Orientation to Guiding

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Contents

Welcome! ..............................................................2
Adult Member Screening ......................................3
Promise, Law, Motto and Sign ...............................4
The Guiding Program ........................................5
Uniform and Insignia ..........................................6
The Structure of Guiding ......................................6
Girl Guide Cookies .................................................8
Supports available to assist you in your Guiding role .....................................................8
How Guiding started ...........................................9
Guiding in Canada ...............................................10
WAGGGS – World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts .................................................10
World Thinking Day .............................................11
Canadian World Friendship Fund (CWFF) ..........11
Policies and Procedures ........................................11
Supporting Accessibility in Guiding ..................14
Accessibility Scenarios .......................................21
Appendix 1: Understanding the Code of Conduct .................................................................23
Appendix 2: Human Rights Codes .........................28
Welcome!

By choosing to become a member of Girl Guides of Canada–Guides du Canada (GGC), you will be rewarded by helping girls achieve greatness. Your work with girl members will help them develop the skills and confidence to achieve extraordinary things. This manual provides you with information about Guiding as an organization to help you in your role.

GGC – the leadership organization for today’s girls and women in Canada.

- Guiding provides diverse and exciting programs and activities that offer girls the opportunity to discover new interests, learn valuable leadership skills and build lasting friendships.
- Guiding provides girls with the tools and resources they need to achieve greatness in every area of their lives.
- GGC is one of 146 Member Organizations of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) providing leadership opportunities to over 10 million girls and young women around the world.

Vision
Girl Guides of Canada–Guides du Canada, the organization of choice for girls and women, makes a positive difference in the life of every girl and woman who experiences Guiding, so she can contribute responsibly to her communities.

Mission
Girl Guides of Canada–Guides du Canada enables girls to be confident, resourceful and courageous, and to make a difference in the world.

Girl Guides of Canada–Guides du Canada (GGC) recognizes and values the richness of human diversity in its many forms, and therefore strives to ensure environments where girls and women from all walks of life, identities, and lived experiences feel a sense of belonging and can participate fully. This commitment to inclusion means GGC’s culture, programming and practices encourage self-awareness and awareness of others; room for difference; and environments where girls and women feel safe, respected, supported and inspired to reach their potential.
Adult Member Screening

All adult applicants must be screened in order to become a member of GGC. The steps of the screening process are:

Step 1: Complete and sign the A.1 Application form and submit as directed by your GGC contact. The application includes your agreement to:
- GGC’s Code of Conduct (see page 11)
- obtain a police records check (PRC)
- provide two references

Note that your PRC and Code of Conduct are renewed every three years.

At this stage you are a potential member (PMBR). Until you have obtained a clear PRC and two completed reference checks, you cannot participate in a unit, take part in overnight activities or be in any kind of supervisory role with girls.

Step 2: Provide two references and a PRC. The reference checks and PRC are primarily done through BackCheck, a company hired by GGC to administer these checks online. After submitting your application, your provincial office will provide information on completing these checks.

When these checks are completed and clear you can start working with girls in a unit. Your placement is conditional until you have completed the interview.

Step 3: Participate in an interview. Your membership screener will contact you to set up an interview. This is an opportunity for you to:
- Find out more about membership in GGC
- Complete an Image Release form (IR.1)
- Share your expectations on current and future involvement in GGC
- Review the information in this document and clarify any questions

You will then receive your Membership Card, which has on it your membership number (also known as iMIS number). Keep this number handy as it gives you access to the members-only section of our website and is useful for administrative purposes.

Your screening must be completed within four months. If there are delays, please contact your screener.

In addition, within six months of joining, you must complete training in Safe Guide, our manual that supports safety in activities for girls. Your province will provide information on accessing Safe Guide training.

Membership and Registration Fees
Each year, a National membership fee is paid for every member, both adult and girls. The fee is applied for a Guiding year which is September 1 to August 31. In addition, provincial councils may set additional local registration fees. Depending on your province, adult member fees may be covered by your Girl Guide council or you may be asked to pay. These fees vary from province to province.
Membership fees cover the development and delivery of effective and relevant programming for girls across Canada; risk management initiatives including our insurance policy to ensure a safe environment for girls; the recruitment and training of adult members who deliver girl-centered programming; our membership in the World Organization of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS); and support the administration and management of Girl Guides.

Should you have any questions or comments e-mail: membership@girlguides.ca

### Promise, Law, Motto and Sign

The Promise, Law, Motto and Sign are statements of Girl Guides of Canada's values. They may vary according to the branch of Guiding. Sparks do not have a Law or Motto. If you were not a previous member of GGC you will say your Promise during enrolment.

**The Promise:**

**Girls Brownie age and older and adult members:**
I promise to do my best,
To be true to myself, my beliefs and Canada.
I will take action for a better world
And respect the Guiding Law. (Brownies say: And respect the Brownie Law)

**Sparks:**
I promise to share and be a friend.

**The Law:**

**Girls Guide age and older and adult members:**
The Guiding Law challenges me to:
- Be honest and trustworthy
- Use my resources wisely
- Respect myself and others
- Recognize and use my talents and abilities
- Protect our common environment
- Live with courage and strength
- Share in the sisterhood of Guiding

**Brownie Law:**
As a Brownie
I am honest and kind;
I help take care
Of the world around me

**The Motto:**

**Girls Guide age and older and adult members:**
Be Prepared

**Brownies:**
Lend a Hand
The Sign: The sign is usually made while saying the Promise. It is made with the right hand raised to shoulder height, elbow down, fingers upright, thumb bent and touching fingers as illustrated:

Girls Brownie age and older and adult members:
The three fingers of the Sign made with the right hand, represent the three parts of the Promise.

Sparks:
The Spark sign is made with the first two fingers of the right hand to represent the two parts of the Sparks Promise.

The Guiding Program

The Mission of Girl Guides of Canada is fulfilled through the Guiding programs.

