to follow through
- Ensure that the volunteer has the necessary resources

- Communicate with them on progress without taking over the project
- Along the way, and when the task is complete, thank them personally and in a group setting, if appropriate

Team building

Before you build a service unit team, think about your own leadership style and the roles you are comfortable playing. Are you a leader, supervisor or team player? You're probably a little of each. The role of the service unit manager is to:

- Establish a positive tone and an atmosphere where volunteers feel valued
- Support and recognize each member of the service unit team for their work
- Offer guidance, knowledge and direction
- Treat all volunteers equally and fairly

Review the position descriptions for all key service unit team members, available on the links page at the end of this training. Think about the desired skills of each position, and identify and personally approach the people you believe have those qualifications. As you build a service unit team, consider who currently holds each position and whether you should reappoint anyone. Choose carefully; don't fill a position just to fill it. Keep ability and compatibility in mind.

You will partner with the volunteer support coordinator and membership development coordinator to recruit team members. Ensure that team members reflect the demographics of the community. Talk to prospective service unit team members personally — this is much more effective than simply asking during a meeting, or passing around a sign-up sheet for team positions. You and your team should make an effort to get to know volunteers and community members to continually build the team for the future.

In collaboration with your volunteer support coordinator, you will want to ensure each potential service unit team member is a good fit for the position. While it's great when someone volunteers for a service unit team position, they need the characteristics and abilities that will enable them to be successful. It is really important to communicate with your membership staff, they have the final authority and need to approve all appointments of service unit team members.

Building a strong team takes time and careful consideration. A service unit team is an energetic group of people who are committed to achieving common objectives, work well together and enjoy doing so. When recruiting service unit team members, remember that they can come from the current Girl Scout volunteer pool or the larger community.

The importance of succession

Succession planning is a process that ensures volunteers are recruited and developed to fill each key role within the organization. Girl Scouts matches and nurtures the skills of volunteers, allowing them to take on new or broader roles. Reappointment is an integral part of this process. Keep succession in mind as you go through your time as service unit manager. You'll want to stay up to date on which team members are continuing from one year to the next, and work with

your volunteer support coordinator to identify people who would make good service unit managers in the future. Each position on the service unit team is a one year term. At the close of each year, membership staff and the volunteer will decide if reappointment for the following year is appropriate. The service unit manager role has a maximum three year long terms. You'll spend your first year learning the position, the second year mastering it, and the third year mentoring someone new.

Service unit finances

Service units have expenses such as postage, copying, recognitions, supplies and refreshments. There are several ways to cover these costs:

- Each adult or troop could contribute a small amount
- Implement a money-earning project such as a T-shirt or sweatshirt sale for members, or a bake sale at a service unit meeting
- A business might sponsor or donate copying services
- Members can bring refreshments on a rotating basis
- Recipients could pay for recognitions
- Service unit money earning project or event

Review financial guidelines with your volunteer support coordinator before starting any money-earning project. Plan projects carefully and manage funds well. Please take a moment to read the [Financial Guidelines](#) if you haven't previously.

The funds service units handle is Girl Scout money. It is important to have a service unit budget and a monthly treasury report at meetings, and be sure volunteers use Check Request forms when requesting monies to be paid out. The service unit manager is ultimately responsible for how money is budgeted. Use care and collaborate with your volunteer support coordinator when appointing service unit treasurer to ensure checks and balances.

Problem solving

Part of a service unit manager's role is to help mediate problems that arise in a service unit when people have trouble getting along and can't resolve the issue themselves. You may be called upon to deal with:

- Individual members not following through on commitments
- Conflict between service unit team members
- Conflict between service unit team members and leaders
- Conflict between leaders
- Conflict between parents

You can view *10 Tips of Resolving Conflict* to assist with managing conflicts that are brought to your attention. *Volunteer Policies, Procedures, and Standards VP19* covers the conflict resolution process at the staff level. Your volunteer support coordinator can help you resolve and manage conflicts. Keep membership staff apprised of problems and your progress toward a resolution. Remember, your membership support staff is here to assist you and help answer any questions.

