



# BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

## MIAMI VALLEY COUNCIL

### **MARCH 20 COVID-19 Update**

Dear Members of the Scouting Community,

First, on behalf of myself, the Miami Valley Council staff and members of the executive board, we hope you and your family are faring well during these challenging and ever-changing times. We are here with you and want to support your Scouting life to the best of our abilities.

As mentioned in the previous communications sent to our Scouting families, the Miami Valley Council's top priority continues to be the health and safety of our Scouts, volunteers, staff, and their family members. As a reminder the MVC COVID-19 Task Force has taken the following actions to-date:

Through **March 31**:

- **The Miami Valley Council Service Center and Scout Shop is closed.** The Council's staff are working remotely and should you need to be in contact with members of the Miami Valley Council team, please email or call. Contact information for staff can be found [HERE](#). We are working to 'Do Our Best' in these unprecedented times to help you keep the Scouting fire lit for the youth and families of our programs, while keeping all parties safe.

Through **April 30**:

- **ALL DISTRICT** and **COUNCIL** in-person meetings and ALL activities through Thursday, April 30, 2020 are postponed or cancelled.
- **ALL UNITS** are to discontinue in-person meetings and ALL activities, including camping trips. Again, it is our civic duty to play a leadership role and help our country limit the spread of the Corona-virus.
- **ALL COUNCIL** camps are closed. For Information regarding refunds for camp facilities rental, event postponement or cancellations, please [CLICK HERE](#).

#### **IMPORTANT NOTE:**

These cancellations do **NOT** apply to our summer camp programs and events occurring beyond the closure period of April 30th. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and may make additional changes on programs, camps, and events beyond the April 30th date should the landscape further evolve.

## MVC COVID-19 Task Force

We understand these provisions will make every Scout's and Leader's ability to keep the Scouting fire lit and brightly burning difficult. That is why the task force has established two subcommittees to aid in our individual journey on the Scouting trail: **Distance Scouting Technology Subcommittee** and **Distance Scouting Program Subcommittee**. Additionally, the Task Force is beginning to track the financial challenges that our council is and will continue to face as we move through this crisis. The **Financial Impact & Solutions Subcommittee** will provide guidance and research relief mechanisms that will allow our council to maintain services (people, programs, and properties) now and beyond the COVID crisis. For more information on the task force and subcommittees, [CLICK HERE](#). Also, if you feel you might have some expertise to lend in any of the subcommittee roles, please don't hesitate to reach out. We'd appreciate new, fresh, and unique ideas to help carry us through.

## Distance Scouting - Program Subcommittee Update

As the Distance Scouting **Program** Subcommittee develops, there have already been a number of resources created by volunteers and staff from councils across the country. The subcommittee will keep mining for great ideas and content to share with our Scouting family here in the Miami Valley.

To get us started the team has identified a great resource developed by the good folks at the Hawkeye Area Council in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The 30-Day Challenge is available for each rank of Cub Scouts and there is a program for Scouts BSA as well. These provide a 'daily dose' of Scouting and can be a great resource for lesson planning activities or classroom 'choice time' activities each day as we all learn to become in-home educators to our own children.

[LION 30-DAY CHALLENGE](#)  
[TIGER 30-DAY CHALLENGE](#)  
[WOLF 30-DAY CHALLENGE](#)  
[BEAR 30-DAY CHALLENGE](#)  
[WEBELOS 30-DAY CHALLENGE](#)  
[SCOUTS BSA 30-DAY CHALLENGE](#)

Another resource is from the Connecticut Rivers Council in East Hartford have some terrific ideas around 'At-Home' Scouting ([CLICK HERE](#)). Additionally, our fellow buckeyes at the Buckeye Council in Canton, Ohio have also created materials for 'Home Scouting' ([CLICK HERE](#)). I encourage you to check out these resources and share any helpful tools you find as we make our way through this new journey.

## Advancement (Extensions and F.A.Q.)

We've also heard the concerns related to Scout Rank advancement and have been in contact with our National BSA organization. Many are wondering if extensions will be granted for those Scouts working through time-sensitive requirements, namely the

Eagle Rank. Please see the [F.A.Q. HERE](#) for answers to many questions related to advancement. As a reminder, if an Eagle Scout project is planned during our suspension period (through April 30) and cannot be conducted in a 'distance Scouting' fashion, please do not conduct the project. While it may feel like the right thing to do as we all care about our Scouts progressing through the ranks, please do not put the advancement of a Scout in front of the health and safety of another Scout or Scouts that might be helping conduct the project.

