

BACKGROUND SEARCH POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

BACKGROUND SEARCH POLICY

In compliance with GSUSA Guidelines, Girl Scouts of Connecticut, Inc. (the “Council”), has adopted the following policy regarding required background searches of all employees and volunteers involved with Girl Scouts of Connecticut programs and participants. The goal of this policy is to provide a process that confirms the identity and background of individuals working for or with Girl Scouts of Connecticut or who otherwise have access to facilities or systems, regardless of location, thereby protecting employees, volunteers, and girl and adult members, as well as safeguarding the Council’s assets.

Background Search Policy

As a condition of employment or volunteer work, and prior to any contact with girl members, Girl Scouts of Connecticut policy requires verification of identity and a background search. The Council has contracted with a third party to conduct required background searches. The agency will be required to check back, over the past 7 years, for information on:

- Identity,
- Criminal history
- National Sex Offender Registry

The agency will retain the records for such searches, and will verify to Girl Scouts of Connecticut that the background searches have been conducted, including reports on outcomes.

Data Privacy Policy

- Data is gathered only for legitimate human resources, business, and safety/security purposes of which employees and volunteers have been notified.
- Data is only released to others if they have a legitimate human resource, business, or safety/security request.
- All data releases are recorded: who received the data, the intended usage, where the information may be sent/accessed, and how long it will be retained.
- All data is protected, whether in electronic or paper form, from unauthorized access, and is kept only as *long as it is necessary for the intended purposes*.
- Only those who need to have access to data for legitimate usage will be allowed access – those individuals currently include the Director of Human Resources and her/his designee, and the Chief Executive Officer.
- Data no longer needed for intended purposes will be destroyed in a secure manner.
- If you have concerns or questions about how this is being handled, please contact the Director of Human Resources immediately.

Girl Scouts of Connecticut will not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, citizenship, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, or any other protected category.

Girl Scouts of Connecticut, Inc.
BACKGROUND SEARCH PROCEDURES

The safety of girls is of paramount importance to all of us in Girl Scouting. Conducting criminal background searches is one step in an overall process of screening and placing employees and volunteers.

1. Background searches will be completed on all individuals in the following categories.
 - a. All Council Employees (including Camp staff)
 - b. Board of Directors
 - c. Leaders and Co-Leaders (01 and 02 positions)
 - d. Product Sales Volunteers
 - e. Mentor Volunteers
 - f. Program Volunteers
 - g. Troop Committee Members
 - h. Service Team Members

New employees and volunteers in any of the listed categories will be screened at the time of recruitment.

2. All employees and volunteers must expressly authorize the Council or its agent to conduct a criminal history search or to conduct any other search the Council deems appropriate for the opportunity being considered. Without such authorization to conduct the background search, an individual cannot be employed, or serve in or be appointed to a volunteer position with the Council.
3. Employees and volunteers have the right to make a written request within a reasonable amount of time after receiving notice of our intent to conduct the background search to receive additional, detailed information about the nature and scope of the background search, including the name, address and telephone number of the third party contracted to conduct the searches.
4. Employees and volunteers may be subjected to repeat background checks at any time during their employment or appointed volunteer activity with Girl Scouts of Connecticut.
5. The decision whether to exclude or limit a prospective individual's participation remains at all times within the sole discretion of the Council. Factors that may be considered in making such determinations include, but are not limited to, the nature and severity of the criminal conduct, and length of time since the criminal conduct occurred. The Council's primary concern is always to safeguard the best interests of its members.
6. Providing false information or omitting relevant information on the application or consent form is grounds for exclusion from participation in the Council, regardless of the result of the background search.
7. If a negative decision regarding a prospective volunteer/employee is reached, it may be based in whole or in part on information contained in a background search result. The individual will be provided in writing on how to contact the third party for any and all disputes.
8. It is the employee's or the volunteer's responsibility to immediately notify the Council office in writing of any circumstance that might alter the background search results following its completion.

9. All results of background searches will be kept strictly confidential at all times. Individuals with access to this information will be confined to the Chief Executive Officer and the Human Resources Department. Results will be shared with legal counsel, if the Council seeks legal guidance. All files are archived with the third party contracted to provide the background search service.

Girl Scouts of Connecticut does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, citizenship, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, genetic information, or any other protected category.

Have you ever been convicted of a crime (e.g., felony or misdemeanor, including DWI, DUI, etc., but not including minor traffic violations or any convictions as a youthful offender)? No Yes

"Conviction," for this application, means a final judgment or verdict of guilty, or a plea of nolo contendere, in any state or federal court, regardless of whether an appeal is pending or could be taken. "Conviction" does not include a final judgment or verdict that has been expunged by pardon, reversed, set aside, or otherwise rendered invalid. Further, you are not required to disclose any arrest(s), criminal charge(s), or conviction(s) the records of which have been erased under law. Such records can include records of finding of delinquency or that a child was a member of a family with service needs (Conn. Gen. Stat. 46b-146), adjudication of youthful offender status (Conn. Gen. Stat. 54-76o), criminal charges dismissed or nolle, or charges for which a person is found not guilty or a conviction later resulting in an absolute pardon (Conn. Gen. Stat. 54-142a). Further, any person whose criminal records have been erased is deemed under law never to have been arrested with respect to such erased proceedings and may swear so under oath.

A conviction will not necessarily be a barrier to your acceptance.

If yes, please state crime, date, and location:

Has any person currently living in your household ever been convicted of a child abuse crime or is anyone a registered sex offender? No Yes

If yes, please state crime, date, circumstances related to the crime, and person in household who committed the crime:

Please send notification of an adverse decision by: email surface mail

I give continuing permission for Girl Scouts of Connecticut or its agents to obtain information relating to my identity and criminal history record from any jurisdiction. I understand that this information will be used to determine my eligibility for a staff or volunteer position with Girl Scouts of Connecticut. A criminal history record may include arrest and conviction data, as well as plea bargains and deferred adjudications. A conviction record will not necessarily bar volunteering or employment, but factors such as date of infraction, rehabilitation, and relatedness to the job in question will be considered.

I acknowledge that I have been given a copy of Girl Scouts of Connecticut's Background Search Policy and Procedures for Employees and Volunteers. I understand that if I am not extended an offer of employment or volunteerism based on the report, I will be provided a copy of the information and a summary of my rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act upon my request. I agree to immediately update the information contained in this form while I am serving as an employee or volunteer if any statement made in it changes or if I or any member of my household should be convicted of a crime against children.

Applicant's Signature

Date

**Return in a sealed envelope marked "Personal and Confidential" to
Human Resources Department
Girl Scouts of Connecticut, 340 Washington Street, Hartford, CT 06106.
860-522-0163; www.gsofct.org; Fax 866-735-3447**