

Returning to In-Person Troop Meetings and Activities (May 15, 2021) COVID-19 Guidance for Volunteers

Supersedes GSUSA guidance provided 9/4//2020 as follows:

Additional sections:

- Attendee COVID-19 Screening Form

Updates to existing sections:

- Face coverings
- Carpooling

This guidance is being provided as of the Edition Date above (when a vaccine has not been made readily available). Girl Scouts of Colorado may modify this guidance, from time to time as circumstances change.

COVID-19 is an extremely contagious virus that spreads easily in the community. Take all reasonable precautions to limit potential exposure for girls, volunteers, and families.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to change as infection rates rise and fall in different areas. Girl Scouts of Colorado will consider local, [state](#), and [national](#) directives as guidelines are provided to troops and groups. As of July 1, 2020, based on group comfort level, in-person meetings of troops/groups could resume if the guidelines outlined below are adhered to. Discuss plans with families. Making decisions as a troop/group needs to take feedback from all families into consideration. Girl Scouts of Colorado is an inclusive organization and if there are families in your group who do not feel comfortable participating in-person, consider if a hybrid of virtual and in-person options is possible. There may be girls or volunteers who are [in high-risk categories for COVID-19 or who live with someone who is considered high-risk](#).

Waiver

Prior to participation in any in-person activity all members, girls and adults, must complete and submit the COVID-19 liability waiver. A waiver needs to be submitted for each individual and only needs to be submitted one time to cover all in-person participation. [COVID-19 liability waivers can be found here](#) and are submitted electronically through Formstack.

Attendee COVID-19 Screening

Prior to attending any in-person meeting or activity, GSUSA requires all attendees complete a [health screen symptom check](#). Troop volunteers should distribute this form to girls' caregivers to be completed and signed the day of an activity or meeting, or troop volunteers may take temperatures and collect the information on the form immediately before a meeting or activity. These forms should be collected by the volunteer and retained for one year.

Use these questions and reminders to help decide how and when to return to troop activities.

Troop Meeting Space. Outdoor spaces where social distancing can be maintained are strongly recommended for meetings. Get advance permission from the property owner or the jurisdiction

that provides the location.

For meetings held at public facilities, 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, consider whether you can supplement any practices that are less ideal. For example, if you will arrive after another user group, plan to bring sanitizing wipes to get the space ready for your troop. Another example: if faucets are manual, take some time to show girls how to shut them off with a paper towel. Use paper towels for doorknobs whenever possible.

Community locations, such as schools, churches, or libraries, might not permit outside groups on premises, so always check and confirm ahead of time. Although community locations might not currently allow use of their indoor meeting spaces, they may allow troops to meet in an outdoor space. Check to see if they would allow your troop to meet in an outdoor space. To limit cross-contamination, if there is a playground in the outdoor space, girls should not be allowed to get on the playground equipment. If your troop/group is meeting in a parking lot, the lot should be closed to traffic.

Troop meeting displacement grant

Girl Scouts of Colorado began offering troop meeting location grants for troops displaced from their meeting location or which saw a major increase in rental rates due to COVID-19 starting August 24. The maximum grant offered will be \$200 and will be offered as a reimbursement. Troops must have a current ACH on file to receive this grant. This grant is only available temporarily to support troops in the current COVID-19 climate.

Troops should fill out this location grant

form: <https://gscolorado.formstack.com/forms/trooplocationgrant>

Troop meetings in the home. Girl Scouts of Colorado typically does not allow troop meetings to be held at a private home or residence (see [Volunteer Essentials](#)) for girl safety reasons beyond COVID-19. Additionally, GSUSA strongly suggests no meetings in the home out of concern that there would be greater risk of exposure to other family members. The recommendation is to stay away from in-home meetings. However, If your troop is unable to find another meeting location, troops can meet in a volunteer's home or yard as a temporary solution if all [requirements](#) are met. The homeowner or renter must submit [this form](#) at least two weeks before the first meeting and all adults living/present in the home must pass the required background check. Girl Scouts of Colorado does not recommend meeting in homes and stresses this is a short-term solution during these unprecedented times.

