

Community Event Planning





Introduction

**Thanks for making a difference here and now by helping to plan
a Girl Scout Community Event!**

Through your dedication to offering quality programs locally, girls and volunteers in your community will benefit greatly. The events you plan can be fun, educational, service oriented, or all of the above. This guide will provide you with the basic steps of facilitating community events.

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Essential Event Planning Resources:

- Safety Activity Checkpoints
- Volunteer Essentials
- Family Connections

Important Forms:

- Permission Slip
- Incident/Accident Report Form
- Additional Insurance Form
- Certificate of Liability Insurance Request Form
- Medical History and Release Form





Types of Events

Events can take on many styles, themes, or purposes, as well as incorporate service or take action projects. Events ensure girls get experience in STEM, outdoors, or any of the other examples below. An event can be aimed at recruiting new Girl Scouts or retaining existing girls. Events should meet Discover, Connect, and Take Action Outcomes.

Events can be:

- A few hours, an entire day, a single over-night, a weekend, a week, or longer
- A camporee, workshop, conference, or training
- Planned by a troop, a community, or the council
- For one grade level, all grade levels, girl and parent, adults only, etc.

Celebration Events:

Thinking Day
Girl Scout Birthday
National Holidays
GSUSA Birthday
Juliette Gordon Low's Birthday

Special Events:

Camporees
Sports Days
Age Level
Adventure Activities
Lock-ins
Travel

Community Events:

Parades
Fairs
Fun Runs
Girl Recruitment
Service Projects

Learning Events:

Outdoor Skills
STEM
Songs and Games
Money Management
Career Exploration
Cultural Awareness

Recognition Events:

Investiture
Court of Awards
Bridging
Leader's Day
Graduating Seniors
Tenure Pins

Top 10 reasons to host an event

1. Fun. General enjoyment.
2. Connect girls with larger sisterhood, other Girl Scouts in their community and beyond.
3. Engages families with Girl Scouts.
4. Create leadership opportunities for older Girl Scouts.
5. Leaders can connect and network with other leaders in their area.
6. Gives leaders an opportunity to observe the Girl Scout Leadership experience in action.
7. Enables girls to be part of traditional Girl Scout events beyond the troop.
8. Improves community visibility.
9. Promotes retention.
10. Provides opportunity to recruit new girls.



Event Timeline

Four to six months before event

Determine the purpose and initial goals of the event

- Who will be invited?
- Do you want a council staff member to attend? What will their role be? Submit this request early through customer care.
- Does your event support the values of the Girl Scout Promise and Law?
- Form an event committee (if needed), decide the responsibilities of each person.
- Determine the date, time, location and name of your event. Consider GS, school, cultural, local, and religious calendars as well as weather conditions.
- Determine the maximum number of participants (girls & adults). What will your go/no go numbers be?
- Are there provisions for girls with special needs?
- Are participant waivers needed?
- Do you have all required adults (camp trained, First Aid/CPR certified, kayak certified, life guard, archery certified, etc.)

Research your event

- What has been done before?
- What are the possibilities?
- If this is a repeat event, what needs to be improved?
- What are the required Safety Activity Checkpoints for your event?
- Create a budget (use attached sheet). **Event should break even unless it is an approved fundraiser.**
- Arrival & departure plans, patch, shirt, goody bag distribution (if applicable).
- Draft an itinerary including activities, badge/patch, and send it to your community events manager. (use Program Summary form attached)
- Will you include Program Aide trained girls? What will their roles be? How many will be needed?



Two to three months before event

Getting the word out

- Plan to speak at your community meetings to promote your event
- Plan Rallyhood message wall posts within needed rallies and create a Rallyhood calendar event.
- Establish emergency procedures for the day(s) of the event
- Create clean – up process for the end of the event
- Keep your community event manager informed of any event changes or concerns. Your event manager will communicate all changes/needs to council.

Review event planning documents

- Review your budget worksheet (use the attached form)
- Begin to compile list of supplies needed (use the attached form)
- Create Plan B & cancellation plan for day of events due to weather or unforeseen circumstances.
- Request certificate of liability from the facility for any High Risk/High Adventure activities

Arrange for and contact special guests/presenters

- When will they arrive
- How long is there presentation
- Do you need to supply anything? Tables, chairs, electricity, etc.

