Girlguiding
North East England

Girlguiding compliance process

Guidance for existing volunteers

Version 1.2 November 2026

To help keep all our members safe, all adult volunteers are required to complete safer guiding training and a disclosure check if their role needs it. Volunteers who are non-compliant with these requirements risk their membership being withdrawn.

We've put together this handbook to help you understand the compliance process, and ensure that you and your unit remain compliant.

Frequently Asked Questions

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What is the timeline for the compliance process?

Stage 1: inform

40 days before a volunteer's current safe space/DBS expires or, for new volunteers, 40 days from the day their role is started on GO

- Volunteer recieves an email notifying them that they need to complete Safer Guiding/DBS within the next 40 days.
- If 40 days passes and the training has not been completed, volunteer enters the **'at risk'** stage.

Stage 2: at risk

Starts after the initial 40 days have passed and lasts an additional 40 days. For volunteers who have completed safe space/DBS previously, this starts on their current expiry date.

- **Volunteer is now non-compliant**. This means they cannot attend unit meetings/Girlguiding events unless they are supervised by a compliant volunteer, and their GO access is limited.
- Volunteer receives another email, which lets them know their initial deadline has passed and that they have 40 additional days to complete Safer Guiding/DBS before they risk being withdrawn.

Volunteers need to complete their safer guiding/DBS before the 40 day deadline (before the end of the inform stage). If they do not complete the appropriate compliance requirement and enter the at risk stage they are officially non-compliant. They cannot be the responsible volunteer for their unit and cannot be around young members unsupervised.

Stage 3: sanction

When final deadline date is reached

- If safer guiding/DBS has still not been started, HQ will withdraw the volunteer's Girlguiding membership in the week following after their final deadline.
- Volunteer will receive an email with a PDF letter attached explaining that their Girlguiding membership has been withdrawn. Volunteer is then barred from Girlguiding membership for 3 years.

Compliance process timeline

Volunteer receives email

Volunteer receives email

Stage 1: inform
40 days before expiry date/the first 40 days from when a new volunteer is assigned a role

Stage 2: at risk
40 days following the expiry date expiry date/after initial deadline

Stage 3: sanction

Initial deadline:
volunteer is officially non-compliant.
Volunteer role goes active pending, cannot volunteer unsupervised, and GO access is limited.

Final deadline: volunteer will be withdrawn if training not completed.
Volunteer will be withdrawn by HQ the week following their final deadline date. This bars them from Girlguiding membership for 3 years.

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How do I ensure that I remain compliant?

Completing safer guiding training

To volunteer with Girlguiding, you must complete either safer guiding or safer guiding basics training depending on your role. This training remains valid for 3 years. If you've previously completed safe space training, you won't need to complete safer guiding until your highest level safe space training expires.

Safer guiding:

- Can be completed as an eLearning, on the **Girlguiding learning platform**. The full training takes approximately 3 hours to complete, but does not need to be done in one go.
- Alternatively you can attend a webinar or in-person training. Webinar trainings can also be booked through the learning platform. If you would like to attend an in-person training, please contact your county team for more information.

Safer guiding basics:

- Can only be completed as an eLearning via the leaning platform. This should take approximately 30 minutes.

Most volunteers require the full safer guiding training, rather than the safer guiding basics training for their role. You can see which level of training you require for your role under the 'my safe practice' tab under your profile on GO.

If you have any issues with completing safer guiding training, please email saferguiding@girlguidingnortheast.org.uk.

Completing disclosure check

All volunteers who work directly with girls need to have a valid DBS check. Once completed DBS checks remain valid for 3 years.

DBS checks can be done digitally or with an in-person verifier. When your DBS is due you will receive an email explaining this process.

If you have any questions, you can contact your local team or disclosures@girlguiding.org.uk for support.

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How will I know when I need to complete safer guiding or DBS?

When your safer guiding or DBS check is due you will receive:

- An email notification when you enter the **inform stage** (40 days before their initial deadline).
- An email notification when you enter the **at risk stage** (on the day of their initial deadline, 40 days before their final deadline).
- You may also receive a communication from your local team informing you that you need to complete safer guiding or a DBS check.

You can also check your when your safer guiding and DBS check is due at anytime under the 'my safe practice' tab under your profile on GO.

What if I need more time?

If you think you will not be able to complete your safer guiding training before your deadline, you may request an extension. Reasons to request an extension include but are not limited to:

- Issues with technology
- Waiting to attend an in-person or webinar training
- A major life event such as moving house, starting a new job, bereavement, or a new baby/maternity leave

If you require an extension please email your county commissioner and let them know how long you need. They will then be able to apply for an extension on your behalf.

Whilst an extension is in place you must be supervised by a compliant volunteer.

You can not attend a residential until your safer guiding/DBS has been completed, and in some cases you may be asked to not attend unit meetings at all until this has been completed.

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What happens if I don't complete safer guiding or DBS by my final deadline?

If safer guiding has not been completed, or DBS has not been started, you will be withdrawn in the week following your safer guiding deadline.

Your role will be ended on GO, and you will receive an email with a PDF letter attached explaining that your Girlguiding membership has been withdrawn, and that you are not allowed to continue as a Girlguiding volunteer. This ban will last for three years.

The letter will also explain how to appeal this decision, which you can do by emailing the compliance team **within 28 days** after being withdrawn.

Making sure your unit stays compliant

For a unit to be compliant, it must meet the following requirements:

- **All regular adult volunteers must have a valid DBS check.** New volunteers may attend up to four unit meetings before completing a DBS, and parent helpers and Trefoil Guild members may attend up to two unit meetings a term without completing a DBS check.
- **All regular adult volunteers should have valid safer guiding/safe space training.**
- **At least one volunteer present must have a valid first aid qualification.** This can be a Girlguiding first response qualification, or an external qualification that has been verified and added to your GO record.

If your leadership team does not meet these requirements, your unit meeting should not take place. Contact your local team for more support.

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Where can I find more information?

Useful links

Safe practice information for Girlguiding North East England:
https://girlguidingnortheast.org.uk/volunteers/safe-practice/

Girlguiding's recruitment and vetting policy:
https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/policies/recruitment-and-vetting-policy/

Information about how to complete safer guiding:
https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/learning-and-development/safer-guiding/

Information about completing a DBS check:
https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/growing-our-membership/recruiting-volunteers/disclosure-check-guidance/

Information about visitors to your unit meetings:
https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/running-your-unit/safeguarding-and-risk/visitors-to-your-meetings/

Useful contacts

disclosures@girlguiding.org.uk - if you have a question about disclosures
saferguiding@girlguidingnortheast.org.uk - if you are having issues with completing safer guiding training
info@girlguidingnortheast.org.uk - for any other queries

If you have a concern

If you have a Safeguarding concern, you must report this to Girlguiding HQ.

During office hours call +44(0)207 834 6242 ext. 3037 or email safeguarding@girlguiding.org.uk.

For out of hours emergencies, call +44(0)7508 032997 (5-10pm Monday to Friday; 9am-10pm Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays).

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