

Transporting Girl Scouts

How parents decide to transport girls between their homes and Girl Scout meeting places is each parents' individual decision and responsibility.

For planned Girl Scout field trips and other activities, outside the normal time and place, in which a group will be transported in private vehicles:

- Every driver must be an approved adult* volunteer of 21 years of age or older and have a good driving record, valid license and a registered/insured vehicle.
- Girls never drive other girls.
- If a group is traveling in one vehicle, there must be at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers in the vehicle, one of whom is female and the girl-volunteer ratios in Volunteer Essentials must be followed.
- If a group is traveling in more than one vehicle, the entire group must consist of at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers, one of whom is female and the girl-volunteer ratios in Volunteer Essentials must be followed. Care should be taken so that a single car (with a single adult driver) is not separated from the group for an extended length of time.

“Adult” is defined by the age of majority in each state.

Private transportation includes private passenger vehicles, rental cars, privately owned or rented recreational vehicles and campers, chartered buses, chartered boats and chartered flights. Each driver of motorized private transportation must be at least 21 years old and hold a valid operator's license appropriate to the vehicle, state laws must be followed, even if they are more stringent than the guidelines here. Anyone who is driving a vehicle with more than 12 passengers must also be a professional driver who possesses a commercial driver's license (CDL); check with your council to determine specific rules about renting large vehicles.

Please keep in mind the following non-negotiable points regarding private transportation:

- Even though written agreements are always required when renting or chartering, you are not authorized to sign an agreement or contract, even if there is no cost associated with the rental. Such an agreement must instead be signed by the Chief Executive Officer of GSDH.
- Check with your council to make sure you are following accepted practices when using private transportation; this ensures that both you and GSDH are protected by liability insurance in the event of an accident.
- If your council has given permission to use a rented car, read all rental agreements to be sure you comply with their terms and avoid surprises. Note the minimum age of drivers (often 25), as well as the maximum age (often under 70). Be sure the car is adequately insured, knowing who is responsible for damage to or the loss of the vehicle itself. Also, ensure you have a good paper trail, with evidence that the vehicle rental is Girl Scout related.
- Obtain parent/guardian permission for any use of transportation outside of the meeting place.

Driver Checklist

When driving a car, RV or camper, take the following precautions and ask all other drivers to do the same:

- Ensure all drivers are at least 21 years old.
- Girls should not be transporting other girls.
- Never transport girls in flatbed or panel trucks, in the bed of a pickup or in a camper-trailer.
- Keep directions and a road map in the car, along with a first-aid kit and flashlight.
- Check your lights, signals, tires, windshield wipers, horns and fluid levels before each trip, and re-check them periodically on long trips.
- Keep all necessary papers up to date including, but not limited to: driver's license, vehicle registration, any state or local inspections and insurance coverage.
- Wear your seat belt at all times and insist that all passengers do the same. Girls under 12 must ride in the back seats.
- Follow all the established rules of the road in your state, including the speed limit. Some additional guidelines include: keeping a two-car-length distance between you and the car ahead of you, not talking or texting on a cell phone or other personal electronic device while driving, not using ear buds or headphones while driving and turning your lights on when your windshield wipers are on.
- Plan rest stops every few hours and avoid driving for extended periods at night. If traveling with others, pre-arrange stopping places along the way. When planning longer trips, arrange for relief drivers.
- Do NOT drive when you are tired or taking medication that makes you drowsy.
- A copy of the completed Troop Travel Itinerary and Participation Roster should be kept in the traveling vehicle.
- A copy of the completed Troop Travel Itinerary and Participation Roster should be left at home with the emergency contact.