Girl engagement
Girl engagement is the process of putting the words of our Mission in action to enable girls to become:

- confident
- resourceful
- courageous
- and to make a difference in the world

This is done by engaging girl members in decision-making and activity-planning based on their own interests and developmental ability. Beginning from Sparks through to Rangers, engagement evolves and expands as girls grow older, gain maturity and experience, and thus increasing their share of the responsibility.

Girl engagement:
- involves the girls in planning their program
- gives girls the opportunity to learn by doing
- builds leadership skills and allows girls to set their own goals and to challenge themselves
- fosters partnerships and communication between girls and Guiders
- can be adapted to meet the needs of the girls in the unit
- is appropriate to the developmental needs/requirements of girls of different ages
- focuses on developing a personal sense of accomplishment in addition to earning external rewards, such as badges and crests.

The goal of Guiders is to build girls’ leadership skills and confidence, increasing their share of responsibility in girl-focused program planning and decision-making.
Program areas
Program areas are themes throughout all branches of the Guiding program. They include:

- personal development and leadership
- health and fitness
- science and technology
- music and the arts
- camping and the outdoors
- environmental and global awareness
- community service

Camping and outdoor activity
Camping and outdoor activities encompass a wide-range of activities from hiking and adventure camping to tenting and campfires. These are ways for girls to develop their skills and leadership abilities. There are trainings and resources that facilitate outdoor activities. Talk to your District Commissioner (DC), Administrative Community Leader (ACL), Unit Administrator or Camping Adviser to learn about the camping and outdoor opportunities available for your unit.

Uniform and Insignia
Guiding is a uniformed organization. The uniform identifies girls and women as members of GGC and helps build a sense of belonging. Information on uniform options and insignia placement can be found in the program books, Guiding Essentials and the GGC online store (www.thegirlguidestore.ca). Uniforms and other GGC items are ordered from this website.

Appointment pins
An adult member is appointed to her position as a Guider usually by an Administrative Community Leader or a Commissioner. At that time she receives an appointment pin for the position that indicates her role. For example a Spark Guider would be presented with Spark Guider Appointment pin or a Brownie Guider would be presented with Brownie Guider Appointment pin.

Membership pins
Girls and adults are presented with membership pins to mark their years in Guiding. These are given out at the beginning of each year for the first to fifteenth year. From that point on membership pins are presented at five-year intervals.

The Structure of Guiding
Guiding emphasizes that the girls are the heart and soul of the organization. At the local level, girls are organized into branches based on age and attend unit meetings where they work on their programs. For administrative purposes, GGC is organized in levels which include national and provincial and depending on the province, can include areas, and districts or administrative communities. Each level has a Commissioner or Administrative Community Leader who provides leadership. Within the provincial administration there are volunteers who act as Advisers who support Guiding activities, such as Safe Guide (our risk management procedures) and cookies.
**Unit meetings**
Unit meetings are usually held once a week, but depending on the unit’s requirements or special interests they could be held more or less frequently. Unit meetings are typically held in the evenings. However, some meet after school or on weekends.

Each branch has a program book which assists you in planning your meetings. A meeting typically consists of an opening, program activities, games or songs and a closing. During a meeting you may also present badges or pins to girl members.

**Branches of Guiding**
Guiding is divided into five branches for the various age groups:

- **Sparks (ages 5-6)**
The program encourages girls to participate in imaginative activities and projects, develop creative skills, make close friends, learn new things and strive to reach their full potential in all they do.

- **Brownies (ages 7-8)**
The program is about encouraging girls to develop their own identity and positive relationships with others. Brownies gain confidence by learning skills for use in their daily lives – everything from safety and eco-awareness to the importance of healthy choices. Brownies also explore science, the arts, camping and the outdoors, and develop a commitment to their communities through service projects and special events.

- **Guides (ages 9-11)**
The program encourages girls to try new things, offering them a space to focus on issues that are important to them. Guides learn how to take action, and to make the world a better place through community service projects. Guides is about real friends, real fun and real adventure.

- **Pathfinders (ages 12-14)**
This program is about adventure, challenges, new experiences and friendships. Girls put their leadership skills into action and make a difference in their community. Guiders who work with Pathfinders are mentors or advisers. The girls determine their own path and the Guider provides the support and shares her experiences, allowing the girl member to reach her full potential.

- **Rangers (ages 15-17)**
The Ranger program is about choice and flexibility, while promoting leadership and community involvement. Guiders act as mentors, helping girls as they shape their own program and achieve their own goals. The Ranger program allows girls to enjoy Guiding by creating a self-defined and personally unique experience.

**Other girl member options**

- **Lones (ages 5-17)**
Lones is an option for girl members who are unable to attend regular meetings due to distance, health, work, studies or physical challenge. Lones carry out the program of their branch (Sparks, Brownies, Guides, Pathfinders, Rangers) by correspondence (written or electronic).
Extra Ops/ Trex (ages 12-17)
Extraordinary Options was developed as an alternative to the regular program. Extraordinary Options, or "Extra Ops," are opportunities for girls to benefit from the unique and enriching experience of Guiding through activity-based programming that focuses on one area. Trex, for example, focuses on outdoor activities.

## Girl Guide Cookies

Adult members assist girls in units with selling Girl Guide cookies twice a year. Our two campaigns are: spring (classic chocolate and vanilla sandwich cookies) and fall (chocolatey mint cookies).

### History
Girl Guides have been selling cookies since 1927. The very first cookies were made and sold by girls and their moms to raise money for local Guiding activities.

### Supporting Guiding
The money raised through cookie sales supports Guiding activities – both in your local community and across the country. Proceeds directly benefit the girls who sell the cookies, helping provide program and activity resources and support for girls and their Guiders (for example to attend camps and events).

### Cookie facts
Girl Guide cookies are baked by Dare Foods Limited in a nut-free/peanut-free bakery. More than 5 million boxes of Girl Guide cookies are sold each year across Canada.

### A great “fun” raiser
Selling cookies helps girls and young women learn and practice skills such as: planning and goal setting; teamwork; problem solving and decision making; money and time management; responsibility; safety awareness; customer service; courtesy; communications; and community involvement.

