

# Troop Transitions Toolkit

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# Adapting Troops through Today's Challenges

Challenges in our region have led many to experience more uncertainty and instability as they plan for a new Girl Scout year. Girl Scouts Nation's Capital recognizes that some troops may need to shift their structure and approach as they plan for 2025-2026. Here's what Troop Leaders need to know as you plan for next year.

The **process and structures** of troops should be flexible and adaptive to meet the needs of our youth and adult members.

- Troop meetings will no longer require two Troop Leaders in attendance - instead, meeting planning and leading can be shared amongst approved volunteers. "Approved volunteers" are volunteers who have completed their background screening, are registered members of Girl Scouts Nation's Capital, and have taken a short safety training.
- Troops may choose to operate in various styles: classic '2-leaders-in-charge' style, co-operative style, or another way that works for you!
- Troop experience not the right fit? Being an Individually Registered Member (IRM) allows Girl Scouts to complete badgework and events independently.

**Safety** remains our #1 priority, and certain safety policies are non-negotiable.

- Girl Scout events always require 2 unrelated adults, both of whom are background checked. Events with additional youth may need additional adults. Adults should never be alone with youth.
- Volunteers should understand safety policies as written in Volunteer Essentials, and should be trained for the positions they hold.
- Short online training will be available for adults who are leading meetings but are not Troop Leaders.
- Each troop should still have 2 Troop Leaders who handle administrative aspects of the troop and understand Girl Scout policies and procedures.

**Tools are available to help!**

- Troop Year Planners lay out a series of meetings to fill an entire Girl Scout year (generally 2 meetings per month).
- The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) has meeting plans for Troop Leaders to select, and caregivers to download and print.
- Resources for leaders such as sign-up sheets and caregiver agendas are available!
- Need to supplement or replace a meeting? Look for Program Partners, Program Kits, Weekend Facilitators at Camp, Troop Edition, and Girl Scout Insider to support!
- Coming soon: database of prospective volunteers and subject matter experts to support meetings!



Access resources online at

[gscnc.org/en/members/for-volunteers/leading-troops-through-uncertainty.html](https://gscnc.org/en/members/for-volunteers/leading-troops-through-uncertainty.html)

Need more support or have feedback to share?

Contact [communityfeedback@gscnc.org](mailto:communityfeedback@gscnc.org).

Girl Scouts Nation's Capital has many resources available to troops to support an amazing experience in 2025-2026! Take advantage of programmatic opportunities, sample emails & scripts, online tools, and more to make this your easiest year yet!

## Planning Troop Meetings

- [Troop Year Planners](#) – use Troop Year Planners to grab-and-go a series of meetings. There are year plans for every year of Girl Scouting, including for multi-level troops!
- Volunteer Toolkit – Use in conjunction with Troop Year Planners to find and download meeting plans. Or for troops using a co-operative structure, save your year plan in Volunteer Toolkit so families can access and download meeting plans for their meetings!
- [Template Sign-Up Sheets & Family Communications](#) – Using a co-operative structure? Use template sign-up sheets to make meeting schedule a breeze. Sample emails and caregiver meeting agendas help families understand changes to their troop structure.

## Supplementing Troop Meetings

- *Full guide coming soon!* Program Partners are organizations that have partnered with Girl Scouts to provide program events and Girl Scout Days across our region.
- Program Kits - available for every level and have detailed instructions for adults to easily facilitate programming. Find a [full list](#) to pick your kit, then [reserve online](#)!
- [Weekend Facilitators at Camp](#) – these programs make getting outdoors easy! Register and bring your troop, and our trained facilitators will take care of the rest.
- [Troop Edition](#) goes out weekly via email on Thursdays. It is loaded with information on fun and exciting things to do.
- [Girl Scout Insider](#) comes out twice a year, August and September. They are always available online.

## Getting Additional Help

- Open to having an extra set of hands or another Troop Leader join the troop? Let us know by [filling out an interest form](#), and if we have interested volunteers, we'll get you connected!
- *Coming soon!* Want to find a subject matter expert in your area to support the troop? Check out our supporters database (version 1.0) online to find a list of people who are excited to work with troops in your area!
- *Coming soon!* New leader looking for a mentor? Indicate your interest to be matched with an experienced volunteer in your area. Experience volunteer with some wisdom to share? Fill out the form as well to volunteer as a mentor!

