Troop and Service Unit Social Media Group and Account Guidelines

Troop Social Media Group and Account Guidelines*

It is wonderful that you want to create your own dedicated Girl Scout Troop accounts and/or groups on social media to connect and share triumphs with your troops and their families. Facebook groups are like an online club and often work much like a Girl Scout meeting where girls and leaders can share experiences, badge and award updates, milestones, events, photos, schedules, and simply get to know and encourage each other. Instagram accounts are also a wonderful way to share experiences in a more visual way through pictures and videos.

However, with social media use comes a lot of responsibility for both girls and leaders within the troops. To protect our members we have developed specific guidelines for the Girl Scouts of Maine Troops and Volunteers.

Troops may set up a Facebook Group or Instagram account if the girls in the troops meet the age criteria (13 years or older) and have parental permission. Age criteria follows *The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)* and *Facebook and Instagram Age Requirements*. Troops with girls younger than 13 may also set-up a group or account if it is administered by a Troop Leader and there is permission from parents of all troop members. All Groups and Accounts must be accessible to Girl Scouts of Maine Staff.

Troop Group and Account Privacy

It is a Girl Scout and Troop Leader responsibility to maintain girl identity and privacy and to keep all girl oriented online activity as safe and protected as possible. This means being able to monitor the activity within these online groups. See the Social Media and Internet Safety section for dos and don'ts.

Facebook
Any Girl Scouts of Maine Troop's Facebook Group must be set to "closed" rather than "private" or "public" and be accessible to Girl Scouts of Maine Staff if requested. At least one of the groups administrators must be a Troop Leader for troops with girls 13 and older, and be the only administrator(s) for troops with girls younger than 13. Your Facebook group must have the following naming convention: "GSME Troop (troop #)" i.e. *GSME Troop 9999*

Anyone can publicly search for your "closed" group but they will not be able to see posts and page/group contents unless you "approve" their request to join. Use caution when approving members and limit approval to join requests to troop members, volunteers, girls' families, and GSME Staff only.

Instagram
Any Girl Scouts of Maine Troop's Instagram account must be set to "private" not "public". The Instagram @username must be provided to Girl Scouts of Maine Staff, and you must "accept" @girlscoutsofmaine as a follower. The Instagram password must be given to at least one Troop Leader for troops with girls 13 and older, and for troops with girls under 13 only Troop Leaders should have the password and account access. Your Instagram account must have the following naming convention: "GSME Troop (troop #)" i.e. *@GSMETroop9999*

People can see your "private" Instagram account but they will not be able to see posts unless you "approve" their request to "follow" you. Use caution when approving followers and limit approval of follower requests to troop members, volunteers, girls' families, and GSME Staff only.

Service Unit and Service Team Social Media Group Guidelines*

Facebook Groups are a great way to communicate with your Service Unit, sharing information on upcoming events, resources, activities, and more! They can also be an effective tool for Service Team members to communicate with each other. Instagram accounts can also serve as a great visual way to share what Service Units are doing.

Service Units and Service Teams Group and Account Privacy

It is a Service Unit Volunteer responsibility to maintain girl identity and privacy and to keep all girl oriented and Service Unit online activity as safe and protected as possible. See the Social Media and Internet Safety section for dos and don'ts.

Facebook

Any Girl Scouts of Maine Service Unit or Service Teams' Facebook Group must be set to "closed" rather than "private" or "public" and a Girl Scouts of Maine Staff member must be one of the group administrators. Your Facebook group must follow the appropriate naming conventions below:

Service Unit pages for SU Leaders: "GSME (service unit name) Service Unit" i.e. *GSME Nidoba Service Unit*
Service Unit Service Teams: "GSME (service unit name) Service Team" i.e. *GSME Nidoba Service Team*

Anyone can publicly search for your "closed" group but they will not be able to see posts and page/group contents unless you "approve" their request to join. Use caution when approving members and limit approval to join requests to Service Unit Troop Leaders and Volunteers, and GSME Staff only.

Instagram
Any Girl Scouts of Maine Service Unit or Service Teams' Instagram Account must be set to "private" not "public". The Instagram @username must be provided to Girl Scouts of Maine Staff, and you must "accept" @girlscoutsofmaine as a follower. The Instagram password must be given to a Girl Scouts of Maine Staff member. Your Instagram account must have the following naming convention: "GSME (service unit name) Service Unit" i.e. @*GSMENidobaServiceUnit*

People can see your "private" Instagram account but they will not be able to see posts unless you "approve" their request to "follow" you. Use caution when approving followers and limit approval of follower requests to Service Unit Troop Leaders and Volunteers, and GSME Staff only.

*Be sure to review and apply the below *Social Media and Internet Safety, General Social Media Best Practices, and Intellectual Property Considerations for Posting* when posting and sharing to any social media groups and accounts.

Social Media and Internet Safety
• Do not use last names of minors on social media, safety is a top priority!
• Never give out anyone's personal information such as home address or personal phone number on social media.
• Never list exactly when and where your troop meets or details about events your troop participates in until after the event has occurred – unless it's within your closed group. Doing so could put you, your family or girls at risk. Most social media sites allow you to turn off the geo-location feature or keep your posts private.
• Be sure to have parental permission if you are posting photos of girls. Do not post a picture of them unless you have written consent. Most girls have opted into permissions but be aware of those girls in your troop or neighborhood who have opted out
• We encourage you and your troops to review and sign the GSUSA Internet Safety Pledge.

General Social Media Best Practices to Keep In Mind
• Think twice before hitting "publish", "post" or "share". What you say, share, or post on the internet is permanent, even if you delete it. Make sure that you will not regret what you post whether it is privately within your group page or to your Instagram account. Any group member or approved follower can screen-shot comments, pictures, etc. and share publicly.
• Do not share your personal contact information outside of private/direct messages. The internet and social media are permanent platforms (even if you delete your content) be careful with what you share.
• Be nice. People tend to be on the bold side when they are hiding behind a screen, please don't join them.
• Be aware of spammers. It's no longer obvious when you are being contacted by a spammer, so be aware if your conversations are taking a turn. Always report them (via Facebook or Instagram) if you think they have suspicious or negative intentions.
• Be respectful of others. Sometimes our opinions are not the same, and that's ok! Just be respectful about being on the opposing side.
• Social Media posts should be consistent with the Girl Scout mission. Before you post consider how it will reflect on you and the organization. Content that does not align with our brand or our mission will be flagged for removal.
• Make the world a better place and be a sister to every Girl Scout.

Intellectual Property Considerations for Posting
Don't violate copyright law by using designs, text from magazines or books, poetry, music, lyrics, videos, graphics, or trademarked symbols without specific permission from the copyright or trademark holder (and, generally, this permission is pretty tough to get!). Girl Scout trademarks (such as the trefoil shape, Girl Scout pins, and badges and patches) can be used only in accordance with guidelines for their use. (The Girl Scout trefoil, for example, may not be animated or used as wallpaper for a website.) Check our Marketing Toolkit for Volunteers for complete graphics guidelines and approvals.