

## Parades and Other Large Gatherings



**Council Approval  
Required:** Not Required

**Activity Permitted for:** D, B, J,  
C, S, A

### About Parades

Whether you are participating in a parade or planning a Girl Scout event, series, or other large group gathering, it's important to represent Girl Scouts in the best possible way and encourage girls to plan the festivities.

**Include Girl Scout members with disabilities.** Communicate with Girl Scout members with disabilities and/or their caregivers to assess any needs and accommodations.

**Equity.** In addition to physical and social-emotional disabilities consider the history, culture, and past experiences of the Girl Scout members in your troop that could affect their ability to equally participate in an activity. Work with members and families to understand how an activity is perceived. Ensure that all Girl Scout members and their families feel comfortable that they have access to whatever is needed to fully participate such as the proper equipment, prior experiences and skills needed to enjoy the activity.

### Gear for Parades and Other Large Group Gatherings

- Girl Scout uniform, pin, or some other means of group identification
- Comfortable walking shoes

### Recommended Gear

- Sunscreen (SPF of at least 15) and lip balm
- Sunglasses
- Reusable water bottle and water for filling bottles

### Safety Activity Checkpoints

- **Standard Safety Guidelines.** Refer to the Standard Safety Guidelines at the beginning of Safety Activity Checkpoints which apply to all Girl Scout gatherings and activities. When the adult-to-girl ratio, or other safety parameters, are stricter for a specific activity than in the Standard Safety Guidelines always follow the stricter parameters in the activity chapter.
- **COVID-19 Guidelines.** Review the Coronavirus Safety in Girl Scouts section under the Standard Safety Guidelines. Be certain to consult your council's specific COVID-19 guidance which can be accessed under the same section. Always call ahead to the vendor, property or facility involved to check for their COVID-19 safety requirements as you prepare to take girls for this activity.
- **Emergency Action Plan (EAP).** Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) ahead of time before taking girls out for this activity. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong such as an accident, physical injury to a girl, missing girl, or sudden illness.
- **Consider the following:**
  - Need, interest and readiness of the girls.
  - The sponsor of the event or activity
  - The needs of the community to be served.
  - Scheduling issues
  - GSUSA and council guidelines on fund-raising, endorsements, collaborating with other organizations and maintaining nonprofit status.
- **Respect parade and large group gathering standards.** Local regulations and permit procedures are observed for public gatherings, facility use, food handling, certificates of insurance and sales or excise tax. Guidelines for personal protection are observed. Local authorities are contacted for safety and security suggestions and assistance applicable to the parade or event. For safety reasons, name tags or other personal identification are not worn in public places. GSUSA and council guidelines on publicity, photo releases, and interviews are observed.
- **Select a safe location.** The location for any community event, large group gathering, or parade is inspected in advance, with consideration for the following, as appropriate:
  - Accessibility to the group and to the public
  - Suitability to event size, age groups, and kinds of activities
  - Parking availability
  - Availability of restrooms
  - Security arrangements, including availability of police protection.
  - Lighting for evening and indoor events
  - Vulnerability to inclement weather
  - Proximity to medical facilities

- Fire safety, which includes not exceeding the occupancy limits for indoor activities or events; sufficient emergency exits, which are well marked and operational; and having an emergency evacuation plan in place.
  - A food-preparation area used for large groups of people meets state and local standards and includes sufficient potable water and restrooms for participants.
  - Provisions are made for garbage removal and site cleanup.
- **Make appropriate plans for parade floats.** Floats drawn by trucks and automobiles be covered by automobile insurance in the name of the vehicle owners. Float construction is safe, using non-toxic or flame-retardant materials, and secured to the body of the float and the vehicle. Floats are equipped with portable ABC fire extinguishers.
    - Adults and girls pick a place to meet in case of separation from the supervising adult or the group.
    - No leaning over the edges and legs and arms do not hang outside of the float. When sitting on a moving float, girls are to remain securely seated with no legs dangling over the side.
    - Riders on floats have secure seating, or a secure handhold or safety harness is used if standing. Floats are not overcrowded. Participants do not walk close to moving floats. An adult accompanies girls on any moving float.
    - Any coupling of a trailer to a vehicle is appropriate to the load and has a safety chain.
    - Nothing is distributed to onlookers from a moving vehicle or a float.
  - **Prepare for emergencies.** Ensure the presence of a first aid kit and a first aider with a current certificate in First Aid, including Adult and Child CPR or CPR/AED, who is prepared to handle cases of abrasions, sprains, and fractures. Emergency transportation is available; if any part of the activity is located 30 minutes or more from emergency medical services, ensure the presence of a first aider and plan for emergency medical routes, consider heavily trafficked routes depending on the day and time.
  - **Take safety precautions.** Instruction is given on safe pedestrian practices, when applicable. Adults must know where girls are, always. Advance arrangements are made for picking up the girls after the event and parents and girls understand the arrangements.