



Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia

Social Media Guidelines

Purpose of Social Media

Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia is continuing to develop social media presence through the use of our Facebook page, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn, and YouTube accounts.

The term “social media” refers to tools that allow the sharing of information and creation of communities through the online networks of people. Some of the most common types of social media include social networking sites (Facebook, LinkedIn), microblogging sites (X), forums, blogs, and content-sharing (services).

The goal of our social media presence is to recruit potential Girl Scouts, volunteers, and donors, as well as to retain current membership, and reconnecting with alumnae. The use of social media enhances the visibility of our council as a united front reaching out into the community and media regarding council activities, national events, and more. With these online collaboration platforms, we are continuing to strengthen the mission of building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. Social media is changing the way we work, communicate, and how we engage with each other and the public.

Why Issue Online Communications Guidelines?

There are many Girl Scout employees and volunteers contributing to online spaces such as blogs, social networking sites, wikis, forums, and photo and video sharing sites. The following guidelines will help you talk about your involvement with the Girl Scouts in an open and transparent way. As Girl Scouts, we must always uphold the trust of people, and uphold the mission and image of Girl Scouts, so it is critical that we tell our story responsibly.

All kinds of social media networking tools are available to those who want to share insights, express opinions, and communicate in a globally distributed conversation. While the Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia recognizes the value of posting personal online content (web sites, weblogs, podcasts, photos, chat rooms, forums, and wikis), it is important that Girl Scouts who choose to tell their Girl Scout story online understand what is recommended, expected, and required.

General Guidelines for Social Media

We invite volunteers to participate on Facebook and Instagram, and follow our pages, keeping the guidelines below in mind.

1. Be honest and fair

Be who you are. We believe in transparency and honesty; anonymity is not an option. Be transparent about your role as a Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia volunteer when communicating about Girl Scouts-related issues online. When discussing topics relevant to GSHG, you must use your real name, be clear who you are, and identify that you volunteer for GSHG. If you have vested interest in something you are discussing, be the first to point it out. Be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy. What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and be judicious in disclosing personal details. You must make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not behalf of GSHG.

2. Be friendly, helpful, considerate, and caring

Treat others as you want to be treated. Don't use social media to attack other volunteers, troop members, and/or staff.

3. Be courageous and strong

Careful monitoring of social media is important in maintaining a positive image of Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia. If you see posts, comments, or behavior that concerns you, please notify a member on the communications team. Don't be afraid to speak up or ask questions.

4. Be responsible for what you say and do

GSHG staff and volunteers are personally responsible for the content they publish online, whether in a blog, social computing site, or any other form of user-generated media. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time (think of it as your online carbon footprint), and nothing is really "private" anymore - protect your privacy and take care to understand a site's terms of service. Use discretion and if you have questions about whether or not you should post something, ask a member on the communications team. If you publish content online relevant to GSHG in your personal capacity use a disclaimer such as this: "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia's positions, strategies, or opinions."

5. Respect yourself and others

The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in online social networks. By virtue of identifying yourself as a Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia volunteer within a social network, you are now connected to your Girl Scouts sisters worldwide. You should ensure that content associated with you is

consistent with your work at GSHG. If you have joined GSHG recently, be sure to update your social profiles to reflect Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia's guidelines. Respect for other people's privacy and your own personal boundaries by using discretion when choosing to accept or invite a fellow volunteer, staff, and/or parents as your Facebook "friend" on your personal Facebook page. (For the service unit or troop Facebook group page, the privacy settings will give you the ability to give permission to only those who are involved with the service unit or troop.)

Respect copyright and fair use laws. For GSHG's protection and as well as your own, it is critical that you show proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material owned by others, including GSUSA's own copyrights, trademarks, and brands.

