

## 2025-2026 GSHH Trip & Activity Policy FAQ

### Q. What does the new trip policy take effect?

A. Effective 10/1/2025 All trip forms submitted prior to this date that no longer require submission will be closed and the leader will be notified.

### Q. What does the new trip policy say?

A. A **Trip and Activity Form** is **no longer required** for field or day trips and low-risk activities. A form is only required if the trip or activity is one of the following:

- Listed as **high-risk** in *Safety Activity Checkpoints (SACs)*
- An **overnight trip** (any length of stay away from home, including campouts)
- An **extended trip** (three nights or more, domestic)
- An **international trip**
- **Outside of the GSHH seven county jurisdiction**

### Q. Why was the trip policy changed?

A. The changes were made to:

- **Streamline the process**
- **Make things easier for volunteers**, allowing leaders to focus on creating fun, meaningful experiences
- Ensure council staff can **focus attention on higher-risk activities** where safety oversight is most critical
- **Enhance the overall Girl Scout experience** by reducing barriers and making troop outings easier and more accessible

**Q. What counts as a “trip” under Girl Scouts?**

**A.** A trip is defined as any activity that takes place **outside of the troop’s regular meeting time and space.**

**Examples of trips include:**

- Going to a local playground or library
- A service project at a food pantry
- Visiting a community business or museum
- Camping overnight

**Q. What is considered a “high-risk activity”?**

**A.** High-risk activities are outlined in *Safety Activity Checkpoints* (SACs) because they require **special planning, permissions, or certified instructors** to keep participants safe.

**Examples include (but are not limited to):**

- Horseback riding
- Canoeing, kayaking, or paddleboarding
- Zip-lining, climbing walls, or rock climbing
- Archery or target sports
- Boating/Water activities
- Activities requiring protective gear or specialized instruction

**Important:** Always review *Safety Activity Checkpoints*. If the activity is marked as high-risk, a Trip and Activity Form is required—even for short day trips.

**Q. What are examples of trips/activities that do *not* require a form anymore?**

**A.** Examples include:

- A walk to a nearby park for badge work

- A visit to the police or fire department
- A troop day at the zoo or aquarium
- Attending a community cultural event or festival
- **ALL trips NOT outlined in Safety Activity Checkpoints as high risk**

**Reminder:** Even if a form isn't needed, all Girl Scout safety guidelines (SACs, Volunteer Essentials, and council rules) must still be followed.

### **Q. Do overnight trips still require a form?**

**A.** Yes. Any overnight activity — whether it's a **campouts, one-night sleepover at a museum, or multi-day camping trip** — requires a Trip and Activity Form.

**Why?** Overnight trips involve additional considerations such as sleeping arrangements, emergency procedures, and adult-to-girl supervision ratios. Council approval ensures the plans meet Girl Scout safety standards.

### **Q. If a form isn't required, what do leaders still need to do?**

**A.** Even without trip & activity form submission, leaders are responsible for:

- Notifying Service Unit Manager (if applicable) or Community Engagement Specialist
- Following **Safety Activity Checkpoints** for every activity
- Maintaining appropriate **adult-to-girl ratios**
- Ensuring all **drivers are registered, approved volunteers, and have completed required checks** (if applicable)
- Collecting **parent/guardian permission slips** for activities outside the normal meeting place
- Having an **emergency plan** in place
- Ensuring all adults have access to **first aid kits and emergency contacts**

### **Q. What if I'm not sure whether my activity requires a form?**

**A.**

- **Step 1:** Check *Safety Activity Checkpoints*. If the activity is listed as high-risk, submit a form.
- **Step 2:** Consider the length of the trip. If it's overnight, extended, or international, submit a form.
- **Step 3:** If still unsure, contact your **Community Engagement Specialist** or council staff for clarification.

**Q. Do parent/guardian permission slips still need to be collected?**

A. Yes. Regardless of whether a form is required, **written parent/guardian permission is required for all activities outside the regular meeting place**. This ensures families are informed and approve of their child's participation.

**Q. Where can I find the Trip and Activity Form and Safety Activity Checkpoints?**

A.

- The **Trip and Activity Form** is available on the council website under Forms and Documents.
- The **Safety Activity Checkpoints** can also be found online and should be reviewed before planning any activity.
- **Volunteer Essentials** provides additional guidance on planning safe and fun experiences.

**Q. Who can I contact with questions about the new trip policy?**

A.

- Your **Community Engagement Specialist** is the first point of contact for questions.
- You may also reach out to Lynn Morales at [membercare@girlscoutshh.org](mailto:membercare@girlscoutshh.org) with the subject line: Trip & Activity Question, Troop XXXX