

This guidance is being provided as of the Edition Date above. Girl Scouts of the Missouri Heartland (GSMH) can modify this guidance, from time to time as circumstances change.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to change as infection rates rise and fall in different areas. There may be regional differences or developments since this guidance was published. Continue to follow local, state, and [national](#) directives. Discuss plans with families.

Restrictions vary greatly from state to state, county to county, and even from town to town—and frequently change. GSMH requires following the most restrictive guidelines as the health and safety of our members is our top priority. For example, if your local guidelines do not require masks in public, GSMH does. Therefore, masks must be worn during all in-person meetings and activities.

Troop/Service Unit Meeting Space. Troops and service units may meet in-person in indoor or outdoor spaces where physical distancing can be maintained. Service Unit events (such as bridging, day camp, etc.) and multi-troop events are allowed. Family members not currently registered or tag-a-longs are only appropriate for family-style events.

Troop/Service Unit Meetings in the Home. If your only option is to meet at home, you should hold your meetings outside in your yard or driveway. If weather prohibits meeting outside, you will need to find a public/community location to meet or plan to meet virtually. GSMH prohibits meetings inside the home out of concern that there would be greater risk of exposure to other family members.

Troop/Service Unit Meeting Size. To determine appropriate troop meeting size, please follow [your local restrictions](#) for gathering size. Restrictions vary greatly from state to state, county to county, and even from town to town—and frequently change. Meetings should be restricted to registered adult and girl members only.

Transportation to Meetings and Activities. In order to maintain physical distancing, we recommend parents/caregivers provide transportation to and from meetings and activities for members of their household. Carpooling should be avoided if possible, but is allowed by following these guidelines:

- Girls and adults must wear masks when inside a motor vehicle.
- Windows should be kept open, at least partially, to promote proper ventilation of air inside the vehicle.
- Girls who would normally be participating in smaller groups during troop activities should ride together in the same vehicle to limit exposure to other girls in the troop. So, if girls of the same program level are going to break out into small groups during activities, those same girls should ride together there and back if carpooling.
- Keep in mind that someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period creates a higher risk for virus transmission.

- Adults and girls who are sick should not travel to program properties. No one should travel with anyone who is sick.
- When using rental vehicles or shared vehicles, make sure to sanitize the car interior and high-touch surfaces including but not limited to keys, steering wheel, gear shifts, seat belts, etc.

Virtual Meetings. Troops continue to have the option to meet online as needed or wanted. Meeting options may need to be flexible based on the fluid nature of COVID-19 risk. GSUSA recommends maintaining a virtual to in-person ratio of at least 20/80, which means to maintain 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](#). Volunteers can also contact your Troop/SU Support Specialist or New Leader Specialist for help.

Awaiting Test Results. If you or another person in your household have been tested and are awaiting results, help us keep our Girl Scout community safe. Do not attend or send your Girl Scout to a Girl Scout meeting or activity in-person until test results are received as negative.

Day 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. In-person activities may continue in outdoor or indoor settings where physical distancing can be maintained. 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. Troop Travel Applications are being accepted for consideration for overnight stays lasting more than 2 nights and travelling more than 100 miles inside or outside of our council boundaries. Troop Travel Applications are subject to approval and must be submitted 4 weeks in advance for domestic travel, and 12 weeks in advance for international travel. Please follow the instructions located in the Troop Travel Procedures and all COVID-19 guidelines. As always, contact GSMH for prior approval before planning any overnight stays and follow guidance in Safety Activity Checkpoints.

Volunteer Training. Volunteer training will continue virtually through gsLearn and in-person. Complete a [Volunteer Training and Support Request](#) to request a training for your troop or service unit.

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 or a member of your immediate family is sick.
- Cough and sneeze into a tissue, throw the tissue in the trash, and wash/sanitize hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using 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 below 100.4 degrees. Members with fever or temperature higher than 100.4 should avoid in-person gatherings until their temperature is normal.

Attendance. Record attendance of all girl and adult members at the meeting or activity. Include date, time, location, and full name.

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 instead.

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. Talk with GSMH about alternative methods of training that may be available during this time.

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 (1/3 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.

Face Coverings. Face coverings—such as a face mask or shield—must be worn during all in-person meetings and activities. Girls and adults can be encouraged to bring their own face coverings. Troops should have disposable masks on hand for those who need them.

Volunteers should remind girls that Girl Scouts wearing face coverings not only protects themselves but protects others. Face coverings are a civic responsibility and a sign of caring for the community. Volunteers can teach girls [how to handle their face coverings](#) so that the coverings are effective.

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 GSMH in this situation. A **GSMH staff member** will be responsible for working with the local health department to follow the appropriate steps.

Let other volunteers know that the tester's identity is confidential. Remember that girl and volunteer health information is private and strictly confidential and should be only shared on a need to know basis with a council staff member. A **GSMH staff member** will be responsible for working with the local health department to follow the appropriate steps.