

2023-2024

Service Unit Name Number Last Updated 6/14/2023

# Contents

*Click on the section to follow.*

[Contents 2](#_Toc110873093)

[Service Units at Girl Scouts Dakota Horizons 3](#_Toc110873094)

[Calendar & Important Dates 4](#_Toc110873095)

[Our Service Unit 6](#_Toc110873096)

[Service Unit Team 6](#_Toc110873097)

[Service Unit Information 6](#_Toc110873098)

[Staff Support Team 7](#_Toc110873099)

[Service Unit Goals 7](#_Toc110873100)

[Service Unit Meetings 8](#_Toc110873101)

[Membership Plan 9](#_Toc110873102)

[Fall Product Program Plan 11](#_Toc110873103)

[Cookie Program Plan 12](#_Toc110873104)

[Girl Program & Event Plan 13](#_Toc110873105)

[Troop & Volunteer Support Plan 15](#_Toc110873106)

[Budget Worksheet 16](#_Toc110873107)

[Membership Information & Resources 17](#_Toc110873108)

[Troop & Volunteer Support Information & Resources 18](#_Toc110873109)

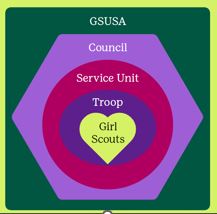
[Girl Program & Event Information & Resources 21](#_Toc110873110)

[Product Program Information & Resources 23](#_Toc110873111)

[Finance Information & Resources 24](#_Toc110873112)

# Service Units at Girl Scouts Dakota Horizons

**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 do 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
* Manage the fall product and cookie programs
* Provide volunteer support and recognition

**What is the Service Unit Planning Guide?**

The Service Unit Planning Guide (SUPG) is a planning tool for the service unit team to track goals, keep records year over year to track progress and keep historical data. Council will keep a copy of your completed SUPG on file for you each year as well! The SUPG contains a fillable planning section as well as information and resources to help as you plan.

**What are the benefits of using the Service Unit Planning Guide each year?**

* Service unit activities, meetings, membership information and more all in one place.
* Keep records of events and activities to evaluate and make improvements each year.
* Documents the work of your service unit for historical year over year information. This is especially helpful for new members of the service unit team.
* Planning allows council staff and the service unit team to collaborate to provide a variety of experiences for the girls. Council staff can provide intentional support based on your service unit’s activities and needs.
* Pro-active planning for the year and sharing volunteer needs makes the load lighter for all.

# Calendar & Important Dates

**Important Service Unit Deadlines**

Find current council events in your area at [gsdakotahorizons.org/events](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/en/events/event-list.html)

* February 1 [Adult Award Nominations](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/en/activities/for-adults/adult-awards.html) & Girl Award Paperwork Due
* June 15 [Service Unit Election Results](https://www.jotform.com/dakotahorizons/service-unit-election-results-form) Due
* June 15 [Annual Service Unit Finance Report](https://form.jotform.com/60283094359157) Due
* June 15 Annual Troop Finance Reports due through VTK
* June 15 [Recognition Event Awards Request](https://form.jotform.com/90215535029149) Due

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **September** | **December** | **March** | **June** |
| * Support membership renewal and recruitment of new volunteers and girls * Welcome new volunteers and invite to meetings * Host Fall Product Troop Training | * Submit Adult Achievement Award Nominations * Review and update Service Unit Planning Guide with Troop Engagement Specialist. | * Wrap up the Cookie Program * Celebrate Girl Scout Week and Girl Scouts’ Birthday 3/12 | * Support Spring Renewal * Submit Service Unit Annual Finance Report by 6/15 * Submit Service Unit Elections Results by 6/15 * Submit Service Unit Awards Request by 6/15 |
| **October** | **January** | **April** | **July** |
| * Girl Scout Year Begins 10/1 * Celebrate Juliette Gordon Low’s Birthday 10/31 * Support membership renewal and recruitment of new volunteers and girls * Support Fall Product Program | * Host Cookie Program Troop Training for volunteers * Host Cookie Rally for girls * Elect Delegates for Annual Meeting | * Celebrate Volunteer Appreciation Month & Girl Scout Leader's Day 4/22 * Support Spring Renewal * Delegates Attend GSDH Annual Meeting |  |
| **November** | **February** | **May** | **August** |
| * Submit Adult Award Nominations * Distribute Fall Products and Rewards | * Girl Award Paperwork Due 2/1 * Adult Award Nominations Due 2/1 * Support the Cookie Program * Distribute Cookie Initial Orders * Celebrate World Thinking Day 2/22 | * Hold SU Elections * Support Spring Renewal * Host Recognition Event/Bridging Ceremony * Review and update Service Unit Planning Guide with Troop Engagement Specialist. | * Hold SU Team Planning Session with your Troop Engagement Specialist * Update Service Unit Planning Guide with service unit meeting dates and events for the year * Verify Service Unit Bank Account Authorized Signers are up to date |

