COVID-19 RESPONSE GUIDELINES
FOR TROOP LEADERS

VERSION 1: JULY 24, 2020
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**Re-opening the Girl Scout Council**

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Girl Scouts Nation’s Capital COVID-19 Response Guidelines

Girl Scouts Nation’s Capital members and staff adapted quickly to the challenges of COVID-19 providing Girl Scout virtual experiences to our girls. Beginning August 15, 2020, we anticipate lifting the restriction on in-person gatherings and once again we need to adapt.

Safety is a cornerstone in Girl Scouting and the following timeline and guidelines are intended to keep our members and our communities safe. **We anticipate updating this information in response to any significant changes in our communities related to COVID-19; therefore, these guidelines are subject to future changes.**

### Re-opening the Girl Scout Council

As of July 24 2020, the Council is planning to re-open for in-person services and gatherings. Key dates listed below. Information subject to change

**Key Dates**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Activity</th>
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<td>Saturday, August 1, 2020</td>
<td>Reservations open for program kits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, August 14, 2020</td>
<td>Suspension of in-person Girl Scout gatherings ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, August 17, 2020</td>
<td>• Visit Girl Scout offices and Equipment Center by appointment only; program kit delivery to offices begins</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Girl Scout Shop online, mail order continues; pick-up at main shop by appointment begins</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In-person volunteer training resumes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, September 1, 2020</td>
<td>Reservations open for camping equipment and flags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, September 8, 2020</td>
<td>All GS Shops scheduled to reopen. Check website for updates/procedures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, September 14, 2020</td>
<td>Camping equipment and flag deliveries to offices begin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, September 12, 2020</td>
<td>All camps open to troop camping</td>
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**Council Camp Properties**
At Council camp properties, glen shelters, platform tents, and hammock units will be available to use on September 12, 2020 for troop camping (reservations resumed on June 15, 2020). Only one troop/group reservation per weekend per site. Currently, lodges and covered wagons are not available for troop rental, but lodges are available for volunteer training only beginning August 17. (see page 8) We anticipate allowing overnight use of lodges by troops at Step IV. (see page 4)

**Equipment Center**
*Program kits, camping equipment, and flags* are available for use for the new Girl Scout year (see schedule page 1).

Equipment Center staff will disinfect items with EPA approved cleaner and deliver to designated offices while wearing disposable latex-free gloves. The Council delivery van will receive an interior deep clean once a week.

An adult member must **disinfect the contents of the container upon delivery and prior to return.** (see page 7) Program kits, camping equipment, and flags will *rest* for 72 hours which further reduces the risk of contact exposure.

**Understanding Risk**

**The Four C’s of Decision Making**

While our understanding of COVID-19 continues to grow, the CDC has identified three primary contributors to transmission – **Contact**, **Confinement**, and **Crowds**.

- **Contact**: Proximity and interaction for an extended amount of time to other people increases risk.
- **Confinement**: Limited circulation of air increases risk.
- **Crowds**: Large group gatherings mean more people, more contacts, and more potential sources of infection.

The guidelines in this document reflect the Council’s approach to minimize these risk factors for our girls, families, volunteers, staff, and our communities. Ultimately, the decision to return to in-person gatherings relies on a person’s level of comfort with risk, weighing their own age and health status, life circumstances, and general level of risk aversion or tolerance. This represents the fourth **C** – **Choice**.

Adapted from *How to Navigate Your Community Reopening? Remember the Four C’s*, by Roni Caryn Rabin, June 6 2020, NY Times.
Communication is Key
We want to do our best to make sure all Girl Scouts, families and volunteers feel included and safe throughout their Girl Scout experience. When deciding whether to host an in-person gathering, please consider the make-up and size of your troop, including possible attendees, their families, and their current comfort level with in-person activities. All members of the troop must agree and adhere to Girl Scouts Nation’s Capital safety requirements (see page 4) before resuming in-person meetings.

