

## Returning to In-Person Activities

### Interim Covid-19 Guidance for Volunteers

Edition date: 7/31/2020

Updated: 7/31/2020

Although our reach extends beyond Los Angeles County, Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles, with headquarters in Los Angeles County, is regulated by Safer-at-Work and in the Community guidelines, under the [LA County Health Officer Orders](#), and as such, public and private gatherings outside of a single household unit are currently not permitted.

COVID-19 is an extremely contagious virus that spreads easily in the community. It is extremely important that we take all reasonable precautions to limit potential exposure for girls, volunteers, and families. As COVID-19 infection rates rise and fall in different areas, regional guidance and developments may continue to vary. GSGLA is following local county guidelines and national health directives. We will continue to monitor LA County guidelines regarding small group gatherings and will modify this guidance as circumstances change.

**At this time, in-person meetings, events, and travel are still not permitted.**

**Update: Organized drive-through experiences are now permitted, i.e. investiture, bridging and rededication ceremonies; please follow all health and safety guidelines. See Appendix A protocols for a safe experience.**

**PLEASE NOTE:** When we can connect in-person, prior to conducting a troop in-person activity, complete the new GSGLA Annual Permission Form, which will be kept on file. Or, you may complete the Parent/Guardian Single-Use Permission Form to be kept on file for the designated event. You must complete one of these two forms.

The GSGLA guidelines on deciding how and when to return to in-person activities are below.

#### Locations:

**Virtual spaces** are still a viable option, as the comfort in returning to in-person can vary in your groups. Meeting options may need to be flexible based on the fluid nature of COVID-19 risk. Troops that can run online meetings should do so. 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: Girl Scouts at Home.

**Outdoor spaces** where social distancing can be maintained are strongly recommended. Get advance permission from the property owner or the jurisdiction that provides the location.

If considering **public facilities and spaces**, contact the facility ahead of time and ask:

- Is the space cleaned, and are touch surfaces (i.e., tabletops, light switches, chairs, etc.) sanitized at least daily?
- Is the space used by others? If so, how often and what size is the group, and 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.

**Schools and churches** may not permit outside groups on premises, so always check and confirm ahead of time.

Meetings may not be held in **fitness centers or gyms**, where a greater risk for contracting the virus may exist.

Meetings in **private homes** are strongly discouraged as this presents a greater risk of exposure to other family members. The recommendation is to not conduct in-home troop meetings for the time being. At home outdoor meetings are encouraged such as backyards and front yards if accessible. If the need arises to utilize a home restroom, follow handwashing and PPE protocols.

#### **Group Size:**

The current maximum for in-person groups is ten (10) people (eight girls and two unrelated adult volunteers). GSGLA aligns with the Los Angeles County Public Health Order for small gatherings. No groups bigger than 10 persons is permitted. If there are adjustments to this guidance after July 10, GSGLA will announce the change. Larger groups that choose to separate into multiple groups of 10, must get clearance from GSGLA Risk Management *before* planning their gathering.

If you have a large troop, stay connected while you wait for a safe time for everyone to gather by:

- Hosting virtual troop meetings (see above).
- Gathering in smaller groups—such as age-level groups, or groups of girls with a badge or activity they'd like to work on.

#### **Transportation:**

At this time, a girl's parents, family member, or guardian, should drop off and pick up girls from meetings. Carpooling and public transportation should be avoided, where possible, to maintain social distancing.

#### **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. 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, like 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.

As of June 12, 2020, many of California's public outdoor spaces and campgrounds may now open in certain counties with COVID-19 safety modifications. Follow the State's stay home order by staying in your own community for recreation. Take part in outdoor activities only with members of your household.

### **California State Parks and Beaches:**

Some state parks, beaches and campgrounds are open. Make sure you check the status of parks in your area before you leave your home. Visitors are required to follow new guidelines to visit parks, beaches and campgrounds safely. Check the status of outdoor spaces managed by your county or city before you leave your home. Visitors are advised to bring soap for handwashing and alcohol-based hand sanitizers for when water is not available.

### **Travel and Overnight Stays:**

Overnight trips are not permitted until after California is successfully past Phase 3 of its re-opening process. These timeframes will vary even from county to county in some cases. As always, complete the GSGLA Extended Troop Travel and High-Risk application for approval before planning extended travel or high-risk troop activities and follow guidance in Safety Activity Checkpoints.

### **Health & Safety:**

**Hygiene and COVID-19 Risk Mitigation:** Follow the resources developed by credible public health sources such as CDC or your local public health department. We encourage sharing these with girls and all volunteers and ensure that they are practiced during meetings and activities. Signs are to be placed in the meeting or activity space to remind participants 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.
- Participants should be reminded to check temperatures 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 skip the in-person gathering 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.

**First Aid Supplies.** Troop first aid supplies should include COVID-19 prevention items including hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol), tissues, disposable facemasks (see ‘Face Coverings’ below), 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. For more information, please contact the GSGLA Training Team at [Training@GirlScoutsLa.org](mailto:Training@GirlScoutsLa.org) 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., tabletops, markers, scissors, etc.). See the [CDC’s website](#) for more on cleaning and disinfecting community facilities.

**Face Coverings.** Face coverings are mandatory by state law and 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. Some girls or volunteers may not be able to wear masks, due to medical conditions such as asthma. Contact GSGLA for guidance on how best to handle these exceptional circumstances as they arise.

**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 GSGLA in this situation. A **GSGLA 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 or homeowner where a troop has met, and
- Alerting the state department of health.

**IMPORTANT:** The tester’s identity is confidential. GSGLA staff, NOT volunteers, will notify parents and others about a positive test result. 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.

Take care, and keep spreading the Girl Scout spirit

For further information or questions, send an email to [covid19@girlscoutsla.org](mailto:covid19@girlscoutsla.org).

## Appendix A

Below, please find protocols and suggestions for a safe and fun drive thru experience.

### Protocols

1. Every participant must complete the **new** [GSGLA Annual Permission](#) or [Parent/Guardian Single-Use Permission](#) Form, as noted above.
2. All members or guests that are volunteering at the event **must wear a face mask**.
3. The Girl Scout will exit the car **wearing a mask**, stand at an appropriate social distance from others, and be directed when it is her turn.

### Safe and Legal

Please know we will be following all guidelines set forth by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and the CDC. We expect all participants to adhere to this guidance as well. Failure to do so may mean losing your chance to participate in these events.

Participation is wholly voluntary, and participants assume full responsibility for any risks of loss, property damage, or personal injury, including death, that may be sustained as a result of participating in these events. Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles and its officers, employees, agents and representatives shall not be liable for any claims, demands or causes of action based upon or arising out of any illness or injury, including death, property loss or damage, however caused, which may result in connection with these events.

### Keep It Fun!

We encourage Girl Scouts to share their Girl Scout Spirit by wearing a Girl Scout sash or uniform.

1. Since we must socially distance, we encourage you to be creative!
  - a. Consider decorating your car in a manner that highlights your Girl Scout spirit.
  - b. Create a sign that includes your troop number and name (tape it to the side window where the girl is exiting the car, so all can see) Use window markers to decorate
2. Consider inviting a volunteer or parent to help
  - a. Greeter - a person that can help each girl exit the car and move to the correct location safely
  - b. Announcer – make announcements, read each of the girl's names, etc.

### File attachments:

Drive Thru Name Sign