

# Inside Government Badge

**Purpose:** Know more about how a government is run.

## Step 1: Start planning your adventure

For any government to run smoothly, it needs to be full of active citizens. Before you go inside government, know what being an active citizen means to you! List 10 things that you think make an active citizen. Your list could include following laws, paying taxes, or knowing what's going on in the world. Ask your family members to make their own list, too. Share your lists, and compare them to the Girl Scout Law. Is following the Girl Scout Law the same thing as being an active citizen?

## Step 2: Go inside government

Learn more about how the government works and who helps make decisions that affect you. With an adult's permission, go online to find a virtual tour of your state's capitol or governor's mansion. Then, chart the government structure for your school district, town, county, or state. Make a big, branching chart that shows who has the power to make and change laws.

## Step 3: Look into laws

Communities work because everyone follows laws. And every law on the books came from somewhere. Many considerations go into making a law. Imagine you are the mayor of the first town on the Moon. What laws, rules, or regulations might you propose? What should happen to a citizen who doesn't follow them? Discuss your answers with your family.

## Step 4: Report on the issues

Every city, town, and county has issues and needs that are important to the people who live there. Follow the local news every day for one week. What stories do you think are most important to your community? Choose one, and write your opinion as a letter to the editor of your local newspaper. If you have permission, you could even send your letter.

## Step 5: Get involved in community government

There is no better way to understand government than to get in there and try being a part of it! Create a poster or pamphlet to raise awareness about an issue you'd like to change. Use it to educate and inspire those inside your household. For example, as a Girl Scout, you know the Leave No Trace Seven Principles, but each of your family members might not know. The idea is to educate and inspire them to take your side, so remember to be respectful of the current "leaders and citizens" of your household.

**Congratulations! You've earned the Inside Government badge!**

Girl Scout Juniors