We recommend troop leaders hold a virtual parent meeting to discuss plan for upcoming year. The agenda may include the following:

- Discuss how Girl Scouts may fulfill girls’ current needs and interests
- Discuss opportunities to meet virtually and/or in-person based on girls’ school schedule(s)
- Discuss everyone’s comfort with in-person gatherings for girls and adults
- Share Girl Scout Nation’s Capital COVID-19 safety requirements (see page 4)
- Discuss ways to help the girls successfully follow requirements. Wearing face coverings and social distancing may be a challenge for younger girls, so practicing with girls in advance will be important.
- Identify at least two or three (2-3) specific dates for troop to meet virtually and/or in-person – sooner is better for the girls!

Transition to In-Person Gatherings

We recognize that our Council spans many jurisdictions with ever-changing COVID-related decisions. Thus, the Council adopted a stepped approach to guide a safe transition for our members in the coming months. These guidelines focus on in-person gatherings occurring within our Council boundaries.

Girl Scouts Nation’s Capital Step I (present until August 14, 2020)
1. No in-person meetings/events/activities
2. Support virtual and family experiences
Girl Scouts Nation’s Capital Step II (anticipate transition on August 15, 2020)
In-person troop meetings and overnights/camping begin.
1. Members of the troop and/or service unit must agree and adhere to COVID-19 Safety Requirements (see page 4-8) before resuming in-person gatherings.
2. Maximum of 50 people may be at an in-person indoor gathering.
3. Maximum 75 people may be at an in-person outdoor gathering.
4. Girl members should be in activity groups of no more than 15 total people (13 girls, 2 adults).
5. If dividing girls into smaller groups, recommend groups of two to three girls.
6. If attending a large event, girls should remain in the same group for the duration of the event, limit contact with other troops.

Girl Scouts Nation’s Capital Step III (anticipate transition TBD) Field trips in local community and service unit and association events begin.
1. Members of the troop and/or service unit must agree and adhere to COVID-19 Safety Requirements (see pages 4-8).
2. Maximum of 100 people may be at an in-person indoor gathering.
   - Girl members should be in activity groups of no more than 15 total people.
3. Maximum 150 people may be at an in-person outdoor gathering.
   - Girl members may be in activity groups of 25-30 total people.
4. If dividing girls into smaller groups, recommend groups of two to three girls.
5. If attending a large gathering, girls should remain in the same group for the duration of the event; limit contact with other troops.

Girl Scouts Nation’s Capital Step IV
Guidelines established based on significant positive changes to minimize transmission of COVID-19.

Girl Scouts Nation’s Capital Step V
Guidelines established based on our new normal.

COVID-19 Safety Requirements

Members are required to follow all the guidelines below in order to attend any in-person Girl Scout gathering.

- If troop is hosting an in-person troop meeting or girl program activity, the troop leader(s) is not required to replicate as virtual experience.
• If families are uncomfortable with in-person gatherings, refer parent to Girl Scout virtual opportunities.
• If families are unable or unwilling to meet safety requirements, refer parent to Girl Scout virtual opportunities.

Health Requirements
All participants at in-person Girl Scout gatherings should meet these criteria:
1. **Have none of the following symptoms of COVID-19:** fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, feeling feverish as well as acute gastrointestinal problems, such as nausea, diarrhea, and vomiting.
2. Have not had a fever over 100 degrees, without the use of fever reducing medications, within the last 72 hours.
3. Have not had a known exposure to COVID-19 or been in close contact with anyone that has tested positive within the last 14 days.
4. Have not traveled away from home or outside of the Greater Washington Region within the last 14 days.
5. Have not travelled on a cruise ship within the last 14 days.

Pre-screen and Contact Tracing
A COVID-19 pre-screen health form is required for all in-person Girl Scout gatherings to protect attendees at meetings, trainings and girl program activities. The form will be available in electronic fillable format.
- All attendees are required to complete, sign and submit to the troop leader (or organizer of the gathering).
- All attendees must complete pre-screen form no more than 24 hours prior to gathering to participate.
- All troop leaders are required to retain all copies of the pre-screen forms for 90 days after the gathering.

