



Latest Girl Scouts of Western Washington Developments Due to COVID-19

Hello, Everyone—

As our community situation continues to change rapidly, the plans for Girl Scouts of Western Washington have to shift accordingly. There've been several developments in the course of this week:

- **We've made the excruciatingly difficult decision to cancel all camp programs for the 2020 season. Why?**
 - We're at the end of March now. Based on information from countries ahead of us on this journey as well as what health authorities are predicting, it seems optimistic to imagine we'll be on the downhill side of this outbreak by late May. However, we used that as our baseline. It would mean at the beginning of our camp season in June we'd be convening girls, young people and our staff early in the post-outbreak recovery period. Given that other places have seen infections spike as soon they've relaxed mitigation efforts, we'd have to prepare any camp we held for a possible outbreak. Our girls and staff are not worth the risk. Also, most of our camp properties aren't prepared for it, which means it would be prohibitively costly—and a procurement nightmare given the scarcity

- of the necessary supplies and equipment. Finally, our staff are not trained for a circumstance like this, nor should we subject them to it.
- The Camp Program & Property Team will use this time to assess the entire program –including how to best support the horse program.
 - The Governor’s Stay at Home order halted both our ability to gather and sell the returned cookie inventory—necessary to regain lost ground in our Cookie Program—as well as our ecommerce retail efforts, since staff can’t fulfill these orders.
 - At this point, we won’t be moving forward with the [Bellefield location in Bellevue](#), which we discussed in an email on March 16. When we’re past the COVID-19-related closures, programs and the retail function will be supported from our Seattle office in Georgetown. We’ll revisit the Bellefield plan when our council operation makes it feasible.

Both the camp cancellation and Stay at Home orders have brought major financial impacts to our council in the last couple of days. Consequently, I’m having to make difficult but necessary reductions in staff – including to management and leadership roles. These changes are in the process of being communicated and implemented. All of the position changes will go into effect on April 10. From GSWW’s roughly 160 headcount, 81 positions are impacted; this includes reducing vacancies, restricting positions to part-time, placing individuals on stand-by as well as eliminating positions. Board leadership also asked that I share that I’m forgoing a portion of my salary.

Please know that we’re following human resources best practices and doing our utmost to support our colleagues during this very tough time. As these are personnel matters, it would be inappropriate to share as much information as some would like. We’ll update you with new contacts for functions across the council based on these changes as quickly as possible.

These are heartbreaking decisions, made with our Girl Scout mission and Girl Scouts of Western Washington vision top of mind to ensure that our path forward

is strategic and in line with our highest values. As ever, we're committed to making Girl Scouts possible for our girls, families and volunteers during this unprecedented challenge.

With steadfast support,
Megan Ferland, CEO