



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

MIAMI VALLEY COUNCIL

Dear Members of the Scouting Community,

As always, your safety and the safety of all our Scouts, volunteers, and employees is our top priority. We know there are questions and concerns about how COVID-19, commonly known as the coronavirus, could affect local Scouting programs in the Miami Valley Council (MVC). Please know that we are monitoring developments regarding COVID-19 at the local, state and national levels. We've established a COVID-19 Task Force comprised of executive board members, risk management and medical professionals and together this group has met twice already and will be conferencing at least weekly, and more frequently should conditions change, to discuss the current issues surrounding this pandemic and how it affects our Scouting family here in the Miami Valley.

The task force held its first conference call yesterday morning and created guidance for our Scouting family and a communication was sent to our membership yesterday afternoon. Since that time, the environment has significantly changed with yesterday afternoon's announcement by the State of Ohio Governor's office ordering a ban on mass-gatherings and suspending school through April 3. The task force met again this morning to discuss how these new changes impact the Scouting program. Again, our goal is to use an abundance of caution and keep our Scouting family and our overall community safe.

With that in mind the following information regarding local events and prevention measures is based on the latest available guidance. As this is an evolving situation, this information is subject to change. We will continue to update you on relevant developments, and we appreciate your understanding of any necessary adjustments in the interest of public health and safety as we move forward.

Status of Council Events

After much discussion by the MVC COVID-19 Task Force, it has been decided that

all in-person Council and District events, activities, and meetings between Friday, March 13 and Thursday, April 30, 2020 will be postponed or cancelled.

This decision has been made out of an abundance of caution and concern for the health of our Scouts, Scouters, and their families. We are taking a strong position of

leadership in our community and being 'Good Scouts' to do our part to aide in reducing the possible transmission of COVID-19 throughout our communities.

Furthermore, the Miami Valley Council strongly suggests and highly recommends that individual Scout units follow this policy. We strongly encourage that ALL levels of local Scouting (our units, our districts, and our council) consider using technology to continue with as many of their normally scheduled meetings and event planning meetings as possible. Free or low-cost options include Free Conference Call services, Skype, and Google Hangouts to provide a 'remote' or 'distance' Scouting experience. Our Council Executive Board will lead by example in this effort and conduct all meetings through April 30 in a non-face-to-face environment.

There will be a trickle-down effect that will occur with this decision and we are working to identify all possible cause-and-effect issues that may arise. We understand that there might be youth working through time-sensitive advancement requirements that cannot be accomplished via remote or distance Scouting, namely Eagle Scout projects. We are in communication with our National organization for guidance. As they work through a number of issues related to this pandemic, we have been assured that the topic of rank advancement, and particularly Eagle Rank Advancement, is on their checklist. We will keep you informed as we move forward.

Regarding the **2020 Scouting For Food Drive**, we encourage all units to participate in this important initiative at a time that is comfortable for their Scouts and families after April 30. It is important to keep in mind that the Scouting For Food drive can happen at any time as the materials are not dated and local food banks and pantries can always be supported by our efforts. There is maximum flexibility in the food drive and we would simply ask they you report your results as you normally would whenever your unit's drive is held; reporting instructions can be found [HERE](#).

Council Facilities

The Miami Valley Council Scout Shop will continue with the normal hours of operation and the Service Center is open for business. However, committee meetings will not be held at this location. If you are coming to visit a staff member, please consider calling instead. The staff will still be available to assist you with your Scouting needs, but again we encourage other methods of virtual or non-face-to-face meetings to accomplish the ongoing needs and support of Scouting's mission.

Our council camping facilities (Cricket Holler, Schiewetz Leadership Training Center, and Woodland Trails Scout Reservation) will be closed through April 30. If you have an existing reservation, we will give your unit credit for a future date or issue a refund accordingly. During this 'downtime', we are working to provide further cleanings of our facilities to ensure we are ready for business when our doors open again.

Summer Programs and Event Refunds

Currently, all summer programming - day camps, summer camps, National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT), etc. - will continue as planned until further notice. Again, committees in charge of planning these experiences are encouraged to meet in a virtual capacity, staff will support your efforts in a virtual manor as well. We have extended all early bird registration deadlines to April 30 in order to give units more flexibility in planning.

When possible, we are encouraging events to reschedule for a later date oppose to outright canceling. If you are registered for an event that gets postponed, your registration will be transferred to the new date. If you are unable to attend the rescheduled event you may request a refund by emailing camping@miamivalleybsa.org. At this time, should an event be outright cancelled we will automatically refund your registration.

Everyday Preventive Measures

BSA Policies to Prevent the Spread of Illness

The Boy Scouts of America continues to have policies and procedures in place that help protect participants from contracting an illness at large Scouting events. Available resources can be found by [CLICKING HERE](#). These include the [Annual Health and Medical Record](#) and the [Pre-Event Medical Screening Checklist](#).

Even with those important policies in place, it is critical that we all take these everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases:

- Stay home when you feel sick.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, and wash your hands before and after doing so.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve/elbow, not your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Do not share personal items such as cups, water bottles, eating utensils, etc.
- Avoid shaking hands. A Scout salute or wave will suffice.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

While these decisions are difficult to make, when putting the safety of our community and using our Scout Oath and Scout Law to guide our decision-making process, the right thing to do becomes clear. Again, our goal is to use an abundance of caution to keep our Scouting family safe and to comply with any current government orders. Scouts are and will continue to be good stewards of our community and responsible and participating citizens. As a Scouting family, during these unprecedented and rapidly changing times we remember the points of the Scout Law... A Scout is Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean, and Reverent.

Sincerely,



**Jeffrey R. Schiavone,
Scout Executive**



**Larry Hodapp,
Council President**



**Jim Crawford,
Council Commissioner**