



March 31, 2020 UPDATE

Gulf Coast Council Coronavirus Update

Out of abundance of caution; the Gulf Coast Council office, Scout Shop, and Spanish Trail Scout Reservation will be closed until further notice.

All face to face district and council meetings have been cancelled until further notice as well.

Units, please follow your local authorities' and your charter organization's recommendations and policies about face to face meetings.

The staff will be working remotely until the office is reopened.

If you need assistance, please contact one of the staff members at

Scout Executive, Spencer Page

spence.page@scouting.org

850-207-8516

Field Director, Billy Egan

(serving Pensacola Bay, Lake Sands, Long Leaf Pine Districts)

william.egan@scouting.org

850-207-5038

District Executive, Wayne Myers

(serving Choctaw District)

wayne.myers@scouting.org

850-683-0330

Program Director, Jim Boksa

jim.boksa@scouting.org

850-266-3911





March 30, 2020 Update

Gulf Coast Council Coronavirus Update

SCOUTING AT HOME

To our Scouting community,

In Scouting, we always vow to help other people. Now, in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, our Scouting community must do its part to slow the spread of the virus, which will save lives and avoid overwhelming our local healthcare infrastructure. Please follow all the guidelines and suggestions from your local authorities.

The safety of the Gulf Coast Council scouts, volunteers, employees and our communities are our top priority. The Gulf Coast Council supports Scouting at home, with stay-at-home activities for any Scout rank, and tips for continuing to work on advancement.

There are many opportunities for scouting to continue during this time. If you see any great ideas, please post them on the [GCC Scout Leaders and Parents Facebook page](#). Check back regularly and let your friends know about these great options for at-home fun and learning for Scouting families and non-Scouting families alike.

Scouting Resources:

Here are a couple of great links

<http://svmbc.org/svmbc/activities/scouting-at-home/>

Here you will find a resource hub for parents and leaders to help support Scouting at home, with stay-at-home educational activities for any Scout rank, tips for continuing to work on advancements and kid-friendly content that connects Scouting with their daily lives.

[Bryan on Scouting Blog](#)

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Service Opportunities

Throughout our history, "to help other people at all times" has been a central tenet of the Boy Scouts of America. From World War I to the most recent hurricanes, Scouts have been there to help during difficult times. We look forward to participating in the mobilization that will take place to bring back normalcy in our communities. We are utilizing our connections to community leaders to see the needs. If you have any ideas on how we can safely serve, please contact Jim Boksa at [email](#). Obviously, the safety of our youth and leaders are paramount in our future efforts.

March 20, 2020 Update

Gulf Coast Council Coronavirus Update

Questions and Answers

Cub Scouting/Scouts BSA/Venturing/Sea Scouting Rank Advancement and the Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The following questions regarding advancement have arisen as we deal with closures, cancellations, or other issues caused by the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19). Although there are difficulties and constraints, advancement can continue. Youth, parents, and leaders should work together to implement creative, common sense ways to facilitate advancement while adhering to the Guide to Safe Scouting and following the rules of Youth Protection training.

Please follow this link to the [Guide to Advancement \(GTA\)](#), which remains the primary source for information related to Scouts BSA advancement. It is referenced throughout the answers provided here.

Please send additional questions to advancement.team@scouting.org

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All Scouting Programs

Q: How can advancement be tracked remotely?

A: Scouting units should use ScoutBook to record and track advancement.

To track advancement remotely, parents should:

- 1) Connect with their child's member profile via an invitation that the unit leader sends within ScoutBook.
- 2) Once a connection is made, the parent should use the Scouting app, found in both the App Store and Google Play, to stay connected with their unit.
- 3) The Scouting app provides parents the ability to report any advancement that was completed at home.

Go to <https://help.scoutbook.com> to learn more about how to start using ScoutBook and how to connect parents to their Scouts.

Cub Scouts

Q: May parents sign off on Webelos and Arrow of Light requirements?

A: Yes. Through July 31, 2020, parents and other adults in the Cub Scout's family, may sign off on Webelos and Arrow of Light requirements. We strongly encourage that parents use the Scouting App or ScoutBook to record completion of their child's requirements.