## Additional Guidance and Supports

- If you need to recruit a new co-leader, transition out of your role unexpectedly, or perhaps help your troop merge with another, check out resources in our Toolkit for Troop Leaders online.
- Girl Scouts Nation's Capital is committed to being a Sister\* to Every Girl Scout, which includes supporting youth and adult members beyond just their Girl Scout experience. Let us know how we can help you and your community by emailing [communityfeedback@gscnc.org](mailto:communityfeedback@gscnc.org).

All links can be found online at [gscnc.org/en/members/for-volunteers/leading-troops-through-uncertainty.html](https://gscnc.org/en/members/for-volunteers/leading-troops-through-uncertainty.html)

\*Girl Scouts Nation's Capital uses the term sister inclusively to speak to everyone who identifies with the Girl Scouting experience. You may substitute another word of your choice, such as sibling, friend, or family member.



# Troop Structures: Co-Operative

Troops that use a co-operative structure divide leadership - meeting planning and leading is done by a rotation of families throughout the year.

## **Troops using a co-op structure still identify 2 Troop Leaders, who are responsible for:**

- Setting the meeting schedule, arranging meeting space, and coordinating caregiver sign-ups
- Sharing meeting plans with families (using either Volunteer Toolkit or Girl Scout Experience Box)
- Taking training and ensuring the troop meets safety guidelines
- Attending SU meetings, or delegating some else to, and being the point of contact for the troop with Service Unit volunteers & council staff

## **Families take an increased role in meeting prep and planning. They participate by:**

- Signing up for one meeting through the troop year to lead or chaperone
- Planning and preparing for their meeting assignment, purchasing supplies as able and being reimbursed by the troop, or coordinating with a troop leader or money manager to purchase supplies. They might also coordinate snack for that meeting.
- Leading the meeting, working directly with the Girl Scouts!

## Best Practices

- **Set your schedule in advance.** At the first Caregiver Meeting of the year, share the schedule for badges and meetings for the year, and have families sign up.
  - As troops get older, Girl Scouts should have an increased say in the badges they earn. That might mean the schedule is decided quarterly as the Girl Scouts plan, or that Girl Scouts attend the caregiver meeting to help set the schedule of badges themselves.
- **Use the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) to help with meeting planning.** Troop Leaders can customize the Volunteer Toolkit with their troop meeting plans. From there, families have view-only permissions - they can use their access to download and print meeting plans, shopping lists, and handouts.
  - Bonus tip: Want to make this extra easy for families? Print meeting plans & shopping lists ahead of your family meeting. Hand out physical copies when families sign up for a month. Then let them run with it!
  - Using the Girl Scout Experience Box? Set up the volunteer toolkit with the appropriate year plan (Daisy Year 1 or Brownie Year 1) to see meetings ahead of receiving the physical kits.
- **Supplement with Field Trips & Activities.** Your troop might designate someone to plan field trips specifically, or families might choose to plan their assigned meeting as an outing instead. Be flexible, and when in doubt, ask the Girl Scouts what they'd like!

Adults  
leading/chaperoning  
meetings should be  
registered and  
screened, and must  
complete a short  
required training.

Scan for more  
resources:



Need more help or guidance on adjusting troop structure?  
Contact [customercare@gscnc.org](mailto:customercare@gscnc.org) or call 202-237-1670.

If you've never recruited another Troop Leader before, don't worry! These tried and true tips can help you find that next great volunteer to work alongside you and build a troop of courage, confidence, and character.

1. **Ask directly, and make it personal.** Asking a group for someone to take the role makes people less likely to respond and more likely to say no - people often think, *"Oh, they mean someone else!"*. Instead, have a one-to-one conversation with your prospective Troop Leader. Make sure your ask is clear and not just giving hints!
2. **Be specific (and honest).** Clearly communicate specific responsibilities and time commitment. Talk about how being a Troop Leader is a partnership.
3. **Share your enthusiasm.** Asking someone to volunteer can be nerve-wracking, but don't let it dampen your enthusiasm. Make sure you share the reasons you've enjoyed leading and your excitement about what the future could hold!
4. **Highlight resources and flexibility.** Share existing resources, like the Volunteer Toolkit, Troop Year Planners, or the support coming from your Service Unit. Ensure they know they don't have to know everything to be a Troop Leader.
5. **Give people time.** Most people need time to consider and learn more. Rather than immediately asking them to take the role, ask them to get coffee with you and learn more - that time to truly think and have a conversation can make all the difference!

