

Inauguration Parade / Women's March participation

Key facts:

- Girl Scouts lets girls choose how they can make their voices heard and what civic events to participate in, independently as Girl Scouts or individuals.
- Girl members (75 girls from Nation's Capital council) plan to march in the inauguration parade; similarly, Girl Scouts throughout the country will march in the Women's March on Washington and affiliated marches throughout the US.
- Girl Scouts (and its councils) is a nonpartisan nonprofit organization and is not affiliated with a party, administration, or organizers of either of these events, and participation is based on the interest of girl and adult members independently.
- We encourage girls to support causes they find worthy and take a stand for what they believe in.
- Read Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles CEO blog here:
<https://girlscoutsla.wordpress.com/2017/01/19/why-we-march-a-message-from-our-ceo/>
- Read Girl Scouts of the USA interim national CEO op-ed: <http://time.com/4640033/girl-scouts-inauguration-march/>

Background

Girl Scouts throughout the country will be participating in civic events surrounding both the inauguration of the 45th President of the United States and the Women's March on Washington. Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) and its councils, including Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles, are not in any way affiliated with a political party or the Women's March organizers. Participation is based on the interest of girl and adult members independently.

Girl Scouts encourages civic engagement and respects the rights of individual girl and adult members of our Movement to make their own decisions regarding participation in these non-partisan events. Per a statement from GSUSA, "Girl Scouts strives to help each girl tap into her leadership potential to develop the courage, confidence, and character to make our world a better place. We are proud to work with leaders from all levels of government and all sides of the political spectrum to advance issues important to girls."

Inauguration events on Friday, January 20:

Following a century-long tradition of volunteering and participation at such events, the local Washington, DC council, Girl Scouts Nation's Capital, has scheduled participation in the presidential inauguration by marching in the inaugural parade. This year, along with members of other nonprofit organizations, approximately 75 Girl Scouts from the Greater Washington region plan to carry American flags and Girl Scout flags in the inaugural procession.

As with any events involving Girl Scouts, troop leaders, parents and guardians should assess the risks and merits of their girl's participation. We strongly encourage any members considering participation to learn more about these events and expectations.

Women's March on Saturday, January 21:



Many troops throughout the country have inquired about participation in the Women's March in DC as well as affiliated local marches throughout the country. Girl Scouts are allowed to participate in the Women's March if they choose to do so—as Girl Scouts or as individuals.

As with any events involving Girl Scouts, troop leaders, parents and guardians should assess the risks and merits of their girl's participation. We strongly encourage any members considering participation to learn more about these events and expectations.

Additional questions?

If you have any additional questions regarding Girl Scouts participation in this week's events, please contact Director of Marketing & Advocacy Kenya Yarbrough at kyarbrough@girlscoutsla.org or 626-677-2266.

FAQs

What does Girl Scouts stand for?

We're 1.9 million girls and 800,000 adults who believe girls can change the world. Our mission is to build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

Girl Scouts helps girls develop their full individual potential; relate to others with increasing understanding, skill, and respect; develop values to guide their actions and provide the foundation for sound decision making; and contribute to the improvement of society through their abilities, leadership skills, and cooperation with others. We model Girl Scout values like respect for others, inclusiveness, and civic participation. We live by the values of [the Girl Scout Law](#) including honesty, fairness, and consideration.

Why are some Girl Scouts marching in the 2017 Inaugural parade?

As an organization, Girl Scouts of the USA and Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles is not endorsing or participating in the inauguration. Following established tradition, the local Washington, DC council, Girl Scouts Nation's Capital, has scheduled voluntary participants in the presidential inauguration parade. For 100 years, Girl Scouts have participated in presidential inaugural events as a way to gain invaluable insight into how our democracy works and learn about civic engagement from our national leaders. The event is an important symbol of our democracy and the peaceful transition of power. Girl Scouts will participate in this historic event because at Girl Scouts, civic engagement, responsibility and duty are at the heart of our values and ideals. In fact, Girl Scouts had to fight for their right to be part of the inauguration parade in 1917—even going so far as to prove that girls can handle being outside in cold weather.