All other fundraising must meet national guidelines and requires approval before it begins.

## Supports available to assist you in your Guiding role

### Member Zone
This members’ only area of the website gives access to your unit list (roster), resource information for Unit Guiders, information about training and regular updates from GGC. From [www.girlguides.ca](http://www.girlguides.ca) follow the links to Member Zone. Request a password using your membership/iMIS number and e-mail address.

### Training and Enrichment for Adult Members (TEAM)
GGC is committed to supporting you in your position. Training and Enrichment for Adult Members (TEAM) is the national training program available to all Guiders. By participating in training sessions, Guiders enhance their knowledge and develop skills.
that enable them to make the girls’ experience worthwhile and fun. Trainings also provide Guiders with opportunities to network and have fun with their sisters in Guiding.

TEAM has five streams, each specialized to meet the training needs of members based on their position.

- Unit Guider
- Outdoor Activity Leader
- District Commissioner
- Administrator
- Trainer

Your District Commissioner (DC) or Administrative Community Leader (ACL) will provide information on trainings being offered locally. You can also check out our trainings on Member Zone as well as the links to the Learning Library, which provides our e-Learning options.

Guidepost
The Guidepost is a monthly e-newsletter offering fresh ideas, news and tips for adult members of Guiding.

Canadian Guider
Canadian Guider is the official magazine of GGC. It is published three times annually and mailed to all Rangers and adult members to keep them up-to-date and connected.

How Guiding started

Lord Baden-Powell (1857-1941)
When Lord Robert Baden-Powell (B-P) was 19-years-old, he joined the British army and ventured to South Africa and India. B-P created games and eventually compiled them into a book called Scouting for Boys. In 1907 he held an experimental camp for boys on Brownsea Island. In 1909 B-P called a rally at the Crystal Palace in London, England to bring together all those who were practicing his scouting games and thousands of boys and their leaders came. There was a small group of girls participating who wanted to join, too. Lord Baden-Powell asked his sister Agnes to be in charge of the girls who he referred to as Guides. In 1912 B-P and Agnes wrote the Handbook for Guides.

Lady Baden-Powell (1889-1977)
In 1912 Lord Baden-Powell met Olave St. Clare Soames on a cruise to the West Indies. They discovered they shared the same birthday, February 22, and felt this was a special sign. By the end of the cruise, they were secretly engaged. In 1930 Lady B-P was elected World Chief Guide and throughout her life worked tirelessly at promoting Guiding all over the world.
Agnes Baden-Powell (1858-1945)
Agnes, B-P’s sister, wrote the first handbook for Girl Guides. She offered good advice to girls as well as information on many subjects including camping. Agnes also set up a Girl Guide Headquarters in London, England.

Guiding in Canada

The first Canadian Guide company was officially registered in St. Catharines, Ontario in January 1910. Companies in Toronto, Moose Jaw and Winnipeg were registered later that same year. Guiding spread to all provinces during 1910 and 1911. Agnes Baden-Powell received so many requests from Canada to form Guide Companies that she suggested the formation of a Dominion Committee in Canada. Lady Pellatt, one of the members of this Committee, was appointed Chief Commissioner in 1912. In 1917 the value of Guiding was recognized by the Canadian Government with an Act of Parliament approving the Constitution of the Canadian Girl Guides Association. The name was changed in 1961, again by Act of Parliament, to Girl Guides of Canada–Guides du Canada.

WAGGGS – World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts

As a member of GGC, you are also a member of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS). With over 10 million members in 150 countries, one of WAGGGS’ most crucial roles is to promote international friendship and understanding.

WAGGGS is divided into five regions: Africa, Arab, Asia Pacific, Europe and Western Hemisphere. Canada is a member of the Western Hemisphere.

World Centres
WAGGGS has five World Centres, where visitors can participate in programs and activities and work with local communities, experiencing the culture and lifestyle.

Our Chalet Switzerland  Our Cabaña Mexico  Sangam India  Pax Lodge UK

The Fifth World Centre is a project exploring how WAGGGS can bring a World Centre experience using existing facilities in Africa. The ‘centre’ has no fixed site but changes location at every event, bringing international experiences for girls and young women in different countries in Africa.
World Thinking Day

On February 22, Girl Guides and Girl Scouts throughout the world remember their sisters in Guiding and celebrate international friendship through World Thinking Day events. The date also marks Lord and Lady Baden-Powell’s joint birthdays. Funds collected for World Thinking Day go toward supporting the Canadian World Friendship Fund.

Canadian World Friendship Fund (CWFF)

The CWFF is maintained through voluntary contributions from members and friends of Guiding, helping our members to experience Guiding internationally. The CWFF provides financial assistance to adult members who have been selected to accompany girls on nationally sponsored trips, to assist members to attend International Guiding events as GGC representatives, and to help girls and adults from other Guiding countries visit Canada for special events.

Policies and Procedures

As members of GGC, our major responsibilities include ensuring the safety and well-being of girls and managing the unit’s administration.

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct sets clear standards of respectful behaviour for the Guiding community of girl members and their parents/guardians, adult members, volunteers, and employees. With the Code of Conduct comes a responsibility to follow its standards by being a good example and supporting others in doing the same.

This Code of Conduct is an integral part of involvement with Girl Guides of Canada–Guides du Canada (GGC). The Code of Conduct requires all members, all volunteers, all employees, and all parents and guardians of members to:

1. Refrain from words, actions and behaviour – in any medium – that demonstrate disrespect for other members, volunteers, employees, or the family members of such individuals.
2. Uphold GGC’s reputation and integrity by ensuring that their conduct, whether in person, online, or otherwise, brings honour and dignity to GGC.
3. Be vigilant in ensuring an environment that is safe and protects girl and adult members, volunteers and employees from emotional, physical, verbal and sexual abuse.
4. Respect other members’, volunteers’ and employees’ rights to privacy and the confidentiality of their personal information.
5. Act with honesty and integrity when dealing with property, monies and any other assets belonging to GGC.
6. Respect and abide by the laws of Canada and of the relevant Province or
7. Treat members, volunteers, employees and members’ families fairly, knowing that GGC does not tolerate unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, national ethnic origin, citizenship, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical ability, political beliefs, socio-economic status, health-related status, sexual orientation, marital status, or any other grounds enumerated in the human rights legislation of the jurisdiction in which the individuals involved are located.

