

# Service Unit Elections Guidelines

This packet is provided to assist service units in holding effective and fair elections each spring for the following membership year. Please contact your Troop Engagement Specialist if you have any questions.

## **What is a service unit?**

A service unit consists of all Girl Scout members including troops, girls, volunteers, parents, and community members who live in a geographic area. Service units play an integral role in advancing the Girl Scout Mission and are critical to sustaining and expanding the Girl Scout Leadership Experience throughout our council. Service units are the local representation of Girl Scouts in the community.

## **What service units do?**

Service units are led by a team of volunteers who work in partnership with council staff to build a strong Girl Scout community. Service units collaborate with council staff to:

- Support membership growth and Girl Scout visibility
- Coordinate events for girls and adults
- Manage the fall product and cookie programs
- Provide volunteer support and recognition

## **What are the Service Unit Volunteer Positions?**

- Service Unit Manager\*
- Service Unit Treasurer\*
- Service Unit Fall Product Manager\*
- Service Unit Cookie Manager\*
- Service Unit Recruiter
- Service Unit Event Coordinator
- Service Unit Secretary
- Service Unit Volunteer Mentor
- Service Unit Individually Registered Member Coordinator

Service units at minimum should have the \* positions filled.

The positions filled in each service unit will depend on the size and needs of the service unit. It should always be the goal to have as many of these positions filled as possible. This ensures that each volunteer holds a reasonable amount of work and that all girls and adults in the service unit are receiving the best Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Service unit positions are held for one membership year or until reelection is needed.

## **What is the Purpose of Service Unit Elections?**

Service unit elections take place to diplomatically choose the service unit team for the next year. The service unit team directs the operations of the service unit during the Girl Scout year in partnership with their council Troop Engagement Specialist.

## **Who is eligible to hold a service unit position?**

Any registered and approved volunteer is eligible for a service unit position if they meet the guidelines outlined in the volunteer position description. Position summaries are included in this packet. Complete position descriptions are available on our website under [Service Unit Resources](#).

## **Who can vote in Service Unit Elections?**

Any registered adult member in the service unit can vote in the election. All eligible voting members must be informed about the opportunity to vote well in advance.

## **When do Service Unit Elections take place?**

The election should take place in the spring or early summer so the team can complete training and begin planning for the upcoming year.

The [Service Unit Election Results Form](#) is due by **June 15** to report the Service Unit Team Members for the next membership year. Service unit roles are updated after training and an expectations agreement is complete. Please be sure all team members renew their membership for the upcoming Girl Scout year by **June 30**.

## **How do we conduct our Service Unit Elections?**

Service units may employ the election method that works best for them. Election resources provided in this packet include:

- Election Steps and Method Options
- Service Unit Position Summaries
- Service Unit Election Letter/E-mail Template
- Service Unit Election Ballot Template

## **Step 1: Pre-Election Steps – required**

1. At least three weeks prior to the election, the SU Manager sends out a **communication in two ways** to all adults stating they are seeking interested candidates for the SU volunteer positions for the next membership year.
  - a. Use Looker SU Full Roster report for current membership contact information.
  - b. Use the *Service Unit Election Email Template* for communication to your SU members.
  - c. Provide a deadline for candidates to submit their interest.
2. After the deadline, the SU Manager will create a ballot with the names of all candidates and the positions they are interested in.
  - a. A *Service Unit Election Ballot Template* is available.
  - b. The current SU Manager will send the ballot out to the SU adult members *at least one week prior to the election*. This allows service unit members a chance to see the slate of candidates and consider their options.
  - c. Provide information regarding how and when to vote (see options in next section). An additional meeting may need to be scheduled.

## **Step 2: Election Methods**

*Please note: If only one candidate is on the ballot for each position, no election is needed. Please proceed to Post-Election Steps.*

### **Option 1: In person election**

For service units that are geographically close and wish to have an in person election. This method is best when you have the majority of your members attending your regular meetings.

