



A “New Normal”

When Can We Start Scouting Again?

On March 14, life changed quickly and drastically around the globe, forcing organizations and businesses to suspend their activities and adapt, with Scouts Canada being no exception. But while we suspended our traditional activities, we haven't stopped Scouting. The resilience shown by our community has been extraordinary as we came together to ensure that Scouting remains active despite the challenges.

Whether through our activity-based “Scouting at Home” newsletter or through virtual meetings, our community has demonstrated the continuous value of Scouting in these uncertain times. We have received numerous messages from parents and Scouters sharing that, in some cases, virtual meetings are the only connection some youth still have with peers, outside of online schooling. Many parents have said that their children look forward to their weekly Scouting event, where they can put on their uniform and enjoy ‘being a kid again’ in spite of the unpredictable reality we are all adjusting to.

These interactions, even online, are extremely beneficial during this time of ‘sheltering at home’, and vital to the mental and physical development of our youth. Our dedicated and passionate volunteers have made an immeasurable difference in many young peoples’ lives by continuing the Scouting adventure online.

The Path Forward

What does Scouting look like in the short and long term?

Although the immediate future remains unclear, one thing is certain: Scouts Canada's focus is the continued **safety** of the youth entrusted in our care, along with that of our employees, volunteers and parents. We also want to ensure the **sustainability** of Scouting as a vibrant community and youth-leadership opportunity both now and long into the future. Despite current challenges, we see this time as an opportunity to improve our connections with each other, exchange ideas and enrich our program.

Canadians and Scouting parents are looking for assurance that as we re-open Scouting we will be able to provide safe Scouting adventures. In light of this, we will act prudently: we will not move first but will learn from others and act accordingly. We will follow Provincial advice, guidelines and regulations.

We will move cohesively, as one Scouting community, to continue providing outstanding development opportunities for Canadian youth, even as we appreciate that in the near-term the Scouting “normal” will not look like it did in February.

In keeping with our values and the principles outlined above, we would like to share the following actions and next steps with you:

- **Virtual Focus** — No in-person Scouting activities will be permitted until August 31, 2020.
- **Extended Membership** — Scouts Canada will extend memberships for all youth until December 31, 2020 to support continued virtual Scouting and in-person, outdoor activities in the fall. There will be no cost to members associated with this extension.
- **New Scouting Year** — Registration will re-open in the fall for the start of a new Scouting Year, beginning in January 2021. We will also work to enable new youth members to join Scouts whenever and wherever possible. Registration will continue to offer a 2-week advanced window for existing members.
- **New Standards for In-Person Activity** — We are developing standards and guidelines to take effect September 1, 2020; they will support our Scouters and

ensure our in-person meetings in the fall will follow Provincial health and safety requirements.

- **Virtual Scouting** — Scouts Canada will develop a comprehensive and robust program to support Section virtual meetings that keep youth active and engaged in Scouting.

We recognize that the pandemic has disrupted people's lives in unprecedented ways. We are tremendously proud of the efforts of our members to continue Scouting, and we are inspired by the numerous stories of Scouts and Scouters giving back to their communities in this time of great need. We look forward to working with everyone to return to in-person Scouting in a safe and meaningful way in the months ahead.

Yours in Scouting,



Andrew Price, Executive Commissioner and CEO



Annabelle Loder, National Youth Commissioner



Tim Welch, National Commissioner



Richard Thomas, Chair of the Board