Q: If my den is behind in advancement due to COVID-19, can my Cub Scout continue to work on advancement through the summer?

A: Yes. Cub Scouts can continue to work on their current den's advancement through July 31, 2020. This is to provide any additional time a Cub Scout needs to complete their badge of rank; if they earn their badge of rank prior to July 31, 2020, they may advance to the next rank.

Scouts BSA, Venturing and Sea Scouts

Q: May merit badge requirements or rank requirements be modified?

A: No. All requirements must be completed as written. If meetings or activities are canceled or limited, youth should continue to work on requirements as far as possible. By employing common sense and creative solutions, many requirements—even Scoutmaster conferences—can be fulfilled through videoconferencing or telephone calls.





Q: Can merit badge counseling or Nova/Supernova counseling be done using digital technologies like Zoom or WebEx?

A: Yes, registered merit badge counselors or Nova counselors/Supernova mentors may work with youth using digital platforms, ensuring that all youth protection measures noted in the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#) and [BSA's social media guidelines](#) are in place. In addition to youth protection, the advancement guidelines in GTA Section 7 are required.

Q: May time missed due to canceled unit meetings count toward active participation requirements?

A: Yes. If youth are registered and in good standing, a disruption from COVID-19 virus can be the "noteworthy circumstance" that prevents participation. This policy has been in place for many years and is explained in GTA Topic 4.2.3.1.

Q: May time missed due to canceled unit meetings count toward position of responsibility requirements?

A: Yes. If youth are registered and unable to meet the expectations of their positions because of COVID-19 disruptions, then units may need to waive or rethink the expectations. Just as youth must not be held to *unestablished* expectations, they must not be held to expectations that are impossible to fulfill. See GTA Topic 4.2.3.4, "Positions of Responsibility," with its six subtopics.

Q: Does the National Council grant extensions of time to complete rank requirements beyond the 18th birthday for the Eagle or 21st birthday for Summit or Quartermaster?

A: Yes, but only for the Eagle Scout rank as described in GTA Topic 9.0.4.0 or for Venturing Summit or Sea Scout Quartermaster as described in GTA Topic 4.3.3.0. Unit leadership must become familiar with the five tests under 9.0.4.0. The tests were designed to accommodate such obstacles as those presented by COVID-19 disruptions.

Q: Will youth who are not yet Life Scouts be allowed to apply for an extension to earn the Eagle Scout rank?

A: Extensions are considered only for Scouts who are Life rank. If, once a Scout achieves Life rank, it turns out that COVID-19 disruptions along the way have left them with insufficient time to complete Eagle requirements, then this may be cited when the time comes to submit an extension request.





Q: May local councils grant extensions?

A: Normally, that is not allowed. However, due to the current situation—effective immediately and through September 30, 2020—council Scout executives may grant extensions, or delegate authority to the Council Advancement Committee to grant extensions under the following limitations:

1. It can be established that COVID-19 disruptions were the only circumstances that delayed work on Eagle Scout/Summit/Quartermaster advancement requirements, such as the service project or merit badges. If any other causes were involved, the extension request must go to the National Council following the process outlined in the GTA.
2. Extensions shall only be granted to youth in Scouts BSA who have already achieved Life rank.
3. When the council receives a COVID-19-related request for a time extension, the council reviews the request and approves it if appropriate. A written response stating the outcome of the extension request must go to the youth. If approved, the notification must be attached to the youth's Eagle/Summit/Quartermaster rank application. For Eagle, the extension must not exceed 3 months from the youth's 18th birthday; for Summit/Quartermaster, the extension must not exceed 3 months from the youth's 21st birthday.
4. Upon turning 18, the Scout must submit a completed adult application and successfully complete YPT; their participant code will now be UP for SBSA or VP for Venturing and Sea Scouting.
5. Extension requests for more than 3 months beyond the youth's 18th/21st birthday must be sent to the National Service Center following the process outlined in the GTA.

Note: A "month" in BSA advancement is defined as a day from one month to the next. For example, March 5 to April 5.

The authority for councils to grant extensions is temporary, lasting only through Sept. 30, 2020.