Follow these steps to set up this election method:

1. Set up the space including ballots, pens/pencils, and a box to collect the ballots.
2. Allow time for the SU members to vote. Utilize the *Service Unit Election Ballot Template* to ensure fairness and anonymity.
  - a. The SU Manager will also provide adult members with a way to send their vote prior to the meeting if unable to attend in person.

### **Option 2: Electronic Election**

For service units that are geographically spread out or are otherwise unable to conduct an in person election, a better option may be an electronic election. In this manner, people may vote even if they are unable to attend a meeting. A few options to consider are:

1. Consider using an online tool such as Survey Monkey or Google Docs. This allows for anonymous voting via electronic survey.
2. Have people respond via email to a designated team member with their vote.
3. Communicate a clear deadline for voting.

### **Step 3: Post-Election Steps - *required***

1. After the election, results will be counted by the current SU team or at least 2 people to ensure transparency.
- 2. Report next year's SU team via the [Service Unit Election Results Form](#) by June 15.**
3. Council staff will review the results to ensure volunteers are eligible to hold the roles and notify the current SU Manager of approval or denial and next steps.
4. Service unit roles will be added to each member's profile after the following are complete:
  - a. Membership is renewed
  - b. Service unit orientation and expectations agreement are complete
    - i. Must be completed by Sep. 1 or within 30 days of reporting new service unit roles
5. Your Troop Engagement Specialist will then contact the incoming SU Manager to schedule an in person Service Unit Planning Session.

## **Service Unit Position Summaries**

*Below are summaries of each position. Complete position descriptions are available on the [website](#).*

Service units at minimum should have the \* positions filled.

### **Service Unit Manager \***

The Service Unit Manager serves as a knowledgeable, positive and encouraging source of support for the entire Service Unit Team and enthusiastically engages others in carrying out the team's plans for membership development and delivery of a quality Girl Scout experience. *Excellent communication skills and at least one year of active Girl Scout volunteer experience with a troop and/or service unit are required for this important role.*

### **Service Unit Treasurer \***

The Service Unit Treasurer manages and maintains the service unit checking account. The treasurer ensures that finance policies and processes are being followed, and serves as a knowledgeable resource for all volunteers regarding troop finance. *Excellent communication skills and knowledge of Microsoft Excel is required.*

### **Service Unit Fall Product Manager \***

The Service Unit Fall Product Manager plays an important role in supporting new and existing troops through the Fall Product Program. This role's duties include attending council training, conducting service unit volunteer training, providing support and continuous communication, accepting product, and distributing product. *Excellent computer and communication skills and a flexible schedule are required for this role.*

### **Service Unit Cookie Manager \***

Service Unit Cookie Manager supports the Cookie Program for area troops and Individually Registered Girls during this exciting time of year! This role's duties include attending council training, conducting service unit volunteer training, providing support and continuous communication, accepting product, and distributing product. *Excellent communication and computer skills and a flexible schedule are required for this role.*

### **Service Unit Cookie Cupboard Manager**

The Service Unit Cookie Cupboard Manager attends council training, secures an approved cupboard location in the community and manages the inventory to keep cookies in stock and moving so local girls can maximize their cookie business success. *Excellent communication and computer skills, access to a mobile friendly device, and a flexible schedule are required for this role.*

### **Service Unit Recruiter**

Be the face of Girl Scouts in your community, and help reach EVERY girl! Service Unit Recruiters work in tandem with the Membership Team and Service Unit Managers to actively seek out opportunities to recruit girls and volunteers in the area. *A strong passion for Girl Scouts, excellent communication skills, flexible schedule, and being comfortable speaking in front of a group are required skills for this role.*

### **Service Unit Event Coordinator**

The Service Unit Event Coordinator plans events that educate and inspire Girl Scouts in their leadership experiences. They also serve as a resource to other volunteers who are planning events. *Excellent communication skills, knowledge of Microsoft Excel and previous Girl Scout event knowledge is required.*

