

## **Overarching Guidance for P.E.O. Gatherings Due to COVID-19 Pandemic Emergency**

The Executive Board of International Chapter understands you are excited and eager to resume your P.E.O. gatherings and local chapter regular business meetings. Please know every emergency decision made by the Executive Board of International Chapter prioritizes the health and welfare of our sisters and their families.

Subject to local area health authority or government instructions for physical distancing, congregating and other related actions recommended to reduce the risk of exposure to the virus during in-person meetings, in-person gatherings, fundraisers, celebrations, teas, etc. will be allowed after August 1, 2020. Plans for resuming local chapter meetings on September 1, 2020 are well underway and our meetings will definitely have a new look. Each chapter president will receive written instructions and new pages for your President's Book in mid-August outlining meeting modifications and adjustments due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Some procedures of the regular business meeting have temporarily been suspended to optimize physical distancing, minimize dispersal of infectious contaminants through speaking (i.e., aerosolization), and to expedite the meeting, while allowing important chapter business to be conducted. The regular business meeting has been modified and a new virtual regular business meeting format has been created. Consideration has been given to members that are not comfortable attending an in-person meeting and a hybrid meeting has been allowed, with some members attending by video conferencing.

Current scientific data, and experience of nations around the globe, strongly indicate that the risk of exposure to COVID-19 is reduced when close indoor contact is managed carefully and the contact time is limited. Therefore, the executive board is temporarily suspending both the program and refreshment components of in-person local chapter meetings.

To maximize consistency across meeting formats (in-person, virtual, hybrid) and reduce possible confusion, some modifications to in-person meetings will also be applied to virtual and hybrid meetings. The executive board will be providing explicit directions on how those chapter meetings may be held in the August mailing.

All P.E.O. meetings and gatherings should follow their local area health authority or government instructions for physical distancing, congregating, and other related actions recommended to reduce the risk of exposure to the virus during in-person events or meetings. A face covering or mask that covers the nose and mouth will be required at all P.E.O. gatherings; a sister medically unable to wear a face covering or mask that covers the nose and mouth may prefer to participate virtually.

We must respect each sister's individual comfort level and well-being when meeting or gathering in person. Sisters should assess their ability to attend a chapter meeting or P.E.O. gathering in person based on a self-evaluation for symptoms of COVID-19 or known contact with a person exposed to, or ill with, COVID-19. A personal Self-Check form will be available on the website. Responses to the Self-Check form are not to be shared to attend any meeting or gathering.

Any meeting or gathering hostess should follow her local area health authority or government instructions regarding sanitation and safety measures, including the following:

- Supplies to have available (e.g., hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, paper towels in bathrooms); any sister in the chapter or at the event can provide these items
- Set up of meeting room or gathering space (e.g., if possible, have windows open for increased fresh air; position chairs at physical distancing recommendation; mitigate places where sisters might cluster, such as an entryway, small room, coat closets; etc.)
- Safe handling of paperwork (use hand sanitizer before and after, or place in an open folder for safe collection)
- No food will be served
- Any sister who needs food/beverage for health reasons will need to bring their own
- No singing or group recitation

It is recommended that the chapter Technology Contact or a "Tech Buddy" be identified to assist sisters with technology needed for virtual meetings and gatherings.