All requests for extensions must sent in writing to Scout Executive Spencer Page at spence.page@scouting.org by September 30, 2020

Q: If youth have already received an extension, can they request additional time due to COVID-19?

A: Yes. Council Scout executives may grant extensions, or delegate authority to the Council Advancement Committee to grant extensions under the limitations listed above.





Q: What should be done while an extension request is being considered?

A: Youth should continue to work on advancement in so far as they are able—e.g., independently, or over the phone or videoconference—and at Scouting activities once they resume.

Q: Are extensions required when an Eagle/Summit/Quartermaster board of review must be delayed?

A: No. Councils may grant Eagle/Summit/Quartermaster boards of review up to six months after the youth's 18th/21st birthday. See GTA Topic 8.0.3.1, "Eagle Scout Board of Review Beyond the 18th Birthday."

See also, GTA Topic 8.0.1.6, "Boards of Review Through Videoconferencing."

Q: Are electronic or digital signatures acceptable for rank advancement or for the Eagle/Summit/Quartermaster packets/applications?

A: Yes. Electronic or digital signatures will be accepted through September 30, 2020.

Q: How can a youth continue to work on advancement requirements if they don't have internet or high-speed internet for videoconferencing?

A: Youth may take a picture of their completed activity/requirement and share the work with unit leaders. In keeping with Youth Protection Training policies, all communications from youth should be sent to at least two adults. Parents or guardians may send advancement work on behalf of their child.





March 19, 2020 UPDATE

Gulf Coast Council Coronavirus Update

Camp Card Update

The sale will end when scheduled on May 15th so all units must close their accounts out by May 15th. Due to the current loss of time/locations to sell, any units that wish to continue selling after May 15th will be able to check out additional cards after closing out their invoice. This will be with no risk to the unit and still earning \$3.25 per card sold! If you have any questions, contact Billy Egan at william.egan@scouting.org

From National Council

We have approved that all Cub Scouting requirements for all ranks, including Webelos and Arrow of Light may be approved by the parent, legal guardian, or other adult family member. In addition Cub Scouts may continue to work on their badge of rank and adventures for that rank through June and July. They are not required to, we just want to provide additional time for those who may need it.

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March 18, 2020 UPDATE
Gulf Coast Council Coronavirus Update



To: All BSA Volunteers and Employees

To our Scouting community,

In Scouting, we vow to help other people at all times. Now, in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, our Scouting community must do its part to slow the spread of the virus, which will save lives and avoid overwhelming our local healthcare infrastructure.

The safety of Scouts, volunteers, employees and our communities is our top priority.

With safety in mind and based on guidance from national health officials,

the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) is strongly advising that in-person meetings, activities, events and gatherings of 10 or more people be suspended through the end of March. Please also follow any restrictions outlined by your state and local health department or other state and local authorities. This applies to youth and adults out of an abundance of caution.

In accordance with national guidelines, please focus on the following through the end of March:

- Avoid in-person gatherings; instead, utilize available digital and online resources, such as video conferencing, to continue Scouting meetings, projects and advancement, adhering to the current youth protection guidelines already in place for digital communications.

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- If you must meet, limit participants to fewer than 10 people and remain at least six feet apart.
- Follow BSA blogs and social channels, as well as #ScoutingAtHome, for great examples and ideas of how to continue Scouting.
- If you or any member of your family feel sick, DO NOT go into the office or attend any gatherings. Contact your health professional to get care and notify your supervisor so they can take the appropriate measures while you focus on recuperating.

We will continue to evaluate the ongoing situation and prioritize the safety of everyone involved in Scouting – youth, families, volunteers, employees and our communities – is our number one priority.

We realize these decisions are not without their challenges, and we thank you for helping meet the needs of our communities in difficult times.

The steps we are taking reinforce the many ways – big and small – that Scouting empowers character and leadership today and for generations to come.

Yours in Scouting,

Roger C. Mosby

President and CEO

Boy Scouts of America

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March 17, 2020 UPDATE

Gulf Coast Council Coronavirus Update

With the CDC guideline change of recommending groups of only 10 or less, the Gulf Coast Council will be making the following changes

- The Wilderness First Aid and CPR classes that were scheduled this weekend have been **POSTPONED**. If you are registered for these classes, please check your e-mail for more information.
- The Spanish Trail Scout Reservation Alumni Association Weekend has been **POSTPONED**. Alumni Association President Jacob Somers will be sending an e-mail to the association's members with more information.