Respecting confidential and proprietary information Social computing blurs many of the traditional boundaries between internal and external communications. Be thoughtful about what you publish - particularly on external platforms. You must make sure you do not disclose or use GSHG's confidential or proprietary information or that of any other person or company in any online social computing platform. For example, ask permission before posting someone's picture in a social network or publishing in a blog a conversation that was meant to be private. Make sure you have a girl's photo release before posting the photo. Remember to adhere to all Safety Activity Checkpoint and the Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge guidelines regarding internet safety and website design.

6. Respect authority

Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia reserves the right to block and/or delete any postings, administrators, group members, etc., or restrict volunteer access to social media sites within council control. Also, if you are contacted by a member of the media through a social media site and are asked to comment on an issue, please refer them to the communications team.

7. Use resources wisely

Your time is a valuable resource and your social media activities should not interfere with your volunteer commitments.

8. Make the world a better place and be a sister to every Girl Scout

This is true regardless of how you are communicating. Remember to always put the Girl Scout mission first: *building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place*. We invite you to help us spread the word on what Girl Scouts are doing, not only at GSHG, but worldwide. When using social

media, you have the potential to discover what's happening in Girl Scouting, connect with other Girl Scouts, and to take action to make the world a better place.

9. Be mindful of how you look and act by living the Girl Scout Promise and Law

Your online presence can reflect positively or negatively on Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia. Be wary of your actions captured via images, posts, or comments. It is always recommended to set your personal Facebook profile to "private" (only your friends can see it), especially if you have Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia listed as an organization that you volunteer for or represent. Please remember that your Facebook profile picture can always be viewed publicly, so use discretion when choosing how the world sees you.

10. Deliver effective and deliberate communication to internal and external audiences

Respond to questions and concerns in a timely manner. Be a valuable resource for information.

Guidelines on how to create a Service Unit and/or Troop Facebook group page

1. The page name should be the service unit and/or troop number - and then specify in the "info" section that your service unit or troop is affiliated with Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia but state that it is NOT the official council page. Use a disclaimer such as this: "The postings on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent the positions, strategies, or opinions of Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia or Girl Scouts of the USA."
2. You must have at least two people set as administrators to help monitor the group page. For Service Unit group pages, please include one GSHG staff member as an administrator.
3. You may use the official Girl Scouts logo on your page. Please contact the council for the official logo.
4. You must create your page as a "group" page that has privacy setting set to "closed." This means page members either must be invited to join the group or be approved after they request to join. As a "closed" group, it is still searchable within Facebook. Only service unit members, volunteers, or parents in that service unit or troop should be allowed to join. Additionally, Girl Scouts who are 13 or older may join, as well as Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia staff.

5. If you have already created a profile for your troop and/or service unit, please set the privacy setting to “friends only” (if it is a regular Facebook profile page). This way people must request to be your “friend.” **Note:** This will ONLY work if your page is a regular Facebook profile page. If you created a fan page, you should change it to a group and set the settings as noted above.
6. These guidelines for Facebook are in place so that girls are protected online - especially if you are posting pictures and/or meeting dates and times on the page.
7. After you have created your page, please send an email to **Media@GSHG.org** so that we can register your page and so we can “like” you or “friend” you. Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia does not intend to “police” the social media community. Quite the contrary; we want to aggregate all the powerful stories Girl Scouts are telling and showcase your individual contribution to the overall mission and gather links in a page at www.GSHG.org and on our social media platforms.

We are posting regular status updates, pictures, links, and more. We also invite our membership to participate in discussions and share information.

“Like” us - Search for “Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia” - when you find us, simply click the “like” button.

Best practices for Facebook:

- Update your status regularly
- Brighten your profile with photos and videos
- Join groups and/or networks
- Write on friends’ walls
- “Like” pages, share links with friends, and organize events

Guidelines on how to create an X account

What is X (formerly Twitter)? X asks the question, “What are you doing today?” And millions of people answer in 140 characters or less. The basics of X:

- Follow relevant account
- Post tweets

To create an X account visit: www.X.com and click on “Sign Up.”

