

Guidelines for Troop Meetings, Events, and Travel

Proposed effective: March 8, 2022 until further notice.

Additions and changes are **highlighted in yellow**.

Girl Scouts of Maine (GSME) may modify this guidance from time to time as circumstances change. If the State of Maine Guidelines are updated and are stricter than those outlined in this document, then the State of Maine Guidelines are to be followed.

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. Please remember in person gatherings are not required. Each troop and family should weigh their participation based on their own health concerns.

NOTE: Individual communities in Maine may establish stricter requirements. If that is the case in your community, you must adapt these guidelines to meet those requirements.

The Basics:

1. **Wearing a mask is optional except when required by meeting/event locations, travelling on public transportation, etc.**
2. Wash or sanitize your hands frequently.
3. Meet outdoors when possible.
4. If you must meet indoors, follow current capacity guidelines, open windows, and use fans to increase ventilation.
5. If you are able to [get a vaccination](#) and do so, you will improve your own protection from contracting COVID-19 and minimize the risk of infecting anyone else.
6. Remember to follow [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) for all included activities and any guidelines issued by the facility you are meeting in or traveling to.

	Troop Meetings & Day Trips April 2021	Troop Overnight Travel July 2021
	<p>In person Girl Scout meetings and events may occur, following the guidelines outlined in this document.</p> <p>If a troop member's school goes virtual, then the troop meeting moves to virtual.</p> <p>If a girl or adult is quarantined from school, work, etc., they cannot attend an in-person meeting.</p> <p>For contact tracing in the event of an outbreak, please keep accurate attendance records of all gatherings.</p>	
Gathering Limits	• Troops may meet following GSUSA girl/ adult ratios. Example: 12 Daisies and 2 adults.	• Troop overnight travel will start July 1, 2021 .

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults should have face masks available in the event that they are required. • See below for GSME’s guidelines on meeting locations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Troops may travel following GSUSA girl/adult ratios. Example: 12 Daisies and 4 adults. • Adults should have face masks available in the event that they are required.
Face coverings	<p>Face Coverings are optional. Please note that you must follow the guidelines of the facility where you are meeting or traveling to, this includes wearing a facemask if required.</p>	
Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds as frequently as possible or use hand sanitizer.	Must have hand washing/sanitizing supplies available. Sanitizer must be at least 60% alcohol based.	Each troop member should have personal hand sanitizer in addition to the troop hand washing and sanitizing supplies
Cover coughs or sneezes into the sleeve or elbow, not hands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take time to review and remind participants of appropriate process. • Remind girls to keep their hands away from their faces, in general. • If not followed, ensure participant sanitizes hands and then, sanitize any surfaces coughed/sneezed on. 	
Regularly clean high-touch surfaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify areas that will need to be wiped down after each person touches it—door handles, handle of toilet, faucets, tables, etc., and ensure they are wiped down after each participant touches it. • Minimize the use of shared materials such as markers, crayons, scissors, etc., by having each girl provide her own box of identified items. This box can be carried to and from the meeting by the individual girl. If collected and stored in one location, each box should be wiped off with sanitizing wipe before stored. • If there are shared items, sanitize after each individual person uses the item. 	
Snacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure each participant brings their own filled-water bottle. • If serving snacks, they should be prepackaged individual snacks or have each participant bring their own snack. • If manually prepackaging snacks (for example, dividing box of GS cookies), person(s) preparing must wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds before packaging, wear gloves, and put items in sealable plastic bags. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Person(s) distributing snacks must wash hands prior to distributing.• There should be no sharing of snacks or drinks.• Do not share dishes/utensils.
Meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If manually serving meals, person(s) preparing must wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and wear gloves and a mask.• Person(s) distributing meals must wash hands prior to distributing.• If serving family style, have one person, wearing clean gloves, serve everyone on clean plates.• There should be no sharing of food.• Public dining (restaurants) only as permitted in local jurisdiction.• Avoid “serve yourself” buffets.• Do not share dishes/utensils.
Reporting and Communicating a positive COVID-19 test	<p>If you are notified that an individual who attended a Troop Meeting or event of any kind has a COVID-19 positive test result, do NOT contact the parents and troop members:</p> <p>PROMPTLY contact GSME by calling 1-888-922-4763 or e-mailing customercare@gsmaine.org.</p> <p>As the Maine CDC may contact you, be sure to have available a roster of those in attendance (girl and adult) at the meeting/event. The roster should include the date and time of the gathering, the name of each person in attendance, and their contact information (e-mail and phone number). For girls, also provide their primary caregiver’s name.</p> <p>Please 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 GSME staff member or the Maine CDC.</p>