One month before the event/registration deadline

- Establish emergency procedures and determine best transportation route and directions to the nearest hospital
- Gather first aid supplies and required forms (See Safety Activity Checkpoints)
- Determine schedule and volunteers for event set up
- Determine registration set up/procedures for day of event
- Place patch/badge order,
- Create proposed menu for review and be ready for any dietary restriction changes needed from your participants.
- Finalize supply list based on current/anticipated numbers of participants
- Finalize equipment list
- Request event insurance, additional insurance, etc.

Two weeks before the event/once registration has closed

- Secure all required insurance (Application for additional insurance, special event insurance, tagalong insurance, etc.)
- Finalize menu and place food order based on number of participants
- Meet with committee members (if applicable)
 1. Share total number of participants
 2. Set up wrap-up evaluation meeting date, time and location
 3. Complete any last minute tasks (name tags, folders, schedules, etc.)
 4. Place final order for all supplies
 5. Decide who will be responsible for opening/closing remarks
- Review who will be responsible for what before, during, and after the event
- Communicate with all presenters to ensure they are still attending
- Create any signage needed (parking, directions to check in, event this way, etc.)
- Plan event layout
- Ensure all receipts are turned in before the event. Event director should manage all paperwork for the event (receipts, forms, insurance, documents, etc.)
- Decide on committee/volunteer/staff attire (all the same shirt, etc.) Committee members should have a special name tag (different color, ribbon, etc.)
- Have a plan in place for early and late arrivals
- Acknowledge any guests or dignitaries present at the event
- Finalize the budget and submit to Community Event Manager

Day of Event

Names					
<input type="checkbox"/> Arrive early to meet as a committee to review responsibilities, have a pep talk and set up.					
<input type="checkbox"/> Post direction signs					
<input type="checkbox"/> Set up Check-In station and First Aid station (all participants should know where this is located)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Greet volunteers and presenters and help them set up their space. Share day of committee contact information. Communicate expectations of the day.					
<input type="checkbox"/> Have participants and presenters/volunteers complete an event evaluation form (see attached document).					
<input type="checkbox"/> Opening/closing remarks. Thank all volunteers <hr/> <hr/>					
<input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>					
<input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>					
<input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>					

Within Two Weeks After Event

Names					
<input type="checkbox"/> Submit invoices for any outstanding bills					
<input type="checkbox"/> Send thank you letters/cards to all volunteers/presenters					
<input type="checkbox"/> Return all borrowed items					
<input type="checkbox"/> Have a committee meeting to evaluate the event. What went well, what didn't, etc.					
<input type="checkbox"/> Have participants and presenters/volunteers complete an event evaluation form (see attached document).					
<input type="checkbox"/> Send MarComm any photos of the event at communications@gsgateway.org . <hr/> <hr/>					
<input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>					
<input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>					
<input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>					



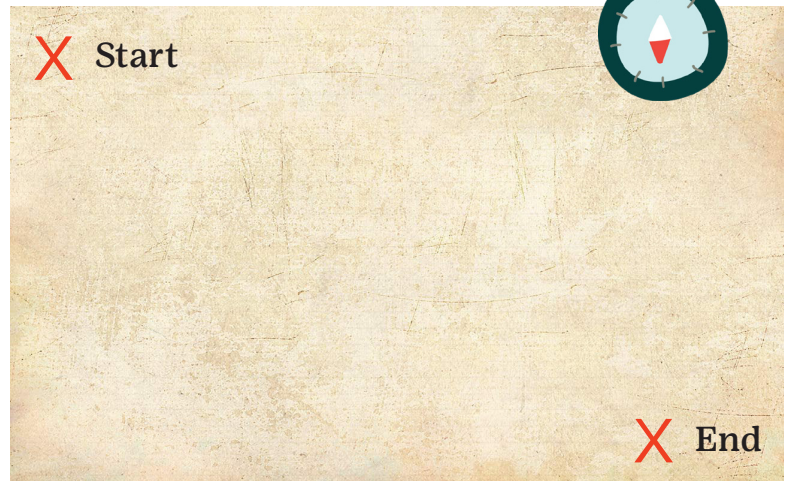
Event Planning Worksheet

General description: _____

Working title: _____

Goals and outcomes:

Map it out:



What are the key activities you want to include:

How will you integrate the Girl Scout Leadership Experience and the National Program Portfolio into these activities?:

List names and strengths

[illegible]



GSLE

Thinking about what you've brainstormed on the Event Planning Worksheet, review these concepts of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience:

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience

If it is a multi-level event, how will you provide progression activities to allow for age/developmentally appropriate learning to take place? Check all that apply:

- ☐ Activities are level-specific
- ☐ Activities are adapted for different levels (increased difficulty)
- ☐ Girls are given more responsibility/choice within the activities as they get older
- ☐ Other _____

How will you include at least one of the following processes?

(Required for all events and recommendations for opportunities).

Girl Led	Learning by Doing	Cooperative Learning
<input type="checkbox"/> Girls are involved in the planning of activities <input type="checkbox"/> Activities involve the girls in decision making <input type="checkbox"/> Questions/activities are open ended and allow girls to think critically <input type="checkbox"/> Girls take the lead in discussions <input type="checkbox"/> Girls are offered choices <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Activities are not only hands on but also minds-on <input type="checkbox"/> Activities involve role playing <input type="checkbox"/> Girls are involved in determining next steps based on outcomes <input type="checkbox"/> Girls have a chance to practice the skills they learn <input type="checkbox"/> Games are used to teach skills <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Girls teach one another or present to one another <input type="checkbox"/> Girls see how they can make a difference in their community <input type="checkbox"/> Girls work together to solve a challenge or complete an activity <input type="checkbox"/> Girls have a chance to reflect on the activity as a group <input type="checkbox"/> Girls work on activities that are developmentally appropriate in small groups <input type="checkbox"/> Girls learn from professionals in the field <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

What journeys, badges, or patches will your event address? Please list the corresponding badges steps/activities if known.

- ☐ Check here if you need more information on badges/journeys or how to incorporate them into your event.

Six Parts of an Event Template

Part & Topic	What will we do?	Why are we doing it? Desired Outcomes	Who will do it?	What materials do we need?
Start Up				
Opening				
Business				
Activities				
Clean Up				
Closing				

Sample Event Schedule

The length of your event will depend on the number of participants attending and the number of stations or activities you offer. If possible, have separate stations for younger girls and older girls so that they can have a richer experience focused on level appropriateness. If you anticipate having a large number of girls in any age bracket, Daisies/Brownies/Juniors and Cadettes and up, you might consider having multiple rotations.

Be sure to consider your location or facility to allow for the best place for certain activities and travel time between stations. Select spaces that will support activities and create a traffic flow that will allow people to move well between those activities.

It's important to give time in between workshops for presenters to regroup and set up, and for troops to travel to their next station. Food breaks and bathroom breaks are important, but you don't want too many of them.

Time	Activity	Description
60+ minutes	Event staff set-up venue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up outdoor directions to guide people to check in. • Organize check-in area and First aid station. • Arrange tables, chairs, stations. • Orient your volunteers and do a pep huddle. • Ensure any last minute details are completed.
30 minutes	Check-in, presenter set-up, start-up activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using your pre-determined check-in procedures, check-in the troops as they arrive. • Give any special instructions as needed. • Hand out the pre-opening activity and provide instructions as needed for girls to complete.
15 minutes	Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome everyone to this awesome event!! • Introduce yourself and volunteers. • Briefly go over what will happen at the event. • Make sure everyone knows where the bathrooms are and go over any special instructions for the day. • Conduct your opening flag ceremony.
45 minutes	Activity rotation	The girls/troops will rotate through the stations as assigned.
5 minutes	Passing time	Moving from one session to the next.
45 minutes	Activity rotation	The girls/troops will rotate through the stations as assigned.
15 minutes	Break	This is a time for girls to have a snack and go to the bathroom, and for the volunteers to set up for the next activity.
45 minutes	Activity rotation	The girls/troops will rotate through the stations as assigned.
5 minutes	Passing time	Moving from one session to the next.
15 minutes	Clean-up and closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask everyone to clean up something. • Thank participants for coming. • Have a Friendship circle. • Have troops complete the evaluations.
30 minutes	Event staff final clean-up and check-out	Remember, a Girl Scout always leaves a place better than she found it. Make sure you remove your items, put tables and chairs back (if applicable), check the bathrooms, and collect any lost and found items.

