

## Contracts (Agreements, Use Permits, Memorandums of Understanding) & Certificates of Insurance

Girl Scouts of Northern California is the legal entity that may sign a contract on behalf of “Girl Scouts.” Troops and service units are not legal entities. Therefore, all contracts, agreements, Memorandums of Understanding and facility use forms that benefit or impose responsibility or potential liability on “Girl Scouts” must be approved and signed by authorized staff representatives of Girl Scouts of Northern California.

**Troops, service units, and committees are NOT legal entities, and therefore, cannot legally enter into contracts.**

### Is It A Contract?

#### Step One:

1. Ask: does the memorandum of understanding or contract attempt to make the troop, service unit, “Girl Scouts” or other “Girl Scouts” entity (for example, SU 299, Heritage Committee, Discoveree, etc.) responsible for anything (for example, payment, taking care of a site, insurance, liability for damage to person or property)?
2. Are words like “indemnify”, “hold harmless”, “assumptions of risk” or “indemnification” used in the contract language?

If yes to either question, then proceed to step two.

If no to both questions, this is a contract between the volunteer and third party and the volunteer is solely responsible for performance and potential liability and may sign it.

#### Step Two:

If you need a GSNorCal staff signature:

Email your contract to: [insurance@gsnorcal.org](mailto:insurance@gsnorcal.org)

Or, mail to:

GSNorCal  
Attn: Risk Management  
1650 Harbor Bay Parkway, Suite 100  
Alameda, CA 94502

Include the deadline for signing and where and to whom the signed contract should be sent.

Don't wait until the last minute, as contracts may take 5-8 business days to review and sign. All contracts must be approved and signed in accordance with Board-established requirements.

GSNorCal's Bylaws establish this requirement for GSNorCal's protection.

## **Facilities Use Agreements for Certain School Districts**

Many of the school districts in our council area are now using online reservation platforms, like Facilitron, Civic Permits, and School Dude, etc., to manage their room reservation requests. These platforms require Certificates of Insurance (COIs) from GSNorCal and contain legally binding language in their agreements.

Troop leaders can now book their reservations by following these instructions:

- Email [Volunteerexperience@gsnorcal.org](mailto:Volunteerexperience@gsnorcal.org) so that council can set up the account for you. Be sure to include your name, troop #, school district and school name.

Within 5-8 business days, your account will be set up and you'll be able to make and manage your reservations quickly and directly.

Please note that some reservation platforms, like Facilitron, now carry fees with them. These fees are being implemented by the individual school district that owns the meeting space (not Girl Scouts) and each troop is responsible for paying them when reserving these sites.

It is completely up to each troop to decide where it wants to meet. Troops should consider if they are willing and able to pay a fee or find a new and more financially feasible meeting place. If you have any questions about these fee schedules, please contact your local school district.

Contact [volunteerexperience@gsnorcal.org](mailto:volunteerexperience@gsnorcal.org) or 800-447-4472 if you have any questions.

## **Certificates of Insurance (COI)**

Often facilities and vendors will request a Certificate of Insurance (COI) from GSNorCal when a troop has a meeting at a site or hosts a cookie booth in front of a business. This is a standard practice and is commonly requested in a contract. The COI proves to the property owner or vendor that GSNorCal is insured if property damage should incur while the Girl Scouts are using their facilities. Likewise, when planning events on behalf of GSNorCal (for example, volunteer-run camps, service unit events, high adventure activities with vendors, etc.), COIs are often needed to verify that an organization or location meets Girl Scouts' insurance standards.

If you are asked to supply a COI, use the [Certificate of Insurance Request Form](https://www.gsnorcal.org/forms) [www.gsnorcal.org/forms](https://www.gsnorcal.org/forms)

If the girls will participate in an activity defined as high adventure:

- The vendor or facility must supply the council with a Certificate of Liability Insurance for one million dollars or more
- The Certificate of Liability Insurance (COI) must read: "Girl Scouts of Northern California is named as additional insured on the General Liability Policy"
- The vendor or facility must complete the checklist relating to the high adventure activity they offer.
- For more information on approved vendors visit [Safety Wise: Approved Vendors]

For more information, visit [www.gsnorcal.org/coi](http://www.gsnorcal.org/coi)

### **Paying for Services**

If you will be hiring and/or paying a person to provide services of any kind, you must contact your VDM or Membership Manager (GSNorCal staff member), who will assist you in consulting with the Human Resources Dept. Your contract must be reviewed with GSNorCal prior to initiating the engagement. Allow at least four weeks for this process, which will include:

- Completion of Independent Contractor Checklist.
- Certificate of Liability Insurance is required for contractors who perform services requiring physical labor with exposure to higher incidence of work-related accidents, such as construction, electrical, high adventure sports, or for contractors that provide food services.
- A Certificate of Workers' Compensation Insurance is required if the contractor engages other employees in the performance of the services.

### **Being Paid for Services**

- Sometimes a troop or service unit performs a service for a community group or event and is offered payment for their service, and may be asked to complete a W-9 form. Since troops and service units are not legal entities, they cannot receive earned income (which is taxable). Troops or service units or other Girl Scout groups may, however, accept a donation as a token of appreciation for their service. Follow guidelines for sponsorships and submit the [Donation Form](#) to the Fund Development Dept. so that the donor can be thanked for their donation.