

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 girls 14 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.

Policy		Procedure
01-11-01	Risk Management	Safe Guide Insurance Booklet
01-12-01	Screening	Module 2: Screening
01-16-01	Anti-Discrimination	
01-17-01	Girl Protection	Module 4: Girl Protection and Self-Harm Module 5: Girl Misconduct and Bullying
01-18-01	Use of Cameras	
01-19-01	Fund Development	Fundraising Procedures and Guidelines
01-23-01	Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco and Gaming	Safe Guide
01-28-01	Code of Conduct	Code of Conduct and YOU Understanding the Code of Conduct Dos and don'ts for following the Code of Conduct
01-29-01	Accessible Customer Service	Supporting Accessibility in Guiding
01-31-01	Integrated Accessibility Standards	Supporting Accessibility in Guiding
03-04-01	Financial Stewardship	Standard Financial Reporting Manual Guidelines for Signing Short-Term Contracts for the Use of Third Party Facilities