

Troop/Group Return to Girl Scout In-person Activities Readiness Checklist

This readiness checklist has been developed to assist troop/group leadership, girls, and families in making a sound, safe decision as to if they are ready to return to in-person meetings. The safety and wellbeing of our Girl Scouts, families, volunteers and staff are paramount. Girl Scouts of Central Maryland (GSCM) strongly recommends that initial meetings be held virtually and/or in outdoor settings. Meeting options may need to be flexible based on the fluid nature of COVID-19 risk. Troops/Groups that are able to run online meetings as needed (or wanted) should continue to do so. **Hold an in-person meeting only when troop/group leadership, girls, and troop/group families feel comfortable and safe.**

We recognize that GSCM members and volunteers are at varying levels of readiness in regard to their comfort level in attending and/or facilitating in-person Girl Scouts activities, whether or not they are held indoors or outdoors. Some members may be excited and ready to meet in-person, while other members may not. Therefore, before a troop or group decides to resume in-person meetings or activities, they need to assess the readiness, preparedness, and comfort level of all troop/group girls, families, and troop volunteers against this *GSCM Troop/Group Return to Girl Scout In-person Activities Readiness Checklist*.

Troop/Group Leadership Readiness

The members of the troop/group leadership team should start by asking themselves the following questions. If the leadership team can 'check' all the boxes, then the next step is to move on to assessing girl and family readiness:

- All members of the troop leadership team received, read, understand and are in agreement with and willing to adhere to *GSCM Guidelines for Returning to In-person Girl Scout Meetings and Activities*.
- Members of the troop leadership team are comfortable with facilitating troop/group in-person meetings.
- All Girl Scouts and volunteers in the troop/group have a current Girl Scout membership.
- All troop adult volunteers (i.e. Troop Leaders, Troop Co-Leaders, Troop Cookie Manager, Troop Treasurer, Family and Friends members, etc.) have a current background clearance on file with GSCM.
- Troop/Group leadership has reviewed and made preparations to obtain from parents/caregivers the following updated/required GSCM forms:
 - o [*Girl and Adult Health Record*](#)
 - o [*GSCM Parent/Guardian Permission for Girl Scout Activities, Events and Trips*](#)
 - o [*GSCM Assumption of Risk, Release and Waiver of Liability Relating to Coronavirus/COVID-19*](#)
- Each troop/group leader has considered for themselves whether or not their in-person participation places members of their household in an increased risk for severe illness (including older adults and those of any age who have severe underlying health conditions).
- Troop/Group leadership has completed a plan for a safe return to in-person meetings, which they will share with girls and families.
- Troop/Group leadership has made a plan on how they will stay connected to girls not ready for in-person. To a reasonable degree, consider how you will ensure participation is still an option for those who are unable to attend in person.

- Prepare for possible questions and concerns you may receive from girls and families about COVID-19 and how the troop/group will work together to keep each other safe while engaged in troop/group activities. Girl Scouts of the USA has developed helpful resources for [How to Talk to Your Girl About Coronavirus](#) and [Help Kids Cope with Disappointment in the Face of COVID-19](#) to help minimize stress and worry in your Girl Scouts' lives and give them a sense of calm and control.

Troop/Group Girl and Family Readiness

Troop/Group leadership should ask these questions of girls and families, whether by phone or email poll, to gauge the readiness of girls and troop families to return to in-person meetings:

- Girls and families are comfortable attending in-person meetings held in the outdoors.
- Girls and families are comfortable attending in-person meetings held indoors.
- Do girls and families have questions/concerns about returning to in-person meetings?
- Parents/Caregivers have received a copy of the *GSCM Guidelines for Returning to In-person Girl Scout Meetings and Activities* and have read, understand, and agree to comply with and support troop/group leadership in adhering to these established safety guidelines.
- Parents/Caregivers have received, completed and signed the following required participation documents:
 - *Girl and Adult Health Record (revised version 8/2020)*
 - *GSCM Parent/Guardian Permission for Girl Scout Activities, Events and Trips (revised version 8/2020)*
 - *GSCM Assumption of Risk, Release and Waiver of Liability Relating to Coronavirus/COVID-19*
- Girls and families who attend troop/group meetings understand that according to current GSCM guidelines, face coverings are required to be worn at in-door Girl Scout meetings and activities. For Girl Scout activities held outdoors, face coverings are required whenever it is not possible to maintain a minimum of six (6) feet of distance from individuals who are not members of their household.
- Girls and families who attend troop/group meetings understand they must maintain a social distance of a minimum of six (6) feet at all times from individuals who are not members of their household while participating in meetings and activities.

Troop/Group Meeting Location Preparations

If troop/group leadership, girls and families are ready to return to in-person meetings, the next step is to assess the readiness and availability of the troop/group meeting location (or alternative location). If the troop/group leadership is able to 'check' all the boxes below, the next step would be to assess troop/group program and materials preparedness.