*"Hi Susie! Our troop is in need of a new Troop Leader next year to work with me, and I thought you'd be a great fit. I love how you worked with the troop at our camping trip - they really responded to you. I've really loved my experience as a Troop Leader so far. Working with our Girl Scouts and seeing them grow has been truly amazing!"*

*As co-leaders, we'd work together based on our schedules to support one another. There are a lot of resources and training provided by our local Service Unit and Council to help as well.*

*Would you be open to grabbing coffee sometime to talk through this more? I can answer any specific questions you might have and talk through how we might work together. Even if you're just curious, I'd love to chat."*

*Asked and the answer was no? Ask what they could do to help, or who they might recommend to be a co-leader instead.*

## Leading Together: Working with your Co-Leader

Once you have a new Troop Leader in place, setting expectations and responsibilities is key! It's helpful also to make some decisions around the troop ahead of the initial caregiver meeting, so you can share the decisions with caregivers during the meeting. Here are some things to talk with your new Troop Leader about:

- Meeting logistics: when, where, how frequently, and how long will the troop meet? Will you use a traditional style where Troop Leaders and leading meetings, or will you use a co-operative style where caregivers plan and lead meetings?
- What kind of help will the troop need from caregivers?
- What type of communication will you use with one another?
- What type of communication will you use with troop families?
- Do either of you have parts that you are particularly interested in, or that you are not interested in? Some co-leaders split tasks equally, while others have one leader who is responsible for planning the program while the other handles administrative tasks.
- Troop finances: which Troop Leader will be a signer on the troop bank account?
- Finalize the caregiver meeting agenda.



# Tips & Guidelines for Troop Mergers

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Troops merging is a normal part of Girl Scouts and happens as youth get older and troops get smaller. With a little admin work, it can be a seamless experience that helps create the best experience for all!

## First Steps:

### Identifying a troop:

Ask your Service Unit or Membership Specialist if you're not sure what other troops are in the area. There may be a troop close by that has youth from the same school, or a nearby one in the same grade level that could be a natural fit. You could also ask the youth in your troop if they have any friends from school or extracurriculars that they know are in a nearby troop.

### Reaching out:

Either reach out yourself, or ask a member of your SU Team or Membership Specialist to do an introduction and float the idea. It's good to figure out how many youths want to continue from each troop, what volunteers will want to stay, if either troop has big travel plans or ideas for coming years, and what the troops like doing to see if the merger makes sense. It may make sense to have a casual troop meeting for the youth to meet each other and get to know each other. Above all, model the behavior you hope to see for your Girl Scouts: making new friends is the Girl Scout way, and adults can & should act as good role models to help facilitate connections.

## When You're Ready to Merge:

### Reach out to your Registrar & Membership Specialist:

You'll need to let them know about this merger and let them know which troop number you're keeping (this should be the troop whose bank account you're keeping) (if the youth cannot agree on which troop number to keep, you can also request a new troop number from your Membership Specialist), as well as which youth are getting transferred into the troop, as well as which adults are being moved and what roles they'll be volunteering for.

### Disband the other troop:

Fill out the [Troop Disbanding Form](#) and work with your Service Unit Money Manager to close out the bank account and transfer the money into the bank account of the troop number that you are retaining.

### Work through logistics:

Where and when is the new troop going to meet? If leadership is changing, work through communication styles, responsibilities, etc. Older Girl Scout troops will also need to figure out how they're handling accounting for the troops, especially if one troop has been doing line-item accounting for each Girl Scout, while the other troop has all funds in a shared pot.

# Role Succession: Passing on Your Girl Scout Roles

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While volunteer roles at Girl Scouts are appointed for year, we know at times that volunteers need to step away or reevaluate their volunteer commitments. If you need to step away from your role, this guide has tips to make the transition smooth and easy, and ideally helps keep opportunities for youth members available.

## Troop Leaders

Thank you for your time leading a troop here at Girl Scouts Nation's Capital! As you know, we cannot provide the experiences and opportunities to our youth without all the hard work and dedication of our volunteers. We deeply appreciate the service you've given to Girl Scouting.

Here are some steps to best transition your troop to work towards their goals and achieve great things with continued leadership.

