

Guidelines for Tomahawks and Throwing Knives at Girl Scouts Nation's Capital Camp Properties During COVID-19

[View a list of addendums to the guidelines here.](#)

Introduction:

The purpose of this document is to present a set of suggested practices, based on currently available information, while using tomahawks and/or throwing knives at Girl Scouts Nation's Capital Camp Properties during COVID-19. These suggestions are provided to assist facilitators and do not replace guidance from federal (e.g., CDC), state, and local authorities. Individual facilitators are responsible for appropriate risk assessment and risk management.

While sanitizing equipment is still required at the end of the session, GSCNC is now emphasizing that troops' main attention during their session be paid to adhering to the behaviors that are proven to be most effective in preventing transmission of COVID-19: social distancing, mask wearing, and hand hygiene

(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html>). Troops are welcome to sanitize the equipment more frequently than required during their reservation. Please bring your own cleaning supplies.

Participating in high adventure during a pandemic requires more time. Fewer girls can actively throw at once and cleaning the equipment will take additional time not previously needed during a pre-COVID high adventure session. As such, if you have a larger troop (> 8 girls participating) we highly recommend that you consider reserving an additional hour for your activity. We also recommend splitting your girls into smaller groups. There will be more down-time: you should have activities prepared for girls who are waiting to participate.

The troop leader and other adult troop volunteers are primarily responsible for enforcing these guidelines. High adventure facilitators have the right to suspend a session if guidelines are not being enforced properly.

Site-Specific Information about Our Tomahawk Ranges and Rentals

All Girl Scouts Nation's Capital camps have a tomahawk range. Some ranges also have throwing knives (separate certification). Access to water/washstands at the ranges can be very limited or nonexistent. All groups should bring plenty of hand sanitizer for their session.

There will be a one-hour "rest period" between all rentals. We recommend that this additional time be used as needed for any final cleaning your group needs to complete.

Very limited disinfecting wipes will be provided at the range: **groups should bring their own cleaning supplies.**

Facilitator Setup

- Wipe down bean bags, tomahawk handles, blades, and knives with disinfectant wipes or spray. Allow equipment to dry completely.
 - Example videos for how to clean equipment can be found on gsLearn – “204 High Adventure Cleaning Procedures”
- At ranges that normally have three targets, only the outside two should be used. When setting up the range, make it clear that the middle target should not be used. At any camp with a fence target, only two girls should be throwing at a time and there should be at least six feet between throwers. Be aware that targets at Camp Crowell’s range are closer together and it may not be possible to have two throwers six feet apart.

Preparing for the Activity with Participants

- All **attendees** must have completed the [COVID-19 Health Pre-Screen Form](#)
 - This includes any adult chaperones and tagalongs that may be present.
- All participants should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer (perform hand hygiene) at the start of the session.
- Masks should be worn at all times for the duration of the session.
- When reviewing the rules and practicing with the bean bags, all members of the group should be social distancing.
- If the facilitator and entire group is comfortable, the facilitator may remove their mask when giving safety instructions at the beginning of the session. If they choose to do this, the facilitator must stand at least 15 feet away from any other individual (the longer distance is to account for the facilitator projecting their voice towards participants).
- If there are not enough bean bags for each participant to have her own, consider skipping the bean bag warm-up. Girls can also practice using bunched up bandanas.

During the Activity

- Masks should be worn at all times.
- A maximum of two girls can throw at a time, with 6 feet between them if the range allows.
- The facilitator and all attending individuals, not just the throwers, should maintain social distancing throughout the activity.
- Girls should perform hand hygiene before and after each round of throwing if sharing tomahawks or knives. For small groups, there may be enough tomahawks for each girl to have her own. For larger groups, consider the following options:
 - If participants perform hand hygiene prior to each time they use a tomahawk or knife, and the group is comfortable with it, they could share tomahawks as normal.

- Consider having individuals who have already been in proximity with each other, such as family members, girls who shared the same sleeping unit, etc. share the same set of tomahawks or knives. The tomahawks can still be cleaned and allowed to dry completely between uses if preferred.
- Each participant could use one tomahawk/knife, retrieving it in between throws. Once a participant is done throwing tomahawk/knife 'A', it would be wiped down and set to dry. Repeat with all available tomahawks/knives. Once all the tomahawks/knives have been used once, the next participant would use tomahawk/knife 'A'. Any tomahawk/knife must be completely dry prior to reuse.
- Throwers could wear gloves, but they need to still allow the participant to grip the tomahawk/knife properly. Gloves should not be shared between participants.

After the Activity

- All participants perform hand hygiene.
- Disinfect all bean bags, tomahawk handles, blades, knives, and any other equipment used. Let the equipment air dry before putting it away.
- Wipe down the box's lid and lock prior to departing.