March 16, 2020 UPDATE

Gulf Coast Council Coronavirus Update

With the new guidelines set by the CDC, the Gulf Coast Council will be making the following changes:

- The following events have been **cancelled**
 - All roundtables in April
 - Fam Camp scheduled for April 17-19
 - BALOO Training April 18-19
- The following events have been **postponed**
 - Order of the Arrow Conclave-make-up date to be determined
 - Pensacola Bay District Camporee- make-up date to be determined (Troop 3 are not quitters, and they are still planning a great camporee)
- The Scout Office and Scout Shop will be closed March 17, 2020 to March 31, 2020 to customers. If you need to drop something off, there will be a box at the front door where you can drop it off. If you need to talk to somebody, the staff will be available by phone and/or e-mail.

Unit leaders, you need to have discussions with your unit's committee and charter organizations about continuing having meetings and events during this time period.

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MARCH 13, 2020 UPDATE

Gulf Coast Council Coronavirus Update

What is the Coronavirus?

The coronavirus is one of the family of viruses that can cause symptoms like the common cold and/or flu virus. Although the immediate health risk is low according to the Center of Disease Control (CDC), we are taking precautions.

What do symptoms of Coronavirus look like?

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) can cause mild to severe respiratory symptoms such as cough, runny nose, sore throat, congestion, fatigue, shortness of breath, and fever.

We will continue to monitor the latest updates of COVID-19 with our local and state health departments, and the CDC.

The Gulf Coast Council (GCC) will announce any cancellations of district and council events/meetings after considerations of current local school system cancellation decisions.

What precautionary measures is the GCC taking at council and district events.

1. **Adult Volunteer/Parent Choice:** Any adult/parent currently signed up for any district or council event between March 13-April 30 may request a refund if the request is received in writing (email: jim.boksa@scouting.org) **prior** to the event **only**.
2. The GCC has currently enacted the mandatory long term camp **BSA Pre-Event Medical Screening Checklist** verification for all youth and adult district/council activities.

BSA Pre-Event Medical Screening Checklist

Has the participant had any of the following symptoms in the last 24 hours?

- Fever (100.4 F or greater)
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

If the participant has fever, vomiting, OR diarrhea- HE OR SHE SHOULD STAY HOME





Has the participant had any of the following symptoms in the last 24 hours?

- Unexplained, extreme fatigue or muscle aches
- Rash
- Cough
- Sore Throat
- Open Sore

If the participant has any two (or more) of these symptoms- **he or she should stay home**. If the participant has one of these symptoms, discuss any limitations and restrictions and consider having him or her stay home.

Participants who become ill should not return to the activity until they are cleared by a health-care provider.

3. Several mobile wash stations are being placed in key traffic locations around events during larger district and council events.
4. Increased sanitation efforts in common areas, buildings, and dining facilities.

What precautionary measures are suggested for local scout units

1. Based on meeting patterns, location, and meeting space consideration each charter partner should locally determine any potential change in regular meetings.
2. The GCC suggests units use the BSA Pre-Event Medical Screening Checklist for youth-parent activities and **prior to departing** for unit overnight campouts.

What can Parents do to protect their family?

Parents should take the same precautions they would for any common cold or flu

- Family members need to wash their hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. (Alcohol based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol content can work in a pinch)
- Hands should be washed before eating, after using the bathroom, and when you come inside from outdoor activities that caused hands to get dirty.
- Teach children not to touch their mouth, eyes, or noses unless they just washed their hand
- Cough and/or sneeze into your elbow and not your hands
- Distance yourself from anyone coughing or sneezing.
- Encourage healthy habits, like eating healthy diet, exercising, and getting enough sleep.
- Get the flu vaccine to help prevent the flu, which is more common and can be dangerous
- **Do not send your child to school or Scouts when they are sick.**





- If you have any symptoms of the virus, seek medical attention immediately and follow the advice of your medical professional.

For additional information on the Coronavirus (COVID-19) from the CDC, visit this page:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

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