# Our Service Unit

## Service Unit Team

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Name | Email | Phone |
| Manager |  |  |  |
| Treasurer |  |  |  |
| Secretary |  |  |  |
| Fall Product Manager |  |  |  |
| Cookie Manager |  |  |  |
| Event Coordinator |  |  |  |
| Recruiter |  |  |  |
| Volunteer Mentor |  |  |  |
| IRG Coordinator |  |  |  |
| Service Unit Helper(s) |  |  |  |
| Other |  |  |  |
| Other |  |  |  |
| Other |  |  |  |

## Service Unit Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Service Unit Name & Number |  |
| Service Unit Website |  |
| Service Unit Facebook |  |
| Service Unit Email |  |
| Does your SU have a gsZoom license?  Who is the license holder? |  |
| Other Communication Method(s) |  |
| Meeting Specifics |  |

## Staff Support Team

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Name | Email | Phone |
| Member Services Team | Monday – Thursday  8am-5pm  Friday 8am-12pm | help@gsdakotahorizons.org | 800.666.2141 |
| Troop Engagement Specialist |  |  |  |
| Membership Specialist |  |  |  |

## Service Unit Goals

What’s the vision for your service unit? What would you like to accomplish? Think about what your team does well and what could be improved upon. List your goals here and track progress throughout the year!

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | This year our team will… | To achieve this goal we will… | We have achieved… |
| Goal #1 |  |  |  |
| Goal #2 |  |  |  |
| Goal #3 |  |  |  |

# Service Unit Meetings

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Month** | **Date** | **Time** | **Location and/or Zoom** | **Topics to Include** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

# Membership Plan

Service Unit Membership Area

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Cities |  |
| Counties |  |
| Public Schools |  |
| Parochial/Private/ Religious Schools |  |

Annual Membership Goals

The membership team will provide these numbers and update your service unit throughout the year. Service unit volunteers can also find current membership information in [Looker.](#_Looker_-_Membership)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Completed by Council Staff** | **Prior Year Actual** | **Current Year Goal** | **Update**  (date) | **Update**  (date) | **Update**  (date) | **Current Year-End**  (date) |
| Total Girl Members |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total Adult Members |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total # of Troops |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total # of IRG Girls |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Service Unit or Troop Recruitment Activities

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Event/Activity |  |
| Event Lead/Contact |  |
| Location |  |
| Date |  |
| Details |  |
| Post Event Notes |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Event/Activity |  |
| Event Lead/Contact |  |
| Location |  |
| Date |  |
| Details |  |
| Post Event Notes |  |

***Add more activities as needed!***

# Fall Product Program Plan

**Fall Product Program Dates:**

**Fall Product Participation Goal**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Completed by Council Staff** | Prior Year Fall Product Program Participation | Current Year Fall Product Program Participation Goal | Current Year Fall Product Program Participation Actual |
| Girls |  |  |  |

**Fall Product Program Activities**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Event/Activity | Host a fall product program training for troop volunteers & IRG caregivers |
| Event Lead/Contact | Fall Product Manager |
| Location |  |
| Date |  |
| Details |  |
| Post Event Notes |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Event/Activity | Distribute fall products to troops & IRG caregivers |
| Event Lead/Contact | Fall Product Manager |
| Location |  |
| Date |  |
| Details |  |
| Post Event Notes |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Event/Activity | Distribute fall product program rewards to troops & IRG caregivers |
| Event Lead/Contact | Fall Product Manager |
| Location |  |
| Date |  |
| Details |  |
| Post Event Notes |  |

