



COVID-19 Update 03-16-2020

Dear Girl Scout Family,

At Girl Scouts, the safety and wellbeing of our girls, volunteers, and council staff are our top priority. Girl Scouts of Eastern South Carolina (GSESC) is closely monitoring the COVID-19 updates from the [Centers for Disease Control](#), the [World Health Organization](#), and the [S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control](#). We are also working in collaboration with local school districts and other partners.

We understand that in times of uncertainty, you and your Girl Scout may have questions and increased concern. We are taking proactive preventive measures to maintain safe environments for our members and staff. Here at our council, our leadership team is actively monitoring recommendations from local and national health authorities, and we will continue to communicate with you to keep you informed of Girl Scout-related recommendations and developments.

GSESC Operations

Offices

As of Monday, March 16, 2020, all GSESC staff will be working remotely. We have the means to conduct the majority of our business needs remotely through laptops, cloud computing and Zoom teleconference technology.

The best way to get assistance is to email your staff member directly or through customercare@girlscoutesc.org. Your needs and requests will be handled in a timely manner during business hours. If you have an emergency, you can always reach me directly at (843) 614-2417.

Our offices will remain closed while South Carolina public schools are closed. When this situation changes, we will notify you through email and social media.

Retail Shops

Our Girl Scout shops in Charleston and Florence will be closed along with our offices. Online ordering of Girl Scout merchandise is available at www.girlscoutshop.com.

Programs and Events

Following recent CDC guidelines, all GSESC programs and events scheduled to occur between March 16th and May 11th will be postponed to a new date yet to be determined. We know the

importance of every program and event we offer and do not want any of our girls to miss such important lessons, experiences or fun activities. Once we have resumed normal business operations, new dates will be put in place and notification to all parties will be sent. If for some reason you are not able to attend the new date you will receive a full refund.

Recently postponed or cancelled events include:

- World Thinking Day (03-14-20) – Event was cancelled. All participants will be refunded and will receive the WTD 2020 patch.
- Mary Dean Brewer Women of Distinction (03-28-20) – We are working to secure an alternate date this summer.
- Volunteer Appreciation Dinners (April 2020) – We are working to determine an alternate method to thank our amazing volunteers!
- Girl Recognition Ceremony (05-03-20) – We are working to secure an alternate date this summer.

Sandy Ridge

Following recent CDC guidelines, all GSESC programs and events scheduled to occur between March 16th and May 11th will be cancelled or rescheduled. All participants will be fully refunded. Contact Chuck Iler at chuckiler@girlscoutsesc.org for more information. We will provide additional information on Resident Camp as the COVID-19 situation continues to unfold.

Training

All GSESC in-person trainings are cancelled. Every attempt will be made to conduct the trainings virtually. If you are unable to attend, a full refund will be provided. Contact Michaela Watts at michaelawatts@girlscoutsesc.org for more information.

Cookie Program

The final Cookie ACH will be postponed one week from March 27th to April 3rd. If you need an additional extension, please email Aggie Reyes at aggiereyes@girlscoutsesc.org by April 1, 2020.

Troop recognition orders are still due on March 20, 2020.

Finally, due to the more than anticipated growth in cookie sales, we are in a position that we need to place an order with Little Brownie Bakers to complete the “Cookies for a Cause” distributions. We would prefer to take back complete cases from our Troops instead of ordering more cookies. **Therefore, we will accept complete, undamaged cases of cookies (any variety) from Troops up to 350 cases.** Email Aggie Reyes at aggiereyes@girlscoutsesc.org with the number of cases that you would like to return. Aggie will accept cases until the 350 cases are filled.

Troops and Service Unit Operations

Troop, Leader and Service Unit Meetings

We know you have many meetings, events and programs you conduct for your girls in addition to what our council provides. The council is aware of the disruption this pandemic is causing. We also understand your concern for the safety of all of your members. As of Monday, March 16th, we recommend that you postpone all of your in-person meetings, events and programs. This will help reduce the amount of exposure to you and your families.

We encourage you to look into different options for meeting remotely with your girls and their parents.

- [Zoom.com](https://zoom.us) allows you to meet through your computer or phone. You must have minimum of three participants and a maximum of 100 participants. Girls can use video conferencing through this manner.
- Facebook messaging or Facebook Live can be utilized if you have a troop closed Facebook group.

[Virtually Badges](#) has programming for Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors they can do online. It has the badges they can earn on the site. There are even virtual field trips on the site for your girls to experience.

Also, in difficult times, Girl Scouts look for opportunities to give back to their communities. During this COVID-19 pandemic, many people are feeling isolated. One idea might be to contact your local assisted living center to explore ideas for our Girl Scouts to interact with residents virtually or through email to alleviate some of the isolation.

Please share your ideas for staying connected on our GSESC Facebook!

GSESC COVID-19 Webinar:

The GSESC Leadership Team will conduct a webinar by Zoom to review these guidelines and answer any additional questions on Wednesday, March 18, 2020 at 6:00 PM.

Please connect to the meeting using the link below or by calling into the phone number below:

<https://zoom.us/j/409976190?pwd=TSSt0WmNvbGF1UVMzbHg4ZUF2MFV1UT09>

Phone: 1-929-436-2866

Meeting ID: 409 976 190

It is my belief that we at Girl Scouts can be a force of stability for our girls by remaining calm and ensuring that their Girl Scout experience remains as least impacted as possible. This can be a scary and difficult time for our girls and our ability to provide a stable and safe space for them is our paramount concern.

Thank you for your continued great support of Girl Scouting.

Yours in Girl Scouting,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diane M. Flanagan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "D".

Diane Flanagan
Chief Executive Officer