



# GSME Girl Scouts Together:

Wellness Guidelines for Meetings, Travel, and Events

Updated October 1, 2022

## Let's make life simpler

As COVID-19 guidance from public health authorities has eased, Girl Scouts of Maine has condensed guidance for Girl Scout families and volunteers into a simplified version we are calling *Girl Scouts Together*. As with previous editions, these guidelines are informed by guidance from the CDC and the State of Maine Guidelines.

*Girl Scouts Together* is intended to be used in conjunction with Safety Activity Checkpoints, Volunteer Essentials, and all other regular guidelines for Girl Scout activities.

Girl Scouts Together will continue to be reviewed and updated as needed. New or changed sections will be identified by **highlighted text**. The most current version will always be available on the [Resources page](#) of the Girl Scouts of Maine website.

Have a question or need support? Contact us at [customercare@gsmaine.org](mailto:customercare@gsmaine.org)

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This guidance applies to all Girl Scout activities. All members must follow all state and municipal health and safety guidelines, and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It is your responsibility to stay up-to-date and follow all current guidelines. In the case that GSME's guidelines differ from state and local health guidance, please follow whichever guideline is most rigorous. In order to meet in-person, members must commit to immediately complying with changes that may arise.

Consider how you will include and accommodate girls and families who are unable or choose not to meet in person at this time, such as through a virtual attendance option.

**Assumption of risk.** COVID-19 is an extremely contagious virus that spreads easily through person-to-person contact. As with any social activity, participation in Girl Scouts could present the risk of contracting COVID-19. While Girl Scouts of Maine takes every safety and preventative precaution, Girl Scouts of Maine can in no way warrant that COVID-19 infection will not occur through participation in troop or council programs.

**Written attendance record.** Please continue to take a written attendance record at all Girl Scout meetings or activities.

**Meeting space.** For meetings held at public facilities, contact the facility ahead and ask:

- Is this facility/space currently open to the public?
- Does the facility require face coverings?
- Is the space cleaned, and high-touch surfaces (i.e., tabletops, light switches, chairs, etc.) sanitized, at least daily?
- Who else uses the space (how often, what size)? Is the space cleaned between groups?

Girl Scouts may also meet outdoors or virtually. You can find ideas to help make these meetings engaging and successful at these links: [Outdoors](#) or [Virtual](#).

**Adult-to-girl ratios.** Follow adult-to-girl ratios as stated in the most current edition of [Volunteer Essentials](#) (p.52). When possible, it is recommended that people be grouped into stable cohorts or patrols to reduce the opportunity for transmission. Cohorts should be as small as feasible.

**Face Coverings.** Wearing a mask is optional except when required by meeting/event locations, traveling on public transportation, etc. GSME supports the decision to wear face coverings if desired. It is recommended that members carry face coverings with them at all times when participating in Girl Scout activities, in the event that a business or venue requires the use of face coverings to enter. Girls can bring their own face coverings. Have disposable face coverings on hand for those who need them. Volunteers can teach girls how to handle their face coverings so that the coverings are effective.



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In situations where face coverings are required, volunteers should remind girls that Girl Scouts wear face coverings not only to protect themselves but to protect others—they are a civic responsibility and a sign of caring for the community.

**Everyday prevention.** Remind girls and volunteers to engage in everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, including:

- Stay home if you are sick.
- Cough and sneeze into a tissue, then 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 them.

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. Members with a fever should skip the in-person gathering until their temperature is normal.

Regularly clean high-touch surfaces and shared equipment at the beginning and end of each meeting.

**Vaccination and testing.** At this time, proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test is only required as by country when traveling abroad (see p.4) and GSME extended overnight camp programs. Vaccination or a negative test are not currently required for other Girl Scout activities, such as troop meetings, short-term overnight travel, adult trainings, Girl Scout product program participation, etc., unless troop or activity leaders deem it necessary based on current conditions.

## If you're not ready to meet

Not ready to meet? That's okay! Girl Scouts who choose not to meet in person are encouraged to make use of at-home Girl Scout program and virtual meeting tools offered by [Girl Scouts of the USA](#) and [GSME](#).

**Virtual meetings.** Meeting options may need to be flexible based on the fluid nature of COVID-19 risk. Troops able to run online meetings as needed/wanted should do so. Girl Scouts of the USA 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 [Safety Activity Checkpoints for Virtual Meetings](#) to guide your plans.



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## Transportation

**Carpooling.** Carpooling is permitted.

**Public transportation.** Public transportation (including paid ride-share) may be utilized. Follow CDC guidance for public transportation. We recommend that you “know before you go” when travelling and check the requirements for the transportation services and hubs you plan to utilize.

## Day trips, overnight and extended travel

**Overnight troop travel is allowed.** Review travel information below, and assess and consider local, state, and county health and safety guidance for all areas that the trip will include.

**Extended travel.** Keep in mind transportation requirements, and health and safety restrictions in the places you will be traveling through as well as the final destination.

**Be prepared for travel.** Call ahead to the facility or vendor to confirm that they are following CDC and state health department guidelines and to determine if they are requiring face coverings. If activity 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 in case none is provided for public use at the activity location.

**Prepare before you go** by checking travel restrictions where you are, along your route, and at your final destination. Keep in mind transportation requirements, access to resources such as bathrooms and food, follow all health and safety guidance. Prepare to be flexible during your trip as restrictions and policies may change during your travel.

## Screening

**Required:** Prior to attending a Girl Scout in-person gathering of any kind, everyone must complete a written/oral pre-screening evaluation. [Click here](#) for the screening form. If the answer to any question is “yes,” the person shouldn’t attend the meeting or activity. If a person has had a negative COVID-19 test result and answers to all other questions are “no,” they may attend meetings.

## Reporting procedure

In the event of a positive Covid test within two days of a Girl Scout gathering, [please complete this form](#) to report. Please note that personal girl and volunteer health information (including the identity of the person who tested positive and/or their symptoms) is private and confidential.



## Resources

### State of Maine—COVID-19 Response

#### **CDC**

[Facts About the Coronavirus](#)

[How to Protect Yourself & Others](#)

#### **American Red Cross**

[General Guidance for Preventing COVID-19 Transmission During CPR and First Aid](#)