



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

GREATER ALABAMA COUNCIL

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) regarding Greater Alabama Council Camp Operations and Program during COVID-19 Pandemic¹

Q: Why did the Greater Alabama Council wait until May 15 before announcing a decision on Summer Camping Operations?

A: The Greater Alabama Council delayed announcing a decision on Summer Camping Operations for as long as was deemed necessary in order to gain further guidance from the Alabama Department of Public Health, the County Health Departments of our constituent counties, and guidance from the Boy Scouts of America's Program division. The decision reached, while not the desired choice, was made with the best information and guidance available.

Q: Who is responsible for making these decisions?

A: A task force made up of our VP of Program, Camping, and Properties recommended to the Greater Alabama Council, Executive Committee (A volunteer committee made up of our council officers and Vice Presidents) that we should consider not holding Day Camp and Summer Camp in June. That recommendation was then voted on and unanimously approved by the Executive Committee.

Q: What factors went into making these decisions?

A: Above any other reason, factor, or consideration, the primary focus was to ensure the health and safety of Scouts, their families, and our volunteer and camp staff. The actions taken and the decision-making process were made with an eye towards ensuring the safety of all involved in our programs and activities.

Q: What information was used to guide or inform the decision-making process?

A: In all aspects of the decision-making process, guidance from the Alabama Department of Public Health, the County Health Departments of our constituent counties, and guidance from the Boy Scouts of America's Program division was used. From the state Department of Public Health, our processes were heavily influenced by the orders of the State Health Officer issued originally on March 19, 2020 and amended again on March 20th, March 27th, April 3rd, April 28th, and most recently on May 8th.

Q: Will I be refunded for my Day Camp Fees?

¹ Version 1, Published May 21, 2020

A: Absolutely. The refund process for those who registered and paid online was initiated per Council policy on May 15th. For those who registered and paid online, it may take up to fourteen (14) days for refunds to be reflected on their credit or debit card.

For those who registered and paid via mail-in or drop off options, the refund process begins on May 18th. It may take up to fourteen (14) days for reimbursements to be issued.

Q: Will I be refunded for my Cub Family Camp Fees?

A: Absolutely. The refund process for those who registered and paid online was initiated per Council policy on May 18th. For those who registered and paid online, it may take up to fourteen (14) days for refunds to be reflected on their credit or debit card.

For those who registered and paid via mail-in or drop off options, the refund process begins on May 18th. It may take up to fourteen (14) days for reimbursements to be issued.

Q: Will I be refunded for my Summer Camp Fees?

A: Yes, if your unit opts not to participate in the abbreviated Summer Camp season in July.

Q: If my summer camp is cancelled, can my unit get together with other units and have our own camp?

A: No. Chartering organizations play an important role in the program and activities for their chartered units. Chartering organizations promote well-planned unit program for the units they charter and encourage their units to have active outdoor unit programs. Chartering organizations are not authorized to plan, promote, and deliver programs for units outside of their charter.

It is the role of the Council to plan summer camps and the role of councils or districts to plan camporees and other outings during the year that give youth an opportunity to test their knowledge and skills in competitive events with other troops and/or patrols.

When units with different chartered organizations do activities together, this becomes a district or council event and requires council approval. In fact, some states require such activities to be licensed.

Should your troop, crew or ship decide to do a long-term summer camping program for their own unit (Cub Scouts units are prohibited from this activity) please note that the Scouter Code of Conduct and relevant program safety and training requirements are still in place, e.g., Safe Swim Defense, Hazardous Weather, Wilderness First Aid, etc.

Q. How can my son or daughter continue to advance in Cub Scouting this summer without day camp?

A. Your Scout will be able to work on advancements throughout the summer while at home. There are numerous opportunities available that will help them with advancements including digital day camps, various 30-Day Challenges, and more. The Cub program works very well in the home environment as most families find the Cub adventures fun and engaging for all.

Q: May parents sign off on Webelos and Arrow of Light requirements?

A: Yes. Through July 31, 2020, parents and other adults in the Cub Scout's family may sign off on Webelos and Arrow of Light requirements. We strongly encourage that parents use the Scouting App or ScoutBook to record completion of their child's requirements.

Q: If my den is behind in advancement due to COVID-19, can my Cub Scout continue to work on advancement through the summer?

A: Yes. Cub Scouts can continue to work on their current den's advancement through July 31, 2020. This is to provide any additional time a Cub Scout needs to complete their badge of rank; if they earn their badge of rank prior to July 31, 2020, they may advance to the next rank.

Q. What is cancelled or closed as of today in the Greater Alabama Council?

A. As of today (May 21, 2020) the following activities are cancelled:

- Arrowhead District Day Camp
- Westmoreland District Day Camp
- Council Cub Day Camp at Oak Mountain State Park
- Council Cub Day Camp at the National Speleological Society Park in Huntsville
- Council Cub Day Camp at Sloss Furnaces in Birmingham
- Scouts BSA Summer Camp at Camp Sequoyah (All summer)
- Scouts BSA Summer Camp at Camp Comer (June ONLY)
- Webelos Resident Camp at Camp Comer
- Cub Family Camp at Camp Comer

Q. Will July activities be cancelled?

A. At this time, the only activity scheduled for July is the Scouts BSA resident camp at Camp Comer. It is our hope that we will be able to continue with this activity, however we must emphasize that this is a dynamic situation and we will continuously evaluate program feasibility as new guidance from the Alabama Department of Public Health is issued in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q. What are other camps in Alabama doing in response to the pandemic?

A. The Black Warrior Council, Mobile Area Council, Tukabatchee Area Council, and the Alabama-Florida Council have cancelled entirely or are scheduling alternative resident summer camping activities (Tukabatchee and Alabama Florida).

Q: Once camp opens in July, what precautions will you be taking to ensure the safety of campers?

A: The health and safety of all participants of our programs is our number one priority. The Greater Alabama Council has implemented several policies to help ensure that safety. These include:

- Medical screenings upon arrival at camp including a temperature check
- Camp will operate at half capacity to alleviate overcrowding
- Tents will be limited to one camper per tent: exception siblings can tent with each other
- Increased sanitation stations throughout camp

- Designated staff will be assigned to clean high traffic areas multiple times a day
- Dining Hall services will be altered to ensure social distancing
- Program supplies and areas will be sanitized between uses
- Merit Badge classes will follow social distancing guidelines
- Highly visited areas or areas that require close staff interaction (shooting sports, climbing tower, trading post) will be “mask zones” campers and staff will be required to wear mask in these area

Q: Why did you just cancel programs in June and not the entire summer?

A: The Council continues to monitor the situation. At this time, we feel it is too early to cancel all of summer and we are planning to have a great resident camp experience for those Troops that wish to participate.

Q: Why are you not holding any sessions at Camp Sequoyah in July?

A: Once camp set-up and staff week would have concluded at Sequoyah, the normal camping season at Sequoyah is almost at an end. We did look at running Sequoyah all through-out July, be we did not have the resources, mainly with staff availability, to operate a different season time frame.

Q: Where can I get more information?

A: More information about Greater Alabama Council Operations including camping and program operations, can be found at:

<https://1bsa.org/coronavirus/>

More information about the guidelines and recommendations that guide our decision-making processes can be found at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

<https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/covid19/>

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