Field Trips
Safety and Paperwork
Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts
This Field Trip Course is composed of two modules: Field Trips: Safety and Paperwork and Field Trips: Planning.

Prerequisites:
- Required: GSUSA Welcome to Girl Scouting Video
- Recommended: Girl Scouting Great Beginning

Remember you should begin with simple field trips that are a short distance from home and of a short duration. As you and the girls become comfortable with those trips, your troop can progress to longer distances and time.
Course Objectives

After completing this course you will be able to:

1. Locate information in Safety Activity Check points and Volunteer Essentials
2. Complete required paperwork
3. Understand what is covered by Girl Scout Insurance
4. Handle injury/illness and understand the responsibilities of the first aider
5. Prepare an emergency plan for your field trip
Safety Activity Checkpoints

When preparing for any activity with girls, always begin with the Girl Scout Safety Activity Checkpoints written for that particular activity.

Safety Activity Checkpoints

The checkpoints are formatted as checklists, so that you, your co-volunteers, and the girls can go through and check off each step that has been followed.

To become familiar with the format of the Checkpoints, take a moment to review the checkpoints for roller skating.

REMEMBER: When you complete your activity and travel form, you are confirming that you have read the safety activity checkpoints for the activity.
Volunteer Essentials

Volunteer Essentials provides information on National and Council policies. When planning a field trip, be sure to consult the Safety-wise chapter. This chapter outlines policies related to transporting girls and required girl-adult ratios.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Girl Scout Daisies* (grades K–1)</th>
<th>6*</th>
<th>4*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Brownies (grades 2–3)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Juniors (grades 4–5)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Cadettes (grades 6–8)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Seniors (grades 9–10)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Ambassadors (grades 11–12)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Policies for transporting girls

These are some highlights of the policies outlined in Chapter 4 of Volunteer Essentials.

These policies apply if the troop is gathering at a central location and traveling together. If each family is responsible for transportation to the event, they do not apply.

- Drivers must be at least 21 years old
- Drivers must be registered and CORI’d
- Each vehicle should have a first aid kit, flashlight, directions, contact info for the destination, and contact info for the troop’s At Home Emergency Contact.

Tip

Keep Medical Authorization forms in plastic sleeve protectors with a picture of the girl. Add permission slips as they are collected. Prepare a folder for each vehicle that contains directions, phone numbers and the appropriate sleeve protectors. This makes it easy to move information if girls change vehicles.
Choosing Chaperones

Look for adults who are committed to:

- Being a positive role model
- Respecting all girls and adults equally
- Prioritizing the safety of all girls
- Supporting and reinforcing a group agreement
- Handling pressure and stress
- Flexibility - willing to accommodate changes in plans
Required Paperwork

Permission slips

- A permission slip is required for any event that is not at your regular meeting place or not at your regular meeting time. The one exception is a short walk from your meeting place to a location that is within sight of the meeting place. (Volunteer Essentials, Chapter 4)

- Use the annual permission slip for most activities: [Annual Permission Slip](#)

- For High Risk and Overnight Activities: [Permission Slip](#)

- The completed permission slip should be with the chaperone in charge of the girl or with the troop leader.
Required Paperwork

Activity and travel form

- An activity and travel form is required in the same situations as a permission slip. Exceptions are:
  1. An event for which you registered through the council website registration system
  2. A trip to a council owned property when you completed the site reservation form
  3. A SU event when the organizer submits the form

- There are two activity and travel forms.
  - The short form is for simple field trips, Outings or Day trips: Activity and Travel Form
  - The long form is for overnights and high risk activities: Activity and Travel Form - Long
The permission slip is a two part form. The top part provides info to families and should be kept by them.

A Back Home Contact is important for every trip. This is the person that the Troop Leader will call when there is an emergency or change in plans. The Back Home Contact person is responsible for informing all families. It is important that the Back Home Contact person has an up-to-date list of family contact info.

The Back Home Contact should understand that he/she must be reachable at all times while the troop is away.

Imagine this scenario: You are visiting a local zoo with your Girl Scout Brownie Troop when the weather unexpectedly turns dangerous. Your girls are asking all kinds of questions about what is going to happen to them, to the animals, to their families. This isn’t the time to be going down a list of names to call parents. And, you may need to call them more than once as plans change.
**Required Paperwork**

**More on High Risk and Overnight Permission Slip - Bottom Section**

- The permission slip is a two part form. The bottom section is turned into the troop.