In addition, members, volunteers and employees will:

8. Subscribe to the principles of the Promise and Law of GGC and adhere to GGC’s bylaws, policies and procedures.

9. Fulfill their roles and responsibilities as stated in their position descriptions (where applicable) and act within the limitations of their authority in the discharge of their duties.

10. Diligently maintain the confidentiality of any information regarding GGC that they have obtained in the course of performing their roles in Guiding and that is not generally available to the public.

Girl Guides of Canada–Guides du Canada reserves the right to take action regarding any breach of the Code of Conduct.

Appendix 1: Understanding the Code of Conduct provides an explanation of how to interpret the Code and includes some “Dos and Don'ts” for following the Code.

Safe Guide

Safe Guide is the manual with the policy and procedures to support safety in activities for girls. It is an important component of organizational risk management and ensures the consistency of programming and the safety of all members. Following Safe Guide is mandatory when planning activities. Training in how to use Safe Guide is mandatory for all adult members who plan and/or deliver activities for girls and/or adults and those in administrative roles that support these activities. This training must be taken within six months of joining.

Guiding Essentials

Guiding Essentials provides information about our policies and related procedures that must be followed by members of GGC. It is primarily for those who are responsible for administration and program delivery, but must be used as a reference by all GGC members and staff.

Girl Protection Procedures

GGC prides itself on creating and maintaining safe spaces for girls and women. The Girl Protection Procedures outlines tips protecting our girl members from abuse and supporting members if they suspect a girl member is being abused. Members can access these procedures in Member Zone. Any adult member who suspects that a girl may be at risk of or may have suffered from neglect, emotional, physical or sexual abuse MUST immediately report the matter to the local child protection agency or police service. This is a legal requirement and GGC requires that all members adhere to this law. Some provinces have a Girl Protection Adviser, who have specialized knowledge in this area and can offer assistance when required. The Girl Protection Procedures are a
resource provided to new members. You can also refer to GGC’s Girl Protection Policy 01-17-01 on Member Zone.

Anti-Discrimination
An important part of our Code of Conduct reminds us of our obligation to respect and uphold anti-discrimination laws. All individuals’ rights are guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (international) and by Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (national), and the human rights code of each province/territory. These documents ensure that we are all equal before the law in our communities; they tell us what our rights are. GGC’s Anti-Discrimination Policy 01-16-01 is available on Member Zone. Appendix 2 contains information on obtaining a copy of the human rights code for your province or territory.

Privacy
GGC is committed to protecting the privacy of all of our members. All personal information and forms should be handled with care. Always ensure the information is kept safe and secure. Please see Member Zone for further information on privacy standards, and our Privacy Policy 01-15-01 or the GGC website for our Privacy Statement.

Contacting members via email
Girl Guides of Canada is subject to the Canadian Anti-Spam Law (CASL). In broad terms, the law prohibits the sending of commercial electronic messages (CEMs) to those that have not consented to receive those messages.

The following tips are based on good email and communication practices – and will help you ensure your messages meet the CASL requirements:

- Make it clear who the email is from. It is best for the recipient to see your name versus an unidentifiable user name. It is important that the recipient know who you are, your position / association with GGC and full contact details.
- Include a clear and concise subject line in the header that clearly explains the purpose of the message.
- Only use members’ email addresses for matters dealing directly with GGC business. Members’ email addresses should never be used for personal and non-GGC related communications – such as personal business, charitable, religious or political causes, outside organizations, or other non-GGC- related solicitations.
- Do not email girls under the age of 14. Please email their parents instead.
- As outlined in the GGC Code of Conduct, respect other members’, volunteers’ and employees’ rights to privacy and the confidentiality of their personal information.

For more information, check out our CASL Overview and Best Practices.

Finances - Standard Financial Reporting Manual
All funds collected by units for activities, camps, cookie sales, and so forth belong to GGC. They are GGC monies and are subject to public scrutiny and must be handled according to set guidelines. The Standard Financial Reporting Manual sets the financial
procedures for the handling of unit funds. Your District Commissioner or Administrative Community Leader/Unit Administrator will assist you in learning the financial procedures for your unit.

## Supporting Accessibility in Guiding

### Introduction

Girl Guides of Canada–Guides du Canada (GGC) recognizes and values the richness of human diversity in its many forms, and therefore strives to ensure environments where girls and women from all walks of life, identities, and lived experiences feel a sense of belonging and can participate fully. This commitment to inclusion means Girl Guides of Canada’s culture, programming, and practices encourage self-awareness and awareness of others; room for difference; and environments where girls and women feel safe, respected, supported, and inspired to reach their potential.

We have all likely worked with someone who has a disability, whether we’re aware of it or not. Some disabilities may be visible, for example, someone in a wheelchair or someone with a guide dog. Others are less obvious. For example, you may not be aware that an acquaintance or colleague has a learning disability, severe back pain, or a heart condition.

This training information is designed to help you, as a valued member volunteer, create a setting that ensures your interaction with girls, parents/guardians, other volunteers or employees who have a disability is appropriate and makes them feel safe, welcomed and comfortable.

### Accessibility at GGC

The core principles for accessibility for people with disabilities are dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity. To support these principles, GGC has two policies:

- Accessible Customer Service Policy (01-29-01)
- Integrated Accessibility Standard Governance Policy (01-31-01).

### Human Rights Codes

Each province has its own human rights code. The provincial human rights codes help to ensure all, including those with disabilities, enjoy equal rights and opportunities and freedom from discrimination. They apply to things like employment, housing, facilities and services, as well as memberships in unions, trade or professional associations. They also apply to volunteers, meaning a volunteer cannot be discriminated against because they have a disability.

### What is a disability?

A disability is a mental or physical impairment caused by injury, illness or experienced since birth, which limits or impacts a person’s abilities. They can include but are not limited to: physical disability, learning disability, mental impairment or disorder. A disability can be either visible (e.g. amputation, difficulty walking) or invisible (such as brain damage). They can be short term, such as a broken arm or leg to something that is permanent. Some people with disabilities may use a support person and/or have a guide dog or other support animal or have a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device to support them.
Duty to Accommodate
To ensure that persons with disabilities are not discriminated against, special arrangements or accommodations may need to be put in place. This is known as the Duty to Accommodate. For details and assistance on making accommodations, contact your local office at 1-800-565-8111 or membership@girlguides.ca. Outlined below are some guiding principles.

In many cases, accommodations that enable an adult member to fulfill her responsibilities are minimal and can easily be addressed. The only two circumstances where it would be acceptable to not accommodate an individual with a disability are when:

1. The person can’t perform the essential duties of the position, even with accommodations.
2. The accommodation required would create what is known as “undue hardship” for the organization. For example, when the accommodation required would be so expensive that it could jeopardize the future of the organization, or could put others in the organization at risk due to health or safety reasons.

GGC is only expected to accommodate disabilities they are made aware of and will accept accommodation requests in good faith, respecting the dignity of the individual.

Additional information can be asked for as long as it is limited to the type of limitation or restriction required in order for the individual to be able to participate or carry out his or her responsibilities. However, you cannot ask for any information about the individual’s diagnosis. As with any health information, you must keep it confidential and share only what is absolutely necessary.

Accessible Customer Service
The Accessible Customer Service policy requires all members and staff to provide accessible ‘customer service’ when interacting with:

- Potential members – people who are interested or inquiring about becoming an adult leader or girl participant
- Members – girls or adults who have joined Girl Guides of Canada
- Parents/guardians
- Non-members – adults who volunteer occasionally or girls who come to summer camp but haven’t joined a unit
- Employees
- Customers or other members of the public

This policy requires that GGC provide training to those who interact with others on its behalf.

Below is an overview of GGC’s commitment to serving its members, non-member volunteers, parents/guardians, employees and customers with disabilities, and GGC’s expectations of you as an adult member or non-member volunteer in your interactions with them.
What is meant by 'accessible customer service'?
Accessible customer service is about providing service to people with disabilities in a way that gives individuals independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity. This means, as is reasonably possible:

- Communicating in a way that takes into account their disability
- Accommodating individuals who use assistive devices to access GGC services and programs
- Accommodating individuals who use service animals
- Accommodating individuals who have a support person
- Providing notice when any facility or part of a facility is temporarily unavailable or is expected to be temporarily unavailable in the near future
- Ensuring emergency response procedures support individuals with disabilities involved in our programs or on our premise
- Having a process for providing feedback on how we provide service to those with disabilities

Interaction with persons with disabilities
Here are some general steps to assist you in offering accessible customer service. These steps apply to face-to-face interactions, and some can also be applied when you are speaking on the phone.

- Introduce yourself. Offering your name builds rapport and decreases anxiety.
- Take the time to find out what methods of communication work best for their disability.
- Be aware of details such as where you are looking when you are talking in person or not speaking too quickly on the phone.
- Offer service in a calm manner that is polite and respectful of everyone.
- When in doubt, ask the customer what you can do to make things easier.

More detailed tips on assisting people with various types of disabilities go to Member Zone.

To create an inclusive environment at unit meetings:

- Talk to the parents, explain that you want to make sure that their daughter is included in all activities, but you need some help in adapting activities to include her.
- Don’t single the girl out by saying "we’re going to do it this way so Suzy can do it too." Just go ahead and do the adapted activity for all.
- Recognize that it will take some extra time and effort in your planning, but don’t be surprised if the results exceed your expectations.

Interaction with people using assistive devices
Some people might need assistive devices to help them in participating in GGC activities. Assistive devices can enable individuals with disabilities to do every-day tasks such as moving, communicating, reading or lifting. Here are a few examples of devices that could be used: white canes, wheelchairs, walkers, listening devices, hearing aids, magnification devices, portable oxygen tanks, laptops with screen-reading software and communication programs, communication boards, smart phones and speech generating devices.
GGC will provide training, as needed, to staff and volunteers on the use of assistive devices provided by GGC, such as a wheelchair lift at a GGC-owned office or camp. If there are assistive devices at a third-party location being used by GGC, such as a key-operated elevator, please talk to a representative of that facility about its use. If someone brings their own assistive device, it is fine for you to ask if they require any assistance with the device and for information on how you could assist. For a girl member, it may also be appropriate to speak to the parents/guardian for more information.

General tips for working with assistive devices:
- Be open and willing to work with assistive devices
- Focus on the person and not the device
- Ensure the person and assistive device have the appropriate amount of space
- Don’t block, knock or bump into assistive devices

Interaction with people using a service animal
In the majority of cases when someone uses a service animal it will be a dog; however, you might also encounter monkeys, parrots and other animals that offer critical assistance to persons with disabilities. Service animals have been trained to perform specific tasks to assist people with disabilities, such as guiding, alerting to sounds, prompting medication, mobility, and retrieving objects.

Tips on having a service animal in the unit are:
- Do not pet the animal.
- Do not speak to the animal.
- Do not try to distract the animal.
- Ensure the customer and the service animal are not separated.
- Do ignore the animal – this is a tough one for everyone, but very important. If too many people are speaking and giving direction, the service animal may become confused about which person’s directions they should be following. The animal works for only one person and that is the person with the disability.

