



Hello Girl Scout Families!

During these unprecedented times, we as parents and guardians are keenly aware of the impact this pandemic is having on our girls. The feelings of isolation, depression and disappointment surface frequently in my home, and I'm sure they're no stranger in your home either.

We know that girls who participate in Girl Scouts have a stronger sense of self, possess more positive values, seek out challenges, have healthier relationships, and desire to solve community problems. These attributes do not change just because girls aren't able to meet in person. In fact, research suggests that girls who continue to see their Troop Leaders and sister Girl Scouts online feel happier and more connected, and that maintaining work on a group project to benefit others will result in greater feelings of overall satisfaction and well-being.

We are actively working on an exciting catalog of online learning opportunities for your girl and/or troop to opt into to allow for deeper exploration in the areas of STEM, Entrepreneurship, Outdoor Education and Life Skills. We can't wait to share that plan with Troop Leaders on **August 22nd** and with parents on September 1st.

Many of our Council staff (myself included) are also Girl Scout parents and volunteers. This perspective gives us the opportunity to dig deep and seek out solutions that will help girls feel connected, valued and encouraged despite these challenging times. It also provides us with the ability to ask ourselves, "how would I feel about this as a parent" when discussing important matters such as health and safety.

It is with that perspective that we have made the difficult decision to postpone all **council-led**, face-to-face events or trainings through October 31, 2020. Following the guidelines of the State of New Mexico and taking into consideration the amount of time and resources needed to plan safe and responsible in-person activities, we think it's best to look far ahead to ensure the health of our

volunteers, girls and staff. We also request that all Service Unit-led face-to-face events and trainings be postponed during this same time period, as well.

You may be asking “what does this mean for my Girl Scout troop”?

We will follow the Governor’s health orders as they stand at any given moment with regards to troop activities and meetings. As we recently implemented, if your troop (and you as a parent) are comfortable meeting in-person and can adhere to the State of New Mexico guidelines, your troop may meet in-person. It is strongly recommended that any activities be conducted outside, and it is required that all participants wear masks or face coverings and spread out at least 6 feet apart. Our requirement is that Troop Leaders must submit the Activity Notification form to their Regional Manager for membership five days in advance so we know who is meeting when and where.

We strongly encourage troops to meet virtually, though we recognize that there may be challenges in doing so. It is critical that our council find opportunities to make sure Troop Leaders and volunteers feel supported and have access to resources that will help them continue their very important work, regardless of the circumstances. We are putting together a toolkit of e-resources for troops to meet virtually, and we will prioritize support for our troop leaders to make sure they have everything they need to be successful this semester and beyond.

Thank you for your continued support of Girl Scouts, your council, and most importantly, your girls! As always, if you have any questions, please reach out to us at customercare@nmgirlscouts.org.

Yours in Girl Scouting,

Rebecca Latham
CEO
Girl Scouts of New Mexico Trails



Have a question? Don't be shy!
Contact us for more information.