# **Newsletter Service: Pandemic Supplement**

*The following articles are provided for distribution in lodge newsletters or other print and digital communications. Please do not revise. You will still receive your scheduled June/July issue of Newsletter Service as usual.*

**LODGE MEETINGS AND IN-PERSON EVENTS**

Sons of Norway has been following the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic closely. In light of the declaration of a national emergency in the United States, and the CDC’s recommendation to avoid in-person gatherings, **we strongly recommend that all Sons of Norway lodge meetings and in-person events be postponed through at least May 31.** We will continue to communicate updates as the situation evolves.

We recognize the difficulty this poses to all of us, but it is important that we work together as an organization to respond this crisis responsibly. *Please continue to follow all state and local guidelines as you make decisions for your lodge.* If we can help in any way, don’t hesitate to contact the Fraternal department at [fraternal@sofn.com](mailto:fraternal@sofn.com).

**VIDEO CONFERENCE OPTIONS FOR MEETINGS**

As you look for new ways to stay connected in this time of social distancing, here are a few free or low-cost video conferencing options that you can use to hold lodge meetings and other gatherings.

1. [GoToMeeting](https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gotomeeting.com%2F&data=02%7C01%7C%7C12914fd36a264e0fb67f08d7cc39a2e6%7C8b6c3bd49ee2493cb760d2c85ef4f63f%7C0%7C0%7C637202420230582107&sdata=5MTUzjLxE1cQGBkSZmi9zys%2FeXqLNdowEE%2FkIfMXcxo%3D&reserved=0)
2. [Zoom](https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fzoom.us%2F&data=02%7C01%7C%7C12914fd36a264e0fb67f08d7cc39a2e6%7C8b6c3bd49ee2493cb760d2c85ef4f63f%7C0%7C0%7C637202420230582107&sdata=%2B3ZcUYCeTQC8JAFx7bgEey1u1NnGnnrHGBYsMSdPgrU%3D&reserved=0)
3. [Skype](https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.skype.com%2Fen%2F&data=02%7C01%7C%7C12914fd36a264e0fb67f08d7cc39a2e6%7C8b6c3bd49ee2493cb760d2c85ef4f63f%7C0%7C0%7C637202420230592103&sdata=%2FsUQxCto7XAkNFU4guBEEvc0vxl98pwgJwdUNXYk%2BbQ%3D&reserved=0)
4. [Amazon Chime](https://aws.amazon.com/chime/?chime-blog-posts.sort-by=item.additionalFields.createdDate&chime-blog-posts.sort-order=desc)
5. [Google Hangouts](https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fhangouts.google.com%2F&data=02%7C01%7C%7C12914fd36a264e0fb67f08d7cc39a2e6%7C8b6c3bd49ee2493cb760d2c85ef4f63f%7C0%7C0%7C637202420230602096&sdata=reVFmONNgbdScGZJFfjHp0edQMt54wzUUqaN1hGMUZk%3D&reserved=0)
6. FaceTime (limited to smaller groups; this option requires each participant to use an Apple product such as an iPhone, iPad or Macbook)

Although we are not able to distribute video conferencing software directly to lodges, we encourage you to explore these options for holding virtual meetings and social events. After an initial download, you will be given a quick set of instructions to get connected. It’s fairly simply to have several people participate at once.

**SONS OF NORWAY REMAINS STRONG**

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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | As we enter into this uncertain time in history, I want to assure you that Sons of Norway remains strong and dedicated to its members and insurance policy holders. From the spread of COVID-19 to unforeseen market volatility and natural disasters, we are living through unique times.  The world is changing at an extraordinary pace, and I want you to know Sons of Norway is well prepared for the current economic environment. Established in 1895 by 18 Norwegian immigrants with the mission to protect each other and their families, that mission has never been truer than it is today.   We have enacted our disaster plan to ensure that we can continue our day-to-day operations, provide service to our clients, and keep our employees safe. We have transitioned most of our employees to work remotely, with limited staff onsite to maintain the day-to-day functions of the home office. We have the systems and safeguards in place to continue to provide you and your families the protection and support you expect from us.  The financial markets have never seen conditions like we are experiencing now, but rest assured your insurance is safe—both life insurance and annuities. We make very conservative long-term investments designed to weather these “perfect storm” conditions. We do not make short-term high-risk bets; as we always have done, we are protecting our members and clients by taking a conservative approach.  Our solvency remains extremely strong, which means our ability to pay claims and annuity income streams remains unchanged amid today’s uncertain circumstances. We want to thank you for being part of Sons of Norway and let you know we remain true to our mission of protecting our members, policy holders and employees.  Fraternally, | | |

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**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

*Here are answers to some of the most frequently asked questions we’ve received as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.*

**Why did Sons of Norway postpone the International and District Conventions?**

The Charter & Constitution gives the International Board of Directors authority to suspend or postpone the international convention for one meeting in case of a national emergency. Due to the national emergency declared in the United States, and the guidance for group gatherings issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Board of Directors determined that the most responsible course of action was to postpone the international convention until 2022.

**How can my lodge take part in the recent food shelf program offer?**

To be eligible for this donation-matching program, lodges must notify Sons of Norway headquarters of their plans to participate and send receipts to: Matt Roedel 1455 W. Lake Street Minneapolis, MN 55408. Please include a brief description of the aid given, including donation amount and the name and contact information of the recipient organization.

**Is Sons of Norway still selling financial products and recruiting members during this time?**

Yes, Sons of Norway remains strong during this time and is continuing to both sell financial products and recruit new members.

**What about the event we have planned?**

If you have an event planned for the next few weeks, we strongly recommend that you reschedule it. Most importantly, please follow all state and local guidelines as you consider holding in-person gatherings of any kind.

**Can I still earn a Cultural Skills pin or work toward a Sports Medal?**

Members are encouraged to work toward Cultural Skills pins and Sports Medals during this time. Send completed Cultural Skills reports to [culturalskills@sonf.com](mailto:culturalskills@sonf.com), or mail hard copies to Sons of Norway headquarters. Sports Directors may order pins for lodge members by e-mailing [sportsmedals@sofn.com](mailto:sportsmedals@sofn.com), calling 612-821-4642, or mailing order forms to headquarters. Medals and pins will be mailed to lodge officers as staff scheduling allows.

**Can I still reach people at Sons of Norway Headquarters if I have questions?**

Yes. We are still operating during our regular business hours, with most of our employees working from home. Each department is fully operational and able to assist you as needed.

**Can I still reach my insurance professional?**

Yes. If you have any questions or if issues arise, please don’t hesitate to reach out to your Insurance Professional by phone or email. They will be happy to serve you during this time.

**Will I still receive my *Viking* magazine?**

Yes! We will continue to print and ship *Viking* magazine though depending on where you live, your delivery may be delayed due to temporary shipping restrictions. We encourage you to [view the digital version of the magazine online](https://www.sofn.com/member_resources/cultural_programming/viking_magazine/viking_magazine_archive/) if delivery to your area is delayed.