



## Graduating Seniors Funds Extension Guidelines

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced the cancellation of many programs and activities that 12th grade Girl Scouts had planned for spring/summer 2020: extended travel, bridging-to-adult ceremonies, camping, Gold Award projects, and other Girl Scout activities.

In response to this current situation, **Girl Scouts of Central Maryland will allow a one-time extension for 12th graders to use Girl Scout money-earned funds to reschedule these cancelled activities into the next membership year.**

This one-time extension to use funds is specifically to meet the needs of girls whose plans were cancelled or rescheduled due to COVID-19. The intent is to support the continuation of Girl Scout activities that had been planned prior to the onset of the pandemic, not to support the planning and financing of new or additional Girl Scout activities.

It is important for troops/groups to recognize that rescheduling activities for next year may not be practical in many cases; troops/groups may have girls dispersing to different states, with uncertainty about their plans for summer 2021. For some troops/groups, disbanding, and finding a rewarding way to deploy the funds they earned on behalf of Girl Scouts, may be their best path forward (see below "*Recommendations for Troops Including 12th Graders Who Intend to Disband*"). Troops/Groups should have a frank discussion now about the possibility of using their funds next year, and possibly revisit the conversation in December 2020 to make their final decisions.

### Financial Considerations

- To meet the needs of troops/groups or girls who had plans for spring/summer 2020 that were interrupted due to COVID-19, **the deadline to use the funds will be extended from September 30, 2020 to August 31, 2021.**
- Troops/Groups should follow all procedures for disbanding troops by August 31, 2021, including financial reconciliation and closing bank accounts.
- **After September 30, 2020, these young alums may not participate in the Cookie Program or Magazine and Nut Program (i.e. ME2 Mag/Nut Sale); they may not do any additional money-earning to finance activities planned for the 2020-2021 membership year.** The **single exception** to this guideline is money-earning for Gold Award projects: funds intended to be used toward Gold Award projects must be raised and used prior to the girl's submission of her final report, which must be filed on or before December 31, 2020, following all standard council guidelines. See "*Gold Award Guidance*" below.

### Membership

- All participants must maintain a current membership. Graduating girl members may take advantage of the "young alum" discount by purchasing a Lifetime Membership or purchase an adult annual membership for the 2020-2021 membership year.
- Adults working with the young alums must also have active membership and current criminal background clearance on file with GSCM.

## Use of Funds

- All activities and use of funds must be directly tied to the mission of Girl Scouts and be permitted Girl Scout activities by Girl Scouts of Central Maryland. All funds “must be used for the purposes of Girl Scouting.” (Ownership of Assets Policy, *Blue Book* p. 22).
- Continue the usual diligence to avoid individual accounting. Mixed-grade and multi-level troops/groups who have money-earned together should continue to make group decisions on use of funds.
- All standard safety and risk management procedures should be followed for group activities, including *Volunteer Essentials*, *Safety Activity Checkpoints*, and the policies of Girl Scouts of Central Maryland. Special guidelines include:
  - The young alums participating in activities during the 2020-2021 membership year should be treated as Ambassadors. Use the same guidelines and ratios for the supervision of young alum members as for supervision of Ambassador Girl Scouts. One exception: for group overnight travel (once permitted per the Girl Scouts of Central Maryland ‘Back to Girl Scouts Activities Guidelines during COVID-19’) that includes both girl members and young alums, steps should be taken to provide separate sleeping arrangements for the girl members; the young alum members; and the adult members.
  - If the group plans to take an extended trip, the standard recommendation to purchase the additional Mutual of Omaha insurance stands.

## Gold Award Guidance

- Girl Scouts is offering a 3-month deadline extension from September 30 to December 31, 2020 for Girl Scouts who graduated from 12th grade in 2020 and who are seeking to earn the Gold Award this year. These Girl Scouts will bridge to adults officially on October 1, 2020 and, without this extension, would no longer be eligible to earn the Gold Award. See details in GSUSA’s COVID-19 Highest Awards guidelines (as of April 2, 2020).
- Funds intended to be used toward Gold Award projects must be raised and used prior to the girl’s submission of her final report, which must be filed with Girl Scouts of Central Maryland via GoGold on or before December 31, 2020. Girl Scouts should follow Girl Scouts of Central Maryland guidelines and procedures.
  - If a girl’s troop has disbanded, but she wishes to raise additional funds for her Gold Award project, funds will be deposited into the girl’s local Service Unit Account; the girl will work with the Service Unit to access funds as needed.

## Recommendations for Troops including 12th Graders Who Intend to Disband

There are many ways that girls can still spend funds and give back to their community and/or to Girl Scouts of Central Maryland in the current membership year. Decisions about how to spend troop treasury funds should include girl input since it is their troop/group and Girl Scout experiences are girl-led. Examples of ways girls might use funds before September 30, 2020:

- Design and execute a Take Action project – perhaps one that addresses the current pandemic.
- Purchase “young alum” Lifetime Memberships at the special discount price of \$200.
- Donate part of the troop/group treasury to Girl Scouts of Central Maryland’s financial assistance fund for girls, the Service Unit, another troop, or to support girl activities. Girl activities can include purchasing materials to support another organization through take-action projects.

## Questions?

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