Additional Guidelines from GSME based on GSUSA guidance

<p>Meeting Locations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whenever possible, meetings should take place outdoors in a public venue. • Meetings may be held indoors at public facilities. Get advance permission from the property owner or the jurisdiction that provides the location. • Please note, in-home/backyard meetings are not allowed due to the greater risk of exposure to and from other family members. In exceptional situations, we will evaluate in-home/backyard meetings on a case-by-case basis. • For meetings held in public areas, volunteers must ensure the space is clean and touch surfaces (i.e., tabletops, chairs, light switches, doors, etc.) have been sanitized. • If your troop needs assistance finding a meeting place, please reach out to your local Service Team or Customer Care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whenever possible trips should take place outdoors in a public venue. • Trips may be indoors at public facilities. Get advance permission from the property owner or the jurisdiction that provides the location. • For trips to public areas, volunteers must ensure the space is clean and touch surfaces (i.e., tabletops, chairs, light switches, doors, etc.) have been sanitized. The space must be large enough to adhere to social distancing guidelines.
<p>Using Non-GSME facilities</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Consider special accommodations or preparations needed when the event is being held off council premises.</p>
<p>Length of Meeting/Trip/Event</p>	<p>You may want to keep meetings relatively short to limit the number of bathroom trips.</p> <p>Many public bathrooms, such as at parks, are currently not open.</p>	<p>Consider logistics resulting from length of trip or event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of bathroom trips • Hand washing/sanitizing • Snacks or Meals • Fatigue
<p>Screenings— Self-Evaluation</p>	<p>All Meetings—It is required that prior to anyone attending a Girl Scout in-person gathering of any kind that they complete a written/oral pre-screening evaluation. Click here for the screening form. If the answer to any of the questions is “yes”, the person shouldn’t attend the meeting. If a person has had a negative COVID-19 test result and answers to all other questions are “no,” they may attend meetings.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone who is ill, living with someone who is ill, or showing symptoms, or in a high-risk category should not participate in any Girl Scout meeting. • Anyone who travels out of the State of Maine must follow State of Maine guidelines in place when returning to Maine. (i.e., if required to quarantine for 14 days do not attend in-person meetings for that period of time) <p>Troop Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents should ensure their child does not have a temperature or feel ill prior to coming to a troop meeting. • If a girl member of your troop exhibits any of the following systems: Fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and/or diarrhea, please follow the guidelines set by your school district for her to return to in person troop meetings (i.e. if the girl is staying home from school for 2 weeks, she should not be attending troop meetings in person and can return to your troop meetings when the school district allows her to return to in person school.) • Parents must determine the risks of allowing their child to attend troop meetings and determine if now is the time for their child to resume in-person Girl Scouting.
First Aid	<p>First Aid kits should reflect this list and include COVID-19 prevention items to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand sanitizer (>60% alcohol) • Tissues • Disposable facemasks • Disinfectants • Disposable or no-contact thermometer if available or not cost prohibitive, however, parents/guardians should be checking temperatures and allowing their child to join group activities only when temperatures are normal. <p>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 and if provided by the troop, disposed of safely.</p>
Transportation	<p>When carpooling is a necessity, you must adhere to the following precautions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep car window opened, at least slightly, to circulate fresh air • Girls and adults travel to and from destination in same vehicle

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the personal situation of girls and adults. Do they live with an immune-compromised person who they can put at risk? If so, perhaps make other accommodations for them. <p>Public transportation. When using public transportation (planes, trains, bus/metro systems, etc.) you must follow specific safety guidelines for public transportation circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid peak hours. • Allow extra time to wait and avoid crowded buses or subway cars or capacity restrictions. • Space out girls to avoid crowding (but keep to the buddy system) • Consider grade level, age, and maturity level of girls. • Always wear a mask • Obtain parental or legal guardian permission, make sure they are aware. • Clean hands before and after public transportation travel. 	
<p>Travel and overnight stays</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>As always, regardless of COVID-19 restrictions, volunteers must follow guidance in Safety Activity Checkpoints. For the foreseeable future, volunteers must seek council prior approval before planning any overnight activities and continue to practice the Hygiene and COVID-19 Risk Mitigation guidance outlined in this document.</p> <p>Although travel plans are often arranged several months in advance, recognize that the COVID-19 risk is fluid; it can and will change, so make alternate plans ahead of time for rescheduling, cancelling, or pivoting to a virtual activity.</p> <p>For all planned trips, create a timeline and identify a final date when decisions must be made about whether or not to move forward with the planned trip, based primarily on the safety of our girls, along with financial commitment deadlines and/or other factors. You should also consider purchasing travel insurance but be</p>

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		<p>sure to read all fine print and ask questions to ensure COVID or pandemic-related cancellation is covered; it is often excluded.</p> <p>Also, check all guidance provided by the CDC specific to Travel, and, for international travel, check U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories. Be sure to check the CDC and Department of State advice with respect to US or international travel.</p> <p>For planned international travel, continue to monitor all guidance from the CDC and Department of State. You can register a planned trip with the Department of State to receive updates when advisories change. You can also check COVID trends over time for select countries by checking the Council on International Educational Exchange’s (CIEE) Health Risk Index Report.</p> <p>Travel approvals will be considered on a case-by-case basis.</p>
Day trips and activities	Activities for Day Trips (7 hours or shorter from pick up to drop off) for Girl Scout girls or adults must adhere to all of the above guidelines.	N/A