- Remarks
  - The remarks section is where parents should list any medications (prescription or over-the-counter) that a girl will need to take during the trip. Parents should also complete the [Permission to Administer Medication](#) form. Medication should be in the original container with dosage listed. Most medication should be turned in to the Troop First Aider. Exceptions would be items that are self administered such as inhalers. The use of these self administered items should still be included on the permission slip.

- Family Emergency Contact
  - Be sure to note if this is different for this trip. This information should be included in what is provided to your Back Home Contact so that if the parent can’t be reached the Back Home Contact knows who to try next.
Girl Scout Accident and Medical Insurance

- The insurance that registered Girl Scouts receive as part of their National membership dues covers such things as:
  - Accident Medical or Dental Expenses
  - Ambulance Expense
  - Exposure to Infectious Disease
  - Accidental Death or Dismemberment
- These are covered when participating in an approved Girl Scout event where council rules and policies have been followed.
- This insurance pays for expenses that are not covered by the injured person’s family’s medical insurance.
Why purchase additional insurance

Imagine this scenario:

It is a beautiful fall day and your Brownie Troop is going apple picking. The troop has decided that it would be fun to invite families to come along. At the orchard, an older brother is stung by a bee. It is discovered that he is very allergic and he is rushed to the hospital via ambulance.

If you have purchased additional insurance, medical costs that aren’t covered by his family insurance are covered. This includes expenses for transportation by ambulance. If you have not purchased additional insurance, that family could ask you as the organizer of this event to cover medical costs.

- It is strongly encouraged that additional insurance be purchased if any participant (including adults) is not a registered Girl Scout.

- Information on purchasing insurance is here: Additional Medical Insurance
Tagalongs and insurance

- Tagalongs are children attending a Girl Scout meeting or event for which they are not the primary audience.

- Examples
  - Any boy under 18
  - Any child under 5
  - A Girl Scout Cadette sitting at a table doing her homework at a Daisy meeting
  - A Girl Scout Daisy joining her mom and older sister on a field trip planned by the Girl Scout Junior’s troop.

- Tagalongs are NOT covered by Girl Scout insurance unless additional insurance is purchased.
How to handle injury or illness

Your Troop First Aider should evaluate all injuries.

For small scrapes or cuts, girls may be able to clean and bandage themselves. The Troop First Aider should still supervise.

For larger injuries, the Troop First Aider should determine if the injury needs more than simple first aid that can be administered on the trip. If it is beyond simple first aid, call 911.

Keep a copy of the GSCWM Emergency Procedures in your troop First Aid kit. It is at the end of chapter 4 of Volunteer Essentials.

See Volunteer Essentials Chapter 4 for training requirements for your Troop First Aider.
Prepare an emergency plan

Imagine these scenarios:

Your Brownie Troop is visiting a pottery studio to work on the Pottery Badge. One of the kilns at the studio catches fire. Do your Brownies know what to do?

Your Junior Troop is visiting a museum when a severe weather alert is issued. How will you respond?

Your Cadette Troop is roller skating and one of the girls falls, hitting her head hard enough to cause a concussion. What steps will you take?
Prepare an emergency plan

Your emergency plan should ensure that you are prepared for:

- Evacuating the building you are in
- Handling a weather emergency
- A serious accident or injury. Remember that if the First Aider needs to leave with an injured girl, a trained leader needs to be available to remain with the group.
- A girl (or buddy pair) is separated from the group

Keep a copy of the GSCWM Emergency Procedures in your troop First Aid kit. This form is at the end of chapter 4 in Volunteer Essentials
Please review the course objectives to be sure that you are able to:

- Locate information in Safety Activity Check points and Volunteer Essentials
- Complete required paperwork
- Understand what is covered by Girl Scout Insurance
- Handle injury/illness and understand the responsibilities of the first aider
- Prepare an emergency plan for your field trip
The next module to prepare for taking your troop on a field trip is

Field Trips - Planning

If you have questions about the material covered in this module, reach out to your Troop Consultant, Service Unit Manager or Membership Specialist.