Materials List

Based on the activities your committee chooses, create a materials list for acquiring or shopping for your supplies.

Item	Quantity	How was it acquired? • Purchased • Borrowed • Printed	Person responsible

Be sure to remember the basic supplies:

- Name tags
- Pencils/pens
- Markers
- Tables
- Chairs
- First aid kit
- Tape
- Scissors
- Flags- American flag (required) and optional: World Association flag, Girl Scout flag, and Service Unit Flag.
- Bell or other signaling device to let troops know when it is time to switch stations.
- Any other materials needed.

Other Forms that May be Helpful

Agreement for renting or borrowing a non-council owned site

It is agreed that _____
(campground, school, facility)
will ☐ RENT ☐ LOAN to _____ property in
(service unit)
_____, described as the following:
(town/city)

(site name or specify portion of building, facility or grounds)
for use during _____ on _____
(event) (date)
for a total payment of _____.

In addition to the above facilities the following will be provided:

<input type="checkbox"/> bathroom facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> wood for campfires
<input type="checkbox"/> # of sites or rooms	<input type="checkbox"/> AV equipment
<input type="checkbox"/> access to phone	<input type="checkbox"/> coffee pots
<input type="checkbox"/> parking facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> extra chairs
<input type="checkbox"/> use of kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/> custodial care
<input type="checkbox"/> access to outlets	<input type="checkbox"/> trash pickup
<input type="checkbox"/> access to water	<input type="checkbox"/> WiFi available
<input type="checkbox"/> extra tables	<input type="checkbox"/> other _____

The owner of the facility assumes responsibility for having the building/site in good safe condition. At the termination of this agreement, the representatives from Girl Scouts of Gateway Council will deliver up the property in as good condition as it was accepted, subject to reasonable wear and tear.

Any restrictions on the use of the site, equipment, etc.: _____

Program Coordinator/Service Unit Manager

Date

Site Manager

Date

Site Approval Checklist

For non-council sites

Buildings

- ___ Complies with all applicable laws and regulations, building codes, fire and health regulations.
- ___ Every building or structure has exits and other safeguards sufficient to permit the prompt escape of occupants (think about # of people vs. # of exits).
- ___ Exits are maintained to provide free and 19 unobstructed degress from all parts of the building.
- ___ No lock or fastening is installed to prevent free escape from the inside.
- ___ Exits clearly visible and illuminated.
- ___ Smoke detectors in working order.
- ___ Recently inspected fire extinguisher available in all buildings.
- ___ Carpeting, floor tiles, and floorboards for tripping hazards.
- ___ Sharp items removed or clearly marked.
- ___ Is facility handicapped accessible? ☐ yes ☐ no
- ___ Is accessibility necessary for this event and/or audience? ☐ yes ☐ no
- ___ Phone is available for emergency use.
- ___ Adequate shelter from possible inclement weather available at site or a plan to get to adequate shelter (required).

Toilets

- ___ All toilets meet applicable standards for health, construction, maintenance, cleanliness, are fly-tight, ventilated and partitioned for privacy.
- ___ Have an outside light or luminescent sign for safety at night.
- ___ Outdoor toilet facilities have tight fitting toilet lids and self-closing doors.
- ___ At least one toilet and one adjacent hand washing facility are provided for the following:
 - all day events = 1/ every 100 people
 - large events w/ overnight = 1/every 50 people

- ___ Toilets and hand washing facilities located close to areas for use and must be within 150 feet of the sleeping quarters, in or near health center, near FA areas, in or near the food service area.
- ___ Hand washing facilities provide water supply, soap dispensers, materials for drying hands and a trash receptacle.