If attendee develops symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19 after the event, notify Council staff by contacting **customercare@gscnc.org** M-F or calling emergency answering service at 703-284-2332 on the weekends. Troop leader will be required to provide original copies of all pre-screen forms to Council staff.

COVID-19 prescreen form does not replace required parental permission form.
**Wear Face Covering**
Members are required to provide and wear a facemask or cloth face covering at all Girl Scout in-person gatherings; it must cover nose, mouth, and chin. Click here for the CDC guidelines on the use of cloth face coverings to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

**Outdoors:**
In an outdoor setting, girls and volunteers are expected to wear masks when outside shelter/campsite or unable to maintain 6 feet of social distancing. If all members of the troop are comfortable, masks are not required when in shelter/campsite if practicing social distancing.

**Hand Washing**
All members expected to wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

**Use Social Distancing**
All members expected to social distance at in-person Girl Scout gatherings. To practice social or physical distancing stay at least 6 feet (about two arms’ length) from other people and stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings.

**Use of Gloves**
Members are responsible for providing and wearing gloves when:
- Cleaning
- Serving food
- Distributing materials (program supplies, recruitment giveaways, etc.)

Recommend using latex free gloves to protect those with allergies or washable gloves to protect the environment.

**Disinfect Surfaces**
Troop/group is responsible for disinfecting high touch surfaces before and after gatherings. High touch surfaces include tables, light switches, countertops, handles, bathroom toilets/latrines and sinks/washstands.
- Wear disposable gloves to clean and disinfect.
- Clean surfaces using a disinfectant that kills germs on surfaces.
• Allow surface to air dry.
• More frequent cleaning and disinfection may be required based on level of use.
• Enhanced precautions may be required if you are near or are part of a group that is particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 risks.

Throw away any materials used to wipe down surface areas in a trash receptacle. It is imperative that you do not flush any items down toilets or latrines.

Disinfectant
Use a household cleaner, or see the EPA’s list of effective cleaners approved for use against COVID-19. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.).

Household bleach is effective against COVID-19. Check that the bleach is not expired and determine if appropriate to use on a given surface. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for application and proper ventilation. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Bleach solution is effective up to 24 hours when properly diluted. To prepare a bleach solution, mix:
• 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water or
• 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

Snacks and Meals
For troop meetings, recommend that no food be served and request attendees to eat before they arrive. If girls do need a snack, each girl should bring her own snack and girls may not share food or drinks.

For trips, more than three hours and overnights which require snacks or meals:
• While preparing and serving food, maintain physical distancing, wear a facemask and gloves.
• Prioritize use of “grab-n-go” items that are pre-packaged.
• Limit contact during the preparation and serving process. For instance, assign a designated person wearing gloves to fill individual’s personal water bottles or serving food. Avoid buffet style, salad bars, self-service, table, counter food service, and other configurations that require diners to use shared utensils.
• Prioritize and make available outdoor seating areas ideally with 6 feet of physical distance; aim to decrease the density by as much as half. For example, if a table typically seats six, seat only three girls and adults at that table.
Transportation
Families providing transportation to/from in-person gatherings provides the least risk.

Carpooling may occur based on the comfort level of the troop/group. If carpooling:
- recommend limiting driver and three passengers (4 people) to a vehicle
- disinfect vehicle’s high touch areas before and after each trip
- driver and passengers wear masks for the entire trip
- windows are open to provide ventilation
- Troop leader retains list of each vehicle’s occupants for 90 days

Volunteer Training

In an effort to minimize contact and risk to our volunteers, we have modified volunteer training requirements for the coming year.

Class with only online offerings:
Domestic and International Travel – new this year!

