

What decisions has Girl Scouts of the USA Board of Directors made regarding Girl Scouts' 55th National Council Session (NCS) and G.I.R.L. 2020/convention?

The National Board held a special meeting on Tuesday, April 21, to discuss the National Council Session (NCS) and G.I.R.L. 2020/convention.

Given that safety is at the heart of all Girl Scout activities and the continuing uncertainty regarding the spread and impact of this novel coronavirus, the board voted to hold a one-time virtual session for our 55th National Council Session in October 2020. The board discussed various options and decided this was the best way to enable the business of Girl Scouting to continue in a timely manner and honor the significant business that was brought to the National Council, including four proposals initiated by councils and two that were co-created by councils and recommended to the board, as well as the business of electing the new board.

The board also made the difficult, but necessary decision, to cancel all other in-person events that were planned as part of G.I.R.L. 2020/Girl Scouts' triennial convention, including the Global Roundtable.

Why can't we hold the NCS and G.I.R.L. 2020/convention as planned in person?

At Girl Scouts, the safety and security of our members remains our top priority. As we've continued to monitor public health experts' recommendations and forecasts, it became clear that Girl Scouts could not hold convention in person in October 2020 because we can't host a large-scale, in-person event and guarantee the health and safety of participants.

Why don't we postpone until we can meet in person?

We stated several months ago that the overarching goal for NCS 2020 was "to bring together the Movement to reinforce our shared commitment to girls and build a common vision and continued excitement for our organization's future."

Given how this pandemic has created disruption within our Movement—presenting both challenges and opportunities—gathering delegates virtually during the originally planned timeframe to discuss and debate topics about the future direction of Girl Scouts will be critical to creating a strong and vibrant future for our organization and the girls we serve.

Also, it is unclear when it will be safe to resume large, in-person gatherings again; too much is unknown about the virus's spread and trajectory. We can't postpone NCS indefinitely because the business of our Movement needs to continue.

Why did the National Board make this decision now?

By making the decision now, we can maximize planning time to deliver an engaging virtual version of our 55th NCS. We understand that our councils, delegates, and those planning to attend NCS and G.I.R.L. 2020 also need time to work through these changes.

Making this decision now allows us to maximize planning time for the virtual version of the 55th NCS while we also minimize additional financial risk that GSUSA and councils might incur by delaying such a decision.

How will the virtual NCS be run and structured?

We are working through those details—ensuring that we maintain the integrity of our democratic process as the focus of all the decisions we make—and will continue to do so during the coming months. We are collecting input from councils that are holding their annual meetings virtually, working with our longstanding parliamentarian, and monitoring best practices. With our members, we will continue to co-create both NCS and the preceding education and engagement plan that supports delegates and our Movement’s leaders as they prepare to participate in this NCS.

What is happening with G.I.R.L. 2020 and the Global Roundtable?

Given that safety is at the heart of all Girl Scout activities and the continuing uncertainty regarding the spread and impact of this novel coronavirus, we made the difficult, but necessary, decision to cancel all in-person convention activities, including G.I.R.L. 2020 and the Global Roundtable.

We know this may be disappointing for the members and supporters who were looking forward to participating, especially the volunteers and staff who have been working hard to plan the events and the many girls and their troops who have been making plans to participate.

We are excited to share that the Global Roundtable Hosting Program between councils and member organizations is continuing. Additionally, over the next several weeks, we will be working with key stakeholders, including the G-TEAM, to collaborate with GSUSA and councils as we create additional engaging, Movement-wide virtual experiences for girls and adults, such as those recently launched via [Girl Scouts at Home™](#) and the [Girl Scout Network's Campfire Chats](#).

What happens with my registration? What is the refund policy?

GSUSA will refund all registrations in full (100%) for the NCS, G.I.R.L. 2020, and other convention-related events and activities made directly through GSUSA via registrants’ original payment method. Please do not contact us and ask for a refund as it will slow down the process. Please give us a few weeks to process all refunds.

For any reservations that you made with airlines, hotels, etc., you will need to contact those organizations directly to cancel.

What about the Disney packages I purchased?

For Disney’s Family Trendsetter and Magical Add-Ons, GSUSA will refund 100% of the package price via your original payment method. If you purchased tickets through Disney, you must contact Disney directly to inquire about its refund policies.

My girl earned a trip to convention for her cookie rewards, what do we do now?

We know this news is incredibly disappointing for you and that your council now finds itself in a challenging place because this cookie reward is now not possible. We are working with councils to brainstorm alternative options for the girls. Stay tuned for more details.

My troop has been saving for this for three years, will there be an alternative event?

We know this news is disheartening for you, your girl, your troop, and your council friends. We also recognize that you have been working hard to plan for this event and that many girls and their troops have been making plans to participate for several years.

Currently, we are not planning an alternative in-person event. Given how this pandemic has created an enormous and severe disruption to our ways of life, it is unclear when it will be safe to resume large, in-person gatherings again.

Although we can't meet in person, we encourage you and your members to continue to connect with our unbreakable sisterhood via the many virtual events and activities we've recently launched for girls, their families, volunteers, and alums via [Girl Scouts at Home](#) and the [Girl Scout Network's Campfire Chats](#).

What about the G-TEAM? How will their work be used?

The G-TEAM—26 brilliant young women from across Girl Scouts and Girl Guides who have played a central role in planning all aspects of our convention—will continue to work with GSUSA as thought partners about programming for older girls through the end of 2020. We are so appreciative of their efforts to bring the vision of G.I.R.L. 2020 to life, and we look forward to continuing to use their insight to create meaningful experiences for girls.

Will the next convention (in three years) be in Orlando?

Right now, we are focused on ensuring that the 55th NCS is a productive virtual meeting with our delegates. Decisions about our next convention will be announced in due course.