Outdoor Cooking Areas

- ___ Built on existing sites (established fire circles).
- ___ Located in an area reasonably protected from the elements.
- ___ Away from trails or traffic patterns.
- ___ Are picnic tables available? ☐ yes ☐ no
- ___ Away from overhanging branches, steep slopes, rotted stumps or logs, dry grass and leaves, and cleared of any burnable materials.
- ___ Fire circles and other sources of open flames are located at least 30 feet away from any structure, including tents.
- ___ Water for Human Consumption – meets requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act.
- ___ Facility on city water OR
- ___ Written evidence of current tests performed to meet these requirements.
- ___ Solid Waste – garbage is stored in fly-tight, rodent resistant containers until it can be removed.

Security

- ___ Seek out boundaries and determine if they are marked.
- ___ Are the boundaries difficult for intruders to penetrate?
- ___ Look for hazards, natural or manmade cliffs, rivers, exposed wires, etc.
- ___ Look for stumps, holes and tall grass in program areas that could be hazardous.
- ___ Is there public access? ☐ yes ☐ no
- ___ How will the public access be controlled during program?
- ___ Can and how will the site be secured when program is in session?

Site Overall

- ___ Adequate outdoor/indoor program space.
- ___ Parking spaces available adequate for event size.
- ___ Shaded and non-shaded areas for outdoor program.

Aquatic Sites

Remember, additional permission may be required if utilizing waterfront facilities. Some of this information may not be evident at first. In some cases, equipment and lines to mark off swimming areas will be brought onto the site specifically for the event.

- ___ The design, construction and maintenance of all boat docks, slips and mooring areas meet the safety standards and regulations of the local, state, federal authorities and the U.S. Coast Guard, where applicable.
- ___ Small craft and all waterfront equipment comply with U.S. Coast Guard and other regulations, where applicable.
- ___ Piers, floats, docks and platforms are kept in good repair. There is documentation of all maintenance completed.
- ___ Water depth is indicated by printed numerals on the deck or planking at 3 to 4 foot intervals.
- ___ Where water depth fluctuates, depth is also indicated on a vertical marker.
- ___ The swimming area is as free as possible from hazards.
- ___ In natural bodies of water, all aquatic activity areas (swimming and boating) are physically separated and clearly marked or the activities do not take place at the same time.
- ___ Swimming areas for various classifications for swimmers are clearly defined by ropes, buoys, or booms in natural bodies of water and by markings and ropes in a pool.

Sleeping Facilities (other than tents)

- ___ There is cross ventilation.
- ___ What is the building occupancy?
- ___ What is it for overnight use?
- ___ Thirty inches between beds or mattresses.
- ___ Two or more exits and a direct means for emergency exit to the outdoors from all sleeping floors.
- ___ Guardrails for the top bed on all bunk beds.
- ___ Automatic fire detection and alarm systems (required).

Sleeping Facilities (portable tents or platform tents)

- ___ Protection from the elements (required).
- ___ Enough sleeping space for each person to lay flat on the floor and use a sleeping bag.
- ___ Protection from insects.
- ___ Safe distance from a flame source.
- ___ Not pitched in a natural hazard area, such as a dry river bed or a rock fall area.
- ___ Not pitched adjacent to the sanitary facilities.

Presenters for Events and Camporees

Step 1

Create a list of potential presenters for the workshops or activities planned. A presenter can be a parent, a Girl Scout volunteer, who you already know or one of our Specialty Volunteers, a specialist (amateur or professional), even one of your friends!

Step 2

Contact presenters by telephone or individual email to find out if they are interested and available. At this time, you might want to ask about costs or fees. Get all their contact information: mailing address, telephone, email, etc., and the best way to reach them.

Be clear about what you need and take the time to be sure that the presenter will be a good match for those needs. Emphasize, that in Girl Scouting, we prefer that the girls have an active and cooperative experience and that girls are allowed to express themselves individually (not “cookie-cutter” projects that need to look perfect when completed!).

The committee should be prepared to reimburse the presenter for his/her mileage to and from the event, costs of materials and/or fee. Presenters may provide all their own supplies/materials and charge you a fee for their services, or they may volunteer their time and ask to be reimbursed for supplies/materials. Get an estimate before the event and give them a maximum budget not to be exceeded.