Interaction with people who are accompanied by a support person
Some people may require the assistance of a support person. A support person is an individual hired or chosen to accompany a person with a disability to provide service or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or to access services. Personal care needs may include assistance with eating or using the washroom. Medical needs might include ensuring medication is taken on time, monitoring someone's health conditions and providing injections. A support person can be a paid worker, volunteer, family member or friend and does not necessarily require any special training or certification to offer support. GGC is not responsible for providing a support person for a girl to attend unit activities; however, we will work with the family to try and make suitable arrangements.

For GGC’s purposes, a support person who regularly attends Guiding activities with the person with a disability is considered to be a non-member volunteer. According to Safe Guide, they must have a current police records check (PRC) that meets GGC requirements. They must also complete an A.7 (Non-member volunteer application form), which includes agreement to the GGC Code of Conduct, the Accessible Customer Service and Integrated Accessibility expectations and the guidelines outlined here. If there are additional activity fees for the support person then the Guider must notify the girl’s family (or in the case of an adult member or non-member volunteer with a support
person, the member or non-member as appropriate) and provide details about the costs. If the extra cost creates a barrier to the person’s participation, please contact your provincial office to discuss options.

As the support person is there to provide one-on-one assistance to the person with a disability, they must not be counted in the supervision ratio for the activity. Please refer to Safe Guide for more information about non-member volunteers.

**General tips for working with a support person**
- *Introduce yourself to both the individual and support person.*
- *Talk directly to the individual, even if the support person is responding.*
- *Address the individual appropriately such as asking: “How can I help you today?” as opposed to asking the support person “Can you find out what they need?”*
- *Provide any written materials to both the individual and the support person.*
- *Ensure that the individual and support person are not separated.*

**Notice of service disruption**
Service disruption refers to the temporary unavailability of facilities or services that people with disabilities usually use to access a building or program. Service disruptions happen for many reasons and can cause upset, hardship and disappointment. Service disruptions can include: broken elevator, cancelled meeting, unplanned closures, sick employees or volunteers, and inaccessible parking. Disruptions should be communicated immediately and in a variety of methods. At Girl Guides of Canada we have developed a guideline for assisting you in handling service disruptions. For complete information go to Member Zone.

**Service disruption tips:**
Most GGC activities take place in third-party facilities (schools, community centres, churches, etc.). Before the first unit meeting, or before adult-only meetings or events, it will be important for the Guider to:
- *Contact the facility’s office staff to discuss how you will be notified about a disruption of service and where notification will be posted.*
- *Provide the facility with emergency contact numbers for the Guiders.*
- *Ask the facility for an emergency contact number in case problems arise during a meeting.*
- *Develop a communication plan to inform participants of disruption to service. It is a good idea to confirm your participant contact information to make sure that you know how to reach them on short notice.*
- *If you need to post the details of a service disruption, use the Notice of Service Disruption go to Member Zone.*

**Integrated Accessibility Standards**
GGC’s [Integrated Accessibility Standard Governance Policy (01-31-01)](http://example.com) policy outlines how it will accommodate individuals in the areas of information and communication and employment.

**Information and Communications**
Under the IAS policy, GGC will provide documents and communications in formats that take into account an individual’s disabilities. This means that GGC will present information in a way that it can be easily converted into a format that persons with disabilities can read, or it will make the information available in different formats, when
requested. If an individual comes to you with a request for accommodation, contact your provincial office at 1-800-565-8111 or contact membership@girlguides.ca for more information on making documents accessible.

Please note that if GGC cannot convert the information into another format it will let the individual know why. GGC has the right to decide which alternative format it will provide information in.

Accessibility Standards
The standards in the Integrated Accessibility policy will help you create a setting in your unit that ensures your interaction with adult members and potential members who have a disability is appropriate and makes them feel safe, welcomed and comfortable.

GGC must ensure that anyone in a supervisory capacity, member or staff, is fully aware of GGC’s policy on accommodating adult members with disabilities. For potential adult members this means that we must accommodate requests related to recruitment and screening of potential member volunteers based on the IAS Policy.

Individuals with disabilities play a key role in this process as the organization can only accommodate disabilities that they are informed of. These individuals play an active role in helping the organization come up with possible accommodation solutions, as most often he or she knows more about potential accommodation solutions than anyone else.

Under the IAS policy, the organization is expected to:

- **Deal with accommodation requests as quickly as possible, even if it means creating a temporary solution while developing a long-term one**
- **Respect the dignity of the person asking for accommodation, and keep information shared by individuals confidential**
- **Facilitate accommodations, including any necessary medical or other expert opinions or documents**
- **Ensure staff and volunteers are trained on the requirements of the policy and know how to interact with others in a manner that is consistent with the goals and objectives of IAS**

If you have a disability, your responsibilities under the policy are to:

- **Let GGC know what your disability related needs are.**
- **Help GGC come up with accommodation solutions should you require them.**
- **If you will require assistance in the event of an emergency, ensure that any plans developed to assist you in an**

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**Note!**
If you are providing information about your disability, you may choose to be selective about whom you tell, but do NOT let fear of others finding out about your disability prevent you from asking for accommodations you are entitled to.

Make sure you let GGC know what your disability related needs are given the duties of your position. However, remember that you only need to provide information related specifically to the accommodation you are requesting.

For example, you may wish to share the fact that you have a visual disability which prevents you from reading printed material. You do not need to share that this disability is due to the fact you have diabetes.
emergency are shared with individuals who have been designated to help should an emergency situation arise.

Your role in managing this policy involves supporting of members and volunteers in the unit. As such, you are expected to:

- Facilitate accommodation requests
- Contact the your Provincial Office at 1-800-565-8111 or membership@girlguides.ca for support in accommodating these requests.

Emergency Response Information for Members and Volunteers
If you have an individual in your unit (whether an adult or girl members or a non-member volunteers) who has a disability that requires an individualized plan and the individual or her parents/guardians have disclosed the need for accommodation the adult members in the unit must provide a plan. This plan must be created as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation.

Where the individual requires assistance, with her/his consent (or that of her parent/guardian), the emergency response information must be provided to the person designated to provide assistance to the individual.

Accessibility Scenarios
To assist you in understanding accessibility please review the scenarios below to assist you in understanding accessibility.