### **Service Unit Secretary**

The Service Unit Secretary leads the charge in keeping meeting minutes and keeping communication lines open. *Excellent communication skills are required for this role.*

### **Service Unit Volunteer Mentor**

The Service Unit Volunteer Mentor uses Girl Scout expertise to provide support to new and seasoned volunteers as needed. *Excellent communication skills and good computer skills required. Previous Girl Scout experience and willingness to stay up-to-date on the Girl Scout materials and resources available is required for this role.*

### **Service Unit Individually Registered Girl Coordinator**

Sometimes Girl Scouts are not part of a troop, but still participate as an Individually Registered Girl (IRG). We want these girls to have a champion who ensures that they have the best possible customized Girl Scout experience.

The Individually Registered Girl Coordinator is the liaison between the service unit and the IRG's in your area, keeping the girls and their caregivers informed of programming, awards, camp, and other opportunities. This volunteer would also work closely with the SU Cookie and Fall Product Managers to support the IRG's and their caregivers through the Product Programs. *Previous Girl Scout experience and willingness to stay up-to-date on the Girl Scout materials and resources available is required for this role.*

## Service Unit Election Email Template

*This template is also available in a customizable word format [here](#).*

Dear Members of (NAME OF SERVICE UNIT),

We would love for you to Discover, Connect, & Grow with us!

My name is <NAME> and I am the service unit manager for the <SU NAME>. We would like to invite you to become part of our team! Each spring service units elect volunteers to fill service unit roles and we will be hosting elections on <DATE>.

The service unit team is the group of volunteers who are responsible for the overall operations of our service unit.

By engaging with your service unit, you will have the opportunity to:

- Use your skills to lend a hand and jump in on the fun.
- Develop transferrable leadership skills in a fun and supportive environment.
- Help with planning and supporting your service unit's activities.

Any registered and approved volunteer can be considered for a Service Unit position if they meet the guidelines outlined in the volunteer position description, is willing to take required training and uphold the Girl Scout Mission, Promise and Law.

The service unit positions available are:

- Service Unit Manager
- Service Unit Treasurer
- Service Unit Fall Product Manager
- Service Unit Cookie Manager
- Service Unit Event Coordinator
- Service Unit Secretary
- Service Unit Recruiter
- Service Unit Volunteer Mentor
- Service Unit Individually Registered Girl Coordinator

To view full service unit volunteer position descriptions, visit [gsdakotahorizons.org](http://gsdakotahorizons.org).

If you are interested in learning more about any of these positions, please reach out to me!

If you would like to add your name to elections for a role, please let me know by (ENTER DEADLINE).

Our service unit elections will be held on (DATE, TIME, LOCATION).

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions!

Thank you,

(SU MANAGER NAME and Contact Info)

# Service Unit Election Ballot Template

This template is also available in a customizable word format [here](#).

## Service Unit Positions

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Service Unit Manager</b><br/> <i>Select 1 or leave blank.</i><br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name</p>                                  | <p><b>Service Unit Treasurer</b><br/> <i>Select 1 or leave blank.</i><br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name</p>         |
| <p><b>Service Unit Fall Product Manager</b><br/> <i>Select 1 or leave blank.</i><br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name</p>                     | <p><b>Service Unit Cookie Manager</b><br/> <i>Select 1 or leave blank.</i><br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name</p>    |
| <p><b>Service Unit Secretary</b><br/> <i>Select 1 or leave blank.</i><br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name</p>                                | <p><b>Service Unit Event Coordinator</b><br/> <i>Select 1 or leave blank.</i><br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name</p> |
| <p><b>Service Unit Recruiter</b><br/> <i>Select 1 or leave blank.</i><br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name</p>                                | <p><b>Service Unit Volunteer Mentor</b><br/> <i>Select 1 or leave blank.</i><br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name</p>  |
| <p><b>Service Unit Individually Registered Girl Coordinator</b><br/> <i>Select 1 or leave blank.</i><br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Insert nominee name</p> |   |