

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 and allows fewer people to gather than what is outlined in our Council guidelines, follow the government's guidelines. The same applies if a local governance requires constant mask use.

Transition to In-Person Gatherings

Q: Council's COVID guidance says "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 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. These guidelines are anticipated to be in place August 15- September 12.

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

A: Yes. Virtual programming will continue in the fall. There will also be tons of virtual program opportunities from 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!

COVID-19 Safety Requirements

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

A: As of September 17, girls or adults who travel outside of the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia must self-quarantine for 14 days prior to attending an in-person Girl Scout gathering.

Q: Are there any exceptions to Girl Scouts Nation's Capital's travel restrictions?

A: We recognize that there are members who may travel daily/weekly in and out of the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, or West Virginia. If this travel has not resulted in illness in a household, we assume that household's travel routine is at low risk of transmission and may attend in-person gatherings.

Q: What about Girl Scout Nation's Capital members that live outside our Council boundaries?

A: We recognize that we have members who may live, work or shop in adjacent states. They may routinely – daily or weekly - travel in and out of our Council. If this travel has not resulted in illness in a household, we assume that household's travel routine is at low risk of transmission. In these instances, a 14-day break from participating in Girl Scout in-person gatherings is not required.

Q: If a family member has traveled outside of District of Columbia, Maryland, 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 Girl Scout participation and may attend in-person gatherings.

Q: If a family travels outside our state boundaries routinely (weekly) and stays overnight, is the participant still allowed to attend in-person gatherings?

A: In some instances, the 14-day break may not be required. If this travel has not resulted in illness in a household, we assume that household's travel routine is at a reduced risk of transmission. However, the situation must be shared with all families in the troop and there must be agreement that families are comfortable with this situation.

Q: Is there a distinction for travel outside of the District of Columbia, Maryland, 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 14 days as listed in our COVID-19 guidelines.

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 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: Unfortunately, CDC currently does not recommend the use of gaiters. There is little data available about if gaiters are effective. Girl Scouts recommends following CDC guidelines for facemasks.

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.

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

A: Yes. Electronic fillable forms from the e-mail address of the parent/guardian is a valid electronic signature. Electronic forms should be emailed and 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: Based on updated Virginia guidance, will Council be revising its social distancing guidance?

A: We review our guidelines every four (4) weeks in order to amend as needed, but at this time social distancing guidance for Council will remain at six (6) feet. Our council covers multiple states and jurisdictions and are unable to make decisions in accordance to only one state.

Q: If a parent is a health care worker, can they and their girl(s) still attend in-person programming?

A: This is a case by case basis. If the parent is a health care worker or an essential worker who has been exposed to COVID, both girl and adult are to refrain from participating in in-person programming. Families are fully encouraged to take advantage of virtual programming.

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.

Girl and Adult Recruitment

Q: Can existing troops opt to be virtual only?

A: Yes, troops have the option to be virtual.

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 in the fall?

A: Unfortunately, no. The large groups such as schools and municipalities that we work with have already issued guidelines for the fall which do not allow for meetings. 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; weekday reservations will open either August 12th or 14th. Troop meetings at camp can begin August 17th. 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: Two of our offices, DC and Kingstowne, may be an option. Due to space restrictions and social distancing, our DC office can accommodate 12 people and our Kingstowne office can accommodate 10 people.

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... many 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, if due for re-certification this fall, is there a waiver or an extension for one year?

A: Volunteers that need to complete required program level classes, and first aid certifications that have expired, have an extended deadline of Dec 31, 2020 to complete their required training. Other required training such as Cookout and Campout, high adventure, and First Aid (if getting certified for the first time) must be completed before engaging in any activities that requires a volunteer certified in these activities. All in-person classes, including required program level classes, enrichment skills, first aid, etc. may resume August 17th. Classes offered at that time will need to adhere to the COVID-19 safety guidelines.

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, she 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 for this fall 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 camping this winter.

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. There are no plans to open the challenge courses at Camp Crowell and Camp White Rock this fall.

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.

Q: For Cookie Booths, will parent/child booths be allowed?

A: We have yet to make a decision on cookie booth adult/girl requirements, stay tuned for the number of people who will be able to participate at a cookie booth.

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 medial insurance does cover medical costs once member's primary insurance has been exhausted which includes COVID-19.