Feedback and Questions
GGC welcomes feedback regarding the way we provide services to people with disabilities. When someone wants to provide feedback, invite the individual to communicate in a way that is appropriate for him or her. For GGC activities or events, ask them to direct their feedback to the Responsible Guider (RG) for that activity or event. Should the feedback provider feel that the response received is insufficient, he or she is encouraged to submit feedback to the Commissioner or Administrative Community Leader (in Ontario) of the relevant jurisdiction, or call the provincial office.

For More Information
GGC is committed to fostering inclusivity and accessibility in every aspect of the organization. To this end there are a number of resources to support you as a member on working to achieve inclusion. Please visit our Inclusivity and Accessibility page on Member Zone to access these resources.
Accessibility Scenarios

Please read each of the following scenarios carefully and choose the answer you think is correct.

Scenario 1

Fatima, who is a Guider in my unit, had a stroke last year. She came back to help in the unit last week. Fatima seems to have recovered almost completely, but no longer has full use of both her arms. Occasionally we need to lift boxes of supplies or cookie cases. I don’t want to embarrass her by doing everything for her, but at the same time I’d really like her to help out if she can. I just don’t know what she can do.

How should I handle this?

A. Ask her what we can do to accommodate her so she can help.
B. Quietly do the lifting when she’s not around.

The correct answer is A. By asking her how you can accommodate her, you are demonstrating your support. It is quite likely that she will be happy to explain how she can support the unit and assist with these tasks.

Scenario 2

One of our parents recently complained that she was unable to read information about an upcoming camp. She was upset that there were no large-print or electronic versions of the camp information available.

What would my appropriate response be?

A. Let her know you will be happy to read the information to her.
B. Reassure her that you will provide the document to her in an accessible format as soon as possible.

The correct answer is B. Under this policy, you do need to help individuals with disabilities access our documents in a manner that works for them, which could include simply reading the document to them.

GGC’s policy does require documents to be in an accessible format. If it is something you have written, it is easy to create large-print and electronic versions of documents, so consider doing it as a best practice. For provincial or national documents, you will need to forward the request to your provincial office. The national office will create large-print formats and the Provincial Office will do the same for their procedures when requested. Documents can easily be enlarged, or an electronic version can be forwarded to the person with a visual disability, who can use their screen reader.
Scenario 3

A potential member just told me she requires an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter for her placement interview.

How should I handle this?

A. Ask the individual if they have a specific interpreter they’d like to bring with them as they may have someone they favour. You can also discuss alternatives to ASL if it’s not feasible for GGC to provide an interpreter for reasons of location, expense or time.

B. This isn’t something you need to worry about – it’s not your responsibility.

The correct answer is A. You are not required to provide an ASL interpreter in all cases, but you are required to provide one if it is needed, assuming there are no alternatives. Ask the individual via email, in print, or through a TTY or your telephone company’s relay operator, if any other method of communication will work. To make the final decision on which method will be used, contact your provincial office at 1-800-565-8111 or membership@girlguides.ca. If the candidate prefers ASL, the Canadian Hearing Society will often provide an interpreter at no cost, if one is available.

Adapted from proLearning innovations AODA materials.

Thank you!

We appreciate all that you will contribute as a volunteer and hope you will find being a member of GGC a very rewarding experience.

Girl Guides of Canada–Guides du Canada
www.girlguides.ca
Appendix 1: Understanding the Code of Conduct

Lines between a person’s personal life and employment/volunteer role are often blurred. Members, volunteers or employees need to keep in mind how their words and actions during or outside of GGC activities may impact the organization’s reputation.

This section-by-section breakdown of the Code of Conduct with explanations, will help you better understand what it means. The key word(s) for interpreting each of the statements is in bold.

The Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct is an integral part of your involvement with Girl Guides of Canada—Guides du Canada (GGC). The Code of Conduct requires all members, all volunteers, all employees, and all parents and guardians of members to:

1. Refrain from words, actions and behaviour – in any medium – that demonstrate disrespect for other members, volunteers, employees, or the family members of such individuals.

   Explanation:
   Respect is shown in what you say, and how you say it in conversation, whether face to face, telephone, in writing, and online (i.e. email, text, Facebook, Twitter, other social media etc.). Each individual is a role model for others and should interact with open, clear and respectful communication.

   This includes:
   • Showing understanding when dealing with sensitive issues
   • Being careful that your actions and choice of words are not misunderstood
   • Confirming facts before taking action to address potential issues

2. Uphold GGC’s reputation and integrity by ensuring that their conduct, whether in person, online, or otherwise, brings honour and dignity to GGC.

   Explanation:
   An individual’s actions, words and behaviours should always bring credit to GGC’s reputation in any setting (online, in print, at a GGC or public event).

3. Be vigilant in ensuring an environment that is safe and protects girl and adult members, volunteers and employees from emotional, physical, verbal and sexual abuse.

   Explanation:
   Ensure all words, actions and behaviour support a setting where individuals feel safe both physically and emotionally. All relationships, in person, written communication, online or by telephone, must be appropriate and support an atmosphere of trust.
4. Respect other members’, volunteers’ and employees’ rights to privacy and the confidentiality of their personal information.

Explanation:
GGC protects the **privacy of our members**. We must handle personal data responsibly and in compliance with all applicable privacy laws. Personal information, and any forms, must be kept safely and be secured. Personal information use is limited to communication about Guiding matters within GGC or for someone’s safety.

5. Act with honesty and integrity when dealing with property, monies and any other assets belonging to GGC.

Explanation:
All money (e.g. fees, dues, cookie funds, fundraising) and assets (e.g. unit supplies and equipment, camping equipment, properties, etc.) belong to GGC and must be accounted for within **GGC’s financial reporting policies**. Account books must be kept up-to-date so that a report of the financial situation of the group is available when requested.

6. Respect and abide by the laws of Canada and of the relevant Province or Territory.

Explanation:
Members must **uphold the law**. If they incur any new charges or convictions these must be reported to GGC as there are convictions that preclude membership/participation with GGC.