Classes with a virtual or in-person option:
- Program Level Basics
  - Includes an online pre-requisite
  - Two hour interactive portion of program level classes via in-person or “live” virtual training
  - All new and bridging troop leaders expected to complete required program level training by December 31, 2020.
- Enrichment courses (offerings will vary)

Classes with required in-person class:
Volunteers with health concerns should refrain from volunteering for roles that require in-person training until the spring 2021.
- Cookout and Campout (also includes an online pre-requisite)
- First Aid (also includes an online pre-requisite)
- Basic Cookout
- Lightweight Camping
- Backpacking
- High Adventure (archery, kayak, canoe, high/low ropes)
Troop Meetings and Activities

**Troop Capacity:** Troop requirements remain at a minimum capacity of 12 girls for new troops formed.

**Virtual Troop Meetings**

- Existing troops may choose to meet virtually in fall 2020
- Virtual meeting will need to be added to description on troop catalog
- Welcoming new girls and their families is extremely important when the only contact is virtual – plan multiple activities with girls and parents to begin building relationships.
- Coming soon:
  - New troop meeting series for Daisy, Brownie and Juniors to prepare girls for a safe return to in-person gatherings with four virtual meetings as well as a plan for two in-person meetings. (available September for new and existing troops)
  - gsLearn: one-stop shop for all virtual troop meeting templates and other training and resources for participating in Girl Scouts virtually
  - Volunteer Toolkit: information to help leaders deliver fun, interactive virtual troop meetings

**Virtual Girl Scout Troops**

The Council will create a new virtual troop option for fall 2020 for **new** troops.

- This troop option has regular meetings virtually **only**, and participates in Fall Product, Cookies, and at least two (2) outdoor activities between August and July.
- While girls from anywhere in the council can join, the troop will be part of the service unit where the troop leaders live.
- Troop **must** be a single program level to support a strong Girl Scout experience and open to any girl of that level.
- Girls in the troop are eligible to attend service unit or association events on their own if their troop is not participating. This troop will be listed in the catalog as ‘Virtual Troop XXXXX’.
- Troop leaders must attend service unit meetings and meet all service unit requirements.
**In-person Troop Meetings and Activities**

With planning and some adaptation, most typical Girl Scout in-person activities can be safe and fun. We know that many creative solutions will come in the weeks and months ahead. Here are several current recommendations.

**Gathering Location**
- **Park, sports field, camp**: outdoors settings offer the least risk and often more space to social distance.
- **Large gather spaces**: access to fellowship halls, conference rooms, cafeteria, and gyms may be limited but, it is always worth asking. Provide copy of Girl Scout COVID-19 Safety Requirements to demonstrate your commitment to safety.
- **Private Homes**: While, the Council does not recommend holding troop meetings in private homes, we understand this may be the only option during the COVID environment. If meeting in a private home, meet standards listed below:
  - The private home must the home of registered, Council-approved volunteer.
  - Girls may not meet in a home where a registered sex offender lives.
  - Keep animals in a place that is separate from the meeting space.
  - Homeowners should consider any personal insurance implications. The homeowner should ask their personal homeowner’s insurance carrier if there are any insurance concerns with troop meetings at the home.
  - Weapons must be out of view and in a locked space. Medication, cleaning products, or any poisonous substance must be stored in a secure space out of sight, preferably.

**Small Girl Groups**
- Maintain groups of no more than 15 people (13 girls, 2 adults).
- Girls should remain in the same group for the duration of the event.
- All members of a larger troop may gather at same time, but divide into smaller groups for activities.
- If girls are cooperating on a task, recommend groups of no more than two to three girls.
- Assign girls to patrols for a month to a year. Patrols, a Girl Scout tradition, provide opportunities for leadership and are ideal for working on longer-term projects.

**Program Supplies**
- Use gloves for distribution and preparation if appropriate.
• Distribute one item to each participant to avoid sharing.
• Distribute several items within a single container (bag, box) to minimize contact.
• Disinfect shared items between uses.