Full Name

Your real name. This will appear on your public profile. In your profile underneath your Username you can say who you are and what you like, ex: Bulldog fan, Girl Scout leader, avid gardener, world traveler, etc. If you are using your account to post about GSHG related events and issues, please use a disclaimer such as this one, “The postings on this site are my own and don’t necessarily represent or reflect Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia positions or opinion.”

Username

This is your “handle” on X. (ex: ours is **@GAGirlScouts**). It can be your name, ex: JaneSmith25, or something that is “you,” ex: CookieFan18

Password

Just a password. You need this to sign into your account.

Terms of Service

Agree to these. Basically, you are agreeing to not spam others users.

Click “create account”. Once your account is created you will see an account page where you can fill in more information about yourself. Please do this!

Before finishing, be sure to click on the “Picture” tab and upload a photo of yourself. A headshot is the best idea.

If you have any questions about creating a Facebook profile or X account, please contact the communications team at **Media@GSHG.org**. Please send us an email so we can “follow” you!

Remember: People like the human touch and will appreciate posts with your with your thoughts and experiences more than you think. They also like it when you say “hi” and respond to their comments, etc.

Best practices for X:

- Build relationships on X
- Listen for comments about Girl Scouts
- Respond to comments and queries
- Ask questions
- Post links to things people would find interesting
- Retweet messages you would like to share
- Use a friendly, casual tone
- Don’t spam people

Guidelines on how to create and Instagram account

What is Instagram? Instagram provides a social media platform for billions of people around the world to share photos and videos. The basics of Instagram:

-Follow relevant accounts

-Post photos and videos

We are posting photos and videos from our Instagram account

@GirlScoutsHistoricGA. To create an Instagram account visit:

www.Instagram.com and click on “Sign Up.”

Full Name

Your real name. This will appear on your public profile. In your profile underneath your Username you can say who you are and what you like, ex: Bulldog fan, Girl Scout leader, avid gardener, world traveler, etc. If you are using your account to post about GSHG related events and issues, please use a disclaimer such as this one, “The postings on this site are my own and don’t necessarily represent or reflect Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia positions or opinion.”

Username

This is your “handle” on Instagram. (ex: ours is **@GirlScoutsHistoricGA**). It can be your name, ex: JaneSmith25, or something that is “you,” ex: CookieFan18

Password

Just a password. You need this to sign into your account.

Terms of Service

Agree to these. Basically, you are agreeing to not spam others users.

Click “create account”. Edit your bio on the home page with information about yourself or your troop.

Before finishing, be sure to click on the “Edit Profile” tab and upload a photo of yourself. A headshot is the best idea.

If you have any questions about creating an Instagram page, please contact the communications team at **Media@GSHG.org**. Please send us an email so we can “follow” you!

Remember: People like the human touch and will appreciate posts with your with your thoughts and experiences more than you think. They also like it when you say “hi” and respond to their comments, etc.

Best practices for Instagram:

- Build relationships on Instagram by tagging and following other accounts
- Listen for comments about Girl Scouts
- Respond to comments and queries
- Be positive in your comments
- Post interesting photos and stories (disappear after 24 hours)
- Retweet messages you would like to share
- Use a friendly, casual tone
- Don’t spam people
- Tag **@GirlScoutsHistoricGA** in your posts and stories

Service Unit Websites

All service units in Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia are encouraged to share information with their volunteers via a service unit website that is accessible through the council website.

Service Units may create a Service Unit Website and link it to the council website. Check for free website options.

