



Trip Planning Guide

Trip Approval Chart

Trip	Forms to be completed ⁴	Additional Requirements
Impromptu activity or Trip at troop meeting (on site only).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No forms required. Leave note on door for parents, telling them where you are, when you will return and how to find you 	
Day Trip (60 miles or more from Council jurisdiction border)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent Permission Slip¹ Trip Application¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Aid/CPR Certified Adult⁶
High Adventure activities – i.e. Swimming/Water Parks, horseback riding, boating/Tubing (see <i>Safety Activity Checkpoints for detailed list</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trip Application¹ Parent Permission Slip¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Aid/CPR Certified Adult Special instructors – such as a lifeguard if applicable
Troop camping or overnight(s) (non-GSMISTS facilities only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trip Application¹ Parent Permission Slip¹ Additional Insurance Plan 2 or 3E 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Aid/CPR Certified Adult Outdoor training specific to facility type² Special instructors – such as a lifeguard if applicable
Troop camping or overnight(s) at GSMISTS facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trip Application¹ Parent Permission Slip¹ Additional Insurance Plan 2 or 3E 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Aid/CPR Certified Adult Outdoor training specific to facility type² Special instructors – such as a lifeguard if applicable
Extended trip of four (4) or more nights (non-GSMISTS facility only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trip Application¹ Parent Permission Slip¹ Additional Insurance Plan 2 or 3E 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Aid/CPR Certified Adult Outdoor training specific to facility type² Special instructors – such as a lifeguard if applicable
International Travel ³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trip Application¹ Parent Permission Slip¹ Additional Insurance 3PI Intent to Travel Form³ Authorization for Medical Treatment (adult & girl)³ Permission for minors to travel³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Aid/CPR Certified Adult Girl & Adult Health History and Medical Examination Forms Global Travel Toolkit (supplemental)

1. Trip Application, Parent Permission Slip, and are available on our website, <http://www.gsmists.org/forms/>. Parent Permission Slips stay with Troop Leader for Troop Records, there are not turned into GSMISTS council.
2. Any outdoor specific training will be in-person. Please refer to our website for available trainings.
3. International Travel forms are also available on our website <http://www.gsmists.org/forms/> As a troop leader, you should already have your scouts Health History Forms. This is required to be on leaders at all time including
4. Troop meetings. This can also be found on our website <http://www.gsmists.org/forms/>
5. See Page 11 for map of council jurisdiction and border line.
6. Read Safety Activity Checkpoints to determine if First Aid/CPR Adult is required.

Trip Planning Guidelines

Taking trips is one of the many ways troops can Discover, Connect and Take Action. Traveling with your troop is a progressive experience. Your experiences may begin with a hike outside your troop meeting place and then progress to overnight camping, a visit to a city in another state, and ultimately a long excursion to one of the four World Centers of Girl Scouting (India, Mexico, London, or Switzerland). When planning trips, it is important to keep a few points in mind:

- The trip should meet the needs and interests of the girls, and be appropriate for their age group. A Girl Scout Daisy troop might visit a local farm or take a behind-the-scenes tour of a local restaurant. A Girl Scout Cadette troop, on the other hand, might plan a weekend trip to a big city.
- All of Volunteer Essentials and Safety Activity Checkpoint procedures must be strictly observed. Be sure you know all of the policies and procedures before venturing out. You can find these resources on the GSMISTS website.
- All volunteer drivers and adult helpers need to be approved GS volunteers who have completed an online volunteer application & criminal background check.

If there is an activity where it is a family event then additional insurance will need to be purchased. Please review the Trip Approval Chart for a quick reference chart and to the “Types of Extra Insurance” further in this document.

- Service Units should follow the same trip guidelines as if a troop was planning the trip. The event planner will need to submit one Travel Application for the event. Individual troops do not need to submit an application.
- Keep in mind the following requirements:
 - Daisies can only participate in a 1-night overnight.
 - All drivers and adult helpers must be approved Girl Scout volunteers.

Girl-Led Trip Planning

Girls of all ages have ideas of places they want to go and, through the progression of experience and skills; they can research, plan, budget, earn money and put together an itinerary for the trip. Start a discussion with girls using these questions:

- What is something that is interesting to all of us?
- Where could we go?
- When?
- How will we get there?
- How much will it cost?
- How should we get ready?
- What will we do along the way?

The *girls* should plan the trip, not the adults. Even Girl Scout Daisies can brainstorm a list of ideas; Girl Scout Juniors can make phone calls to find out admission fees and hours of operation. Girl Scout Seniors can make airline reservations. Let the girls take on the leadership roles in planning and carrying out their trip.

