



Camp Update #4 May 18, 2020

**Operations update regarding summer of 2020 and Unit,
District and Council use of camp properties
During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Please know that the safety of Participants and our Staff is priority #1 and we are planning to offer an outdoor experience for youth and adults who have otherwise been indoors for some time.

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic continues to be a significant health concern, one that the BSA takes very seriously. The North Florida Council and the Boy Scouts of America are committed to providing a safe high-quality program for young people who will be participating in programs at our properties: St Johns River Base and Camp Shands.

Health guidance from State and Local authorities regarding Summer Day and Resident Camps has been very slow in forthcoming. We continue to monitor daily and ask for guidance. As soon as we have this guidance, we can then determine if we can offer you and your Scouts a safe and smart Summer outdoor experience.

We understand you need information now in order to plan and communicate with other leaders and parents, so here is our most updated information and guidance.

As soon as specific and additional government guidance is made available to us, we will review our programs and provide additional updates. We ask for your understanding and patience at this time.

Summer Day Camps & Aquatics Camp

We have made the difficult decision to cancel Cub Scout Day Camp and Aquatics Camp programs. An alternative program is being developed to be offered at the River Base this summer. It is anticipated that information regarding this new program will be made available on or shortly after June 1, 2020. Pending agreement with public health authorities we believe this program will be offered in July and will be geared towards youth and families ages 6-15.

Resident Camp at Camp Shands

Camp Shands resident camp will be in operation this summer with modifications and a delayed start. We are currently planning to begin 4 weeks of Scouts BSA resident Camp beginning on June 28, 2020. Scouts BSA Troops that have reservations for earlier in June are being contacted personally and provided an opportunity to move to a later week in July, apply deposits to future programs/camps, make a contribution to support Camp Shands or request a refund.

We know that Summer Camp at Camp Shands will be very different than in previous years. Physical distancing, increased sanitizing procedures and group size restrictions will limit the camp's ability to offer all merit badge programs and activities. Participants can expect medical screenings before departure, upon arrival and daily while on site. Revised dining hall operations and tenting/accommodations are a distinct possibility. It is very probable not all program areas will be available. We have developed several program and operational contingencies; however, without official governmental authority and guidance, it is difficult to proceed and announce at this time.

Further, while precautions to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 while at camp will be in place, participants are advised that these precautions do not remove the potential for exposure to COVID-19 or any other illness while at camp. Some people with COVID-19 show no signs or symptoms of illness but can still spread the virus, and people may be contagious before their symptoms occur. These factors mean that an infected person may pass the required health screenings and be allowed into camp.

We also know the very nature of camp makes social distancing difficult in many situations and impossible in others.

What Should I be doing?

Continue your registration process for camp. Scouts should be working on any pre-work related to potential merit badges they wish to work on while attending camp. If you need any assistance with this please contact Carolyn Kurtz via email Carolyn.kurtz@scouting.org for assistance.

What about Summer Camp Fees?

We understand the hardship this situation has created for units and Scouts' fundraising efforts for camp; because of this we have extended Early Bird Pricing for Camp Shands for the duration of the 2020 season. No Late fees will be charged for not paying your fees on time. Deposits for Aquatics Camp and Cub Scout Day Camp may be used for other North Florida Council programs, may be donated for the use of the camp or if requested, we will refund your fees.

What about weekend Unit, District and Council camping/use at Camp Shands and the Saint Johns River Base?

We continue to monitor local, state and federal health guidelines to determine when the camps may open for Unit, District and Council use. The camps remain closed at this time. We will issue updates as soon as practical. For more information please visit www.campshands.org; www.aquaticscamp.org and www.nfcscouting.org

Yours in Scouting,

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