Inviting new members to join

Girl Scouts of the USA understands that girls today are busier than ever. To accommodate their busy schedules, they have created [Girl Scout Pathways](#) — various ways of participating in Girl Scouting. Pathways are flexible and engage members to continue with the organization for as long as possible. Choices include Camp, Event, Series, Travel, and Troop.

New members can join all year round — not just during the fall or at beginning of the school year. To ensure that girls find us throughout the year, Girl Scouts San Diego holds a spring membership campaign (usually March-May) to remind girls — and adults — it's never too late to become a Girl Scout. There are several tools to help you inspire year round recruitment for service units and troops. Take a look at *Girl Scout Recruitment Tools*, *Service Unit Recruitment Ideas*, and *Troop Recruitment Ideas*.

Adult volunteer recruitment

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience would not exist without all the time, effort and work volunteers put into delivering quality programming for the girls. Once an adult expresses interest in becoming a volunteer, let them know their next steps. Please see [Pathways to Leadership Volunteer Process](#) for details.

Volunteers interested in becoming troop leaders must complete the welcome meeting process prior to appointment.

- It is imperative that every new leader receive a personal, one-on-one orientation from the membership development coordinator, service unit manager, membership organizer or any other designated team member.
- Never give out welcome meeting packets as a self-study. Instead, give leaders complete orientations, combining online training and an in-person welcome meeting.

Once a volunteer has been appointed, they read and sign the Leader Position Description.

Renewal

The bulk of service unit membership comes from girls and adults who are returning from one year to the next. Engage girls and volunteers year round so that they have a fulfilling Girl Scout experience and want to return. Member renewal is one of the best ways to meet membership goals; encourage them to renew early. Some service units host a summer or early fall event open to any members that have renewed for the upcoming Girl Scout year. Please look at the *Guide for Easy Annual Troop Renewal*.

Supporting and engaging adults is key to keeping them involved, as well as the girls they serve. Tips given earlier in this training, such as holding engaging meetings and getting to know the leaders, will help you retain volunteers.

Recognition

Volunteers are an essential part of Girl Scouting. Remember to recognize the adults working directly or indirectly with girls. Partner with the recognition chair and your volunteer support coordinator to acknowledge volunteers throughout the year. For tips on motivating volunteers, see *Adult Recognitions* online now. Encourage service unit members to nominate their peers for prestigious high level awards. These are recognized and presented at the annual Volunteer Conference and Celebration.

Evaluation

Taking time each year to review volunteer performance and satisfaction helps ensure your service unit's success. Evaluation is an essential part of an effective volunteer management system. Take a look at [Volunteer Evaluation Form](#), a tool for conducting a review.

Thank you!!!!!!

Next Steps

By meeting with the volunteer support coordinator and signing the position description, I'm verifying that I have completed the Service Unit Manager Self Paced Training.

Any questions or clarifications should be directed to the volunteer support coordinator.

Questions I have:

Reference Links

- ❖ [SUM Position Description](#)
- ❖ [Service Unit Team Function and Composition](#)
- ❖ [Volunteer Policies, Procedures, and Standards](#)
- ❖ [Financial Guidelines](#)
- ❖ [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#)
- ❖ [Strategic Goals](#)
- ❖ [President's Award](#)
- ❖ [Service Unit Manager Guide to Success](#)
- ❖ [Fun Ways to Make Your Service Unit Meeting Well Attended](#)
- ❖ Service Unit Team Position Descriptions
 - [Registrar](#)
 - [Treasurer](#)
 - [Membership Organizer](#)
 - [Activity Consultant](#)
- ❖ [Girl Scout Pathways](#)
- ❖ [Girl Scout Recruitment Tools](#)
- ❖ [Service Unit Recruitment Ideas](#)
- ❖ [Troop Recruitment Ideas](#)
- ❖ [Pathways to Leadership Volunteer Process](#)
- ❖ [Guide for Easy Annual Troop Renewal](#)
- ❖ [Adult Recognitions](#)
- ❖ [Volunteer Evaluation Form](#)
- ❖ [10 Tips of Resolving Conflict](#)
- ❖ [Volunteer Essentials](#)
- ❖ [Staff Directory](#)

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Outdoor Education Mission

We aim to inspire positive and challenging experience in the outdoors, building interpersonal connections between people and the natural environment while sharing life changing adventures.



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