Troop Meeting Size. When considering in-person meetings or activities, troops should consult these recommendations and the current guidelines posted in their county. Allowable group size varies by county and activity, be sure to [check for the most recent updates from the Colorado state government](#) for small gatherings. Please also check for your county's guidance, links to counties' COVID-19 websites can be found at the end of this document. Restrictions may vary county to county, and frequently change.

If you have a large troop, stay connected while you wait for a safe time for everyone to gather. Large troops are wonderful, so stay together! Some ideas:

- Host virtual troop meetings (see below).
- Gather up in smaller groups—such as age-level groups or groups of girls with a particular badge they'd like to work on.

Large Gatherings. If larger gatherings are permitted in your county, Girl Scouts of Colorado recommends that gatherings are limited to the size of one troop. If you plan a larger gathering that complies with guidelines for your county, you should ensure that social distancing is adhered to and a system of pods or cohorts is used to limit potential levels of exposure.

The CDC guiding principles state that the *more people* an individual interacts with at a gathering and the longer that interaction lasts, the higher the potential risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 and COVID-19 spreading.

It is strongly recommended to meet outdoors as opposed to indoors, and only when social distancing can be maintained. For more people or large gatherings, when the time is safely appropriate, follow the CDC guidelines: [Large Gatherings and Community Events](#).

The CDC shares that the risk of COVID-19 spreading at events and gatherings increases as follows:

Lowest risk: Virtual-only activities, events, and gatherings.

More risk: Smaller outdoor and in-person gatherings in which individuals from different households remain spaced at least 6 feet apart, wear cloth face coverings, do not share objects, and come from the same local area (e.g., community, town, city, or county).

Higher risk: Medium-sized in-person gatherings that are adapted to allow individuals to remain spaced at least 6 feet apart and with attendees coming from outside the local area.

Highest risk: Large in-person gatherings where it is difficult for individuals to remain spaced at least 6 feet apart and attendees travel from outside the local area.

Transportation. It is recommended that individual caregivers drop off and pick up their own girls from meetings. Carpooling and public transportation should be avoided, where possible, to maintain social distancing. If carpooling cannot be avoided, it is imperative to take all safety precautions when girls are travelling in motor vehicles. Coronavirus transmission risk is high when people are in close proximity, less than six feet apart. The risk increases when people are in a closed in area or indoors for longer than 10 minutes. When transporting girls, always space out the girls to avoid crowding, have girls wear a mask and keep the windows partially open to provide ventilation. Make sure parents are aware ahead of time if girls will be in a car together. Always, for every in-person event, meeting, or transportation arrangement, conduct the prescreening process to ensure that coronavirus does not touch Girl Scout gatherings.

Remember:

- Girls and adults should wear masks when inside of a motor vehicle

- Keep car window opened, at least partially, to circulate fresh air.
- Consider the personal situation of your girls:
 - Do they live with an immune compromised person that they can put at risk? If so, perhaps make other accommodations for her with her parents.
 - Prescreen all passengers
 - Have the families been isolating, and free from contagion? If so, the troop may essentially be a safe bubble.

Again, 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](#)

Virtual meetings. Meeting options may need to be flexible based on the fluid nature of COVID-19 risk. Troops that can run online meetings as needed (or wanted) should do so. GSUSA recommends maintaining a virtual to in-person ratio of at least 20/80, which means to hold virtual troop meetings at least 20% of the time to keep tech skills and virtual meeting habits fresh. Use the Safety Activity Checkpoints for Virtual Meetings, to guide your meeting plans: [Virtual Troop Meetings](#).

Other helpful resources can be found here: <https://www.girlscoutsofcolorado.org/en/our-program/ways-to-participate/girl-scouting-at-home.html>

Day trips and activities. In conjunction with Safety Activity Checkpoints, follow the same guidance as Troop Meetings and Hygiene and COVID-19 Risk Mitigation guidance in this document. This includes, but is not limited to, guidance focused on group size and transportation. 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 equipment at the gym. Make whatever appropriate accommodations that are necessary. For example, bring extra sanitizer if none will be provided for public use at the activity location.

Travel and overnight stays.

In-state travel and overnight stays are permitted when the county of origin and the county where staying overnight are both in level clear/no restrictions.