# Cookie Program Plan

## Cookie Program Dates:

## Cookie Program Participation Goal

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Completed by Council Staff** | Prior Year Cookie Program Participation | Current Year Cookie Program Participation Goal | Current Year Cookie Program Participation Actual |
| Girls |  |  |  |

## Cookie Program Activities

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Event/Activity | Host a Cookie Program training for troop volunteers and IRG caregivers |
| Event Lead/Contact |  |
| Location |  |
| Date |  |
| Details |  |
| Post Event Notes |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Event/Activity | Distribute initial orders to troops & IRG caregivers |
| Event Lead/Contact |  |
| Location |  |
| Date |  |
| Details |  |
| Post Event Notes |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Event/Activity | Distribute Cookie Program rewards to troops & IRG caregivers |
| Event Lead/Contact |  |
| Location |  |
| Date |  |
| Details |  |
| Post Event Notes |  |

# Girl Program & Event Plan

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Program/Event |  |
| Event Lead/Contact |  |
| Location |  |
| Date |  |
| Details |  |
| Grade Levels | Daisies  Juniors  Seniors  Brownies  Cadettes  Ambassadors |
| Event open to SU or all members | Open to service unit members only  Open to all members |
| Post Event Notes |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Program/Event |  |
| Event Lead/Contact |  |
| Location |  |
| Date |  |
| Details |  |
| Grade Levels | Daisies  Juniors  Seniors  Brownies  Cadettes  Ambassadors |
| Event open to SU or all members | Open to service unit members only  Open to all members |
| Post Event Notes |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Program/Event |  |
| Event Lead/Contact |  |
| Location |  |
| Date |  |
| Details |  |
| Grade Levels | Daisies  Juniors  Seniors  Brownies  Cadettes  Ambassadors |
| Event open to SU or all members | Open to service unit members only  Open to all members |
| Post Event Notes |  |

***Add more activities as needed!***

# Troop & Volunteer Support Plan

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Event/Activity |  |
| Event Lead/Contact |  |
| Location |  |
| Date |  |
| Details |  |
| Post Event Notes |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Event/Activity |  |
| Event Lead/Contact |  |
| Location |  |
| Date |  |
| Details |  |
| Post Event Notes |  |

*Add more activities as needed!*

# Budget Worksheet

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Previous Year Totals** | **Proposed Budget**  **Current Year** | **Actuals** | **Variance** |
| **INCOME** |  |  |  |  |
| GSDH Paid Incentives |  |  |  |  |
| SU Led Event Income |  |  |  |  |
| Disbanded Troop Funds |  |  |  |  |
| Troop / SU Sponsorship Income |  |  |  |  |
| Donations |  |  |  |  |
| Other: |  |  |  |  |
| Other: |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Income** |  |  |  |  |
| **EXPENSES** |  |  |  |  |
| Meeting Supplies |  |  |  |  |
| Service Projects |  |  |  |  |
| Fall Product Program Expenses |  |  |  |  |
| Cookie Program Expenses |  |  |  |  |
| GS Retail Store Purchases |  |  |  |  |
| GSUSA Membership Dues |  |  |  |  |
| Volunteer Expenses |  |  |  |  |
| Recruitment Expenses |  |  |  |  |
| SU Event Expenses |  |  |  |  |
| Misc. Expense: |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Expenses** |  |  |  |  |

# Membership Information & Resources

## Recruitments & New Members

We would love to partner with you to grow membership in your area! Is there a local parade or community event Girl Scouts could be a part of? Want to host a bring a friend event to show new girls what Girl Scouts is all about? Reach out to your membership specialist to learn about the recruitment plans for your area and how we can help!

## Participation Catalog and Troop Intent Form

The participation catalog is an online listing of available troop opportunities. The catalog makes it easy for new and returning members to find a troop that best fits their needs and makes Girl Scouts accessible to everyone. Encourage troop co-leaders to submit the [Troop Intent Form](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/en/for-volunteers/troop-resources.html#TroopIntent) annually. This information is used to update troop information and open the troop for more girls and volunteers to join the fun!

## Spring Renewal

Girl Scout members who renew in the spring receive special incentives, like an exclusive patch, and are ready for Back to Troop in the fall. Details are provided each spring and our website will be updated to include incentive details and renewal guides for troop co-leaders and caregivers.