Step 3

Once you find out that the person is interested and available, mail a Presenters Agreement form. Be sure to fill out the return date and who to return it to. You should also fill out as much of the presenter's contact information as you can.

Step 4

When the signed agreement has been returned, send a confirmation packet to the presenter.

The packet should contain:

- Cover letter (see sample)
- Copy of signed agreement
- Tips for Presenters (see sample)
- Reimbursement form (if applicable)
- Schedule of the day
- Directions to location



Sample Letter

[Date] Jane Doe
Kind Company 21 Their St
Sunshine, FL 04000

Dear Jane,

Thank you for agreeing to serve [name of your community as a workshop presenter for [name of Camporee or event] on [date of Camporee or Event] at [location].

WORKSHOP:
LOCATION ON SITE:
SESSION TIME(S):
MAXIMUM CAPACITY:

Please plan to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the start of your workshop to check in and set up. Save all of your receipts if you would like to be reimbursed for supplies. We have set a budget not to exceed_____.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact [name of person] at [phone# and/or email address].

Thank you for sharing your time, energy, and enthusiasm with our Girl Scouts. I am sure your participation will help make this event meaningful and successful.

Sincerely,

Tips for Presenters

1. Plan ahead.
2. Please arrive on time – which means at least 30 minutes before your session.
3. Be prepared with any handouts, supplies, or equipment you may need for each person. Save your receipts.

Handouts might include:

- Directions
- Equipment needed
- Age or ability required
- Time needed
- Where in the community participants will find supplies after the workshop

4. Start and end time.
5. Plan age-appropriate activities. Plan for more than the designated time allotted.
6. Introduce yourself: who you are, where you're from, etc.
7. Speak clearly, slowly, and loud enough for everyone to hear.
8. If you use visuals, print large enough so people can see clearly or pass the object around the room for all to see.
9. If you are describing a process, make sure everyone understands and completes step 1 before moving on to step 2, etc.
10. Plan for group participation; make activities interactive and hands-on.
11. Relax and have fun!

Event Evaluation

Name of Event: _____

What did you like about this event? Please tell us about at least one thing.

What would make this event even better?

What events would you like to go to next year?



Event Evaluation

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What would make this event even better?

What events would you like to go to next year?



Event and Program Budget

Name of Event: _____ Date: _____

Number of participants: Projected _____ Actual _____

Income:

*Should be figured on 85% participation
i.e. capacity is 200—figure on 170*

Projected _____ Actual _____

Cost per family girl _____

Cost per family guest _____

Cost per adult _____

Community _____

Other (In-kind donations) _____

Total Income

Projected _____ Actual _____

Expenses:

Should be figured on 100% participation

Rental fees (Sites/Equipment) _____

Housekeeping Supplies _____

Program (Supplies/equipment/crafts) _____

Food _____

First Aid/Supplies _____

Office Supplies _____

Recognition (Patches/T-shirts/Thank you) _____

Additional Insurance _____

Decorations _____

Presenters Fees (mileage/lodging/flat rate) _____

Other _____

Total Expenses

Zero—Based Budgeting—Community Events are not intended to be money earning entities. Events need to be accessible to all girls. Registration fees are to be used responsibly and event budgets should be designed to break even. See Volunteer Essentials for more details.

This should be turned in to the Community Manager for approval before the event is built and open for registrations.

Event Evaluation (Internal Use)

Did you stay on budget? If not, why? _____

Did the girls enjoy the event? Did the parents enjoy the event? _____

What problems arose during the event? _____

What was successful? _____

What would you do differently if this event were hosted again? _____

Did you feel you had the support of the community? How can we improve support? _____

Would you recommend doing this event again? Why or why not? _____

Comments _____

Necessary Forms

COI Form:

<https://gsgc.wufoo.com/forms/z46bbei0e6bri0/>

Incident Form:

<https://gsgc.wufoo.com/forms/r1l2jz4h02cgojs/>

Event Creation Form:

<https://gsgc.wufoo.com/forms/z1phk8we1j9n9sz/>

Safety Activity Checkpoints:

[Safety Checkpoints Document](#)

Notes

[illegible]