Trip Checklist

- Girls brainstorm ideas for things they would like to do. Girl Scouts is girl led so find what interest your troop or Girl Scout! Discuss activity/travel opportunities and research ideas.
- Check the program partner page on our website for community partners that may already have your activity or trip available. <http://www.gsmists.org/partners/>
- Girls vote or use troop government to choose a destination.
- Girls consider costs and money earning potential and develop an trip budget.
- Review the Trip Approval chart to see what kind of trip, forms, trainings, insurance and additional resources you may need.
- Adults read applicable sections of Volunteer Essentials and Safety Activity Checkpoints. These can be found on the GSMISTS website <http://www.gsmists.org/forms/>
- If council permission is needed, submit the Trip Application to our administrative assistant e-mail at mvp@gsmists.org (income applications will not be accepted).
- Check for an e-mail confirmation once your trip is approved. After you receive your e-mail confirmation, you may proceed in booking your trip.
- Plan and participate in troop money earning activities, if needed. All money earning activities (with the exception of Cookie and Fall Product sales) must be approved by the Program Department.
- Secure enough approved GS volunteer drivers and helpers to appropriately supervise the trip. All adults must be registered members and approved volunteers to assist, attend or drive.
- Collect signed Parent/Guardian Permission Slips and bring these and girls' Health History forms with you on the trip.
- Purchase additional insurance, if needed, at least 4 weeks prior to event/trip.
- Have FUN on your trip!
- As a troop, evaluate the experience. Think about creating a survey for your trip so the troop can learn from its experiences!
 - What did you enjoy?
 - What would you change?
 - What did you learn?
 - What could we do differently?
 - What was your favorite part?
 - What was your least favorite part?

Trip Application for Approval Process

Council permission must be obtained for the following activities and trips within the stated timeline:

<u>Type of Trip</u>	<u>Timeline</u>
Day Trip (60 miles or more from Council jurisdiction border)	4 weeks prior to trip
High Adventure	4 weeks prior to trip
Troop Camping/Overnight (non-GSMISTS properties)	4 weeks prior to trip
Troop Camping/Overnight (GSMISTS properties)	4 weeks prior to trip
Extended Trip – (3 nights or more, non-GSMISTS property only)	6 weeks prior to trip
International Travel	1 year prior to trip

To obtain, council permission submit the Trip Application online. The application is available at <http://www.gsmists.org/forms/>.

In all cases, permission must be obtained before money earning activities are approved.

When an application is submitted, troops will receive an email within 2 weeks with one of three answers:

1. Trip is approved - No further steps are required.
2. Trip is tentatively approved - This email will describe additional steps or information needed.
3. Trip is not approved - Reasons why your trip is not approved will be described in the e-mail.

Once some type of approval is granted, troops may start booking the trip. There may be changes to your trip application between the time it is submitted, approved and the actual trip, please email updates to mvp@gsmists.org address. Please include Troop number and leader's name in the email.

- Location
- Times/Dates
- Additional adult or girl attendees. Please note this may change the status of the trip application depending on adult volunteer status and girl membership status.

Training Requirements

Volunteer Capacity	Trainings ¹	Pre-requisites	Delivery Options
<p><u>Indoor Camping Trip</u> – Troop will be sleeping in cabins or similar closed structure with access to flush toilets. Cooking in a kitchen or meals provided and not building a camp fire</p> <p>Or</p> <p><u>Backyard Camping Trip</u> - Located at a volunteers house (after Permission to Meet in the Home has been approved) Home toilet facilities and cooking in a kitchen</p>	<p>Girl Scouts 101 (GS 101)</p> <p>Troop Management (TM)</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>GS101 – online only</p> <p>TM- In Person or online</p>
<p><u>Outdoor Camping Trip</u> – Troop will be sleeping in platform tents or cabins at an established camp which may or may not have access to flushing toilets. You plan to cook outdoors and build a campfire.</p>	<p>Troop Camping Skills Home Study & In Person Session</p>	<p>GS101</p> <p>TM</p>	<p>TCS – Home Study Only</p> <p>TCS – In Person Only</p>
<p><u>Archery</u> – Troop wants to learn archery skills and practice their hand at a bow and arrow</p>	<p>Archery Certification</p>	<p>GS101</p> <p>TM</p>	<p>Archery – In Person Only</p>
<p><u>Boating Activities</u> – want to teach Girl Scouts or supervise boating activities</p>	<p>Small Craft Certification</p>	<p>GS101</p> <p>TM</p>	<p>Small Craft – In Person Only</p>

Course descriptions may be found on our website under <http://www.gsmists.org/forms/>. A list of available training and dates can be found on our website calendar or by contacting Council directly.

Approved Adults

Troops must maintain proper adult/girl ratios during all Girl Scout activities (please refer to Volunteer Essentials for adult/girl ratio numbers). Troops use the Events, Travel and Camping ratios when planning field trips, overnights and travel. Adults accompanying a group should be chosen for their patience, flexibility and good judgment.

