

Coronavirus Preparedness, Prevention & Response Girl Scouts of the Colonial Coast Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Due to the COVID-19 virus, a state of emergency has been declared by both Virginia Governor Northam and North Carolina Governor Cooper. Girl Scouts of the Colonial Coast is monitoring the situation closely. We know many families and volunteers are concerned about the spread of COVID-19 and we are taking action to ensure the safety of our members, including offering a FAQ to help answer questions. We will be adding and updating this resource as information becomes available.

What is COVID-19?

Per the CDC, COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019.

What is a State of Emergency?

It is an administrative act (made by the Governor of the state) that provides access to additional resources and facilitates more efficient decision-making authority.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Per the CDC, the most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, dry cough and difficulty breathing. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and don't feel unwell. Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment. Around 1 out of every 6 people who gets COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops difficulty breathing. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness. About 2% of people with the disease have died. People with fever, cough and difficulty breathing should seek medical attention.

What steps can girls and volunteers take to prevent the spread of coronavirus?

Please follow all of the [steps recommended by the CDC](#). The same simple steps that prevent the spread of ordinary flu viruses work against coronavirus and other illnesses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Cough into a tissue or your elbow (not your hand). Then throw tissue away and wash hands.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick, with temperature above 100.0° F (38.7° C) or do not feel well, appear weak or ill.
- Consult your health care provider if you have special health conditions that put you at increased risk.

Are children more susceptible to the virus that causes COVID-19 compared with the general population?

Per the CDC, there is no evidence that children are more susceptible. In fact, most confirmed cases of COVID-19 reported from China have occurred in adults. Per the CDC, children have not been shown to be a high-risk group for serious illness from this virus. As much as possible, children should be allowed to carry on with their education and normal activities.

What is Girl Scouts of Colonial Coast (GSCCC) doing in response to the coronavirus?

GSCCC is monitoring the situation closely. We are working on contingency plans for programming and other events to be prepared for changing circumstances. We are actively following the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the North Carolina Department of Health and the Virginia Department of Health, along with local health departments, so we can respond quickly to any shifts in their recommendations. This is a quickly evolving situation and we will stay in touch with members about any additional changes in public health recommendations and how they affect Girl Scout programming.

What about the Cookie Program?

The Cookie Program has been extended to April 19. Cookie booths have been suspended as of March 16, 2020. Girls may continue to use the digital platform for online sales/deliveries.

Girl and Troop Deadlines:

- April 19 Cookie Program Ends
- April 20 Final Girl Payments Due to Troop
- April 23 Troop Paperwork due to SUCC and Final Rewards Submitted in eBudde

Will GSCCC be cancelling any events or activities?

All events in March and April have been canceled. We are notifying members who are registered for events and posting cancellations on our Facebook and website. For any activity or event that is cancelled, all registered participants will be offered a credit or refund.

Will events and workshops provided by third party Community/Program Partners be canceling their events offered to Girl Scouts?

GSCCC has cancelled all Council-hosted events for March and April. Third party Community/Program Partners who are hosting events that are open to Girl Scouts and others (like a theater program or sporting event) will make their own determination about any cancellations/refunds. We encourage those who have registered or purchased tickets from vendors to reach out to the hosting organization to inquire about their cancellation terms and policies.

How do I help calm and educate my girl about the Coronavirus?

Check out [this article](#) from Raising Awesome Girls for suggestions on how to handle the subject of coronavirus with care and encourage her to stay calm during similar situations.

Should service units (or troops) cancel their upcoming events?

We strongly encourage troops and service units to suspend any events or gatherings for eight weeks, starting March 16, 2020. Always follow guidance from health agencies and conduct similar vetting of area events as we do with council-sponsored events in your decision making. For future scheduling, consider such factors as: the number and makeup of participants, type of activity and if it requires resource sharing, and the venue and social distancing options. In addition, as with council events, we

encourage extra health and safety measures and promoting good health practices at all Girl Scout functions.

What should a troop do to ensure health and safety?

We encourage troops to suspend meetings for eight weeks starting March 16, 2020. We will continue to monitor the situation and will keep you posted with any relevant Girl Scout updates. Consider other ways they can participate (virtually, take-home packet, work on badge/Journey activities at home, etc.). Check out technology resources to host virtual meetings, as needed. There are some free or low-cost, safe options available for hosting online meetings (see below in subsequent question).

For future consideration:

1. Talk with the meeting facility about circumstances if anywhere they might limit access to groups, ask about their cleaning protocols, etc. Example: Is the troop assisting with wiping down tables or common spaces and shared resources in their meeting location?
2. Talk to the girls and parents about not attending a meeting or activity if they are sick or have underlying health conditions.
3. Have everyone wash their hands when arriving to and upon leaving the meeting or activity and before eating snacks.
4. Modify activities that might include shared resources, touching or handshaking (i.e. Friendship Circle, Girl Scout handshake, etc.)

If girls cannot attend troop meetings, what resources or technology can I use to keep Girl Scouts engaged and enjoying Girl Scout activities and fellowship during this challenging situation?

The opportunity to participate in “normal” activities and engage with one another will continue to be very important for girls, especially during this time of uncertainty for them. To keep girls actively engaged, consider creating take-home packets, choose a badge, Journey or patch program to work on individually then host group discussion/sharing conferences, find a Facebook Live event to attend together, etc.

You can also consider hosting online or virtual meetings. Though we cannot endorse or support specific online meeting tools for your use, we are aware of several tools troops and Service Units are using for virtual meetings. See below for a list of free and low-cost tools that could be useful to you that was compiled by Girl Scouts of Western Washington. We encourage troop leaders to look at these and alternative options and discuss with parents and girls to determine what the best solution is for your troop’s needs. *Make sure your girls complete the [Internet Safety Pledge](#) and have parent/caregiver consent.

GSCCC will be hosting a Just for Me page on our website where girls and families can find helpful resources and activities to continue their Girl Scout Leadership Experience at home.

Video and Audio-Conferencing Tools with free versions

While all of these options have a free version, please note you may be prompted to consider their upgraded versions for a subscription fee.

- [Zoom - FAQ](#)
Note: Meetings durations maximum of 40 minutes in free version
- [Skype - Support](#)
Note: Up to 10 participants free
- [Webex – Help Center](#)
Note: Limited file and content sharing in free version

Chat and Collaboration Tools with free versions

- [Microsoft Teams - Support](#)
- [Slack – Help Center](#)
- [Facebook Groups – Help Center](#)

Additional low-cost tools for collaboration and conferencing to consider if the above options do not meet your group's needs.

- [GoToMeeting - Support](#)
- [Google Hangouts Chat](#) and [Hangouts Meet - Support](#)

My troop has a troop trip scheduled for spring break. Are there any current guidelines to consider?

As this situation is developing, we strongly recommend that you examine each scheduled trip and determine if the trip should be rescheduled. Please monitor the updates the CDC, U.S. Department of State, and state/local authorities are providing. Look at all travel advisories and health department notifications for destinations. If utilizing a third party for travel planning, consult with them regarding cancellation, insurance, refund or credit inquiries. For any trip that does proceed, ensure to take every suggested precaution recommended by the CDC and U.S. Department of State in conjunction with all of the Travel/Trip guidelines in Safety Activity Checkpoints. Troop Leaders should have girl safety top of mind and engage them and their parents/caregivers in the decision making.

Important: Please note that girls traveling to any international location identified by the U.S. Department of State as “Level 4 – Do Not Travel” is never allowed. New in this situation is that if there is any girl travel scheduled in the next 60 days to a U.S. Department of State Level 3 location due to COVID-19 risk, the trip should immediately be cancelled or re-routed. New guidance also prohibits travel to Europe and advises against cruises and long air travel.