

Girl Scout Trips Quick Start Guide

Some of the most memorable moments in a Girl Scout's life happen while taking trips! Travel also offers a wealth of opportunities for girls to develop leadership skills. Here is the basic information on GSNIM policies and procedures for trips.

Girls must be ready to participate in the trip, whether it's a day trip, overnight, or extended. This *Travel Progression Chart* will help you and your girls plan appropriate trips based on the girls' levels of readiness.

Seeking Council Permission

Please refer to the following chart to determine what type of forms and approval you need:

Type of Trip			
Day Trip No Specialized Activities	Specialized Activities	Overnight Trip	Extended/ International Trip
- Field trip close enough to home that no overnight required - Any excursion where the troop is not at their regular meeting place (meeting at the park, etc) for the day - Not a Council-sponsored event or at a council property	- Activities that require an adult supervisor with certification or documented experience such as: - Climbing - Horseback riding - Swimming - Boating Check Safety Activity Checkpoints for a list of these activities	- An overnight less than 3 days/ 2 nights - Not at a council property - Not a council-sponsored event - Staying in the USA	- A trip extending more than 3 days/ 2 nights AND/OR - A trip taken outside of the USA
Who Approves			
Notification only. No approval needed.	Troop Support Specialist at GSNIM	Notification only. No approval needed.	Troop Support Specialist or Manager of Membership at GSNIM

It is understood that parents/ guardians must approve all trips. A signed Permission Slip is required regardless of if the parent is in attendance or not.

Forms Needed			
Note – be sure and take your Girl and Adult Health History forms on every trip			
Day Trip No Specialized Activities	Specialized Activities	Overnight Trip	Extended/ International Trip
<i>*Parent Permission Slip</i> Submit the following information to your SU Manager: ✓ Where you're going ✓ Date/ time of trip	<i>*Parent Permission Slip</i> <i>*Non-GSNIM Specialized Activity form</i> Submit Specialized Activity form to frontdesk@gsnim.org	<i>*Parent Permission Slip</i> Submit the following information to frontdesk@gsnim.org: ✓ Where you're going ✓ Dates/ times of trip ✓ Roster (adults and girls); indicate drivers ✓ Brief list of activities	<i>*Parent Permission Slip</i> <i>*Extended Trip Application</i> <i>*Additional Insurance Request form</i> Submit trip application and insurance request to frontdesk@gsnim.org

Additional Help and Resources

- **Additional help:**

- Contact your Troop Support Specialist:
 - **Anne Williams:** Phone: 260.422.3417 x63101, Toll Free: 800.283.4812 ext 63101, anne.williams@gsnim.org
 - Counties: Adams, DeKalb, Elkhart, Huntington, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Whitley
 - **Donna James:** Phone: 574.273.3021 x63322, Toll Free: 800.283.4812 ext. x63322, donna.james@gsnim.org
 - Counties: Berrien and Cass – MI; Marshall, Starke, St. Joseph - IN
 - **Jean Orcutt:** Phone: 260.414-1312, Toll Free: 800.283.4812 ext. 63315, jean.orcutt@gsnim.org
 - Counties: Fulton, LaPorte, Pulaski
 - **Tammy Savage:** Phone: 260.422.3417 x63123, Toll Free: 800.283.4812 ext 63123, tammy.savage@gsnim.org
 - Counties: Allen, Cass, Miami, Wells

- **Additional resources:**

- The GSNIM website is the place to go for all of the forms you may need for your trip. All forms needed can be found by navigating to: Volunteers-Forms & Documents- Events and Field Trips
- The website also has a section on resources, many of which are trip related. Specifically, these resources will be of help in planning and implementing a trip:
 - [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#)
 - [Volunteer Essentials](#)
 - [Travel Progression Chart](#)
 - [USA Travel Resource Guide](#) – travel within the US
 - [Global Travel Toolkit](#) – travel outside of the US
 - gsLearn – volunteer trainings
 - Trip Planning Basics
 - Extended Troop Travel
 - First Aid/ CPR – any upcoming certification classes
 - Outdoor Basics
 - [COVID-19 Guidelines](#) – check for updated guidelines regarding all trips
 - [Volunteer Policies](#) (relevant policies listed below)

GP 8: Trips

Policy	Trips taken by Girl Scout groups require notification and/or approval, refer below for specific details.
Procedure	A trip is defined as any activity that takes place outside of the normal troop meeting time and/or location. This excludes events that GSNI-M or Girl Scout Service Units are hosting/facilitating.