## Distance Scouting - Technology Subcommittee Update

We recognize that the current situation is a trying time for everyone, and it will force us all to reevaluate how we can keep doing the things we love including Scouting. To that end the Distance Scouting **Technology** Subcommittee has provided tips and tools so that you can keep the Scouting fire burning during our social distancing period.

Below are suggestions of different solutions you might use to host virtual Scouting events (den meetings, troop meetings, boards of reviews, etc.). The subcommittee is looking for your feedback on how Our Council can best support you moving forward. Please take a few minutes to complete a short survey by [CLICKING HERE](#).

### Youth Protection Guidelines

The safety of our members is first and foremost with any Scouting activity. As we make the shift to virtual methods for Scouting, don't forget that all YPT guidelines still apply. Check out this article from [Bryan on Scouting](#) for more details.

### Virtual Meeting Tools

There are many free and paid solutions out there and we've collected a few options for you to consider as you're formulating a plan for virtual Scouting:

[Cisco WebEx](#): Full featured, no time limit, allows up to 100 participants

[Google Hangouts](#): Easy to use, no time limit, allows up to 10 participants

[Zoom](#): Great features, 40-minute time limit, allows up to 100 participants

[Skype](#): Good stability, four-hour time limit, allows up to 50 participants

[UberConference](#): Excellent video quality, 45-minute time limit, allows up to 10 participants

[FreeConferenceCall.com](#): Old standby for audio conferencing, can also share screen. Six-hour time limit, allows up to 1000 participants.

### Collaboration Tools

[Slack](#): Chat based collaboration, can setup up different channels for different projects or groups.

[Google Docs](#): Many are already familiar with this free service provided by Google. It is a great way to create documents, spreadsheets, and presentations to share or work on together remotely.

[Discord](#): Audio only and chat-based solution positioned to gamers. Some youth may already be familiar with this solution if they have used it for video gaming.

## Resources

[Scouting Show & Tell: Scouting remotely](#)

[How to conduct a board of review through videoconferencing](#)

[Youth Protection and texting with Scouts](#)

[17 Tips for Leading Effective Conference Calls](#)

## Tips and Tricks

**Internet Struggles:** As every person's technology situation is different (computers, home internet speeds, etc.) the easiest and most reliable form of conferencing is an audio-only or "dial-in" conference call. Most cell phone plans include unlimited minutes and free nationwide calling, so using a service like [FreeConferenceCall.com](#) to create an audio only call will make it the easiest solution no matter what the scenario (call the number, enter the PIN, you're in the call). If you want to share content with your participants, you may be able to pair the conference call with a document or PowerPoint deck you email out separately for each person to review while on the call.

**Try it out:** If you aren't familiar with a service, have a test call with a few other people to get familiar with how the service works and you will be ready for the call with everyone! Also turn to some of your 'tech-savy' Scouts...they may indeed have the best answer.

**The Mute Button:** whenever you get a group of people together on a call, it's always best to remind everyone to stay on mute unless speaking at the beginning of your call. Many services allow the host to mute individuals or all attendees in case someone isn't on mute.

And as always, follow all updates on [Our Council's Facebook Page](#) and [website](#).

I'd like to thank each and every one of you for the dedication that you've shown to keep the Scouting fire lit and to keep the Scouting routine in the daily lives of the young people in our collective care. I am seeing unique and innovative ways leaders and parents are keeping our Scouts together and promoting a sense of normalcy to the best of their ability; I thank you for it.

**Thought of the Day:** Over the last couple days we've experienced a tremendous amount of rain in the Miami Valley. Those of you who have been on a rainy camp out know how hard it is to keep a fire going in the middle of a torrential downpour. You know that it takes an incredible amount of energy, effort, patience and a watchful eye to keep even the smallest of embers glowing. One has to work much harder to keep a fire smoldering in the rain than to create a raging fire on the clearest of nights.

We too must work extremely hard and pull together to keep adding dry timber onto our Scouting fire through these stormy days. The rain will subside and our fire will brightly burn once again because of your commitment and dedication to the principles of Scouting.

#KeepTheFlame

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey R. Schiavone". The signature is stylized with overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Jeffrey R. Schiavone,  
Scout Executive**