Product Program

Product Program will enthusiastically move forward in the coming year. Strategies for safe order taking and delivery in both programs will keep girls and supporters safe, while maximizing success. If we all just follow the themes, we will do GREAT! Fall Product in 2020 is **Bravely Be!** and Cookies in 2021 is **We Got This!** Product Program will succeed!

**Digital Ordering**

Both Fall Product and the Cookie Programs offer an ideal social distancing order system with the M2media digital platforms.

• **Set up Account:** Every girl should set up digital accounts in both programs.
  - Fall Product and Digital Cookie account use the same login and password.

• **Girl Delivery:** There is a period of digital order taking that offers girl delivery of orders with both programs.

• **Gather Emails:** Encourage girls to gather email addresses for all of their potential supporters, girls will be able to take orders, and payment, while maintaining social distancing.
  - Girls only have to add their supporters once.
  - All of their supporters contact info will be in their Fall Product and Digital Cookie accounts.

• **Workplace Sales:** Girls should consider using the digital platforms for workplace sales. With permission, email parents’ co-workers and the product easily delivered by the Girl Scouts’ “delivery service”, her supportive caregivers.

• **Other Promotion Channels:** If digital ordering is not possible, girls can turn to phone calls, social media and text messaging to contact potential customers, while maintaining social distancing. Any interaction with supporters should include masks and, possibly, gloves.

• **Porch Pixies:** Girls can be “Porch Pixies”, with a drop and go delivery plan for their supporters’ orders. Delivery and money handling are important aspects of the program, but families should help to ensure their daughters remain safe.
**Cookie Booths**

Securing cookie booth locations is an important aspect of the Girl Scout Cookie Program and represent 16-20% of what troops earn. Service unit cookie managers will contact locations, as they have in the past, to develop as many locations as possible. The response of retail businesses is unknown at this point. If successful, it will be more important than ever to adhere to the standards of booth staffing – we need your help.

**Cookie Booth Staffing**

1. **When you Arrive**
   - Arrive at your sale location on time, not more than five minutes early.
   - Check in with the store manager before you set up.
   - If a troop is already selling at the site, let them know you are there. Please make the transition smooth.
   - If management asks you to set up in a certain place, stay within the area.

2. **During your Booth Sale**
   - Due to limited space generally allotted for booths, it will be necessary to limit number of people at each booth and schedule “shifts” to give girls the opportunity to sell at booths.
   - Make safety a priority. Never leave booth, girls or money unattended.
   - Booth sales must not interfere with the business’ activity, including the flow of its customers/patrons.

3. **At the end of your Booth Sale**
   - Ensure the area is neat and clean when you leave
   - Parents/guardians should pick up each girl before adults leave (regardless of the girl’s age).

**Outdoor Program**

Take advantage of the healing power of nature – getting outdoors, being in nature, and moving our bodies is good for everyone! However, even when outside, it is important to follow COVID-19 Safety Requirements (see page 4-8) as well as these additional safety requirements.

**Sleeping Accommodations**

The Council adjusted the capacity of all glen shelters and platform tent on our properties to four (4) per structure.
• Recommend access to sleeping structure limited to only individuals assigned; avoid having groups of campers visit other campers in sleeping shelters.

• Create a **sleeping roster** with names of campers and adults sleeping in each shelter. Troop leader retains for a minimum of 90 days after the camping trip. *(sample form on page 16).*

**Sleeping Position**
In structure, position campers head-to-toe or toe-to-toe to maximize distance between heads and faces. For bunk beds, position the head of the camper in one bed opposite the position of the camper in the adjacent bunk. If possible, create four to six feet of space between beds.

**Bedding**
Recommend that campers bring bedding (e.g. sheets, pillows, blankets, sleeping bags). Wash and dry in a mechanical air dryer once home. Keep each camper’s bedding separate during transport.

