



COVID-19 Response Guidelines for Programs, Members, and Volunteers

Edition Date: January 15, 2023

Understanding Risk

The Four C's of Decision-Making: While our understanding of COVID-19 continues to grow, the CDC has identified three primary contributors to transmission - **Contact**, **Confinement**, and **Crowds**.

- **Contact:** Proximity and interaction with other people for an extended amount of time increases risk.
- **Confinement:** Limited circulation of air increases risk.
- **Crowds:** Large group gatherings mean more people, more contacts, and more potential sources of infection.

The guidelines in this document reflect our council's approach to minimizing these risk factors for our Girl Scout members, families, volunteers, staff, and our communities. Ultimately, the decision to attend in-person gatherings relies on a person's level of comfort with risk, weighing their own age and health status, life circumstances, and general level of risk aversion or tolerance. This represents the fourth C – **Choice**.

Adapted from "[How to Navigate Your Community Reopening? Remember the Four C's.](#)" by Roni Caryn Rabin, June 6, 2020, The New York Times.

In-Person Gatherings

In-person gatherings require the following:

1. Members should continue to self-assess and use their best judgment, i.e., if you're sick or exhibit symptoms, don't attend a meeting or event.
 - Members are not required to be vaccinated to participate in Girl Scout in-person gatherings.
2. Masking is optional for all in-person events if no county or state mask mandates exist.
 - Troop leaders and event organizers may not require masks as a condition of attendance at Girl Scout gatherings.
3. Troops hosting in-person troop meetings or program activities are not required to replicate the activity virtually.
4. Families that are uncomfortable with in-person gatherings or unable or unwilling to meet safety requirements, may wish to consider Girl Scout virtual opportunities.

COVID-19 Vaccine

Volunteers and members are NOT REQUIRED to have the COVID-19 vaccine to attend in-person Girl Scout gatherings. GSNYPENN staff are required to supply proof of vaccination or medical or religious exemption.

Council Offices

Council offices are open, if you want to see a specific member of the staff, we recommend that you coordinate in advance of your visit. Please call ahead to make sure staff are available to help you.

Council Camp Properties

All council camp properties are open and operating.

Pre-Screening

Prior to arriving at Girl Scout meetings or events, members should self-assess and use their best judgment, i.e., if you're sick or exhibit symptoms, don't attend a meeting or event. Following simple protocols can create a safer experience for everyone.

All participants must be free of COVID-19 symptoms for 24 hours prior to a gathering: fever, cough, nasal congestion, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, feeling feverish as well as acute gastrointestinal problems, such as nausea, diarrhea, and vomiting.

COVID-19 Symptoms and Testing

According to CDC guidance, regardless of vaccination status, members and volunteers who are sick or suspect that they may have COVID-19 but do not yet have test results should isolate themselves from others.

Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 should isolate themselves at home for five days and return to in-person Girl Scout activities after five days of isolation if they have remained symptom-free, or if their symptoms are improving and they have remained fever-free without utilizing fever-reducing medicine for 24 hours.

At the completion of isolation, members should wear a well-fitting mask through day 10. Antigen testing can be utilized (but is not required) to potentially shorten the duration of post-isolation mask use. With two sequential negative antigen tests (administered 48 hours apart), individuals can remove their masks sooner than day 10.

[Per CDC recommendation](#), if an individual has COVID-19 symptoms but has a negative PCR test, the individual should still refrain from Girl Scout in-person activities until five days have passed since the onset of symptoms.

Face Masks

Masks are optional at all indoor and outdoor in-person Girl Scout gatherings when no county or state mask mandates are in place. Wearing a mask is the decision of each individual and family. Troop leaders and event organizers may not require masks as a condition of attendance at Girl Scout gatherings.

If an individual is exposed to COVID-19, we suggest following [CDC guidance](#) to wear a mask for 10 days after exposure.

Ventilation

If indoors in a poorly ventilated space or in a crowd, it is recommended to open windows and doors to increase airflow and ventilation.

Travel

Transportation

Families providing transportation to/from in-person gatherings provide the least risk. Carpooling may occur based on the comfort level of the troop/group.

Trips

Troops must complete the [Troop/Group Activity Application](#) if they are planning a trip of more than 250 miles roundtrip, a high-risk activity, or an overnight trip.

Domestic Travel

Troops may travel in the United States. Troops are expected to research and plan to meet all safety requirements. Rates of infection, quarantining before and after trips, and requirements for COVID-19 testing and vaccines vary by state and venue.

Cruises

Troops may currently go on cruises. It is the troop's responsibility to be aware that the virus spreads easily between people in close quarters aboard ships. CDC recommends you get up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines and testing no more than three days before travel.

International Travel

GSNYPENN is approving international travel that meets the council's guidelines as detailed in our Extended Trips [policies](#).

In addition, volunteers and families are responsible for knowing and complying with all COVID-19 safety requirements in transit and for destination arrival and departure. [Refer to CDC guidance for international travel](#).

The CDC recommends that you do not travel internationally until you are fully vaccinated. International travel poses additional risks, and even fully vaccinated travelers might be at increased risk of getting and possibly spreading some COVID-19 variants. If you travel, follow all CDC recommendations before, during, and after travel.

It is strongly recommended that there is a clear understanding in writing by volunteers and families of all cancellation policies for planned travel, accommodations, and activities.

Also, refer to the [U.S. Department of State's current information for international travelers](#).

Reporting COVID-19

Universal contact tracing and individual COVID-19 case investigations were implemented as a tool to slow transmissions. However, the wide availability of COVID-19 vaccines, at-home testing kits, and updated isolation and quarantine guidance has prompted a revised public health approach. Many states and localities have scaled back or stopped universal case investigations and contact tracing in alignment with CDC contact tracing recommendations.

If an attendee at a Girl Scout event tests positive for COVID-19 after attending or within five days of participating in a Girl Scout in-person gathering, please send the template email (or a modified version) that is located below to any participant families. Please note that we do not want to share the personal information of the individual who tests positive to maintain their privacy.

If a COVID-19 notice is sent to families after a Girl Scout event, please [complete a COVID-19 incident report](#). Troop leaders do not need to notify council staff if a member tests positive after a troop meeting.

Recommended email for COVID-19 Notification to troop families:

Dear Girl Scout families,

We have been notified that a participant at our last Girl Scout event has tested positive for COVID-19. At this time, it is recommended that attendees wear a mask to any Girl Scout gathering that takes place within the next 10 days. Please follow COVID-19 guidelines put forth by the other organizations your child participates in (i.e., school, sports, church, etc.).

If you have any questions on GSNYPENN's COVID-19 policy, please contact info@gsnypenn.org.

In the event of an emergency, contact the GSNYPENN Emergency Line at 1.800.943.4414, option 4:

- Identify who you are
- Explain the nature of the emergency: positive COVID-19 test
- Provide a contact number for yourself and we will call you back immediately

Incident Response Lead is Christina Verratti, Director of Membership Engagement, 315.915.8976 office, cverratti@gsnypenn.org or 315.723.8849 cell.

All media inquiries must be referred to Jaime Alvarez, Senior Director of Marketing & Communications, 315.275.2251 office, 315.263.5957 cell or jalvarez@gsnypenn.org.