

Messages from Kit Cheng, Council Commissioner
March 1, 2020 9:53pm

[Scouts - YHW (AST)] Updates - Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Hi Group Commissioners and Leadership Teams,

On January 27, I sent out an email regarding New Coronavirus in Ontario (now known as COVID-19). Thank you for everyone's cooperation and feedback on this subject. Today, we would like to re-affirm our notes mentioned in the January 27 email.

It is important to note at this time: the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) has assessed the public health risk associated with COVID-19 as **low** for Canada. The public health risk is continually reassessed as new information becomes available. Please continue to take advice and recommendations only from official and trustworthy sources - such as [Ontario Public Health](#) and [Canada Public Health](#)

Re-iterating our recommendations to all Groups back in January:

- Continue all Scouting activities where practical and safe to do so - do exercise the same level of caution as peak flu seasons. Groups can contact Safe Scouting for advice when in doubt.
- Encourage healthy practices as recommended by Health Authorities (e.g., wash hands frequently and thoroughly with soap & water, cover your mouth & nose when you cough or sneeze, stay home if you or your family members are ill)
- If the member is asked to stay home by their school, workplace, custom, or health authorities - then they are to stay home and not come to Scouting activities.
- Be firm with safety - but don't make unnecessary rules that will cause more significant harm. For example, it is appropriate to enforce frequent hand-washing. However, it is not necessary to make our members wear medical masks to Scouting activities - if the member is ill - they're to stay home. As per Canadian Public Health Authority - "If you are a healthy individual, the use of a mask is not necessary" ([Source - Q10](#))
- Same rules should apply to adults and youths
- Group Commissioners - please continue to be knowledgeable about the activities your sections will be undertaking in the next few weeks (no reporting required - it's just for your information in case you need to act on short notice). It would be a good idea to check emails regularly for possible updates as the situation continues to develop. Scouts Canada or Council will provide updates as necessary
- Group Commissioners - please ensure your Scouters and Youth/Parent's contact information are up-to-date.

- It's crucial that we, as Scouters, stay calm but be knowledgeable about the situation - and act quickly on facts and official advice. We must work together to ensure our people are feeling safe and that misinformation is not being spread that elevates concern.

We thank you for your support. Please share this message with your teams. You can reach out to your Group's Relationship Manager or Safe Scouting for help and guidance - so that we can continue to stay safe and have fun.

Yours in Scouting,

Kit Cheng

Council Commissioner - Shining Waters Council

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