- Troop/Group leadership has identified a meeting place that will permit them to hold Girl Scout meetings/activities. If troop/group leadership needs assistance, contact your Service Unit Manager and/or membercare@gscm.org
- The meeting space is large enough to maintain a social distancing expectation of six (6) feet between girls and troop adults at all times.
- The location has a protocol for sanitation of the meeting space prior to troop/group meetings
- The troop/group has readily available disinfectant (e.g. disinfectant wipes/cleaner, disinfectant aerosols, etc.) in order to disinfect the meeting location before and after, regardless of whether or not the facility has cleaned the space prior to the meeting.

Troop/Group Meeting Program and Materials

Next, consider troop/group meeting material preparedness:

- The troop/group has an extra supply of face coverings, hand sanitizer, soap, paper towels, tissues, gloves, and a well-stocked first-aid kit.
- The troop/group is prepared with individual supplies for each girl to use for activities (e.g. markers, crayons, etc.) or has asked parents/caregivers to provide individual supplies.
- If deemed snacks/food/drinks for meetings is necessary, the girls have been asked to bring their own or individually wrapped snacks/drinks are available.
- The troop/group leadership has completed the program plan to determine if adjustments and/or additional materials are needed to adapt activities (i.e. badge/Journey work, ceremonies, games, activities, etc.).

Troop/Group Day Trips and Activities

Before engaging in a troop/group day trip or activity, consider the following:

- The troop/group leadership is aware of local and state travel advisories, as well as quarantine requirements upon returning, if day trip will be out-of-state.
- For out of state trips, has leadership completed and submitted the *GSCM Trip Application*, if necessary, also the *GSCM Mid to High Risk Application*.
- Troop/Group leadership has contacted the facility/venue to confirm that they are following CDC and local health department guidelines.
- Transportation: families will need to provide transportation for their Girl Scouts (carpooling is not permitted); consider the duration of travel time. Discuss with all families if they are able to make this drive.
- Food: If snacks/food/drinks are deemed necessary based on the duration of the trip or activity, the girls and participating adults are encouraged to pack a snack or their lunch, if possible or individually wrapped items are provided.

Prepare for the First Back to In-person Meeting/Activity

Before the meeting/activity:

- Review and share with all troop/group leadership and girls/families the *GSCM Guidelines for Returning to In-person Girl Scout Meetings and Activities*.
- Share and plan for collection of the following participation documents from all participating girls and families (hardcopy or electronic copy):
 - *Girl and Adult Health Record (revised version 8/2020)*
 - *GSCM Parent/Guardian Permission for Girl Scout Activities, Events and Trips (revised version 8/2020)*
 - *GSCM Assumption of Risk, Release and Waiver of Liability Relating to Coronavirus/COVID-19*
- Purchase needed materials and disinfecting supplies for the meeting/activity.
- Update troop/group first aid kit (see *GSCM Guidelines for Returning to In-person Girl Scout Meetings and Activities*.)
- Prepare signage in regard to social distancing, washing hands, etc. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) offers [printable COVID-19 health and safety signage](#).
- Arrive early to disinfect space, set-up social distancing measures, etc. Suggestions for designating individual space:
 - Mark tables and/or chairs with girls' names
 - Use masking tape to mark spots on floor
 - Use hula hoops to denote where girls would stand/sit for activities
 - Have girls bring their own chair or a sit-upon

During the meeting/activity:

- ❑ Designate a troop/group leadership team member to welcome girls and families and conduct a screening of each girl prior to their entry to the meeting space (see *GSCM Guidelines for Returning to In-person Girl Scout Meetings and Activities.*)
- ❑ Collect the following participation documentation for every participant:
 - *Girl and Adult Health Record (revised version 8/2020)*
 - *GSCM Parent/Guardian Permission for Girl Scout Activities, Events and Trips (revised version 8/2020)*
 - *GSCM Assumption of Risk, Release and Waiver of Liability Relating to Coronavirus/COVID-19*
- ❑ Take attendance; retain attendance records for one (1) year.
- ❑ Have everyone wash their hands prior to entering the meeting space.
- ❑ Begin the meeting/activity with a statement of recognition that meetings will be a bit different in light of COVID-19; explain participation expectations and safety to girls. Provide any needed training on social distancing protocols, safety, and hygiene practices.
- ❑ It is suggested that troop/groups create or update their meeting ground rules. Ask girls for input on how members of the troop/group can keep each other safe while participating in activities together. Some topics to include/discuss: behavior/expectations, hand washing, social distancing, wearing face coverings, restroom protocol, etc.

After the meeting/activity:

- ❑ Clean and disinfect meeting space (see *GSCM Guidelines for Returning to In-person Girl Scout Meetings and Activities.*)
- ❑ File and secure original/copies of participant's *GSCM Assumption of Risk, Release and Waiver of Liability Relating to Coronavirus/COVID-19*, *Girl and Adult Health Record* and *Parent/Guardian Permission for Girl Scout Activities, Events and Trip* forms.

A note on engaging girls who are not ready for in-person meetings/activities:

- Consider virtual or call-in options, if possible
- Provide meeting activities to girls ahead of time so they can participate at home
- Share information about the [GSCM Girl Scouts at Home](#) activities and programs
- Follow-up with girls families so members can stay connected