

Girl Scouts Heart of New Jersey

Sector: Nonprofit | Size Range: 50-99 Employees | Interviewed: 6/16/2020

The Organization

Girl Scouts Heart of New Jersey operates programs for Girl Scouts living in Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Somerset, Union, southern Warren, and parts of Middlesex counties. They operate day and overnight camps in Middleville, Hillsborough, and Maplewood.

Staffing

Employees stopped coming into the office after March 13th. Thankfully the transition to telework was a smooth one. The organization recently sold its office in Montclair and had been running a remote workforce pilot program for the past 6-7 months. Everybody outside of their customer support team had already been set up with a laptop, and it was not difficult to get those few employees set up once GSHNJ decided to shift to telework. As of today, they have not had to furlough or lay off any employees, but will continue to assess over the coming months. They use Zoom and Microsoft Teams for group meetings. The staff convenes for an all staff Zoom meeting every other week.

Some employees visit the office as necessary. Before going in, employees must notify HR, their Manager, and their Facilities Manager. Their payroll employee goes into the office every Wednesday after payroll is run, and the Facilities Manager stops by their Westfield and North Branch buildings a couple of times per week to receive mail and check on the office. Others will occasionally go in to collect files if they need to.

COVID Task Force

GSHNJ's COVID task force is composed of their CEO, COO, Director of Girl Experience, Facilities Manager, HR Director, Fund Development Director, Product Program Director, Retail Manager, Customer Support Manager and three Membership Managers. They meet once per week over Zoom.

Impact on Programming

GSHNJ decided against running in-person summer camps on May 15th, because they did not feel they could ensure the safety of their staff and campers while maintaining the camp experience. The Camp Directors began to develop virtual offerings the following Monday, May 18th. The alternative they created, [Camp in Our Hearts](#), will consist of various 3-day programs offered weekly. Campers will receive Camp Boxes containing activities and materials, and sessions are held over Zoom. Counselors will run the programs from home. Outside of camping, their Director of Girl Experience has developed other Zoom programs for the girls. Prior to the pandemic, the organization was doing very little virtual girl programming. They post COVID-19 updates for troops and volunteers on a [dedicated](#)

[webpage](#), which includes recommended safety protocols for troop meetings, Cookie Booths, and other activities.

The Future of Telework

The CEO has been very supportive of remote work and staff members have maintained productivity working remotely. They anticipate more flexibility regarding remote work in the future. While a couple of employees wish to come back into the office full-time after the pandemic subsides, the majority hopes to follow a model where they spend a few days in the office and a few days out. During the remote work pilot program, employees came into the office at least one day per week, or at least one day every other week. These decisions primarily fall with the managers. Some managers who started off more skeptical about remote work have grown more comfortable with it.