They need to understand their responsibilities during the trip. Any adult participating in a field trip, overnight or trip including drivers and other parents must be registered members and approved volunteers. This means that the following conditions are met:

- Have completed a Volunteer Application and criminal background check with GSMISTS
- Have completed adult member registration with GSUSA

First-Aider: A qualified first-aider is required for all activities that involve risk. Please review Volunteer Essentials for requirements.

Agreements/Car Rentals

As a troop leader, you might encounter agreements that need to be signed. Some common agreements include facility rental, vehicle rental or equipment rental agreements. Agreements **MUST** also be signed by a Girl Scout staff person. To submit an agreement for review and to be signed, submit **WITH** your Trip Application Form.

If there is no money exchange involved with the agreement then:

- The agreement needs to be included with your Trip Application Form.
- The MVP Admin Assistant will sign off.
- Your signature will need to be provided on the agreement after you receive it back.

If there is an exchange of money involved with the agreement then:

- The agreement needs to be included with your Trip Application Form.
- Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore CEO will initial the agreement.
- Your signature will need to be provided on the agreement after you receive it back.

Keep the following in mind when renting cars.

- Girl Scouts/troops are never allowed to rent or use 15-passenger vans.
- Troops are able to rent 12-passenger vans only if the drivers have proven experience using these vehicles.
- The following types of insurance for the vehicles will need to be purchased through the rental company:
 - Loss Damage Waiver
 - Additional/Supplement Liability
 - Please note these names can vary by Rental Company, talk to the council if you need clarification.
- You will be asked to submit a confirmation of rental and insurance before you leave.

Safety

The most important factor in having a safe and successful outing is good planning. Let girls do as much of the planning as possible. When girls have been included in planning, they will take the responsibility for enforcing safety procedures. The leader needs to guide the group to ensure that the plans are appropriate to the girls' experience and skill level. Part of the planning process is to learn and practice the basic skills that girls will need to carry out the trip.

Before planning any trip, a leader is responsible for reviewing the following resources:

- Volunteer Essentials - is the Girl Scout's volunteer handbook. It includes basic policy and procedure information; health and safety guidelines; and information about Girl Scout basics, volunteer tips, Girl Scout activity resources and traditions; and ideas for ways to engage girls. The following chapters are especially important for troops planning an activity or trip.
 - Volunteer Essentials: Chapter 4: Safety-Wise is the key safety reference document, providing volunteers with basic program activity guidelines and assuring safe and quality experiences for girls.
 - Volunteer Essentials: Appendix for Travel Volunteers provides key information for troops planning overnights or trips.
- Safety Activity Checkpoints – These provide specific instructions for staying safe while participating in various activities. They are activity specific and should be reviewed before engaging in activities with girls.

To ensure the safety of sleeping areas, use the following guidelines.

- Overnights can only take place on private property or in homes if the Permission to Meet in the Home form has been completed and approved. This can be found on our council website
- Each participant has her own bed. Parent/guardian permission must be obtained if girls are to share a bed.
- Adults and girls never share a bed.
- It is not mandatory that an adult sleep in the sleeping area (tent, cabin, hotel room, or designated area) with the girls. However, if an adult female does share the sleeping area, there should always be two unrelated adult females present.
- If males are participating, a separate sleeping and bathroom facilities are provided for them.

High Adventure/ Risk Activities:

Challenge Courses, Climbing & rappelling, Fencing, Horseback Riding, Canoeing, Kayaking, Recreational Tree Climbing, Sailing, Scuba Diving, and Skateboarding. Please refer to Safety Activity Checkpoints for a complete list of ALL high risk activities and a list of activities that are not approved for a Girl Scout trips.

Accident/Incident Reporting

In the event if you need to submit an Accident/Incident report form to council please download and submit our Accident/Incident report form. Submission information can be found on the form. The leader/advisor, staff member or trained adult responsible for an event or activity, must complete one form for each person involved in an incident or injured and submit to a Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore Service Center within 48 hours of the accident or incident.

Contact person

Designate an emergency contact person who will remain near home during the duration of the trip.

- Leave a list of names, phone numbers, emergency contacts and other vital information of all people going so that they can contact you or the girls' families in an emergency.
- Provide the designated contact people with a complete trip itinerary including contact numbers for hotels, campgrounds and attractions you plan to visit.
- Leave your route of travel with the contact person along with basic vehicle information.

Health History

- Leaders should collect a complete, accurate, signed health history from each girl in the troop annually. A Health History Form is available on the council website. It is a fillable PDF and can be emailed to families at the beginning of the Girl Scout year.

