Q: Where can COVID-19 Guidelines (both volunteer and troop leader editions), the safety overview flyer for caregivers, and the pre-screen COVID-19 contact tracing form be found?

A: These documents can be found under the COVID-19 Information page on our website at: https://www.gscnc.org/en/council/about-us/covid-19-information.html. These documents and other COVID resources can also be found on gsLearn.

Q: Which guidance should we follow if our local or state guidance is different than Girl Scouts Nation’s Capital COVID guidelines?

A: If local or state government guidelines are more restrictive than what is outlined in our Council guidelines, follow the government’s guidelines. The may include masks, gathering numbers, travel and quarantine.

In-Person Gatherings

Q: Council’s COVID guidance, “girl members should be in activity groups of no more than 15 total people (13 girls, 2 adults).” How does this work for troops with more than 13 girl members?

A: For groups larger than 13 girls, break down into two smaller activity groups to limit any exposure. Please keep in mind that there can be no more than 50 people (girls and adults) at an indoor gathering and no more than 75 people at an outdoor gathering.

Q: Will council staff continue offering virtual programming for families that are not comfortable with in-person gatherings?

A: Yes. Virtual programming is still offered by both GSCNC and GSUSA!

Q: Is there a virtual platform available for troops to use to host their meetings?

A: All troops will have access to a virtual platform through Zoom. The cost per platform is $36 annually. New troops will receive their first year free and financial assistance will be available for troops in need- thanks to generous donations!

Troop Travel

Q: Our troop is hoping to travel. Does the council have any guidance/restrictions on where we can go?

A: Yes, troops may plan travel in the USA for the spring and summer of 2021. However, the council (and service unit managers) will not approve international travel and cruises for the spring and summer of 2021. Rates of infection, quarantining before and after trip, and requirements for COVID-19 testing and vaccines vary by state and venues. Troops are expected to research and plan to meet all safety requirements.

COVID-19 Safety Requirements

Q: What the travel restrictions set in place by Girl Scouts Nation’s Capital?

A: As of March 1, girls or adults who travel outside of Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia must self-quarantine for 10 days prior to attending an in-person Girl Scout gathering. A negative COVID test exempts you from self-quarantine, only if the test is administered 5 days after your return to the area after travel.

Updated March 1, 2021
Q: Are there any exceptions to Girl Scouts Nation’s Capital’s travel restrictions? What if a member lives or works outside of the identified boundaries?

A: No, there are no exceptions. We hope with the addition of Delaware and Pennsylvania to our approved travel area, we now are able to accommodate all our members who participate in our council.

Q: If a family member has traveled outside of Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia (ex: for work), is the participant still allowed to attend in-person gatherings?

A: Yes, the participant is still allowed to attend since they are not the individual traveling. If a family member regularly travels for work and there has been no resulting infection at home or at work, the participant is considered to be a low risk for transmission and may attend in-person gatherings.

Q: Is there a distinction for travel outside of Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia for volunteer purposes? What if a family leaves the area for outdoor activities (ex: camping) and observes CDC guidelines?

A: No, there is no distinction for types of travel outside of the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. If an individual who has traveled wants to participate in an in-person Girl Scout gathering, they must wait 10 days as listed in our COVID-19 guidelines or provide a negative COVID test at least 5 days after their return to the area.

Q: Are girls or adults able to participate in Girl Scouts without a face covering?

A: All girls and adults are required to wear face masks with two or more layers of breathable fabric if attending or participating in any Girl Scout activity. If there is an inability to do so, virtual programming is the only option. The only exception is if the troop is meeting outdoors, girls are able to maintain social distancing (6ft), all participants are comfortable not wearing masks, and both local governance and community norm allow for it.

Q: Are neck gaiters an acceptable alternative to face masks?

A: Yes, gaiters may be used if they have two layers of breathable fabric and cover the nose and mouth.

Q: Is the pre-screen document required for every in-person activity (ex: every troop meeting) as opposed to the Girl Scout permission form which can be filled out once and then used for the year?

A: Yes. Pre-screen documents are required for each individual activity. If a girl or adult does not provide a form, they will be unable to attend or participate in the respective meeting, activity, or event. The pre-screen is to be completed at most 24 hours in advance. Troops or SUs can adapt the form to a virtual format (ex: Google Docs) for to simplify collection and storage of these forms.

Q: For health pre-screen forms, do electronic signatures count as an original signature?

A: Yes. Electronic signatures count as an original signature for digital forms. Digital forms should be emailed or otherwise submitted the day of the activity.

Q: Can a troop created Google form be used as a replacement for the original health pre-screen form?

A: Yes, troops can create a Google form to collect responses as long as all questions from the health pre-screen form are included.

Q: How long will the pre-screen health form need to be kept?

A: All pre-screen health forms must be kept for three (3) months.
Q: What if families do not want to complete the required COVID pre-screen forms?
A: If families do not complete the pre-screen form, they will NOT be able to attend the respective in-person event, meeting, etc. Virtual programming is the best option for them.

Q: If all parents and families give permission to forgo wearing masks or gloves, are they still required?
A: All requirements must be followed at Girl Scout in-person gatherings.

Q: Asthmatics are now being advised that they should remove masks if encountering breathing difficulties. What should we do?
A: If an Asthma attack occurs, removal of the masks is understandable, and organizers should make every effort to limit the exposure to other attendees. Encourage girls and families to take advantage of available virtual offering if they are unable to wear a mask.

Q: If a health care provider works with COVID-19 patients, but use PPE responsibly and family members have shown no symptoms or been infected, can the family participate in in-person gatherings?
A: Yes, a health care provider who works with COVID-19 can participate in-person if proper PPE usage is practiced and family members have no symptoms or have not been infected.

Q: When can I return to in-person Girl Scout activities if I tested positive for COVID?
A: If you have symptoms, you can return if at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, 24 hours have passed with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, AND other symptoms are improving. If you were asymptomatic, you may return to in-person activities 10 days after the first positive COVID test.

Q: If there was confirmed exposure to COVID, but tested negative, can I return to in-person activities?
A: If there is a negative COVID test after a confirmed exposure to COVID, you may return to in-person gatherings on day 7 after receiving a negative COVID test. Testing must occur on day 5 after exposure to ensure testing accuracy.

Q: Is a COVID vaccine required for Girl Scouts?
A: No, volunteers and girls are not required to be vaccinated in order to attend in-person Girl Scout gatherings. Additionally, a vaccination does not eliminate the risk of carrying and exposing others to COVID. Continue to follow COVID safety requirements to minimize risk of exposure.

**Girl and Adult Recruitment**

Q: Can existing troops opt to be virtual only?
A: Yes, troops have the option to be fully virtual for Membership Year 21 (October 1, 2020- September 30, 2021).

Q: What will happen with newly formed virtual troops in the future?
A: Virtual may be a necessity now but will continue to have a role in our future. We will also provide guidance to help troops transition from virtual to in-person meetings and getting outdoors.

Q: Will the initial meeting scripts/activities only be for new troops or can existing troops utilize them as well?
A: Initial meeting resources are for both new and existing troops to utilize.

Q: Is there a “deal” that the Council Staff can broker for a meeting space?
A: Unfortunately, no. The large groups such as schools and municipalities that we work with have already issued guidelines which do not allow for meetings at this time. Girl Scouts has a memorandum of understanding with United Methodist Church, but space must be requested locally.

Q: Can meetings be held at Girl Scout camps?

A: Yes, troop meetings can be held at camp. Properties are available for day use. Outside pavilions and sites with glen shelters will be available and Camping Services will provide programmatic ideas and plans for troops to use at our camps. Troop meetings can also be held during overnights at camps on weekends.

Q: Will Girl Scout offices be available for troops to meet?

A: Offices are not available for troop meetings at this time.

Q: Can troops meet in private homes?

A: Yes, troops can meet in homes. Site Safety checklists should be reviewed and followed. Larger troops may not be able to easily utilize this option- they may need to break into patrols and meet in different homes. Please note that masks, social distancing, and disinfecting are important measures that must be followed whenever meeting indoors.