## Looker - Membership Information

Looker is an online tool for service unit volunteers to access real time membership information. Service Unit Managers, Product Program Managers, Secretaries and Recruiters have access to a Looker account. Please refer to the [Looker Volunteer Guide](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/content/dam/gsdakotahorizons-redesign/documents/service-unit-resources/looker_volunteer_faq.pdf) for information about setting up your account. There are four reports available in Looker listed below along with a description and ways you may find the report useful. Keep in mind that this information is available to you as you plan your year.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Report Title** | **Report Description** | **Uses** |
| FULL ROSTER | A full roster of all members within your assigned service unit. Can be filtered by membership year or troop number. | Useful to view all members in your service unit including members in troops, individually registered girls, and Lifetime members. |
| MEMBERSHIP ANALYSIS | An analysis report showing number of active troops and total girl and adult members for the current and previous year. | Useful to view year over year membership totals by girl, adult and active troops. |
| TROOP DETAILS | A view of troops within the service unit including each troop’s grade level(s), meeting information, current number of girls and openings available. | Useful to view the troops in your service unit and number of girl openings in each troop. |
| NEW IN THE LAST TWO WEEKS | A roster showing new members who joined in the last 2 weeks. Can be filtered by membership year, troop, or volunteer role. | Useful to view new girl and adult members who have joined your service unit. |

# Troop & Volunteer Support Information & Resources

In the service unit the Girl Scout sisterhood extends to adult volunteers where they can connect to share ideas and expertise, learn about local resources, and make new friends. Service units can provide volunteer support in many ways – service unit meetings, communications, learning opportunities, networking, recognition, and more!

## Welcome New Volunteers

Once a new troop co-leader has been approved as a volunteer they will begin new co-leader onboarding and will be connected to their service unit by the Troop Engagement Specialist. The Service Unit Volunteer Mentor or other designated service unit team members should reach out to welcome them right away! Be sure they are connected to your communciation channels and invite them to upcoming service unit meetings and events.

## Communication is Key

Providing timely & respectful communications and responses to inquiries encourages people to communicate openly and increases collaboration. Be sure someone on the service unit team is dedicated to sending and responding to communications.

Consider what methods might work best for your group and ask volunteers in your area how they would like to receive information. Many service units use a combination of the communication methods below.

* Website
* Facebook Page
* Facebook Group
* Texting
* Phone Calls
* Email
* US Mail
* Newsletter

## Service Unit Meetings

Service unit meetings are held regularly to conduct the business of the service unit, provide council updates, and offer an opportunity for all volunteers to meet, network and support each other. Meetings should be business-oriented and follow an agenda to respect everyone's time, but should also be friendly and fun!

Consider including a virtual meeting option such as Zoom or GoogleMeet for your service unit meetings to help remove participation barriers. i.e. distance, bad weather, sick kids, etc.

Consider including some learning opportunities in your service unit meetings. Staff can bring information about any of the topics listed below and more - just ask your Troop Engagement Specialist!

* Volunteer Toolkit
* CPR/First Aid
* Girl Scout Higher Awards
* Troop Travel
* Troop Finance
* Troop Camping and Outdoors
* Program Grade Levels
* Ceremonies and Traditions
* Service Unit Event Planning

Schedule service unit meetings in advance and be sure to share the dates with all volunteers. Send out a reminder a few days prior along with the meeting agenda. Personally inviting volunteers through phone calls or in person is also a great way to increase attendance.

Keeping your staff Troop Engagement Specialist informed allows them to know how to support you. Troop Engagement Specialists will have council updates and reminders to share at service unit meetings. **Please include staff in all meeting communications.**

Find service unit meeting resources on our [website](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/en/members/for-volunteers/service-unit-resources.html) including Tips for Successful Service Unit Meetings and a Service Unit Meeting Agenda Template.

## gsLearn

gsLearn is Girl Scouts’ official online and on demand training platform. gsLearn is full of essential volunteer trainings and courses, like how to lead activities the Girl Scout way, safety procedures, and advice for guiding Girl Scouts at every grade level.

You’ll find gsLearn via the left menu bar of [MyGS](https://mygs.girlscouts.org/) in My Account. It’s accessible on any desktop, tablet, or mobile device, and it will be populated with any trainings you should view. Courses are created by GSUSA and GSDH.

