

COVID-19 Guidelines for In-Person Activities

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Original: June 1, 2020

Edition date: August 13, 2021

This guidance supersedes preceding COVID-19 guidance

Purpose. *Girl Scouts – Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas has developed the COVID-19 Guidelines for In-Person Girl Scout Activity as defined below.*

Members should be reminded, and acknowledge understanding, that COVID-19 is an extremely contagious virus that spreads easily in the community. Members should take all reasonable precautions to limit potential exposure for girls, themselves and families. It is an important time to be a great Girl Scout and demonstrate Girl Scout values. Since the COVID-19 pandemic continues to change as infection rates rise and fall in different areas, there may be regional differences or developments that occur after this edition is provided. Continue to follow real-time local and national directives. Discuss plans with families.

Adherence to these guidelines is necessary to keep all members safe, while allowing members to meet safely. No member at any time should be pressured to meet in person. Girls, parents and volunteers should be consulted in the decision-making process. Please note that while all Girl Scout event insurance will remain in effect as before to cover injuries resulting from an accident, Girl Scout insurance does not cover healthcare costs from illness.

Guidelines for COVID-19 Member Exposure

- Any member who tests positive for COVID-19 may not return to in-person activities for at least 14 days. Members should email incident@girlscoutsdiamonds.org if they test positive for COVID-19 to inform the council of exposure.
- Any member who has been exposed to COVID-19 must self-isolate for 14 days during which time they may not attend any in-person Girl Scout activities. Members who are exposed to COVID-19 should email incident@girlscoutsdiamonds.org to inform the council of exposure.
- All vulnerable individuals or members of households with vulnerable individuals should consider not attending in-person activities.

COVID-19 Screening and Prevention Guidelines

Social Distancing and Face Coverings: Girl Scouts wear face coverings (masks) not only to protect themselves but to protect others. Face masks should go home with members at the end of every in-person activity to be sanitized or discarded before the next Girl Scout event. Some girls or volunteers may not be able to wear masks, due to medical conditions such as asthma. Members who have a disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), that may also limit the ability to wear a mask should be excused from this recommendation as long as all other screening criteria are met.

- **Outdoor activities: masks or social distancing**
- **Indoor activities: masks required AND social distancing (UPDATED)**

COVID-19 Incident Response: Members should email incident@girlscoutsdiamonds.org in the event of a COVID-19 positive test result. An assigned council point person will lead the COVID-19 communications and responsibilities related to the reported incident. All health information is private/confidential to be shared only on a need-to-know basis. Council staff, NOT volunteers, will notify parents and others about a positive test result in order to protect the tester's identity.

The council staff point person responsible to manage COVID-19 positive tester reports will:

- Record the facts in an incident report
- Confirm and trace the positive tester.
- Notify the facility or homeowner where a troop has met.
- Alert the state department of health.
- Contact the parents of anyone who may have been exposed, or other adult volunteers without sharing the positive tester's identity.

Member Meeting Guidelines

Troop Meeting Attendance. Attendance of all members should be taken at every in-person activity and kept on record with the leader in case information is needed for contact tracing. Only Girl Scout members who have passed pre-screening should be present. Non-members should not be attending in-person troop meetings.

Troop Meeting Size. Troop meeting sizes are no longer restricted. All social distancing practices preventative guidance (such as face coverings) should be followed. For large troops, consider gathering up in smaller groups—such as age-level groups, patrols, or groups of girls with a particular badge on which they'd like to work. Indoor masking should be followed.

Large Gatherings. Larger gathering sizes are no longer restricted across the council. This includes multi-troop and multi-service unit gatherings. In order to have a large gathering, confirm the number of people that are coming and remind volunteers to allow for proper girl-to-adult ratios. It is recommended to meet outdoors as opposed to indoors, and only when social distancing can be maintained. Indoor masking should be followed.

Troop Meetings in the Home. Troop meetings in homes are allowed. This applies particularly for those troops in rural areas who have regularly and successfully met in the home, have no elderly or immune compromised family members in the home.

- The home must be the home of registered, background checked, council-approved Volunteer.
- Girls may not meet in a home where a registered sex offender lives.
- Some councils may require membership and background checks for all adults living in the home.
- The troop needs to be able to focus without disruptions from other household members.
- Animals should be kept in a place that is separate from the meeting space.
- Homeowners should consider any personal homeowner insurance implications. The Homeowner should ask their Homeowner's insurance carrier if there are any insurance exclusions regarding holding troop meetings at the home, in the event an accident or injury occurs.
- Weapons must be completely out of view and stored in a locked space.
- Medication, dangerous cleaning products, or any poisonous substance must be stored in a secure space out of sight, preferably locked.
- Meetings should ideally be held outdoors, perhaps in the back or front yard of the home
- Ensure that the Hygiene and Risk Mitigation and all other guidance in this document are followed.
- Masks must be worn indoors.

