



March 17, 2020

Dear Girl Scout Families and Volunteers,

At Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast (GSWISE), there is nothing we take more seriously than the safety and well-being of our girls, volunteers, and council staff. GSWISE will continue to take all possible and appropriate measures to ensure girls have a safe, fun, one-of-a-kind experience at Girl Scouts.

While what health officials know about coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to develop, we do know that verified cases in our State and across the country have been increasing rapidly and just today, Governor Evers has extended the mandated state-wide school closures indefinitely. GSWISE continues to ensure we are working in guidance with all local, county, state, and federal guidelines – including the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations to help our community respond to and contain the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Therefore, in an extreme abundance of caution:

Effective immediately, we are extending the suspension of all Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast in-person activities including girl programs and events, meetings, trainings, troop and other camping, and property/facilities rentals until at least Monday, May 11.

What does this mean for our Girl Scouts?

GSWISE Resource Centers and Business Operations

- Our staff will begin to work remotely effective Wednesday, March 18 but will remain available to support you by phone, email or virtual means. We thank you in advance for your patience as we navigate this new work environment.
- All school recruitment and program activities are suspended. This includes activities like cookie booths, troop camping, troop meetings, travel, trainings and service unit meetings, activities, and events.
- All meetings with external visitors at our Service Centers and Program Centers are suspended.
- We are suspending all Girl Scout facility rentals.
- GSWISE Retail Shops will be closed to external visitors beginning Monday, March 16. Customers will be able to place orders by phone (800-565-4475) or email (customercare@gswise.org.)
- If you or your girl(s) are registered for a council-sponsored program, refunds will be processed by the council. If you registered for a service unit-sponsored program, you must contact the service unit leader. If you have further questions, please contact our Customer Care team at 800-565-4475.



- This does not mean that Girl Scouting stops. We encourage you to use webinars, teleconferences and other technologies to engage girls and adults. GSWISE will create “surprise and delight” moments to keep our Girl Scouts engaged by designing program activities that can be completed at home or online.

The Girl Scouts Cookie Program

Effective March 16, all Girl Scout Cookie Booths will continue to be suspended until at least April 6. Additional Girl Scout Cookie Program updates include:

- The Girl Scout Cookie Program will now extend until April 30 for those troops that want additional selling time.
- All Girl Scout Cookie Booths will be suspended until at least April 6 and all stores have been notified.
 - Troops do NOT need to cancel upcoming booths in ABC Smart Cookies.
- To help GSWISE better assess the current unsold cookie inventory, we are asking troops with unsold cookies to complete this [Troop Inventory Form](#) by 5:00pm on Thursday, March 19. If we do not hear from you or your troop, we will draw the conclusion that all your booth cookies have been sold.
- Cookie cupboards will be closed until at least April 6. If you need cookies to fill orders, please go to the [Online Cookie Cupboard](#).
- Upcoming ACH withdrawal (25%) on March 18 will continue as planned. If you have concerns regarding this upcoming withdrawal, please call Customer Care at 800-565-4475.
- Final ACH withdrawal (remaining amount) will be delayed until May 1.
- Options to decrease your cookie inventory:
 - Post your unsold cookies on the [Online Cookie Cupboard](#). Troops looking for cookies will be directed there, and troop leaders can work together to coordinate an exchange of cookies.
 - Sell online! All girls have the opportunity to set up an online selling account and email customers.
 - Cookie reward orders will not be due until the final dates and decisions have been finalized.

Our Council is taking these steps to minimize exposure to COVID-19 and its spread while doing our best to continue to provide a quality Girl Scout experience. At this time, we are holding onto hope that extending the sale to April 30 will help alleviate overstock of cookies and allow both the troops and council to reach their established cookie goals. We will reassess in early April as this situation continues to evolve.

Rest assured, GSWISE has no intention of causing any troop to be in financial difficulty due to



this health situation and the inability to hold Girl Scout cookie booths. We will work together to make this cookie season a successful one for your troop.

We will continue to closely monitor official local, county, state, and federal guidance, and will be prepared to disseminate new, relevant information to our members and their families as it becomes available.

Please remember that the best protection is self-protection and self-monitoring, especially in this flu season. The CDC has also put together this helpful [handout](#) on what you can do to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. For additional information, including resources for how you can talk to your girl about COVID-19, please review [this FAQ](#) and/or visit the links below:

- [How to Talk to Your Girl About Coronavirus](#)
 - *Help Her Be Happy and Healthy (Raising Awesome Girls Blog)* created by the Girl Scouts has also created a way to talk to girls not by avoiding the topic, but by tackling it head-on.
- [Wisconsin Department of Health Services - Coronavirus](#)
- [Milwaukee](#), [Waukesha](#), [Racine](#), [Kenosha](#), [Washington](#), [Ozaukee](#), [Walworth County Websites](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control - Coronavirus](#)
- [World Health Organization - Coronavirus](#)

Thank you for your support, and please do not hesitate to contact our Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast team by emailing customercare@gswise.org, or calling 800-565-4475.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christy L. Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christy L. Brown, JD
CEO, Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast