



Good Turns

Acts of Scouting Service You Can Do From Home

(Credit: Bryan on Scouting, published March 18, 2020)

With schools closed and many Scouting events on pause, how do you continue to “Do a Good Turn Daily”?

By remembering that acts of Scouting service don’t have to stop because you’re at home practicing social distancing.

“We don’t stop being Scouts just because our meetings are physically on hold,” says Leah Nehls, a volunteer from Ypsilanti, Mich. “We have plenty of opportunities to do good and be a positive impact in our communities during times when people are feeling scared or trapped in their houses.”

Here are some ideas for following the Scout Slogan in the time of the coronavirus.

1. Send a ‘thinking of you’ video or email to a local nursing home — or give them a call

Scouts and Venturers might take this time away from school to send electronic notes, images or video greetings to nursing homes and assisted-living facilities in their community.

The first step would be to contact the facility to figure out the logistics of sending these messages.

“Those folks can no longer receive visitors and would feel forgotten,” says Maceo Felton, a volunteer from the Coastal Georgia Council. “Wouldn’t this be a great way to let these elderly people know that Scouts are thinking about them?”

You could make a handmade card and take a photo of it, share a video greeting or simply pick up the phone and give them a call.

To ensure you’re following Youth Protection guidelines, have your Scouts copy an adult on all email communications. For phone calls, make sure you’re in the room with the Scout.

2. Help with grocery pick-up/delivery

As long as it’s safe to do so, and a parent or guardian is present, Scouts could offer to pick up and deliver groceries for those who are unable to leave their homes.

They should practice social distancing — remaining 6 feet away from others — and thoroughly wash their hands before and after performing this act of service.

3. Send a thank-you message to a local hospital

ER doctors, nurses and other critical care professionals can't work remotely.

Let's make sure they're thanked for their hard work. Scouts can send electronic messages to these hard-working heroes. Again, be sure to find a nonemergency contact at the hospital before sending a message. We don't want to overwhelm these facilities with calls.

"This seems like a great idea to do a national Scouting Good Turn, occupy students who are home from school with little to do and help the spirits of our critical care health care workers," says Todd Plotner, a Distinguished Eagle Scout and longtime Scouting volunteer.

While officials say the coronavirus doesn't survive long on objects, it's better to be safe than sorry. So electronic messages are best at this time.

4. Contact your local food bank

With schools closed, many families that relied on schools to provide food for their children are left missing out.

[Find your local food bank](#) and see what help they might need. If you can assist in a way that's safe, please do.

5. Call your loved ones

Call, FaceTime or Skype your loved ones — especially those who are older and may not be leaving their houses. Ask about their childhood, their first car, where they grew up.

Did they have electricity? Running water?

This conversation could even meet merit badge requirements, such as requirement 2D of the [American Heritage merit badge](#).

6. Donate blood

The coronavirus has caused many blood drives to be canceled, prompting concerns of a blood shortage.

Encourage any healthy person 18 or older to donate blood through the American Red Cross.

The Red Cross has set up [this page](#) that answers questions potential donors might have about the safety of giving blood during the coronavirus pandemic.