

COVID-19 Message 4.3.20

Dear Valued GSHPA Volunteer –

Good afternoon. Let me begin by thanking you for all you do for Girl Scouts every day. Never before have we been in a scenario like this one. I am so very grateful for your continued commitment to our girls in all the ways you are supporting their Girl Scout experience, and, in particular, for your flexibility as we make nearly daily decisions regarding the Girl Scout Cookie Program. I know this has been a time of great change as we all navigate this new normal.

As the whole world pivots to virtual in the face of local, regional and national guidance to stay at home, there is no question that at the troop, service unit and Council level, the COVID-19 pandemic has upended the way we historically have conducted the Girl Scout Cookie Program. As in other areas of our lives, we are now also rallying to take advantage of new ways to promote Girl Scout Cookies. I am so proud of how our Girl Scouts are taking charge and developing remarkable entrepreneurial skills as they discover, connect and take action. Thank you for your very important role in this pivot.

At the troop level, we have seen video marketing, social media campaigns and community engagement by our Girl Scouts. At the service unit level, we have seen collaboration and support for all of our leaders and cookie liaisons. At the Council level, GSHPA has been working diligently with our national organization and our baker to create options for our troops to extend the Girl Scout Cookie Program season and delay payments to maximize opportunity for our girls to achieve their goals. We are committed to the concept that cookies will not be a financial burden to any of our Girl Scout families, and we are working to eliminate hardship for troops, families and girls. We are also committed to making this season successful for all of our troops.

We are Girl Scouts. We are resilient. We believe that the 2020 Girl Scout Cookie Program can be a complete success for our troops, service units and Council and we are creating the tools to make that happen. As you already know, we are partnering with businesses in the community to establish unstaffed cookie booths for the benefit of our troops. We are working with the media to give greater visibility to our Cookie Program. We are connecting interested buyers with troops through our Member Services email, website live chat function and Volunteer Support Coordinators.

Today, we are excited to announce additional initiatives. As we move forward, we will be **discounting shipping for cookie customers** and **increasing troop proceeds** for those troops who continue active participation through May 31st and offering a new **digital cookie mapping tool** to support troops that are participating online.

We also recognize that there are those of you for whom COVID-19 is up close and personal, and more than the societal burden of staying at home that we all face. For those in extraordinary circumstances, we will be working with you to exit the Girl Scout Cookie Program so you may focus on the personal impact of this pandemic in your household. GSHPA is dedicated to supporting these troops, and we will honor their decisions to end their season early.

Below are the options GSHPA is offering to each troop that is enrolled in our Cookie Program.

Option A: For those troops who continue selling until May 31st, GSHPA will continue working with you to maximize opportunities. Troop proceeds for those troops will increase by two (.02) cents per package at all tiers. Shipping costs will be discounted by five (\$5.00) dollars for any orders over nine (9) packages.

Option B: For those troops that find themselves in extraordinary circumstances due to the pandemic, and find that the troop is no longer in a position to move forward with the Girl Scout Cookie Program, please contact our Director of Product Program and Retail, Jess Delp at jdelp@gshpa.org.

Option C: For those troops that have sold all inventory, and the troop has decided not to request additional inventory, they may end their participation in this year's Girl Scout Cookie Program early.

On Tuesday, April 7th, we will follow up with an additional email, which will include a WUFOO response form, so you can indicate the decision of your girls and troop. It's important you have several days to discuss these options with your Girl Scouts and their families, and ask any questions you may have of our Product Program team and/or your Volunteer Support Coordinator.

Please be patient as we roll out next steps to support you during this unprecedented time. We know that these decisions are not easy; we hope to maintain and build on the trust our families have in Girl Scouts as the place where their daughter can become a young woman of courage, confidence and character. And, again, I thank you for your willingness to adapt and overcome as we all navigate this challenging time.

Yours in Girl Scouts,
Janet Donovan
RADM, JAGC, USN(Ret.)
President and Chief Executive Officer
Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania