

**March 17, 2020, 3PM**

We are hearing from families and volunteers who have concerns about the Cookie Program and about troop and service unit meetings and activities following our recent email communication, and we are updating some of that information.

Please realize we are doing our best to provide advice and decisions that are in the best interest of as many of our members as possible. We are also doing our best to respond to both member feedback and what is happening in the world outside Girl Scouts, both of which are happening at a very rapid pace. We appreciate your patience as we navigate this completely unknown territory for all of us.

### **Cookie Program**

Because we did not want to take away the opportunity from those girls who wished to continue digitally and/or creatively, but safely, selling cookies, we left the decision of whether to continue up to girls and families, rather than mandate a cease to all efforts. However, even in just the few days since then, the COVID-19 situation has evolved rapidly. Given that it is unlikely everyday activities will return to anything resembling normal anytime soon, there is concern about girls/families/troops/service units being burdened with cookie inventory they may not have the opportunity to sell given the national suspension of cookie booths and other limitations.

We are currently working with GSUSA and Little Brownie Baker to help with the situation we are all in. We extended all dates and deadlines to give everyone time to decide what to do. We are also working at a local level regarding our inventory for cupboards, service units and troops. Rest assured; we have time to work through these issues. There are no immediate expectations on troops, girls or service units to liquidate, pay or take a loss on the cookies.

Please know we are passing on all the information we currently have. We ask that you hold questions on this topic until we have solutions. We will be in close communication with our product managers during this time.

### **Troop and Service Unit Meetings and Events**

Our girls and volunteers are our top priority and we want all of you to be taking the precautions outlined by the CDC, as well as federal and state guidelines. We have until this time encouraged service units, troops and parents to make decisions about meetings at a local level.

In order to be as consistent and as safe as possible, and in accordance with the recommendations of both GSUSA and the CDC, effective today, Girl Scouts – Diamonds is asking that across our council, all volunteer-led activities and programs—including but not limited to troop meetings, trainings and events—either be held virtually or postponed, at least through May 15, with that date being subject to extension based on the situation at that time. This guidance extends to events held on or off Girl Scout property.

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## 3-17-20 COVID-19 Update

If you have a current reservation at any of our urban or wilderness properties, someone from our property department has or will be contacting you. At this time, we will be working to reschedule all current reservations for an alternate time, or issue refunds as needed. If your group was using a free reservation, that free usage will be transferable to another time.

Our program team is working hard to develop some virtual alternatives for programming so that Girl Scout fun may continue during this difficult time. Check out our **#GirlScoutsatHome** activities in the drop-down menu of our **COVID-19 page** for some ways girls can participate in Girl Scout activities and earn awards even when school and other activities are canceled. To help you out with any new awards and badges you may be earning, beginning March 18, GSUSA will offer free shipping with no purchase minimums at [www.girlscoutshop.com](http://www.girlscoutshop.com).

In the drop down lists at the bottom of this page is a list of free and low-cost tools troops and service units in other councils are using for virtual meetings. While we cannot endorse or support specific online meeting tools, we encourage you to look at these and alternative options and discuss with parents and girls to determine what the best solution is for your troop or service unit needs.

Again, thank you for bringing your concerns to our attention and for being patient as we try to respond and adapt. We know these cancellations and closures are disruptive and frustrating. This is a quickly evolving situation and we promise to stay in touch with members about any additional changes in public health recommendations and how they affect Girl Scout programming.