Virtual Meetings. Meeting options may need to be flexible based on the fluid nature of COVID-19 risk. Troops that decide to run online meetings as needed (or wanted) should continue to do so. Use the Safety Activity Checkpoints for Virtual Meetings, to guide your meeting plans.

Member Outdoor Activities. Overnight camping and activities such as family camp, service unit camping and troop camping is permitted. Facial coverings do not have to be worn during hiking and physical outdoor activities as long as six feet of social distancing can be maintained. Members may also share tables and seating areas without masks as long as social distancing can be maintained.

The Diamonds Council encourages outdoor activities for all members.

- Outdoor activities: masks or social distancing
- Indoor activities: masks required

Transportation and Travel Guidelines

Transportation (car-pooling). Carpooling between non-related members is allowed. All members must meet the following criteria to be eligible for carpooling.

This criteria includes:

- All individuals must be comfortable providing carpooling services.
- All individuals must be registered Girl Scout members.
- All individuals must be fever and symptom free.
- All individuals must not have had contact with a known case of COVID-19 or be in a quarantine period themselves.
- All individuals must be able to wear a mask during the length of the carpool time period.

When members are in the vehicle:

- Girls and adults should wear masks when inside of a motor vehicle.
- Keep car window opened, at least slightly, to circulate fresh air.

- Remember to consider the personal situation of each member:
 - i. Do they live with an immune-compromised person that they can put at risk? If so, perhaps make other accommodations.
 - ii. Have the families been isolating, and free from contagion? If so, the members may essentially be a safe bubble.

Remember, sustained contact within less than six (6) feet for longer than ten (10) minutes within an enclosed area creates high risk for virus transmission, so be very careful with carpool decisions. CDC guidance for ride shares and drivers for hire may be helpful as an additional reference when evaluating motor vehicle transportation or car-pooling: [Ride Shares and Drivers for Hire](#)

Day Trips and Activities. All guidance within Safety Activity Checkpoints should be followed. Call ahead to the facility or vendor to confirm that they are following CDC and state health department guidelines. If activity or sporting equipment is being provided, ask the provider if they wipe down equipment in between uses, similar to wipe downs in between uses for equipment at the gym. Make whatever appropriate accommodations that are necessary. For example, bring extra sanitizer or disinfectant wipes if none will be provided for public use at the activity location.

Travel and Overnight Stays. The Diamonds council will permit day travel and over-night stays as permissible by home state, county, and city guidelines. These trips are allowed within council jurisdiction or within other states. When traveling to other council areas, Diamonds COVID-19 guidance should be observed. As always, volunteers must seek council prior approval (Troop Travel Application) before planning any overnight stays, follow guidance in Safety Activity Checkpoints and continue to practice the Hygiene and COVID-19 Risk Mitigation guidance outlined in this document for the foreseeable future. Overnight camping for families, troops and service units is allowed. In compliance with ACA guidelines “If possible, there should be at least 6-feet of space between beds. If head-to-toe orientation is used, 4-feet is acceptable. Camps can use common spaces as sleeping areas to minimize the number of people sleeping in a space.” If a member shows symptoms of COVID-19 while traveling, the member should be isolated as much as possible, and arrangements should be made for all members to return home.

First Aid and Disinfectant Guidelines

First Aid Supplies: All in-person activities should have readily available first aid supplies that include COVID-19 prevention items including hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol), tissues, disposable facemasks, and disinfectants. Trash baskets or bags should be supplied for meeting and activity spaces, if not already available. Disposable or no-contact thermometers may be added to supplies if available and not cost-prohibitive.

First Aid / CPR Training: Keep skills up to date for any emergency. During this time, CPR/First Aid classes hosted by council will allow for at-home learning followed by an in-person skills (1 hour) requirement. The at-home learning will be sent one week before the in-person skills session and must be completed before the skills session. No more than 10 people will be allowed for each in-person skills session. If there are more than 10 people, a second session will be added on the same day.

Disinfectants and Disinfecting: [Routinely clean and disinfect](#) surfaces and objects that are frequently touched (i.e., table tops, markers, scissors, etc.). 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 for up to 24 hours when properly diluted. Check that the bleach is not expired and determine if it can be used on a given surface. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.

To prepare a bleach solution, mix:

- 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water or
- 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

See the [CDC's website](#) for more on cleaning and disinfecting community facilities.

