

## Rio Grande Communication for COVID-19 Response

Dear Scouting Family of the Rio Grande Council,

Following the [guidance of the Center for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), the leadership of the Rio Grande Council is working in ongoing coordination with local health officials with regards to the operations of Scouting programs and the recent outbreak of the COVID-19 virus.

**For Hidalgo County Residents, latest COVID-19 updates please visit:**

<https://www.hidalgocounty.us/2630/Coronavirus-Updates>

**For Willacy, Starr, and Zapata Counties, latest COVID-19 updates please visit:**

<https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/>

**For Cameron County Residents, latest COVID-19 updates please visit:**

<http://www.cameroncounty.us/publichealth/>

Our top priority in Scouting is the safety of our youth members, families, and volunteers. First and foremost, the decision to participate in Scouting is voluntary, and each family should make a personal decision for what level of participation, if any, it will have in Scouting meetings and activities during this outbreak.

The Rio Grande Council would like to emphasize the following guidance from the CDC, which should be applied to all Scouting meetings and activities:

Clean your hands often

- **Wash your hands** often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.

Avoid close contact

- **Avoid close contact** with people who are sick
- Put **distance between yourself and other people** if COVID-19 is spreading in your community. This is especially important for [people who are at higher risk of getting very sick](#).

Stay home if you're sick

- **Stay home** if you are sick, except to get medical care. Learn [what to do if you are sick](#).

Cover coughs and sneezes

- **Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- **Throw used tissues** in the trash.
- Immediately **wash your hands** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Clean and disinfect

- **Clean AND disinfect [frequently touched surfaces](#) daily.** This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- **If surfaces are dirty, clean them:** Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

Travelers Returning from Abroad

- Depending on your travel history, you should **stay home for a period of 14 days** if you left an area with widespread or ongoing community spread ([Level 3 Travel Health Notice](#)).

This situation is a dynamic and evolving situation and our council leadership will be monitoring the situation closely alongside local health officials and determine the most appropriate response to the conditions at hand. For determining participation in Scouting activities, in addition to following all of the above guidance from the CDC, the following actions should be taken.

Unit / Den Meetings and Activities

- Unit leadership should first consult with your unit's Chartered Organization. The organization may have policies or protocols that have been put in place in response to COVID-19. **Remember that the Chartered Organization "owns" your Scouting unit and has ultimate authority in these decisions.**
- If your unit's meeting place is a different entity than your unit's Chartered Organization, the unit leadership should consult with the meeting place as to any policies or protocols that they have

put in place in response to COVID-19. For many Cub Scout Packs, this will be a school campus. **Arrangements for alternate meeting locations may be needed.**

- For any outside activities, contact the facility's management to determine if that facility has put any restrictions or policies in place in response to COVID-19.
- After consulting with the Chartered Organization, **unit committees should determine the most appropriate path forward in delivering the Scouting program for its families.** The unit leadership should respect any family's decision not to participate during this outbreak and make plans to help Scouts that do not participate re-engage after it is complete.

#### District Meetings and Activities

- District leadership should consult with the facility manager of all district meeting locations and event locations to determine if those facilities have put in place any policies or protocols in response to COVID-19. **Arrangement for alternate meeting and event locations may be needed.**
- **No meeting or activity should be postponed or cancelled without the approval of the Rio Grande Council.** Any such request should come with the full recommendation of the District Key-3 and communicated through the Scout Executive.

#### Council Facilities

- At this time, all facilities owned by the Rio Grande Council are **open for full operations.** This includes the Scout Service Center, Camp Perry, and Laguna Station
- Our facilities have handwashing stations, soap, and cleaning supplies to comply with the guidance provided by the CDC.

#### Council Events

- All scheduled council events are being examined on a case-by-case basis by the Rio Grande Council.

As Scouts and Scouters, it is our duty to be prepared. We also must not panic while making the best decisions possible for our Scouting programs and its members. Our council leadership is committed to being diligent with regular communications as this situation evolves. **As this is a constantly evolving situation, please regularly monitor our standard means of communication (Facebook, Email, and Council Website) for updates.** If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact our Scout Service Center at 956-423-0250

Thank you for all you do for Scouting.

Paty Garcia  
Council Commissioner

Manny Guerra III  
Chair of the Board

Rudy Gonzalez  
Scout Executive / CEO