



## Writing Letters to Seniors and Caretakers:

### Troop Leader Instructions

Serving our communities is part of how Girl Scouts lead, especially in times of our country's greatest need. During World War I and the Spanish flu pandemic, Girl Scouts collected peach pits to be ground up and used in making soldiers' gas masks, rolled bandages for the Red Cross, educated their communities about food production, and sold U.S. Treasury Bonds. On the home front in World War II, Girl Scouts planted victory gardens; conducted scrap drives for rubber, metal, and nylon; and trained with the Red Cross on first aid. They sent President Franklin Delano Roosevelt a "check" documenting 5.4 million hours of service.

**Girl Scouts have always stepped up in times of need, and our current COVID-19 crisis is no different. All across the country, Girl Scouts have leapt to the aid of others by engaging in wonderful acts of service and kindness. Now your troop can get involved too!**

The idea is simple: girls write letters to people in nursing homes, senior centers, and assisted living facilities, including the dedicated staff and caregivers. This long-distance hug is a way to share your good thoughts with these vulnerable and loved community members.

#### Here's how it works:

1. Ask your girls (and their friends!) to write letters using the [Tips for Writing Letters to Seniors and Caretakers](#). You can share the handout with your girls before you write letters or during your virtual troop meeting.
2. You can mail letters to one of the locations ready to receive letters from Girl Scout troops. The list is available on the [National Service Project page](#). Or you can reach out to a local assisted living center or nursing home and find out how they would like to receive your troop's letters.
3. Decide how to collect and deliver your troop's letters. You could collect the letters (using no-contact practices) and mail them or drop them off as a packet, have girls mail them individually, or even deliver them via email. Do whatever is easiest and safest for you and your troop. If you decide to have girls mail them on their own, provide the council office address as the return address.

4. Include a letter or note to the facility staff explaining who your letters are for, along with suggested ideas for sharing your letters (for example, adding a letter to meal trays or decorating a nurse's station). A sample letter to the facility can be found [here](#).
5. If your troop wrote both "thinking of you" notes for residents and "thank you" notes for staff and caregivers, make sure to organize your package so that it is easy for staff to deliver letters to the right recipients.
6. Take a picture of your letter packet and post it to your social media networks using #GirlScoutsGiveBack (and be sure to tag us @girlscouts).
7. Don't forget to visit our [National Service Project page](#) and log the number of letters you send to add them to the national campaign. Let's see how many letters of love and care our Movement can send!
8. If you wish to recognize your troop's participation with a patch, we recommend this [community service patch](#).