GSUSA's COVID-19 guidelines do not permit domestic and international travel at this time. We are monitoring closely to determine when GSUSA permits travel. Once travel is permitted, as always please complete the Girl Scouts of Colorado [Activity and Event Approval Form](#) for prior approval before planning any overnight stays and follow guidance in Safety Activity Checkpoints. Be sure to check the cancellation and refund policies for any travel and overnight stays as Girl Scouts of Colorado will not provide financial assistance related to trip cancellations and reimbursements.

When planning for future trips, troops/groups should refer to CDC guidance for both [domestic](#) and [international](#) travel and consider conditions at their destination when making contingency plans. Due to the constantly changing nature of the current climate, troops/groups are encouraged to consider rescheduling travel plans for 2020.

Hygiene and COVID-19 Risk Mitigation. Follow the [resources developed by credible public health sources such as CDC](#) or your local public health department. Share these with girls and volunteers and ensure that they are practiced during meetings and activities. Place signs in the meeting or activity space to remind girls and volunteers 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/caregivers 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 stay home until their temperature is normal.

Personal contact. Hugs, handshakes, “high-fives,” and even activities like the friendship circle or squeeze can transmit COVID-19 from person to person. Refrain from these gestures for the time being. Create a safe way for girls and volunteers to greet and end meetings without contact.

First Aid Supplies. Troop first aid supplies should 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. Make sure that the trash baskets (or bags) are easily accessible for girls. Disposable or no-contact thermometers may be added to supplies if available and not cost-prohibitive, however, parents should be checking temperatures and allowing their girl(s) to join group activities only when temperatures are normal.

First Aid / CPR Training. Keep skills up to date for any emergency. Check the Girl Scouts of Colorado events calendar or your staff contact if you are interested in a remote first aid / CPR training.

Disinfectants and Disinfecting. [Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces](#) and objects that are frequently touched (i.e., tabletops, 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.

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

FDA Warning. The FDA advised consumers (6/19/2020) not to use any hand sanitizer manufactured by Eskbiochem SA de CV in Mexico, due to the potential presence of methanol (wood alcohol), a substance that can be toxic when absorbed through the skin or ingested. FDA has identified the following products manufactured by Eskbiochem:

- All-Clean Hand Sanitizer (NDC: 74589-002-01)
- Esk Biochem Hand Sanitizer (NDC: 74589-007-01)
- CleanCare NoGerm Advanced Hand Sanitizer 75% Alcohol (NDC: 74589-008-04)
- Lavar 70 Gel Hand Sanitizer (NDC: 74589-006-01)
- The Good Gel Antibacterial Gel Hand Sanitizer (NDC: 74589-010-10)
- CleanCare NoGerm Advanced Hand Sanitizer 80% Alcohol (NDC: 74589-005-03)
- CleanCare NoGerm Advanced Hand Sanitizer 75% Alcohol (NDC: 74589-009-01)
- CleanCare NoGerm Advanced Hand Sanitizer 80% Alcohol (NDC: 74589-003-01)
- Saniderm Advanced Hand Sanitizer (NDC: 74589-001-01)

Methanol is not an acceptable ingredient for hand sanitizers and should not be used due to its toxic effects. Stay completely away from sanitizers containing methanol.

Consumers who have been exposed to hand sanitizer containing methanol should seek immediate treatment, which is critical for potential reversal of toxic effects of methanol poisoning.

Face Coverings. Volunteers should follow [state](#), county, and local guidance for face coverings (masks). Mask guidance may change and volunteers should check for updates.

Volunteers can remind girls that wearing face coverings (masks) not only protects themselves but to protect others. Face coverings are a civic responsibility and a sign of caring for the community. Girls can bring their own face coverings. Have disposable masks on hand for those who need them. Volunteers can teach girls [how to handle their face coverings](#) so that the coverings are effective.

While it is OK for a troop to reach its own agreement regarding face coverings as long as it is in compliance with local and state guidelines, if the troop is participating in GSCO staff-led programming or other third-party programming, they must follow the guidelines of the organization.