Q: If camps and homes are not options and schools are unavailable, what are the options for meetings space?

A: Three ideas that have been shared are grocery store meeting rooms (Walmart, Safeway, Wegmans, etc. may have community rooms), houses of worship fellowship halls (members of congregations will have best success in getting space), and outdoor parks and picnic shelters.

Volunteer Training

Q: Will there be a price increase for council-priced classes with additional costs for sanitizer and gloves?

A: There is no current price increase for council-priced classes.

Q: For required training, like first aid, is there a waiver for this Girl Scout year?

A: There are no extensions or waivers for trainings this Girl Scout year. We are allowing virtual first aid classes and are offering program level classes virtually as well. In-person outdoor trainings have resumed.

Q: How are in-person trainings being conducted?

A: There are safety guidelines for in-person training that include social distancing and sanitation. There are also live, interactive virtual trainings that will be offered.

Q: There is an in-person training being offered in our Council but it is in a community that has more restrictive government guidelines than my community. Should I attend?

A: All in-person training classes will be 15 people or less and participants will be required to wear face coverings and social distance. If a volunteer is uncomfortable with the location or the mix of communities from our Council that may be represented, s/he may not want to attend the in-person training. Our members need to look at their individual and family life circumstances and determine the right choice for their family’s well-being.

Outdoor Program and Camp Properties

Q: If you have a camping reservation at one of the Council properties and the schedule changes, will there be a full refund?
A: Yes. If we need to cancel your reservation, there will be a full refund.

Q: When will the lodges be open for troop camping reservations?

A: Currently we are monitoring CDC guidelines for indoor facilities; we hope to have lodges open for troop by Fall 2021. Camping in an outdoor setting such as a glen shelter provides better ventilation and poses less of a risk to the troop.

Q: How do disinfecting guidelines impact high adventure such as target sports?

A: The Council reopened archery, tomahawks, slingshots, canoe, and kayak program areas at our camps on September 12th. There are new enhanced safety guidelines that must be reviewed and adhered to. The challenge courses at Camp Crowell and Camp White Rock will reopen this spring.

Q: Is tent camping allowed?

A: Yes, tent camping is allowed. Keep participants to a 50% of the maximum capacity at the most. Campers should also alternate their sleeping orientation so that girls are head to toe with their tent-mate.

**Equipment Center**

Q: Will we be allowed to rent program kits?

A: Yes, program kits were made available to rent on August 17th.

Q: Will there be a longer time period to rent program kits to allow for pre and post cleaning?

A: When requesting, you can indicate how long you want to have the kit. Staff will also be conducting post cleaning before another troop receives it.

Q: Are there resources, such as canopies, available for troops to use for outdoor meetings?

A: Yes, troops can rent EZ Up Canopies through the equipment center. Canopies must be disinfected and returned between uses.

**Product Program**

Q: Will shipping charges be reduced for Girl Scout cookie online orders?

A: Unfortunately, we do not control the cost for shipping.

**Liability/Insurance**

Q: Who holds the liability if a Girl Scout becomes sick after attending a meeting?

A: Girl Scout liability insurance does not cover COVID-19 or any other virus. This exclusion is common throughout the insurance industry. This means that the Council would be responsible for absorbing all costs for the Council and volunteers in the event of a lawsuit. The Council understands and has made the decision to accept this risk.

Girl Scout liability insurance does protect volunteers in their roles. Volunteer Essentials and COVID-19 Response Guidelines are designed to protect members’ safety and to minimize risk. The Council is in the in strongest position when volunteers follow the prescribed guidelines. If a guideline is not followed, it may jeopardize safety and weakens the Council’s position in the event of a lawsuit. It does not, however, eliminate our liability coverage for a volunteer. This assumes that the volunteer has not been grossly negligent in the performance of their role.
Q: How does Girl Scout medical insurance impact an individual who may be infected with COVID during a meeting?

A: Girl Scout *secondary* medical insurance does cover medical costs once member’s primary insurance has been exhausted which includes COVID-19.