All service unit team volunteers are required to complete the **Service Unit Volunteer Orientation** in gsLearn prior to starting in their role.

New Troop Co-Leaders are required to complete the **New Troop Volunteer Learning Path** in gsLearn within two weeks of being placed in the role.

## Volunteer Toolkit

The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) is a web based digital planning tool for troops and Individually Registered Girls (IRG). It contains free program content for all grade levels, suggested year plans and ready to go meetings with activities, templates, and more!

The VTK is accessed through your [MyGS](https://mygs.girlscouts.org/my-account) account and can be used from any computer, tablet, or smartphone with internet access. For best results, use a VTK–friendly browser such as Chrome or Firefox with a cleared cache.

* **Troop co-leaders** have full access to manage their troop and, once meetings are set up, caregivers of girls in the troop can view the troop’s meeting plans. All troops are required to submit their annual finance report through the VTK Finance tab where once submitted, caregivers can view the annual financial summary. **Troop Treasurers** also have access to submit their Annual Finance Report in the VTK.
* **Caregivers of IRG’s** have full access to the VTK to manage their girls’ experience.
* **Service unit volunteers** who support troop leaders and families have access to the Volunteer Toolkit Demo Troop. Service unit managers, recruiters, event coordinators, volunteer mentors, and IRG coordinators have access to the VTK Demo.

Learn more about the Volunteer Toolkit with the VTK courses in gsLearn and VTK User Guides available on our [website.](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/en/members/for-volunteers/troop-leader-resources.html)

## Volunteer Appreciation

April is National Volunteer Appreciation Month and the official [Girl Scout Leader’s Day](https://www.girlscouts.org/en/members/for-volunteers/traditions-and-ceremonies.html#days) is April 22. Consider providing a fun get together or a small gift of appreciation from your service unit in April to celebrate!

## Adult Achievement Awards

Nominate volunteers in your service unit for an Adult Achievement Award! Nominations are due February 1. All adult award recipients are invited to attend Honoring Excellence in June to receive their award and are recognized by the service unit at your Recognition Event. Learn more about Adult Achievement Awards and submitting a nomination on our [website](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/en/activities/for-adults/adult-awards.html).

## Service Unit Elections

Service Unit (SU) elections take place to diplomatically choose the SU Leadership Team for the next year. The SU Leadership Team directs the operations of the SU during the Girl Scout year with the support of their council Troop Engagement Specialist. The election takes place in the spring or early summer so the incoming team can complete training and begin planning for the upcoming year with the Troop Engagement Specialist.

The [Service Unit Election Results Form](https://form.jotform.com/60767580951162) is submitted to council to report the Service Unit Leadership volunteers by **June 15**. These service unit roles are added to each member's profile by Girl Scouts Dakota Horizons staff. Service unit volunteer role descriptions and Election Guidelines are under Service Unit Resources on our [website](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/en/members/for-volunteers/service-unit-resources.html).

# Girl Program & Event Information & Resources

Events for Girl Scouts should be FUN – with a purpose! From community service projects to badge workshops to day camps, service unit events are a fun way for girls to meet new friends, try new things and gain more leadership skills. Service unit events can be hosted for just your girls or can be opened up to girls from throughout the council. Contact your Troop Engagement Specialist for more information about how to open up events outside your service unit.

## Girl Scout Leadership Experience

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience is what makes Girl Scouting a unique experience for girls. Through each and every Girl Scout activity, girls are discovering new things, connecting with their friends, and making the world a better place.

Girl Scout programming revolves around the 4 Pillars of **STEM, Outdoors, Life Skills, & Entrepreneurship**. Activities should be hands on and provide opportunities for girls to lead, work together and celebrate sisterhood! Learn more about the Girl Scout Leadership Experience at [girlscouts.org](https://www.girlscouts.org/en/discover/about-us/what-girl-scouts-do/leadership-experience.html).

