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Introduction to Overnights

Use this guide to assist your troop in planning and seeking approval for overnight activities. This is just an overview of important information, so always consult *Volunteer Essentials*, *Safety Activity Checkpoints*, and make sure to complete all necessary training.

Definitions:

- Overnight: Stay one (or up to three) nights away, such as at a state park or nearby city for sightseeing.
- Extended overnight: Progress to staying overnight for longer periods of time. Extended overnights are any overnight of four or more nights.

Types of Overnights:

There are **three** types of overnights:

- **Indoor** (Homes/Buildings)
- **Outdoor** (Tents/Camping/Fire burning)
- **Travel** (Hotels/Hostels/Time Shares and other 3rd party rentals)

Location of Overnight:

Girls may go further from home depending on their progression for their grade levels and will have approval deadlines based on type and range of travel.

| Types of Travel | Range of Travel | Approval Deadlines |
|---|--|--|
| Local travel (Daisies and above) | From San Luis Obispo to San Diego | 4 weeks in advance |
| Regional travel (Juniors & above) | California, Arizona, Nevada | 3 months in advance |
| National travel (Cadettes and above) | Inside U.S. borders & U.S. Territories | 6 months in advance |
| International travel/cruises (Cadettes and above) | Anything that requires a passport | 18+ months in advance (Mexico/Canada = 12 months) |

Permissions

For any overnight, you will need one or both forms to get permission to go on this activity:

- Parent/Guardian Single-Use Permission Form: This form gives written permission for activities that include overnight stays of 1-3 nights and/or Tier 1 high-risk activities.
- Extended Travel/High Risk Application eForm: This eForm gives permission for the following circumstances: extended overnights of 4+ nights and/or Tier 2 high-risk activities.

Overnights 101

Volunteers in these roles must be approved volunteers who complete position related training. The adult(s) who have the required trainings must be in attendance for the entire duration of the overnight.

- One adult does not have to complete all the training. Volunteers can split these duties.
- However, at least one adult must complete all required training for the activity you will be doing. For example, if you are going on a camping trip, one adult will serve as the Troop Camping Advisor by completing Indoor Overnight and Camping Skills Training. And another adult can serve as Troop First Aider by completing CPR/AED & First Aid certification.

Training

Training Requirements:

What training you need for an overnight activity will depend on two different factors. The first is your sleeping accommodation (cabin, tent, hotel, etc.). The second is how many nights your trip will take place. Use the following chart as a guide to help you determine what training you will need:

| Sleeping Accommodations | Number of Nights | Training Required |
|---|------------------|---|
| Multi-purpose room, cabin, home, or similar | 1-3 nights | Indoor Overnight |
| Tent Camping, Open Air Sleeping, or any use of a campfire or open flame | 1-3 nights | Indoor Overnight + Camping Skills |
| Hotel, Hostel, or other compartmentalized sleeping | 1-3 nights | Indoor Overnight + Domestic Troop Travel |
| Multi-purpose room, cabin, home, or similar | 4+ nights | Indoor Overnight + Domestic Troop Travel |
| Tent Camping, Open Air Sleeping, or any use of a campfire or open flame | 4+ nights | Indoor Overnight + Camping Skills + Domestic Troop Travel |
| Hotel or Hostel with International Travel | 1+ nights | Indoor Overnight + Domestic Troop Travel + International Travel |
| Backpacking | 1-3 nights | Indoor Overnight + Camping Skills + Backpacking |
| Backpacking | 4+ nights | Indoor Overnight + Camping Skills + Domestic Troop Travel + Backpacking |

If it has been 2+ years since you've taken Domestic Troop Travel training, there is a refresher course available on [gsLearn](#): search for 611 Troop Travel Advisor.

For additional information on forms, etc. Please see the [What I need for my girls to attend a...](#) document. If after reading through this chart, you still need help determining what training you need, please email training@girlscoutsla.org and include your sleeping accommodations and the number of nights of your trip.

Deadlines for trainings:

| Course Name | Should be Completed |
|-----------------------|---|
| First Aid/CPR/AED | Always current and up to date (every 2 years) |
| Indoor Overnight | 6 to 8 weeks prior to activity |
| Camping Skills | 4 months prior to activity |
| Domestic Troop Travel | 6 months prior to activity |
| International Travel | 2 years prior to activity |

Transportation

Transportation to/from overnight:

Every driver must be an approved volunteer as well as a registered adult member, over the age of 21, have a good driving record, and a valid license. Each driver should be supplied with a driver's packet. Please consult the 611 Troop Driver Onboarding course in gsLearn and Transporting Girl Scouts section of *Safety Activity Checkpoints* for more information.

Additional modes of transportation may also be allowed, consult *Safety Activity Checkpoints* for more information on how to keep your troop safe.

Tagalongs

If any non-Girl Scout children, also known as tagalongs, will be attending the overnight, those children would be the responsibility of their parent/caregiver. If tagalongs are attending, any adults responsible for tagalongs may not be part of the adult-to-girl ratio.

Emergencies

Any time your troop goes on an overnight, you need to create an [emergency action plan](#) with your troop as part of the planning process. If you should experience an emergency on your overnight, the first course of action is to account for everyone in your group and secure everyone's immediate safety. If necessary, contact the local authorities and follow their directions.

If needed, contact GSGLA so that the council is aware of what is happening and to what extent they may need to assist. GSGLA after-hours emergency phone number: 1-877-423-4752.

After you know what to do, let your offsite emergency contact know what happened, how it is being handled, and if there are any additional people they need to contact, such as the girl's parents.

After you get home, complete the [GSGLA Accident/Incident report](#) within 72 hours.

Important Links

- [A Troop Leader's Guide to Permission Forms](#)
- [Emergency After-Hours Calls \(Pink Card\)](#)
- [Extended Travel/High Risk Application eForm](#)
- [GSGLA Accident/Incident report](#)
- [GSGLA First-Aider & Emergency Plan Manual](#)
- [Parent/Guardian Single-Use Permission Form](#)
- [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#)
- [Volunteer Essentials](#)
- [What I need for my girls to attend a...](#)