

# Cookie Program Social Media and Email Guidelines

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND EMAIL GUIDELINES

Consistent with national guidelines, girls may use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, text messages, direct messages, and emails as online marketing tools to market the Girl Scout Cookie Program to friends and family (for clarity, “friends and family” are people whom the girl or her family personally know).

Girls and troops may use private social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, etc.) to message family and friends about the cookie program. Troops and girls who are at least 13 years old and have parental permission may set up a troop or group social networking site in accordance with the United States Child Online Privacy and Protection Act [COPPA] and the Child Online Protection Act [COPA]. We ask that girls, families, and troops not advertise or post messages or requests on web-based public groups and pages, such as Facebook Yard Sale sites, Marketplace pages, eBay, Angie’s List, Craigslist, or KSL. This also includes social media groups that are labeled as "closed" but include members of the general public. This ensures the safety of our girls and adherence to the cookie sale guidelines, as well as the numerous posting guidelines on websites and social media.

The purposes behind the annual Cookie Program are to help girls develop important life skills and to provide them with the means to participate in great learning experiences. Although we sincerely appreciate the support of our Girl Scout families, we want to ensure that the girl is the one making contact with customers and filling their cookie orders. If a girl is 13 years old or older, she may use her private social networking accounts to reach out to family and friends about the Cookie Program. Girls under age 13 may reach out to family and friends using their guardians’ social networking sites.

However, the girl must be the one to send the messages and make contact with potential customers. This helps her to really be a part of the largest girl-led business in the world and it keeps her safe while doing so.

## CUSTOMERS

Girls can market to and collect indications of interest orders from customers within their council’s zip codes. Refer prospects from outside council zip code jurisdiction to the council cookie finder at <https://www.girlscouts.org/en/cookies.html>. Exceptions to this zip code rule are family members, friends, former customers, and Digital Cookie sales (see below).

## ONLINE SALES

Digital Cookie is the only approved online sales tool available for girls to use when selling (exchanging money online) cookies. Outside of Digital Cookie, girls cannot setup online sites where cookies are sold and money is exchanged via the internet. See the guidelines specific to Digital Cookie below.

Girls must sign the [Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge](#) before doing any online activities, and all online activities must be under the supervision of adults.

## **EMAIL**

Girls cannot expose their own or any other girl's email address, physical address, or phone number to the public. When writing email messages or online announcements, girls should sign with their first name only along with their troop number, or first name and council name. Girls may also use a group account monitored by an adult or an adult's email account, which is supervised by that adult.

## **ADVERTISING AND AUCTION-TYPE SITES**

Girls and adults cannot post messages, requests, or advertisements on Facebook yard-sale groups, Facebook Marketplace, eBay, Craigslist, KSL, or any other classified or auction-type site. You cannot post paid ads on social media to promote a girl's link or about cookie sales in general.

NOTE: You may respond to someone's comment about looking for Girl Scout Cookies by asking them to send you a private message. This is the only way you may share a girl's link with someone.

Another great response to inquiries is: Thank you so much for asking about Girl Scout Cookies! You can buy Girl Scout Cookies from local Girl Scouts you know from [insert cookie dates here]. If you don't know one, reach out to your friends and family on social media - we bet someone knows a cookie entrepreneur.

During cookie booths: Thank you so much for asking about Girl Scout Cookies! You can find a cookie booth in Utah by visiting [www.gsutah.org/cookies](http://www.gsutah.org/cookies) and searching your zip code in the Cookie Finder.

## **GUIDELINES SPECIFIC TO DIGITAL COOKIE**

1. Girls must read and accept the [Girl Scout Digital Cookie Pledge](#) before they can participate in Digital Cookie
2. Volunteers must read and accept the [Digital Cookie Terms and Conditions](#) for Volunteers before they can participate in Digital Cookie
3. Girls may only post about their participation on Digital Cookie on social media that allows them to restrict access to friends and family (e.g. Facebook).
4. Friends and family of a girl participating in the cookie program must not market or share a girl's contact information, sales links, or sales information on public-facing online sites.
5. Parents/guardians must approve the content of a girl's Digital Cookie web page before it goes live.
6. For girls under 13 years old, a parent/guardian must manage the girl's web site and be responsible for all content. In other words, girls under 13 are not allowed to post anything to their websites; it must be done by their parent/guardian.

**Should any online marketing activities be identified as “in violation of guidance,” GSUSA or the council reserves the right to intervene and request removal or remove the post.**