## Service Unit Event Planning

1. What type of event is needed in your area for the girls? What are the grade levels of the girls in your service unit? Gather inspiration from girls and volunteers. Consider potential community program partners and interested facilitators/presenters.
2. Use the [Award and Badge Explorer](https://www.girlscouts.org/en/our-program/badges/badge_explorer.html) to view the badges and awards available for each grade level or by topic. The Volunteer Toolkit can also provide activity ideas based on badges and awards.
3. Start planning with the Event Planning Checklist, budget workbook, templates, and more available under Service Unit Resources on our [website](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/en/members/for-volunteers/service-unit-resources.html). Contact your Troop Engagement Specialist for more information about how to open up events outside your service unit.
4. Check [Safety Activity Checkpoints](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/content/dam/gsdakotahorizons-redesign/documents/Safety/Safety_Activity_Checkpoints.pdf) & [Volunteer Essentials](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/en/members/for-volunteers/volunteer-essentials.html) to see what safety measures and ratios need to be followed.

## Branding 101

Our brand is not just a logo, a visual identify, or a product. It is the personal connection and experience that people associate with Girl Scouts Dakota Horizons including our programs, services, marketing, and reputation. When creating tshirts, patches or other event materials be sure to follow the guidelines on the Branding 101 page of our [website](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/en/members/for-volunteers/volunteer-essentials/branding-101.html). Learn more about the Girl Scout brand with the GSUSA Brand Ambassador 101 course in gsLearn.

## Mobile STEM Center

The Mobile STEM Center is a cargo van equipped with hands-on equipment and programming materials that can travel throughout the council’s geography, bringing STEM Experiences to Girl Scouts in *their*community. Girls will not actually get inside the vehicle, rather the equipment will be set up within a determined location. The Mobile STEM Center can be [reserved by a Service Unit](https://form.jotform.com/211094460836051) and then brought to you by a program specialist, providing instruction, equipment and supplies needed for a successful STEM event. Before you request a visit, be sure to review our [General Information & Expectations](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/content/dam/gsdakotahorizons-redesign/documents/service-unit-resources/msc_information_expectations.pdf) to ensure you’re ready.

## Recognition Event

Service units host a Recognition Event each year to celebrate girl and adult achievements. At this annual event Higher Award, Leadership Award, and Adult Award recipients are recognized in the presence of fellow Girl Scouts, families, and the community. Gold Award Girl Scouts and Silver and Bronze Award recipients are encouraged to share their projects to inspire more girls to achieve Higher Awards. Holding a bridging ceremony at the recognition event is a great way to include more troops and girls in the event and celebrate sisterhood! Check out the [Girl Scout Bridging Guide](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/content/dam/girlscouts-gsdakotahorizons/documents/SUresources/Bridging%20Guide%202019.pdf) for details about bridging ceremonies.

The event should be held before the end of the membership year (September 30). Traditionally, events have been held in the spring, but the service unit may select the best fit for the greatest member and community involvement.

To support your event the council provides planning resources, funds, and pins and certificates. Recognition event support funds are deposited via ACH into the service unit bank account each spring if a current Bank Account Confirmation/ACH form is on file. A list of council provided pins and certificates is in the [Service Unit Recognition Event Planning Guide](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/content/dam/gsdakotahorizons-redesign/documents/SUresources/Recognition/recognition_planning_guide.pdf). Awards are mailed to the service unit after the [Awards Request Form](https://form.jotform.com/90215535029149) has been submitted. The Awards Request form must be submitted by **June 15.** More information about Recognition Events is under Service Unit Resources on our [website](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/en/members/for-volunteers/service-unit-resources.html).

# Product Program Information & Resources

The fall product program and Girl Scout Cookie Program are foundational experiences during which girls learn to think like entrepreneurs and to develop vital business skills.

## Fall Product & Cookie Managers

Service units are key to the girls’ and troops’ success in the product programs, and the Service Unit Fall Product and Cookie Manager play important roles in delivering these financial literacy programs. Service unit product program managers coordinate the product programs at the local level with the support of council. After attending training with council, they host training for volunteers, provide volunteer support throughout the program, and can also organize kick offs, rallies, or other events to enhance the girls’ product program experience!

## Service Unit Proceeds

The service unit has the opportunity to earn proceeds based on how many girls participate in each product program. Girl participation in the product programs is voluntary but by providing encouragement and support the service unit can encourage girls to participate at their comfort level. Details about service unit proceeds are posted on the website before each program begins.