In order for a Service Unit Website to be linked to the council website, it must be created with the following criteria:

- There must be NO advertisements on the website. There are many sites that offer free hosting and/or free websites - but they are usually “free” because there are ads posted along the sides of the page.
- The website must use the proper Girl Scouts logos and branding.
- There must be a link to the Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia’s website on the Service Unit Website.
- The Service Unit must follow the Safety Activity Checkpoints and the Internet Safety Pledge guidelines regarding internet safety and website design.
- Any pictures of girls should NOT have nametags visible (first and last names should not be shown). Make sure you have photo releases for all girls before using photos.
- Identify the Service Unit name and/or number, along with the communities you serve.
- Please use the following statement as an example: Welcome to Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia (insert SU name) Service Unit proudly serving more than (insert #) of girls and adults in (insert counties served) counties through Girl Scout activities, meetings, and more.
- Include the Girl Scout history, promise, and law.
- Service Unit roster (if all members are okay with their information being posted)
- Service Unit meeting information (day, time, location)
- Monthly Information (agendas, meeting minutes, event flyers, announcements)
- Pictures - A limited number of photos can be posted on each page. The photos should be compressed for web viewing and may be rotated out each month.

Please contact the communications team at Media@GSHG.org if you would like help in setting up your website.

Using Websites and Social Media Tools

1. Adult Responsibility

Before you begin developing a website for your service unit and/or troop, you should designate one adult who will be responsible for monitoring the website so it meets the guidelines stated above.

2. Identifying Members

- If you wish to post Girl Scouts' names on your website, use first names only. Do not identify by name any Girl Scouts pictured in any photos you post online.
- Never identify the schools, addresses, phone numbers, or email addresses of Girl Scouts members.
- Never list the address or location of any Girl Scout meeting or activity.
- Identify trip or event locations only AFTER they have occurred.

3. Website and Facebook Content

All website and Facebook pages must say they are a part of Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia council. Remember that anything posted on your website reflects Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia and GSUSA, so be cautious when selecting content.

4. Girl Use

Speak with the girls in your troop or service unit and make sure they understand the importance of preserving the Girl Scout image online. Encourage them to use good judgment and discretion when posting online. Please review GSUSA's Internet Safety Pledge for Girls.

5. Hyperlinks

Consider hyperlinks with care. If you link to another website from your website, make sure that page's content is consistent with Girl Scout values and does not contain inappropriate or controversial material.

6. Advertising and Product Sales

Do not sell advertising on your website, either in text or graphic format. This includes banner ads, skyscraper ads, sponsored links, etc. The sale of advertising creates an implied relationship between Girl Scouts and the goods or services being advertised and is not permitted.

Also: girls and/or adults may not post notices on websites to sell Girl Scout Cookies or other products from council-sponsored sales.

7. Website Infractions

If you are contacted by Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia or GSUSA and asked to remove any content or links from your website, please comply with that request.

If you find a Girl Scout website that is in violation of these guidelines, please contact the communications team at Media@GSHG.org. Please describe the violation in detail and provide the URL of the website.

We expect all who participate in social media on behalf of Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia (or in relation to Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia) to understand and follow these guidelines. These guidelines will continue to evolve as social media evolves and new technologies and tools are added.

Frequently Asked Questions:

How do I balance my personal and professional lives online?

You need to determine your own comfort level in discussing work in your personal communications. If you choose to talk about your Girl Scout work via your personal online accounts, please disclose your relationship to Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia.

Should I respond to comments or mentions I see online?

If you should come across comments online, please refer them to our communications team to respond to them appropriately. Again, this is important to uphold the mission and image of Girl Scouts, so it is critical that we tell our story responsibly.

Should I use social media platforms to sell cookies?

Please follow the Internet Safety Pledge guidelines and the Safety Activity Checkpoints. The heart of the Girl Scout Cookie Program experience remains the face-to-face interaction that the public expects. Girls will deliver cookies and accept payment either in person or through the Digital Cookie platform, following appropriate safety guidelines. You can promote the Cookie Program online.

Parents and Girl Scouts older than 13 may use social media to promote their Digital Cookie link to family and friends on personal, private accounts/pages.

For marketing purposes, parents/caregivers are allowed to create announcements marketing their Girl Scout's Cookie Program on closed/private groups on social media. To ensure the Girl Scout's safety, the Digital Cookie link should not be copied onto these posts or in the comments in any groups.

Girl Scout Cookies or Digital Cookie links should never be posted on online retail sites like public yard sale groups, Facebook Marketplace, or eBay.