



2014 Girl Scout Cookie Program

Retail Price Increase FAQs

Why does Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida need to increase the retail price of Girl Scout Cookies?

As we all know, inflation trends affect each of us in our own lives and have also had major impacts in the food industry, including the Girl Scout Cookie Program. To put this in perspective, according to the Consumer Price Index, if goods or services were purchased for \$3.50 in 2003, in 2013 the same goods or services would cost \$4.43 (a 26.6% increase). Similarly, the direct cost of cookies to our council has continued to rise over the years, as has the cost to deliver quality programming for Girls.

We know that our Girl Scouts, families, and volunteers have seen these changes as well and have expressed the desire to have added earning power through the Girl Scout Cookie Program. A retail price increase allows us to continue to provide generous troop proceeds and girl rewards as a part of the Girl Scout Cookie Program.

For these reasons, our council will undergo a 50 cent retail price increase to \$4.00 per package, effective for the 2013-2014 Girl Scout Cookie Program. This price increase will allow our council to continue to ensure positive Girl Scout experiences for all girls within our council.

Who determines the price of Girl Scout Cookies?

Each Girl Scout council determines the retail price of Girl Scout Cookies within their council. This allows all councils to account for regional economic variations and costs in different parts of the country. The Girl Scout Cookie retail price is approved by each council's Board of Directors.

When was the last time Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida experienced a retail price increase for Girl Scout Cookies?

The last retail price increase for Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida was in 2003, when cookie prices increased from \$3.00 per package to \$3.50 per package.

Have other councils in the state of Florida experienced a retail price increase for Girl Scout Cookies?

Yes. At this time, all of the other Florida Girl Scout councils have either already increased their Girl Scout Cookie retail prices to \$4.00 per package or are planning to increase prices in 2014. Nationally, the most common price point for Girl Scout Cookies is \$4.00 per package.

Will Girl Scout troops see an increase in proceeds as a result of the retail price increase?

Yes. Beginning in 2014, the "base" troop proceeds will increase to \$.65 per package. There will be opportunities for troops to earn additional troop cookie proceeds as well. Those programs have not yet been determined, but the council staff will share these opportunities with volunteers and our general council membership as soon as it's available, likely in November 2013. The decision to make an incremental step in troop proceeds is made very carefully to ensure that the

change is sustainable for the next several years to avoid the need for another retail price increase in the near future. Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida is dedicated to remaining a leader in providing generous proceeds and rewards to our troops and girls for their work during the Girl Scout Cookie Program.

What is the impact of a retail price increase to our council?

Based on consumer research, for every 50 cent increase in price, consumers will buy on average one less box of Girl Scout Cookies. As a result, we expect a slight dip in sales during the first year the price increase takes effect. However, results from other councils undergoing a price increase have varied greatly. By keeping our prices competitive with other councils throughout the state of Florida and by continuing to elevate the benefits of the Girl Scout Cookie Program, we expect the Cookie Program to continue to be successful in 2014 and beyond.

How can we offset a potential dip in sales as a result of the price increase?

To remain consistent with historic sales volume, girls should strive to reach more customers than in prior years. Research shows that customers are most likely to purchase cookies from a Girl Scout coming to the customer's home. Therefore, strategies that target customers who might otherwise not see a Girl Scout (for instance, at a Cookie booth) will be important to achieving sales goals for 2014. Additionally, girls are encouraged to participate in the Fall Product Sale program to help offset a potential dip in sales during the 2014 Girl Scout Cookie Program.

What does the council do with its part of the Girl Scout Cookie proceeds?

Council uses proceeds from the Cookie sales for a variety of purposes, including: the direct cost of cookies from our cookie baker, girl rewards and recognitions, volunteer training opportunities, council staffing, maintaining local Girl Scout properties, general membership resources, providing financial assistance to girls, and much more. Aside from the direct cost of the cookies, 100% of the proceeds from the Cookie Program stay within our council, supporting Girl Scouting for girls right here on the Gulfcoast.

How will the general public find out about the retail price increase?

The general public will receive typical Girl Scout Cookie Program information as they have in the past through print and online articles, radio and TV features, public service announcements, etc. Price will be included in all press releases and communications and we will openly discuss it, but it will not be a focus. We will continue to focus on the great things girls are doing and the five essential skills girls are learning through the Girl Scout Cookie Program.

Do we have to sell at the established retail price?

Yes. All Girl Scout Cookie Program participants must abide by our council's established retail price, \$4.00 per package in 2014. This is a great example of business ethics and putting the Girl Scout Promise and Law into practice. Maintaining a consistent retail price for ALL Girl Scouts within our council benefits all girls, builds trust with consumers, and ensures an even playing field for all girls participating in the Girl Scout Cookie Program.

We're already experiencing an increased membership fee this year from \$12 to \$15 annually. Won't that negate the need for a retail price increase?

No. The membership fee is paid directly to GSUSA, with all membership fees being used at the national level. We do not receive any portion of these funds to use at the council level. Some councils do, however, impose a program fee in addition to the annual membership fee. Our council has not opted to add that fee at this time.

It's important to remember that even at an increased membership cost of \$15 annually, Girl Scouting remains a great value for girls and families, and participation in the Girl Scout Cookie Program helps defray troop expenses so girls may participate in the world's preeminent leadership experience with very little out-of-pocket expense to their families.

Why is my support of this retail price increase needed?

As Girl Scout members and volunteers, we value you as our partners in communicating this retail price increase in a positive manner. It is imperative to realize that this is the first price increase our council has experienced in eleven years. Statistics show that the price of cookies is **not** a negative factor in terms of sales. However, how the price increase is communicated **will** affect sales. Our goals are to continue elevating the many benefits the Girl Scout Cookie Program provides to girls and our communities while also increasing girl participation in 2014. With your support, we are confident that we can address the retail price increase and achieve these sales.

Thank you for your continued support of the Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida through the Girl Scout Cookie Program.

Who can I contact if I have other questions or would like more information?

Please feel free to contact Corinne Wright, Director of Sales. You can reach Corinne at (941) 921-5358 or (800) 232-4475 ext. 340 or by email at corinnew@gsgcf.org.