Overnight Trips:

For all overnight trips up to and including three days, two nights in length, with no activities that require council approval according to Safety-Activity Checkpoints.

- Submit the following information to frontdesk@gsnim.org
- Trip date, time, and location
- Roster: Attach a list of girls and adults going on the trip. Indicate any adults who are driving on the trip.
- Activities planned

Specialized activity approval:

A specialized activity is an activity that a group is conducting that Safety-Activity Checkpoints requires council approval or that requires facilitators with specific certifications. The Safety Activity Checkpoints for each activity will state if that particular activity requires council approval.

The following are examples of some of these activities:

- swimming - horseback riding - archery - climbing - boating - etc.

Before participating in the activity, please complete a **Non-GSNI-M Specialized Activity Form** and submit the form to frontdesk@gsnim.org at least four to six weeks before the 35 event. This form is not needed if the activity is happening at a council-sponsored activity or event. To plan a specialized activity at one of GSNI-M's camps, please submit activities request at time of online rental reservation. Select desired camp on "Camp" tab of gsnim.org to view information and reserve. Please complete request four to six weeks in advance. Groups have the choice of requesting GSNI-M staff to facilitate an activity (subject to staff availability), or they can provide own facilitators. If providing own facilitators, the facilitator must have current certification and have completed site-specific training for the activity.

For Extended trips (More than three days and two nights):

As soon as a group decides on their extended trip and wants to start planning, they need to complete an **Extended Trip Form**. Check the “Preliminary Extended Trip Approval” spot at the top of the form and follow appropriate directions. This form is to be submitted to frontdesk@gsnim.org 3-6 months in advance for extended trips within the United States and 12-18 months for international trips. Because these plans are initial plans, we do not expect the details to be in place and information can be changed when they submit their “Final Trip Approval” (checked at the top of the **Extended Trip Form**). Groups should not do any money-earning activities/projects until after submitting their preliminary approval form **and** money-earning approval form and have received approval on both. After preliminary approval is given, groups will start working on their “Final Trip Approval.” This form should be turned in at 1-2 months prior to the trip.

GP 9: Transportation of Volunteers and Girls

Policy Transportation to and from homes and Girl Scout meeting places is each parent’s individual decision and responsibility.

For planned Girl Scout field trips and other activities – outside of normal time and place in which group will be transported in private vehicles:

- Every driver must be an approved adult volunteer, a registered Girl Scout, and have a good driving record, a valid license, and a registered/insured vehicle.
- Girls never drive other girls.
- If a group is traveling in one vehicle, there must be at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers in the vehicle, one of whom is female, and the girl-volunteer ratios in volunteer essentials must be followed.
- If the group is traveling in more than one vehicle, the entire group must consist of at least two unrelated approved adult volunteers, one of whom is female, and the girlvolunteer ratios in Volunteer Essentials must be followed. Care should be taken so 36 that a single car (with a single adult driver) is not separated from the group for an extended length of time.
- 15 passenger vans as described below may not be used for any Girl Scout activity. GSNI-M will NOT approve any leases or rental of 15 passenger vans.

Procedures/information:

The NHTSA states that the risk of roll-over of 15 passenger vans is greatly increased with 10 or more passengers a “15-passenger van” is described in section 10309a2 of the “Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users” (2005) as “a vehicle that seats 10-14 passengers, not including the driver”. GSNI-M will also use this definition of a “15 passenger van”.

Therefore, only private vehicles or leased vehicles seating nine passengers and under may be used for Girl Scout transportation.

Groups may charter larger vehicles with council approval. Companies must have a positive rating, provide a certificate of insurance and signed Bus Agreement, employ appropriately licensed drivers and follow all other safety requirements.

All girls and adults must wear seatbelts while in a van, car, or truck. They must also follow all state laws, including booster seat usage, according to the state that they are traveling in.

Group leaders need to make sure their drivers are licensed drivers with a valid registration and current insurance.

Group leaders must make sure that all Girl Scout guidelines are followed.