

# Conflict Resolution

As part of the Girl Scout team, differences of opinion, disagreements, and conflicts are inevitable. When handled with empathy, respect, and kindness, conflicts can actually enhance communication and improve relationships. However, when disagreements escalate, they often interfere with ability of adults to provide girls with a high-quality Girl Scout experience.

When conflict arises, parties involved are encouraged to sit down together and talk in a calm nonjudgmental manner to resolve the conflict. If the conflict cannot be resolved informally to the satisfaction of all parties, the parties involved are expected to participate in GSWPA's conflict resolution processes. Parties also are expected to maintain confidentiality in order to respect the dignity and rights of the individuals involved.

1. The most effective way of resolving conflicts or concerns is usually by calm, open discussion between the individuals involved by telephone or in person. Parties in conflict are encouraged to try to self-resolve the matter informally among themselves. E-mail and text message exchanges are generally not conducive to a prompt and efficient resolution and, therefore, should be avoided. Parties may contact council for guidance and support with self-resolution.
2. If an issue cannot be resolved informally, any of the involved parties should reach out to customer care or contact their support staff such as the volunteer support specialist for guidance on resolving the conflict.
3. If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved in step two, the matter will be referred to the volunteer relations coordinator. The volunteer relations coordinator serves as a neutral person who helps to support the parties in conflict to reach a resolution. The volunteer relations coordinator will start an inquiry into the conflict by contacting all parties and relevant witnesses.
4. Based on the findings, the volunteer relations coordinator may recommend a staff facilitated meeting between the parties in conflict. The two primary parties will agree to a face-to-face meeting, facilitated by the volunteer relations coordinator, to discuss how they will work together moving forward. The meeting will result in a mutually agreeable action plan.
5. If the above step does not resolve the conflict or the issue is deemed to be a safety, policy, or behavior issue the volunteer relations coordinator will consult with the director of membership and vice president of membership to identify appropriate solutions.
6. The volunteer relations coordinator will notify all parties of the outcome in step five. The volunteer relations coordinator will also notify any appropriate individuals such as troop leaders, service unit manager/team or troop parents when necessary to help ensure that the Girl Scout Experience is as uninterrupted as possible for the girls.

***When working to resolve a situation, keep in mind that a troop/group leader may not dismiss a Girl Scout, including an adult or girl, from a troop/group for any reason.***