7. Treat members, volunteers, employees and members’ families fairly, knowing that GGC does not tolerate unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, citizenship, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical ability, political beliefs, socio-economic status, health-related status, sexual orientation, marital status, or any other grounds enumerated in the human rights legislation of the jurisdiction in which the individuals involved are located.

Explanation:
We are inclusive and are welcoming to individuals from all walks of life, identities or life experiences. We treat others fairly and equally. Diversity is acknowledged, valued and respected by all involved in Guiding.

In addition, members, volunteers and employees will:

8. Subscribe to the principles of the Promise and Law of GGC and adhere to GGC’s bylaws, policies and procedures.

Explanation:
All members make the Promise and accept the Law as part of their enrolment and agree to the values they describe.

The **GGC policies and procedures** guide the actions of all persons involved or connected with GGC.
9. Fulfill their roles and responsibilities as stated in their position descriptions (where applicable) and act within the limitations of their authority in the discharge of their duties.

**Explanation:**
Individuals must work to **understand their responsibilities** as well as the limitations of their position. Whenever you are in doubt, please seek assistance.

10. Diligently maintain the confidentiality of any information regarding GGC that they have obtained in the course of performing their roles in Guiding and that is not generally available to the public.

**Explanation:**
Individuals who have access to non-public **confidential information** about or concerning GGC must not discuss or disclose this information by any means with others, whether within or outside of the organization.

Girl Guides of Canada–Guides du Canada reserves the right to take action regarding any breach of the Code of Conduct.

**Explanation:**
The decision of the national level is final, if there is any **discrepancy in the interpretation** of the Code of Conduct or the policies and procedures of the organization.

**Dos and don’ts for following the Code of Conduct**

The following are a few basic steps to guide you in your interactions and supporting others in doing the same.

**Do**

- Set an example by using words and actions that are respectful of others and support their health, safety, privacy and well-being.
- Keep in mind that your words and actions during or outside of GGC activities may impact the organization’s reputation.
- Ensure that you are not one-on-one with a girl and that private conversations are in view of others even if out of hearing.
- Only contact directly girls14 and older. Always copy parents/guardians on all messages sent via technology.
- Use the blind carbon copy (BCC) field when sending emails to groups of people.
- Avoid jokes or stories that, though intending to be funny could be considered offensive.
- Recognize that verbal abuse, bullying, name-calling or ridiculing is unacceptable and GGC will take appropriate action to deal with such behaviour.
- Take care that your behaviour will not be misunderstood or cause offence and is acceptable within a relationship of trust.
- Only use individuals’ contact information from GGC rosters for Guiding purposes.
- Follow the alcohol and smoking procedures in Safe Guide.
- When frustrated, look for people who can offer advice and assistance; ensure you have the facts correct; avoid jumping to conclusions.
Follow GGC policies and procedures; ask for more information if you need clarification or direction.

Keep unit accounts up-to-date and available for review when requested.

**Do not**

- Permit abusive behaviour such as bullying, name-calling or ridiculing by either girls or adults.
- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others.
- Swear, use vulgar language, be verbally abusive.
- Make a comment even in passing that could reveal personal information about someone.
- Use individuals’ contact information from rosters for personal reasons (solicit donations for causes) or business opportunities (advertise or sell products).
- Use technology or social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, blogs etc.) to engage in disrespectful or bullying behaviour.
- Use Guiding to promote personal beliefs, behaviours or practices where these are not compatible with Guiding or related to Guiding activities.
- Make assumptions.
- Make suggestive remarks or actions, even in jest.
- Deliberately place yourself or others in a compromising situation.

**Related GGC policies and procedures**

Below are GGC policies and procedures that relate directly to the Code of Conduct. If your issue is not covered by one of these policies, review the list of policies in the Governance Manual and/or contact membership@girlguides.ca for assistance.

GGC policies are found in the Governance Manual which is on Member Zone under the heading “Policies and Procedures.” From here click on Governance. When you click on each of the policies listed in the Table of Contents (page 2) you are taken directly to that policy. Some of the policies have a set of procedures that explain how to implement them.

The Conflict of Interest Protocol outlines expectations on how to conduct the affairs and business of GGC professionally, objectively and without interference or the perception of interference arising from personal interests of the individuals involved in making decisions. It is available in the Governance Manual.

Module 3: Performance and Conduct Management is the main source for how to deal with issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Procedure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01-11-01 Risk Management</td>
<td>Safe Guide Insurance Booklet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-12-01 Screening</td>
<td>Module 2: Screening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-16-01 Anti-Discrimination</td>
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<tr>
<td>01-17-01 Girl Protection</td>
<td>Module 4: Girl Protection and Self-Harm Module 5: Girl Misconduct and Bullying</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-18-01</td>
<td>Use of Cameras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-19-01</td>
<td>Fund Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-23-01</td>
<td>Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco and Gaming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-28-01</td>
<td>Code of Conduct</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>01-29-01</td>
<td>Accessible Customer Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-31-01</td>
<td>Integrated Accessibility Standards</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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July 2015  Orientation to Guiding  Page 27 of 28
Appendix 2: Human Rights Codes


Provincial/Territorial Human Rights Commissions:

   Alberta:  http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/
   British Columbia:  http://www.bchrt.bc.ca/
   Manitoba:  http://www.manitobahumanrights.ca/
   New Brunswick:  http://www.gnb.ca/hrc-cdp/index-e.asp
   Northwest Territories:  http://nwhumanrights.ca/
   Nova Scotia:  http://humanrights.gov.ns.ca/
   Nunavut:  http://www.nhrt.ca/splash.html
   Ontario:  http://www.ohrc.on.ca
   Prince Edward Island:  http://www.gov.pe.ca/humanrights/
   Quebec:  http://www.cdpdj.qc.ca/Pages/Default.aspx
   Saskatchewan:  http://www.gov.sk.ca/shrc/
   Yukon:  http://www.yhrc.yk.ca/