Where applicable, disinfect provided mattress before and after use. *(see page 7)*

**Personal Belongings**
Personal belongings should be limited to essential items plus a limited number of non-essentials items. Campers should keep personal belongings organized and separate from other campers. Campers should not share personal belongings including bedding.

**Shared Bathrooms**
Recommend troops/groups use the latrine/bathroom facilities in their units. If unit shares a latrine with another site, assign and label the latrines/bathrooms upon arrival.

**Troop Camping Meals**
It is important that girls remain responsible for the planning and preparation of meals. In advance of the troop camping weekend, review all safety procedures with campers and discuss how to prepare for safe meal service.

When using a kaper chart, recommend the number of campers/volunteers per kaper is no more than four people. (3 girls/1 adult)
Safe Cooks
When preparing and serving food, girls and volunteers:

- Must wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after food preparation and serving; after using the bathroom, blowing nose, coughing, sneezing, or touching frequently touched surfaces.
- If soap and water are not available to wash hands, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Must wear gloves and facemasks/cloth face coverings while preparing meals.
- Maintain a physical distance and increased spacing from other food preparation campers whenever possible.

Safe Surfaces

- For a clean food contact surface, recommend covering picnic tables with a tablecloth able to disinfect between uses. (see page 7)
- For non-food contact surfaces, clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (e.g. picnic tables, benches) before every meal or at least three times a day.
- If hard non-porous surfaces are visibly dirty, clean them with detergent or soap and water before disinfecting.
- Girls should remove and dispose of gloves immediately after cleaning and disinfecting or when visibly soiled and immediately wash hands.

Safe Seating
Prioritize and make available outdoor seating areas ideally with 6 feet of physical distance; aim to decrease the density by as much as half. For example, if a table typically seats six, seat only three campers at that table.

Safe Meal Preparation and Service

- Prioritize use of “grab-n-go” items that are pre-packaged.
- **Limit contact during the preparation and serving process.** For instance, assign a designated person wearing gloves to fill individual’s personal water bottles or serving food. Avoid buffet style, salad bars, self-service, table, counter food service, and other configurations that require diners to use shared utensils.
- If each camper is preparing her own meal (foil dinners, pizza bagels etc.), recommend the individual eating the meal prepares the using Safe Cook guidelines above.
- If cooking s’mores or other items that require each girl to be in the fire circle and share cooking utensils, sticks etc., it is important that girls maintain social distancing and disinfect cooking utensil between each individual use.
Safe Dishwashing
The steps in dishwashing covered in Cookout/Campout training and very important complete the third step of sanitizing with liquid bleach.

Supplies:
- 3 tubs/dishpans appropriate for the size of your dishes
- Liquid dishwashing detergent
- Hot water
- Liquid chlorine bleach
- Sponge for dishwashing, scrub brush, scraper
- Gloves (recommended when washing shared cooking ware)
- Plastic bag

Process:
1. Scrape all dishes
2. Polish with paper towel until dishes “look” clean
3. Tub One: Wash in warm, soapy water (Very little soap needed in small wash bins.)
4. Tub Two: Rinse in hot, clear water. (Hot is relative to what girls can handle!)
5. Tub Three: Sanitize using 1 Tablespoon liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of tepid water
6. Place clean dishes in drip bag
7. Hang on drip line to dry

- Remember to strain dishwater when emptying, dish tubs to capture any food items.
- **Best Practice:** Renew bleach after washing four (4) sets of dishes. For shared cookware, use a newly prepared Tub Three, the bleach tub.
**Sleeping Roster**

Campsite: __________________________
Dates: _____________________________ Number of attendees: _________________

*Complete this roster by filling in the first and last name of each attendee in the sleeping shelter they are assigned to.*

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<thead>
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<th>Sleeping Shelter 1</th>
<th>Sleeping Shelter 5</th>
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Troop Leader: July 24, 2020
Guidelines subject to change.