

PRAIRIELANDS COUNCIL SUMMER 2020 CAMP PROGRAM CANCELLATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Why were summer 2020 camp programs cancelled?

A. The decision to cancel all summer programming at our camp properties was difficult on both an historical and an emotional level. We remained hopeful for as long as possible as our staff exhausted all alternative programming options with the goal of saving our 88th year of Camp Robert Drake. We are committed to closely following guidance from the American Camp Association, the Center for Disease Control, local health departments, medical experts, and our council's COVID-19 Advisory Group to support our programming decisions and have remained committed to providing a safe environment for campers, staff, and families. Ultimately, we determined that the best course of action for protecting our Scouting families and our staff is to cancel our summer camp programs through July 31, 2020.

Q. Is there a possibility that camp programs will resume this summer if things change?

A. No. We know that the time will come when shelter-in-place orders are lifted, social distancing is no longer required, and health care experts provide clear guidance for reopening. Given our standards of excellence and the time that is required to provide appropriate training, prepare our camp properties, and to have certified staff, we will not return to traditional summer programming this year. When it is safe to do so, we will resume programming.

Q. What happens to my troop's deposit?

A. 2020 deposits will be refunded back to the units, unless otherwise requested. If your troop has any questions about their reservation, please contact Mike Graham at mike.graham@scouting.org.

Q. Can I get a refund of my camp fees?

A. For those of you who have registered for summer programming and have paid full or partial programming deposits/fees, you have the following options:

- Receive a full refund. Refunds will be issued by check to the person who made payment around June 1st.
- Support camp through this difficult time by donating all or a portion of your camper deposit/fees.
- Carry your registration over to 2021.
- A combination of the above - donation, refund and/or deposit for 2021. You should receive an email detailing these options no later than May 18, 2020. If you do not receive an email by May 18, please contact Mike Graham at mike.graham@scouting.org to indicate your preference.

Q. How can I help Camp?

A. Thank you for your support. Camp Drake relies on camp fees to maintain the property, pay our staff, and ensure appropriate equipment is available.

If you are able, you can support Camp through this difficult time by:

- Making a donation for maintaining Camp Robert Drake at <https://prairielandsforms.tentaroo.com/FOS-donation>
- Donating all or a portion of your camper deposits/fees to Camp's greatest needs
 - **Please consult your tax professional, but for people who no longer itemize their charitable giving, the CARES Act will allow these individual taxpayers to deduct donations to charity of up to \$300 on their 2020 federal tax return, even though they take the standard deduction.**
- Notifying us of any grant funding opportunities
- Notifying us of any foundations we should be approaching
- Connecting camp with Donor Advised Funds that are currently being distributed

Q. Why aren't you able to run camp programs for a portion of summer?

A. Preparing Camp Drake for a successful summer season is a complex and multifaceted endeavor even in normal operating years. Besides preparing the property, we must have ample time for staff to be trained and receive the proper certifications required to operate our many camp program areas. Both of these necessary steps have been made nearly impossible to complete due to local and state regulations pursuant to COVID-19. We are closely following guidance from the American Camp Association, the Centers for Disease Control, local health departments, medical experts, and our council's COVID-19 Advisory Group to support our programming decisions and have remained committed to providing a safe environment for campers and families. Further, the state government in Illinois has issued a detailed "recovery plan" (Restore Illinois) for operations and social interactions during the pandemic. These plans both have multiple phases, and our firm judgment is that the only phase that would permit us to operate large-scale summer programs will not be reached this summer. Ultimately, there remains too much uncertainty about the progression of the COVID-19 pandemic and how to maintain a safe environment at Camp for us to continue with summer programming this year.

Q. My Scout is having a really hard time with this, do you have any suggestions?

A. Camp is a special place. Many of our campers count down the days until they can return. Feeling sad about not being able to come to camp this year is normal, and we are sad, too. Additionally, we hope to create some of the magic of Camp Drake through the virtual programming currently in development. We encourage Scouts and families to participate in that programming.

Q. I was going to work at Camp this summer – will I be eligible for re-hire next year?

A. All staff who applied for this summer will be eligible for re-hire when programming resumes. Please ensure we have your most recent contact for information so we can stay in touch about what you can expect for our next operating season. If you think your contact information may be out-of-date, send an email to Mike Graham at mike.graham@scouting.org.

Q. My troop conducted an Order of the Arrow election. How is my troop impacted?

A. Ordeal candidates elected between February 1, 2019 and July 1, 2020 will have 24 months from date of election to complete their Ordeal. Details about Fall Order of the Arrow events will be shared later in the summer.

Q. Will there be any fall programs?

A. We will be following the state recovery plans, along with recommendations from the CDC, ACA, local health departments and medical experts, to make decisions about Fall programming. At this time, we anticipate being able to provide some Fall programming

Q. Can I come visit Camp Drake this summer?

A. Camp Drake is a special place for many. We understand your desire to visit. At present, under Illinois shelter-in-place rules, it is simply not appropriate to visit. If you are interested in visiting when it becomes safe to do so, we ask that you please contact Mike Graham at mike.graham@scouting.org. Mike will subsequently let you know when it is permissible to plan a visit and what precautions will be necessary.

Q. Will there be Camp programs next year?

A. Yes! We look forward to welcoming you all back at Camp Drake once again in 2021.

Q: Does this decision also apply to in-person unit level activities and events this summer?

A: At present, we have suspended all in-person unit level activities and events through May 30. We are in the process of formulating further guidance for unit level activities and events during June and July, and we expect to release that guidance no later than May 30. We will follow the Restore Illinois plan and recognize we need to be in Phase 3 – Recovery for groups of 10 or less and Phase 4 –Revitalization for groups of 50 or less.

Q: I have a question about summer camp operations not answered here. Who should I ask?

A: For questions about camp operations, please contact Mike Graham at mike.graham@scouting.org or Jared White at Jared.White@scouting.org.