### Identify the Role

Different troops utilize different leadership methods. Does your troop use the "classic" model of 2 troop leaders who plan and lead every troop meeting? Does your troop use the co-operative model, where you have troop leaders assisting with admin items like planning the calendar and handling communications, while caregivers assist with leading meetings?

Once you identify what role you currently play and if your troop would like to continue with this model, then you can solidify the expectations for the next volunteer. If this may be a good time for your troop to change leadership models due to leadership changes, you can find materials on those models and caregiver communications [here](#).

### Communicate with Caregivers

Let your caregivers know that you need to step down from the role and when you will officially be stepping down. Use this time to communicate with families that this does not mean Girl Scouts cannot continue and invite them to a succession planning meeting to discuss next steps. If you are able, give time before stepping down for caregivers/families to decide if they may be able to step into the role.

### Personal Asks

While troop leaders should communicate with everyone to notify them of upcoming changes, we find the most successful way to recruit a new troop leader is through personal asks. Think through the families in your troop and what their skill sets may be. Is there a family member who is always attending meetings and happy to help? Reach out by phone and mention you have noticed these skills and think they may be a great fit!

## Offer Shadowing

When making your personal asks, offer to have the potential new leaders shadow the work you do for the troop. Show them how you complete your tasks, share resources, and, if applicable, have them help lead a meeting. This helps prospective leaders know that they can do it!

## Succession Planning Meeting

Whether you have found someone to volunteer or not, you will want to dedicate time at an upcoming meeting (or schedule a new meeting) to discuss next steps. If you are unable to secure someone to fulfill the role, this meeting helps fully describe the role vacancy and the importance of succession. If you need assistance running this meeting, please reach out to your Service Unit team, as they will be happy to assist.

## Troop Money Manager

The troop money manager plays a critical role for all troops and is required for troops to continue. The troop money manager helps manage all the troop's funds, and helps youth build a budget and plan for their dream activities.

Troop leaders should work with their outgoing troop money manager, utilizing steps 1-4 above to help find someone to fulfill the role. Some great skills for a troop money manager may be someone who is great with spreadsheets, someone who prefers a behind-the-scenes role, someone who cannot attend meetings but would like to help, and/or someone who enjoys numbers. **Keep in mind that all roles (including troop leaders and troop money managers) can have more than one person to divide duties.**

Once you have volunteers(s) officially stepping into the role of troop money manager, work with schedules to get them on the troop bank account, following your bank policies for this. Make sure to connect with your Service Unit Money Manager to get a letter of authorization and ensure all required signers are on the account moving forward.

## Other Troop Committee Roles

Depending on your troop plans, plans decided by the interests of the youth in your troop, there may be other key roles to recruit for. Please review the Family Passport (page 9) or [Volunteer Essentials](#) (pages 12-15) for more information on what each role can do to provide more opportunities for the youth in your troop.

Utilizing the methods above to help recruit and retain caregivers in these roles ensures the dreams your Girl Scouts have can come to fruition.

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No matter your volunteer role and your next steps, we at Girl Scouts Nation's Capital wish you all the best in your future endeavors. Please know there is always a place in Girl Scouting for you if you choose to return - *"Once a Girl Scout, Always a Girl Scout"!*



# Succession Planning - Reformation Meeting Agenda

If you need to step down from your Troop Leader role, the script and plan below can help. Make sure you're honest with caregivers about expectations specific to the troop. Information to customize is highlighted for your convenience!

Don't forget you do not need to do it alone! Your Service Unit Team members can help facilitate this meeting.

## If you have not found a volunteer (30-45 minutes)

### Opening

Girl Scout volunteers changing is a normal and healthy process! This evening, we will be discussing next steps for our troop.

I will be stepping down from the role of troop leader as of (enter date). We are looking to have someone be the troop leader in my upcoming absence. We are hoping by the end of this meeting or within the next few days we can have someone who can help the troop continue!

### Why do we need a troop leader to continue?

In order to follow the safety guidelines, set by Girl Scouts of America's National Policy, we need two background checked and trained adult volunteers at every meeting.

In our troop, our meetings are led by (troop leaders or caregivers). The troop leaders are responsible for the communications and planning of our troop activities.

Here are some things the youth in our troop are planning to do in upcoming months: (include upcoming Girl Scout plans)

If we are able to find continuing leadership, then the troop can continue to plan and support these goals.

### Helpful Resources Available:

Here are all the resources available to help our troop leaders (keep the ones applicable to your troop and provide more information and insight about what you find most helpful!)

