



COVID-19 UPDATE: November 17, 2020

Dear Girl Scouts of Western Washington Community,

In light of Governor Inslee's recent COVID-19 restrictions and given our paramount concern for the safety of our members, families, volunteers, donors, and staff, we've had to make further changes in our council programming and volunteer engagement. ALL in-person programming across the 18 counties served by Girl Scouts of Western Washington (GSWW) is suspended from November 16 until January, when we will re-evaluate our operation based on state guidance at that time. As the holidays near, GSWW closes from December 21-January 4, so we wouldn't be open to respond to any changes made by the governor during that time.

For the safety of our volunteers and site staff, and since our camp volunteer support needs through the winter months are minimal, we're also putting a pause on camp work parties (though if needed for a crucial task, skilled volunteers may be contacted by the camp team). We take great pride in maintaining our beautiful camp properties and are so looking forward to the day when it becomes possible to gather again, even if it may be in a limited, socially distanced way. For now, we hope that this collective pause will keep our community safe and allow us to move forward with camp work parties when they're needed most, in late winter or early spring.

Cookie booth sales will be evaluated in January, once we have more information from Governor Inslee. We'll share more details before the start of the Cookie Sale.

We understand that reduced access to Girl Scout in-person programming is frustrating and disappointing. Under the recent restrictions announcement, we also understand that some other outdoor gatherings may continue, and members may question why GSWW has pulled back on all in-person programming. We put this question to our internal Pandemic Committee—a cross-functional team that includes member-facing staff and monitors state and other resources to discuss health and safety impacts, helping support our program operation decisions. The answer was straight forward: it's not worth it right now. We don't provide child care. We're a volunteer-run organization focused on youth leadership — so, in the hierarchy of pandemic preparedness, that means we're not an essential business. Staying home and staying safe is what the governor has asked everyone to do for our

communities' and health care workers' safety, and for our own families' safety. As Girl Scouts, we have a responsibility to champion that message.

As always, we want to thank you for your patience. For being such dedicated advocates and participants in Girl Scouting. For always doing your best to live by the Girl Scout Law, making our communities – and our world – better.

With gratitude,

Megan Ferland

CEO

Girl Scouts of Western Washington