

# Background Checks

To best protect the safety of our girl and adult members, GSNETX requires a background check, also known as a **CBC** or **BGC**, to be run on all volunteers and any adults that may be responsible for girls, troops, their safety, or troop funds as outlined in our [Volunteer Policies & Procedures](#).

Eligible background checks are valid for three (3) years with one normal exception. Volunteers participating at a Day/Twilight camp must complete a new background check each year to comply with state guidelines.

GSNETX has partnered with an outside vendor, Sterling Volunteers, to provide easy and secure background checks with greater transparency. You can see the results of your background check and you may choose to share it with other organizations that also use Sterling Volunteers.

## Does GSNETX run a credit check?

No, GSNETX does not run credit checks, as part of our background check processing.

## How long does the Background Check take?

Results usually come back for review within 48 business hours, but this can vary based on the different states or jurisdictions which pull the requested information.

It will take longer to update your Membership process, if your background check isn't completed using the email sent from Sterling Volunteers during your registration.

## Do I need to pay for my Background Check?

No, GSNETX covers the cost of the background check only if you use the invitation email that is sent to you or if you use our Good Deed code (given to resolve issues with email).

However, on the final page of your background check you also have the option to help us cover the cost in full or in any amount you can. GSNETX cannot provide refunds on any portion you choose to cover.

## How do I check my current Background Check status?

To check to see if you have a current eligible background check on file, log into your *My GS* account and go to Member Profile. Go to your Family Profile and click the Edit link. Your current background check's expiration date will be listed just below your Membership year.

Troop Leaders can check the expiration dates of volunteers in their troop using the CBC Expiration column in the Troops section of their *MY GS* account. Troop Leaders do not have access to background check results or other personal information of members; their access is limited to only the expiration dates.

## What restrictions can be placed on a volunteer's responsibilities?

Volunteers are either classified as "eligible" or "ineligible" to volunteer with GSNETX, it is not possible to volunteer with pre-set restrictions. This is necessary as it is incredibly difficult to enforce restrictions for volunteers on specific troop activities.

## **What may exclude me from volunteering?**

You may be excluded from volunteering with GSNETX, for any or more of the following reasons:

- You fail to provide accurate information, including personal or residence information.
- You have been convicted of (or plead guilty) to certain crimes, including the ones listed below which will automatically disqualify you as a volunteer with GSNETX.
- You have a pending charge for certain crimes, including the ones listed below which will automatically disqualify you as a volunteer with GSNETX.
- You have pled “no contest” to or have been charged with and received deferred adjudication for certain crimes, including the ones listed below which will automatically disqualify you as a volunteer with GSNETX.
- There is any other status or issue that delays the processing of your background check.

Background check results are reviewed by the Customer Care Coordinator and/or their supervisor to determine eligibility. The final decision whether to appoint or terminate a current/prospective volunteer shall be within the absolute and exclusive discretion of GSNETX.

The length of time you may be excluded from volunteering based on the results of your background check will be no less than seven (7) years from the date of the offense or incident at issue. The exclusion may be longer than seven (7) years and may depend on other mitigating factors, such as the frequency of repeated or related offenses.

### **Automatic Disqualifications:**

Given our work with girls, GSNETX will not allow you to serve as a volunteer with GSNETX if you are (1) convicted of or plead guilty to; (2) plead “no contest” to; (3) have a pending charge for; or (4) have been charged with and received deferred adjudication for, any of the following crimes:

- Any crime that would require registered sex offender status.\*
- Any offense in which the victim is a child, including but not limited to:
  - Examples: injury; abduction; molestation; indecent conduct with; and endangerment.
- Texas Penal Code Title 5 Felonies (or similar offenses in other states) – Offenses against persons.
  - Examples: Murder; Human Trafficking; Kidnapping; Aggravated Assault; Sexual Assault; Indecency or improper relationship with a Child; Intentional or Reckless Injury to a Child or the Elderly; Abandoning or Endangering a Child; Deadly Conduct; and Terroristic Threats.
- Texas Penal Code Title 6 Felonies (or similar offenses in other states) - Offenses against the family.

- Examples: Prohibited Sexual Conduct; Sale or Purchase of a Child; Interference with custody of a Child; Family violence; and Criminal Nonsupport.
- Texas Penal Code Title 9 Felonies (or similar offenses in other states) – Offenses against public order and decency.
  - Examples: Compelling prostitution; possession or promotion of child pornography; and stalking.
- Crimes involving the unlawful possession or use of weapons or explosives.
- Any crime of violence or assault classified as a Felony or Class A misdemeanor.
- Any felony or Class A misdemeanor drug-related offense.
- Arson.
- Embezzlement, Fraud, or Theft over certain thresholds.
- DWI/DUI within the last seven (7) years.
  - Note that a third DWI/DUI offense is a permanent disqualification.

\*Registered sex offenders are not eligible for membership in Girl Scouts of the USA and may not participate in any capacity with Girl Scout programs. Volunteers shall not knowingly hold activities where in the residence of a registered sex offender or where the registered sex offender is present.

For more information about these charges or to see the full range not included in these examples, see <https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/?link=PE>

### **Potential Disqualifications:**

Offenses or situations other than those outlined above will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine if they will affect an applicant's ability to volunteer with GSNETX. The final decision whether to appoint or terminate a current/prospective volunteer shall be within the absolute and exclusive discretion of GSNETX.

The nature and severity of each offense, the length of time since the occurrence of the offense, as well, as the total number of offenses, will be some of the leading factors used to determine eligibility. For example, a DWI/DUI offense (first or second) which is older than seven (7) years may render you eligible to volunteer, provided there are no other circumstances surrounding the offense.