How does the Girl Scouts Nation's Capital council fit into Girl Scouts of the USA?

Girl Scouts Girl Scouts Nation's Capital council is one of 112 Girl Scout councils that are part of a national organization, Girl Scouts of the USA.

Are Girl Scouts allowed to advocate for a political candidate or campaign?

No, not as Girl Scouts. Girl Scouts is a non-partisan, non-political organization. When in an official Girl Scout capacity or in any way identifying as Girl Scouts, troops may not participate (directly or indirectly) in any political campaign or work on behalf of or in opposition to a candidate for public office. Neither letter-writing campaigns nor participation in political rallies, petition circulation, or carrying political banners is allowed. Doing so can jeopardize the IRS nonprofit status of GSGLA. Additionally, Girl Scouts cannot serve to promote commercial enterprises or topical political campaigns as Girl Scouts. Lastly, Girl Scouts are not allowed, when identifying themselves as Girl Scouts (such as wearing a uniform, a sash or vest, official pins, and so on), to solicit money on behalf of another organization. However, they may support another organization through Take Action projects.

Are Girl Scouts allowed to advocate for social issues?

Yes. Girl Scouts encourages girl engagement in civic events and social discourse. Councils, service units and troops can independently determine how participating in any event aligns with the values of the Girl Scout Movement. Furthermore, because Girl Scouts is a very diverse organization, we respect the many points of view on political and social issues and support Girl Scout participation in social causes with some limitations. Girl Scouts around the world are constantly at work to make the world a better place:

- Girls, through their Take Action projects, may choose to advocate and speak out on a particular position—that is up to the girl and her parents. Examples might include advocating for ballot initiatives that fund education or aid to homeless individuals, or working with groups who are trying to get funding for crosswalk lights near schools. A recent local example includes troops banding together in Culver City to speak persuasively for a proposed single-use polystyrene food container ban at a City Council meeting. Another includes a Gold Award Girl Scout who—after hearing of a truck crash in La Cañada—presented a plan to CalTrans that included truck passage regulation and new signage.
- Girl Scouts identifies important issues that girls want to take action on collectively, and, sometimes these are political issues. For example, Girl Scouts in California, spoke out collectively on legislation, limiting advertising and requiring stricter labeling of sweetened alcoholic beverages known as “alcopops.”

Can Girl Scouts wear their uniforms at the Women’s March/Inauguration week events?

Yes, girls can attend wearing their uniform and/or Girl Scout-branded clothing. However, troop leaders should advise girls against carrying signs or wearing buttons that are profane or do not align with our Girl Scout Promise & Law.

As with any events involving Girl Scouts, troop leaders, parents and guardians should assess the risks and merits of their girl’s participation. We strongly encourage any members considering participation to learn more about these events and expectations.

Why is Girl Scouts not taking a stand against Trump, whose views I don’t agree with?



As an organization, Girl Scouts remains nonpartisan and objective—letting the girls lead. Rather, our role is to empower girls to use their voices by providing them with the tools and experiences to think, research, understand, and take action.

What is Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles' policy on diversity and inclusion?

Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles' policy on diversity and inclusion states: "As a Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles member, I will do my best to think, speak, and act in ways that ensure everyone across GSGLA feels they belong and can meaningfully participate in all aspects of Girl Scouting regardless of ability, age, culture, education, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status."

Why should I buy cookies/donate to Girl Scouts?

When you support Girl Scouts, you are supporting an over 100-year tradition of inspiring girls to use their voice and participate in social discourse.

The cookie program teaches girls important skills and cookie proceeds fuel the activities and revenue to support our troops; a decline in their sales will only impact them negatively. Girl Scouts use proceeds to fund community service and girl-led activities. Choosing to stop donating/buying cookies does not "send a message" to GSUSA or GSGLA; it only hurts the girls. If you would like to talk to someone else about this, please contact our Director of Marketing & Advocacy, Kenya Yarbrough, 626-677-2266.