

2020 Edition *Safety Activity Checkpoints* (SAC)

Change Memo – Important Changes to GSMISTS 2020 Edition Revised 4/8/20

At the beginning of each new Girl Scout year it is extremely important volunteers review the updated *Safety Activity Checkpoints*. This document is released by GSUSA and councils are able to customize certain information that it contains.

Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore (GSMISTS) has customized *Safety Activity Checkpoints* for the 2020-2021 year. This “Change Memo” highlights major customizations.

- GSMISTS has made decisions regarding whether or not council approval is needed for the activities that in the past were listed as council approval “May Be Required.” This information has been updated in the “Activities at a Glance” section and in the actual Safety Activity Checkpoint. Use the [Activity and Trip Application Form](#) found in GSMISTS [Activity and Trip Planning Guide](#) to obtain GSMISTS approval for activities and trips.
- In the “First Aid” section – Added GSMISTS Emergency Procedures.
- In the “Overall Health, Well Being, and Inclusivity” section – GSMISTS is requiring a record of a health examination for girls and adults for any activity that is four overnights or longer.
- In the “Transporting Girl” section - GSMISTS added “It is a best practice to have two unrelated, approved adult volunteers, one of whom is female in each car if possible.” to the Checklist for Drivers.
- In the “Troop Meeting Space” section - GSMISTS is allowing regularly scheduled troop meetings to occur at a volunteer’s home. Review GSMISTS [Guidelines for Girl Scout Meetings/Activities in the Home](#). GSMISTS must receive a completed *Permission to Meet in the Home Application and Approval Form* and approve the home as a meeting site prior to meetings taking place.

2020 Edition Safety Activity Checkpoints (SAC) Change Memo – Important Changes to 2020 Edition

2020 Edition Revised @ April 8, 2020

The Safety Activity Checkpoints (SAC) 2020 Edition has been updated to reflect the following material changes.

Please pay attention to the addition of a high-risk column on the Activities-at-a-Glance chart. High risk activities have been identified and rated as high risk by GSUSA's national insurance carrier(s). High risk activities require council prior approval. Whether your council requires approval for an activity as a one-time approval for the year or requires a more frequent approval protocol will vary from state to state. The frequency of council prior approval for any one activity is a council decision, based on local norms and laws.

Safety Standards and Guidelines (p. 4-20)

- Added: A section on Coronavirus Safety in Girl Scouting. We recognize that the degree of coronavirus risk will vary from community to community or from state to state. Likewise, we realize that health and safety guidance will continue to adjust as the situation and the risk will change over time. In addition to the Center of Disease Control (CDC) guidance and the American Camp Association (ACA) guidance provided in Safety Activity Checkpoints, always become familiar with and practice the precautions as provided by your local health and governmental authorities.
- There is emphasis that the GSUSA issued Safety Activity Checkpoints is to provide a national guideline for safety standards. These are standard guidelines which are established from a national view, recognizing that commonsense adjustments may be made when appropriate to account for local and state specific norms.
- Added: High risk activity indicator column. High risk activities are defined as activities that have been identified and rated as high risk by GSUSA's national insurance carrier(s). A high-risk column on the Activities-at-a-Glance chart has been added to indicate if an activity is rated high risk, based on loss experience if such an activity is not carried out safely, by Girl Scout national insurers.
- Added: An explanation for council prior approval. Council prior approval is indicated as "Required" for those activities that are rated high risk, per above. **Note:** Council staff may provide a one-time approval for a specific activity or council staff may request that prior approval is sought each time volunteers take girls to participate. The frequency of approval is a council decision depending on the activity itself, local norms or council-specific protocol. The important thing is that council staff is aware the activity is taking place and that they have approved it.
- Added: Emergency Action Plan (EAP). Volunteers should always think through the activity and consider what could go wrong so that there is a calm, confident response to emergencies. This section provides the key elements of a thoughtful EAP that should be documented for adult volunteers and reviewed with girls to the extent it makes sense given their age and maturity levels. And EAP should be considered and implemented as appropriate for all Girl Scout activities.
- Added: Permission Slips. Many councils require an annual permission slip for regular attendance at troop meetings during the year. Volunteers always adhere to council protocol concerning annual permission slips. Volunteers retain and track copies of annual permission slips, the same as with activity specific permission slips.

- Omitted: Transportation. The Transportation section is omitted and replaced by a “Transporting Girls” section with significantly enhanced transportation guidance.
- Added: Transporting Girls section with more extensive transportation guidance.
- Added: Troop Meeting Space. The section for “Troop Meeting Space” describes the safe and appropriate characteristics of a safe troop meeting space.
- Modelling Right Behavior: Enhanced this language.
- Drugs and Alcohol: Enhanced language.
- Added: a section on Firearms section to provide a statement that volunteers and adults are not are not permitted to carry firearms while overseeing girls or participating in Girl Scout activities, except in the case of pre-approved shooting activities.
- Added: First Aid: Several options to obtain CPR certification. Several examples provided for the hands-on skills required for a General First Aider.

New Activity Chapters

- Aerial Fitness: includes silks, hoops and trapeze.
- Virtual Troop Meetings

Activity Specific Changes

- **Camping:** Added a section for coronavirus safety at camp.
- **Climbing and Rappelling:** Daisies and Brownies are permitted to boulder, slackline and do low challenge elements. Note: that Brownies may participate in outdoor climbing and higher elements *only for activities designed specifically for their ages*, with equipment suitable to the size and ability of each girl. So, indoor or outdoor climbing is acceptable only when the gear and the course are adjusted for the proper size, age and skill level for Brownies.
- **Climbing and Rappelling:** For zipline, council prior approval is required. The exception for prior approval is for when ziplining is practiced on Girl Scout site, where safety measures are controlled by the council directly and not a third-party vendor or facility.
- **Computer Internet Safety Pledge:** Added: I won’t spam or hack others.
- **Horseback riding:** It is recommended that you request a certificate of insurance to document evidence of the insurance coverage, most facilities will accommodate this request if they are able to administratively.
- **Sailing:** Added an instructor-to-girl ratio of one to four, to be used in addition to the adult-to-girl ratio.
- **Sledding, Tobogganing, Snow Tubing:** Added no sledding near trees, buildings, or roadways.
- **Surfing:** Added to notify lifeguards and point out location of surfers so that lifeguards are aware of where the girls are learning and practicing. Also, be sure that swimming skills are confirmed for all surfers by having them pass the swim test.

- **Target Sports:** Always refer to Target and Shooting Sports Master Progression Chart for age and grade level requirements.
- **Target Sports:** For Archery, council prior approval is required, with the exception for when archery is practiced on Girl Scout site where safety measures are controlled by the council directly and not a third-party vendor or facility.
- **Target Sports:** For Ax, Knife and Hatchet Throwing, added additional detail and resources for indoor and outdoor ranges.
- **Tools:** For using a handsaw, Brownies and Juniors are permitted.