Sensitive Topics

Girl Scouts welcomes and serves girls and families from a wide spectrum of cultures. In order to be contemporary and responsive to girls' needs, some Girl Scout activities focus on subjects that may be considered sensitive in nature. There is no definitive list of sensitive issues but possible examples are listed below. Keep in mind that what is considered a sensitive issue in some families, communities or school districts may not be considered so in others.

When girls discuss sensitive topics, council and parent approval is required. Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore requires a separate form for the sensitive issues. Use the Sensitive Issue Permission Form to obtain parent and council permissions. Form must be submitted 4 weeks in advance.

Examples of sensitive issues:

- Substance Abuse: drug awareness activities and education, including tobacco and alcohol.
- Child Abuse: information about types of abuse, including sexual abuse or molestation; danger awareness and person safety.
- Puberty/Human Sexuality: information about the physical and emotional changes that come with puberty; personal hygiene and teen pregnancy.
- Violence: rape/date rape, sexual harassment; school violence, family violence.
- Youth Suicide: recognizing the warning signs of plans for suicide; how to react/what to do; suicide prevention; and dealing with depression.
- Religion: discussion of religion among girls of different beliefs. If working on the My Promise/My Faith Award or any of the established religious awards, council approval is not needed but parent permission is required.
- Weapons: open carry, concealed weapons, etc.
- Human trafficking.
- LGBT and any related issues.

Insurance

A portion of the individual annual GS membership dues pays for supplementary insurance for Girl Scout members only. This insurance provides up to a specified maximum for medical expenses incurred as a result of an accident while a member is participating in an approved, supervised Girl Scout activity lasting two nights or less, after the individual's primary insurance pays out. This is one reason that all adults and girls should be registered members. Non-registered parents, tagalongs (brothers, sisters, friends), and other persons are not covered by basic coverage.

An optional plan of activity insurance is available for Girl Scouts taking extended trips (3 nights or more) and for non-members who participate in approved and supervised Girl Scout activities. These plans are secondary insurance that covers individuals while participating in any approved supervised Girl Scout activity. Optional insurance coverage must be purchased for any Girl Scout activity that involves non-Girl Scouts, lasts longer than three days and two nights or involves travel outside the United States.

For plan descriptions, see below. Visit [Mutual of Omaha's website](#) for more detailed information. To purchase additional insurance, submit the Insurance Purchase Form to the council.

Types of Extra Insurance

- Plan 2 Accident Insurance (\$0.11 per participant per calendar day)
 - For members participating in approved Girl Scout activities lasting 3 days/2 nights or less.
 - For non-members *participating* in an approved and supervised Girl Scout activity such as Father Daughter Dance or Court of Awards
- Plan 3E Accident and Sickness Insurance (supplemental to individuals insurance) (\$0.29 per participant per calendar day)
 - For *participants* in approved Girl Scout activities - most often purchased for council sponsored activities such as resident camp or for troop travel of 4 days/3 nights or longer. This acts as a supplement to an individual's personal insurance.
- Plan 3P Accident and Sickness Insurance (\$0.70 per participant per calendar day)
 - For *participants* in approved Girl Scout activities - most often purchased for council sponsored activities such as resident camp or for troop travel of 4 days/3 nights or longer. This acts as a primary and is recommended for trips outside council boundaries.
- Plan 3PI Accident and Sickness Insurance for International Trips (\$1.17 per participant per calendar day)
 - For *participants* in approved Girl Scout International Trips - this is a requirement for international travel.

Age and Skill Appropriate Activities: In order to qualify as a participant, a person must meet the age and skill level of the activity. If a Safety Activity Checkpoint says that an activity is only appropriate for Juniors and up, then all participants must be grade 4 and up. A few examples:

- A Cadette troop plans a field trip. If one of the girls has a sibling who is a registered Brownie, the sibling is considered a tagalong since this is a Cadette activity and cannot attend.
- A Cadette volunteers to work with a Brownie troop while completing her Leader in Action Award. This is approved activity and insurance does not need to be purchased for the Cadette.

Insurance Terms

- **Participants:** This includes adults, minors, members and nonmembers who participate in an event. For example, at an enrollment event, it would include current Members, the volunteers and any staff that will be attending and managing the activities designed especially for the potential enrollees, their parents, the children placed in a Supplemental Supervised Unit, and the supervisor(s) of that unit. As always, it would not include “*Tagalongs*” (see below).
- **Supplemental Supervised Unit:** This may be called by many names. Some common ones include “boys’ unit,” and “pixie unit”. It is the children who would be “*Tagalongs*,” except for the fact that they are kept under the continuous supervision of an adult while a Girl Scouting activity takes place for Members. The reason they are insurable is that they are continuously supervised. In resident camping there may be a counselor assigned specifically to supervise the children of staff who are not campers. In the group setting, it may be siblings who are kept together away from the Girl Scout programming and supervised by an adult; Member or nonmember, or a properly trained and adult supervised older Girl Scout.