Per the [CDC face covering guidelines](#), there may be some activities where masks should not be worn:

- People should not wear cloth face coverings while engaged in activities that may cause the cloth face covering to become wet, like when [swimming at the beach or pool](#). A wet cloth face covering may make it difficult to breathe. For activities like swimming and water sports it is particularly important to maintain physical distance from others when in the water. When engaging in swimming, boating, and water sports please maintain physical distance and follow CDC's guidelines regarding not wearing face coverings when they could get wet and cause a safety or drowning hazard.
- People who are engaged in high intensity activities, like running, may not be able to wear a cloth face covering if it causes difficulty breathing. If unable to wear a cloth face

covering, consider conducting the activity in a location with greater ventilation and air exchange (for instance, outdoors versus indoors) and where it is possible to maintain physical distance from others.

Some girls or volunteers may not be able to wear masks, due to medical conditions. It is advised that members in high risk categories or who are unable to wear masks consult with their physician about the safest way to participate. Girl Scouts of Colorado is an inclusive organization and if there are families in your group who do not feel comfortable participating in-person, consider a hybrid of virtual and in-person options.

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.
- Avoid “serve yourself” buffets.
- Public dining only as permitted in your local jurisdiction.
- 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 pack) or hotdog for outdoor cooking.
- Ensure everyone handling food, those serving, girls, 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 6 foot spacing during mealtimes.

Restrooms. Be very careful in public restrooms. Most public restrooms will regulate the number of people using the restroom at the same time, depending on the size. If there is no regulator or signage, have volunteers ensure girls take appropriate turns to maintain social distancing and that they wear their masks in the restrooms. It is ideal to have automatic flushers and sensory faucets to wash hands. If these are not available, girls and adults should get in the habit of using tissue or paper towel to open doors and latches, touching as little as possible. If the restroom is large, have girls use every other stall and avoid using stalls with a person in the stall next to them at the same time. Restrooms and toilets are fraught with germs normally, and more so now considering the contagion of coronavirus.

Reporting and communicating a positive COVID-19 test. In the event of a COVID-19

positive test result, do NOT contact the parents or troop members. Promptly contact GSCO in this situation by emailing risk.management@gscolorado.org, please be sure to include your name, phone number, and a brief description of the situation including that there has been a positive COVID-19 test. A **council staff member** and NOT volunteers, will be responsible for:

- Confirming and tracing the positive tester,
- Contacting the parents of anyone who may have been exposed (or other volunteers),
- Notifying a facility where a troop has met, and
- Alerting the state department of health.

Let other volunteers who are aware of the situation know that council staff, NOT volunteers, will notify parents and others about a positive test result and that the tester's identity is confidential. Remember that girl and volunteer health information is private and strictly confidential and should be shared only on a need-to-know basis with a council staff member.

State and Local COVID-19 Resource Pages

State of Colorado

Counties COVID-19 Resources

*Some counties may not have the most updated information or have limited information regarding their re-opening procedures on their website. Please call your local county representatives if you need more information. If county information is unavailable, please follow the state guidelines.

- [Adams County](#) (Adams, Arapahoe, and Douglas County are all the same link)
- [Alamosa County](#)
- [Arapahoe County](#)
- [Archuleta County](#)
- [Baca County](#)
- [Bent County](#)
- [Boulder County](#)
- [Broomfield County](#)
- [Chaffee County](#)
- [Cheyenne County](#)
- [Clear Creek County](#)
- [Conejos County](#)
- [Costilla County](#)

- [Crowley County](#) (Facebook)
- [Custer County](#)
- [Delta County](#)
- [Denver County](#)
- [Dolores County](#)
- [Douglas County](#)
- [Eagle County](#)
- [El Paso County](#)
- [Elbert County](#)
- [Fremont County](#)
- [Garfield County](#)
- [Gilpin County](#)
- [Grand County](#)
- [Gunnison County](#)
- [Hinsdale County](#)
- [Huerfano County](#)
- [Jackson County](#)
- [Jefferson County](#)
- [Kiowa County](#)
- [Kit Carson County](#)
- [La Plata County](#)
- [Lake County](#) (Facebook page for this county)
- [Larimer County](#)
- [Las Animas County](#)
- [Lincoln County](#)
- [Logan County](#)
- [Mesa County](#)
- [Mineral County](#)
- [Moffat County](#)

- [Montezuma County](#)
- [Montrose County](#)
- [Morgan County](#)
- [Otero County](#)
- [Ouray County](#)
- [Park County](#)
- [Phillips County](#)
- [Pitkin County](#)
- [Prowers County](#)
- [Pueblo County](#)
- [Rio Blanco County](#)
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