Hygiene and Safety in Shared Spaces Guidelines

Hygiene and COVID-19 Risk Mitigation: Follow the [resources developed by public health sources such as CDC](#) or your local public health department. Share these with members to ensure that they are practiced during meetings and activities. Place signs in the meeting or activity space to remind members to engage in [everyday preventive actions](#) to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Signs should include:

- Stay home if you are sick.
- Cough and sneeze into a tissue, throw the tissue in the trash, and wash or sanitize your hands.
- Wash your 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. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Wash hands if you do touch.
- Volunteers, girls and parents should be reminded to make sure temperatures are taken prior to group interaction to confirm the individual is not running a fever and temperature is a normal 98.6 degrees. Members with fever or temperature higher than 98.6 should skip the in-person gathering until their temperature is normal.

Personal contact: Hugs, handshakes, "high-fives," and even activities like the friendship circle can transmit COVID-19 from person to person. Create a safe way for girls and volunteers to greet and end meetings instead (like tapping elbows).

Cleanliness of Meeting Spaces. Outdoor spaces where social distancing can be maintained are strongly recommended for meetings when the weather permits. Volunteers should get advance permission from the property owner or the jurisdiction that provides the location.

For meetings held at public facilities, volunteers should contact the facility ahead of time and ask:

- Is the space cleaned, and touch surfaces (i.e., tabletops, light switches, chairs, etc.) sanitized, at least daily?
- Who else uses the space (how often, what size is the group)? Is the space cleaned between groups?
- What type of faucets / soap dispensers are available in the restroom (sensory or manual)?

Then, encourage members to supplement any practices that are less ideal. For example, if the troop arrives after another user group, they should plan to bring sanitizing wipes to get the space ready for their troop. Another example: if faucets are manual, ask volunteers to take some time to show girls how to shut them off with a paper towel and to use paper towels for doorknobs whenever possible. Meetings

may not be held in fitness centers or gyms because the atmosphere in sports facilities is aerosolizing making them a higher risk for contracting virus.

Food, Dining and Snacks: Be careful when handling and serving food and have girls be careful with each other when eating. Safety recommendations for food, dining and snacks include:

- Encourage girls to bring their own foods to eat (bag lunch or dinner).
- Encourage girls not to share their food after having touched it, such as a bag of chips.
- Individually wrapped items are recommended.
- If providing snacks, especially if unwrapped, have one person, wearing gloves, hand out items to each person, such as with cupcakes or cookies.
- Use a serving spoon or scoop rather than reaching into a bag or bowl of snacks. Use a buffet line only if staffed with a safely protected server with mask and gloves. Avoid “serve yourself” buffets.
- If serving family style, have one person, wearing clean gloves, serve everyone on clean plates.
- Use disposable plates, forks, napkins, etc. when possible.
- Encourage girls to bring foods they can easily cook themselves (a prepacked foil packs or hotdogs for outdoor cooking).
- Ensure everyone handling food, and those serving (girls and adults) wash hands (even if they will be wearing gloves) prior to any food prep or meals, following CDC handwashing guidelines.
- If sharing outdoor cooking utensils (roasting forks), they should be washed and sanitized between each use or bring enough utensils so that each person gets their own.
- Continue recommendation for 6 feet spacing during mealtimes.

Hand Washing/Sanitizing: Access to hand washing and/or hand sanitizer should be present at each in-person activity. Consider setting up a hand sanitizing station. Hands should be washed/sanitized at the beginning and before/after any activity where the hands are near a member’s mouth. A container should be present at each event that holds aerosol sanitizing spray such as Lysol and sanitizing wipes. This container should be always kept within the reach of girls. Sanitizing spray and wipes should be used on items, such as tables and door handles, before girls arrive with proper ventilation and after members leave at the close of the in-person event. Items that are exchanged between members should be wiped down. Aerosol sprays should not be used in the presence of girls.

Council Property Guidelines

Use of Council Meeting Spaces: Council meeting spaces are currently available for service unit and troop activities. The following items must be addressed or observed:

1. Use of masks AND social distancing when indoors.
2. Masks in outdoor activity when social distance cannot be observed.
3. Trip advisor agrees to enforce current CDC COVID-19 safety guidelines.

Use of Council Camp Properties: Diamonds council camp properties are available for use by service unit, troop and family members. Reservation information for property programs, such as our horse program, and camping opportunities can be found at <https://www.girlscoutsdiamonds.org/en/camp/diamond-properties.html>. Council Staff and Camp Reserve members will follow sanitizing protocols between user stays to ensure a safe environment for your stay. All camp property users will follow the COVID-19 safety guidelines as listed in this document.