

Membership and Uniform Assistance Programs

Membership Committee

There should be no barriers to membership... Girl Guides of Canada—Guides du Canada believes that every girl who wants to be a Member should be.

One way Calgary Area puts this belief into action is through the membership and uniform assistance programs.

How do these programs work? When a parent or guardian speaks to a leader indicating a need for assistance, that individual expects and deserves respect and confidentiality. The information provided is only shared with those in the organization involved in processing the application.

Calgary Area asks every level including the family to contribute something towards each girl's membership. When discussing assistance, there should be a conversation with the parent or guardian about payment options and how much the family is able to contribute, even if only a small amount each month.

What if a family cannot contribute financially? That isn't a problem. The Guider completes the assistance form then it continues up the levels.

If parents can't give money, maybe they can give time. Do they have a skill to teach the girls? Can they help sell cookies? Or come to camp?

Why do we have to supply an assistance card or support letter? All programs—recreational, social or educational—have some form of assessment of needs; it is not that we don't believe people or their needs.

Who can write the letter? It can come from a Guider if they know the family. Or it may come from a teacher, religious leader, social worker or community resource person familiar with the family.

Why should the unit, district and division contribute? We are a sisterhood; this is one way of helping each other and commu-

nity service is a part of the program. General discussion about financially supporting each other can be a learning opportunity within units, though we would never speak about a specific person or her situation.

Why does support reduce each year?

The hope is that as a family's situation improves, they will be able to contribute financially to their daughter's membership fees. If this is not the case, this information can be put into a letter the parent can write to add to the letter of support.

What about the uniform assistance program? The same basic process is in place for uniform assistance.

Calgary Area receives good quality, previously used uniform pieces that are shared first, if available, when uniform assistance is requested.

Where do I get membership or uniform assistance program forms? Guiders can get the forms from the Calgary Area website or by calling the youth membership coordinator to ask that it be e-mailed to you.

What do I do with the form? Once the form has been completed and signed by all levels required, submit it to the Office Administrator for processing.

Forms missing signatures or information will be sent back without processing. We need all the information including the amount the division is charging for fees as we may not have this information at the Area office.

Processing and issuing of the cheque usually takes two to four weeks. The cheque is sent to the unit. If the district controls the banking then the Guider must indicate that the cheque should be issued to the district.

If you require more information on membership or uniform assistance, please contact the Office Administrator or Youth Membership Coordinator at Calgary Area Guide Centre.



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