- Volunteer Toolkit – Access for troop leaders and caregivers
- Troop Communications (Email/Social media)
- Rallyhood
- Girl Scout Experience Box
- Co-operative troops: caregiver sign up sheets
- Your Service Unit Team
- Council Training
- New leader passport
- Year Plans

Remember you do not have to do it alone! Your Service Unit and Council Staff are here to help. It is also possible to split the role with another adult member to divide the duties.

### **Next Steps:**

If you are interested in learning more about the role, please feel free to contact me about shadowing a troop meeting or reviewing the resources we use for troop planning before deciding. I am also available for any questions anyone has.

We are looking to have someone officially in the role by (enter date)

If we are not able to find someone, there are still ways for the youth to participate in girl Scouts it just may not be with this troop. This may be by merging with other local troops, continuing as an IRM or more. We'll discuss more of those options as needed at an upcoming meeting, as applicable.

### **Any questions?**

(offer a moment for questions)

## **If you have found a Volunteer (15 minute)**

### **Opening**

Troop Committees Succession is a normal and healthy process! This evening, we will be discussing next steps for our troop.

I will be stepping down from the role of troop leader as of (enter date). Our new troop leader will be (enter name of new leader). You will start to see communications coming from them by (enter date).

We are so excited our troop will continue and would like to thank (enter new volunteer(s) name) for their dedication and time by stepping into this role for our youth!

### **Next Steps**

Take this moment to highlight any changes that may be happening with your troop due to leadership changes. This may mean communication channels changing or troop leadership model, etc.

This is important for caregivers to stay informed and know when to expect these changes.

### **Any questions?**

(offer a moment for questions)

# Rallyhood

## How to use the sign-ups feature

### Step 1: Log In to Rallyhood

Go to [www.rallyhood.com](http://www.rallyhood.com) and log in using your email and password.

### Step 2: Go to Your Rally

From your dashboard, click the name of the Rally where you want to post a sign-up.

### Step 3: Click the "Sign-Ups" tab

Find the "sign-ups" tab at the top of your Rally page. Click it to view or create sign-ups

### Step 4: Create a New Sign-Up

- Click "Create a Sign-Up"
- Give it a title (e.g., "Cookie Booth Volunteers - March 10th")
- Add a description with any details people need to know
- Set the start and end dates/times
- Add a location or special notes (optional)

### Step 5: Add Tasks or Time Slots

- Click "Add Task or Time Slot"
- Name the task (e.g., "Booth Helper 4-6pm")
- Set how many people are needed
- Add multiple time slots or tasks as needed

### Step 6: Publish and Share

Once your sign-up is ready, click "Publish"



# SignUp Genius

## How to use the sign-ups features

### Creating a SignUp Genius Account

- Go to [www.signupgenius.com](http://www.signupgenius.com)
- Click 'Login' in the top right corner
- Select 'New Account? Sign Up' under the login form
- Fill in your name, email, and create a password
- Agree to the Terms of Service and click 'Register Now'
- Check your email to verify your account if prompted

### Get Started with Recurring Sign Ups

- Start by logging in and creating a sign up in your account. When you get to the Slots tab, select the option to Add Dates. In the box that pops up, select Add Recurring Days
- Make your selections and click Add Dates to automatically generate the dates and times you need for the year. If you have multiple recurring times, you can use the dates tool multiple times

### Set Up Text Messaging

- To get started, invite your sign up participants to opt in to receive text messages
- Log in to your account and click the Messages icon on the left side of the Sign Ups account page
- Once you hit the Compose option, click on Text Message. You can then send an email that will invite people in your group to opt in to text messages

### Creating an Event with Sign Up Options

- After logging in, click 'Create a Sign Up' at the top
- Choose a theme/template that fits your event
- Enter general details like title, location, and description
- Click 'Date/Time' to add time slots: Choose date(s) and start/end times; add multiple slots if needed
- Click 'Slots' to define what people can sign up for: Enter the task or item name, quantity needed, etc
- Click 'Settings' to configure preferences (notifications, privacy, etc)
- Click 'Publish' to make your sign up live and share the link via email or social media

### Hide Past or Future Dates

- Use the hide past or future dates tool to select how far in the past or future you would like to hide dates
- As time progresses, dates in the past will automatically be hidden and future dates will appear based upon the parameters that you enter