## Dakota Dough

Girl Scouts have the opportunity to earn Dakota Dough as part of the rewards system for participating in the Cookie and Fall Product Programs. Dakota Dough can be used for Girl Scout retail store purchases, girl membership dues, and for Girl Scout programs and camps.

Service units can accept Dakota Dough as payment for Girl Scout programs and submit to council for reimbursement into the service unit bank account. Reimbursement form and details are available on our [website](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/en/cookies/product-program-resources/dakota-dough.html).

# Finance Information & Resources

Your service unit will decide how to use its money for well-balanced program activities to enhance your girls' experiences. The Service Unit Treasurer with the support of the service unit team should work to develop an annual service unit budget which can be adjusted as the year progresses. The SU Treasurer should report regularly on the service unit finances. Review the prior year Check Register to help determine the budget for the next year.

The suggested distribution of service unit funds is below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **SU Event & Programming Expenses** | 40% | All expenses for providing programming for girls such as service unit events, recognition/bridging events, and other activities. |
| **Volunteer Expenses** | 20% | Informal and formal recognition and other expenses associated with the support of leaders. |
| **Troop Support** | 20% | Funds and/or supplies and resources to support new and/or existing troops within the service unit. Troops are not expected to reimburse the service unit. |
| **Assistance to Members** | 15% | Supporting a girl or adult member with funds needed to participate in Girl Scout troop, service unit, council, or national activities. Whenever possible, service teams are encouraged to help members by providing supplemental resources beyond a member's ability to pay. The assistance should be paid directly to the vendor or troop, not the girl/ family. In addition to service unit resources, GSDH provides scholarships to qualified individuals for retail, program fees, and membership dues. |
| **Administration** | 5% | This includes expenses for administrative costs of the service unit including photocopies, paper, postage, meeting place rental fees, and service unit meeting supplies. |

## Finance Forms and Resources

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| [Troop and Service Unit Authorized Account Signer Responsibilities](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/content/dam/gsdakotahorizons-redesign/documents/finances/authorized_signers.pdf) | Expectations of an authorized account signer on a troop/Service Unit checking account. |
| [Check Register](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/en/members/for-volunteers/volunteer-essentials/troop-finances.html) | This Excel Workbook is used to track troop/service unit funds all year long and makes submitting the Annual Finance Report easy. (June 2023-May 2024) |
| [Just-in-Time: Annual Finance Report](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/content/dam/gsdakotahorizons-redesign/documents/volunteer-training/just-in-times/jit_annual_finance_report.pdf) | Steps for completing a troop or service unit Annual Finance Report. |
| [Service Unit Annual Finance Report](https://form.jotform.com/60283094359157) | A recap of your service unit's income and expenses from the reporting period (June 1st to May 31st) that is to be completed in its entirety by June 15th of each year. |
| [GSDH Troop and Service Unit Funds Policies](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/content/dam/gsdakotahorizons-redesign/documents/finances/troop_and_service_unit_funds_policy.pdf) | Governance policy regarding Troop and/or Service Unit funds. |
| [Just-in-Time: How to Open or Change Signers on a Troop Bank Account](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/content/dam/gsdakotahorizons-redesign/documents/volunteer-training/just-in-times/5_bank_account.pdf) | Step by step instructions to open a new troop or service unit checking account. |
| [Bank Account Authorization Request Form](https://form.jotform.com/51756498077167) | Submitted to request authorization to open a new troop/service unit bank account or to make any changes on an existing account. |
| [Bank Account Confirmation/ACH Form](https://form.jotform.us/60546148055152) | Submitted within 10 days of opening or making any changes to a troop/service unit bank account confirming to council that the troop/service unit volunteers made the changes at the bank. |
| [Dakota Dough Reimbursement Form](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/content/dam/gsdakotahorizons-redesign/documents/finances/dakota_dough_reimbursement_form.pdf) | Service units submit this form to be reimbursed via ACH for Dakota Dough received at Girl Scout programs. |
| [Service Unit Funds Request](https://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/content/dam/gsdakotahorizons-redesign/documents/service-unit-resources/service_unit_funds_request.pdf) | GSDH may have funds available to support local service unit led activities. The availability of funds varies throughout the year and from year to year. In order to be considered for financial support from council, the Service Unit Funds Application and a budget must be submitted and approved in advance of the event. |