



Guidelines for Returning to In-person Girl Scout Activities *Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Volunteers*

Edition Date: April 1, 2021

This guidance supersedes all former GSCM COVID-19 guidelines

Girl Scouts of Central Maryland's (GSCM) number one priority is the safety and well-being of our members, and the families and communities we serve. Volunteers should take all precautions to limit potential exposure for girls, themselves and families. We remind our members that COVID-19 is an extremely contagious virus that spreads easily in the community.

GSCM is strictly enforcing these guidelines: Girl Scout member and volunteer cooperation is expected in order to keep all girls, families, volunteers and staff safe while attending in-person Girl Scout meetings, activities, and events. If guidelines are not followed, GSCM will be forced to discontinue in-person Girl Scout activities and resume virtual only Girl Scout activities.

This document provides COVID-19 health and safety guidance for Girl Scout volunteers. The guidance which follows is separated into four (4) categories:

- Troop Meetings
- Service Unit Meetings and Activities
- Activities and Programs
- Health and Safety Practices

This guidance, which is comprised of recommendations from Girl Scout of the USA (GSUSA), the Girl Scouts of Central Maryland (GSCM) Back to Girl Scout In-person Activities volunteer and staff Advisory Group, the Centers of Disease Control (CDC), and the State of Maryland, is being provided as of the edition date above.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to change as infection rates rise and fall in different areas. There may be regional differences or developments since this guidance was published. GSCM will continue to follow directives as per local, state, [national](#), and GSUSA. GSCM may modify this guidance, from time to time as circumstances concerning COVID-19 change.

Making a Determination to Return to In-person Girl Scout Activities: GSCM recognizes that our 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. Therefore, before a troop, group or service unit decides to resume in-person meetings or activities, they need to assess the readiness, preparedness, and comfort level of all girls, families, and volunteers against the *GSCM Return to Girl Scout In-person Activities Readiness Checklist*.

These guidelines must be provided to all troop/group leadership team members, service unit volunteers, and each Girl Scout's parent/caregiver in advance of holding an in-person Girl Scout activity.

Required In-person Girl Scout In-person Activities Permissions and Waiver

For any girl member participating in ANY and ALL Girl Scout activities which are in-person, be it activities at the local troop/group or service unit level or a GSCM program/event, **all three of the following participation forms are required prior to participation:**

- [Updated GSCM Parent/Guardian Permission for Girl Scout Activities, Events and Trips](#)
- [Updated Girl and Adult Health Record](#)
- [GSCM Assumption of Risk, Release and Waiver of Liability Relating to Coronavirus/COVID-19](#)

The troop/group leader needs to retain all these forms with the troop/group records; at any time, GSCM will ask for these forms, in the case of an incident. As per GSCM guidelines, these forms should be retained with troop/group records for three (3) years.

Note: For Girl Scout troop/group activities and service unit activities, the troop/group leader is responsible for obtaining and maintaining these forms with troop/group records. For troops/groups and service units utilizing GSCM properties, it will be required to provide GSCM a copy of each participant's GSCM Assumption of Risk, Release and Waiver of Liability Relating to Coronavirus/COVID-19.

Reporting and Communicating a Positive COVID-19 Test: In the event of a COVID-19 positive test result or confirmed exposure to someone who has tested positive, do NOT contact the parents/caregivers or troop/group members. Promptly contact Girl Scouts of Central Maryland in this situation. A **council staff member** and NOT volunteers, will be responsible for:

- Confirming and tracing the positive tester,
- Contacting the parents/caregivers of anyone who may have been exposed (or other volunteers),
- Notifying a facility where a troop/group has met, and
- Alerting the state department of health.

Girl Scouts of Central Maryland staff, NOT volunteers, will notify parents/caregivers and others about a positive test result and that the **tester's identity is confidential**. 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 Girl Scouts of Central Maryland staff member.

Troop/Group leaders are to document girl and adult meeting/activity attendance for each meeting/activity. This information may be helpful down the road for contact tracing purposes, if necessary. Attendance records for troop/group meetings should be retained for one (1) membership year (October 1-September 30).

Report a positive COVID-19 test or exposure case to Girl Scouts of Central Maryland at COVID19Reporting@gscm.org

Troop/Group Meetings

Troop/Group Meeting Size: Troops/Groups may meet, but only at 50% capacity of the meeting facility/location, regardless if it is an indoor or outdoor site. Total participation includes both girls and adults.

In-person gatherings/meetings should not exceed recommended age appropriate troop ratios of individuals, including girls, parents and volunteers per GSUSA guidelines (see *Volunteer Essentials*). Girl/adult ratio must meet the standard for the program level.

If you have a large troop/group that is not ready to meet in-person, stay connected while you wait for a safe time for everyone to gather. Large troops/groups are wonderful, so stay together! Some ideas:

- Host virtual troop/groups meetings.
- Gather in smaller groups—such as age-level groups, patrols or groups of girls with a particular badge they'd like to complete.

Determination of Maximum Occupancy: Per the State of Maryland, “Maximum Occupancy” means that the maximum occupancy load of the facility under the applicable fire code, as set forth on a certificate issued for the facility by a local fire code official; or if no such certificate has been issued for the facility by the local fire code official, the maximum occupancy of the facility pursuant to applicable laws, regulations and permits.

Troop/Group Meeting Space: Once again, as COVID-19 is an extremely contagious virus that spreads easily in the community, we highly recommend that initial meetings be held virtually and/or in outdoor settings. If a troop/group makes a decision to meet in-person, outdoor spaces where social distancing can be maintained are strongly recommended for meetings. Obtain advance permission from the property owner or the jurisdiction that provides the location.

Troop/Group leadership needs to consider space capacity for in-person meetings; can the entire troop/group gather in the meeting location at the same time while maintaining required social distancing practices? Active girl members of the troop/group and troop/group leadership should have priority; minimize additional adults at the meeting. Will parents/caregivers be able to stay at meetings without compromising social distancing requirements and ratio limit guidelines?

For meetings held at public facilities, contact the facility ahead of time and ask:

- Is the space cleaned and are frequently touched surfaces (i.e., tabletops, light switches, chairs, doorknobs, restrooms, etc.) sanitized, at least daily?
- Who else uses the space (how often, what size is the group)? Is the space cleaned between groups?
- What type of faucets / soap dispensers are available in the restroom (sensory or manual)?
- Is there adequate meeting space to maintain at a minimum of six (6) feet? Can the space be modified (i.e., rearrange tables, chairs, etc.) if needed to ensure social distancing protocols?

For outdoor meeting locations:

- Consider using new/clean, disposable tablecloths on picnic tables since wooden tables cannot be easily disinfected.
- Consider having girls/families bring their own chairs.
- While outdoors, maintain social distancing and follow current face covering guidelines.
- Have a back-up plan for inclement weather (i.e., rain, thunderstorm, etc.).

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/group. 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. It is recommended that troop/group leaders stagger arrival and drop-off times so that girls/adults are not all arriving/leaving at the same time.

As per GSUSA, meetings may not be held in fitness centers or gyms, where a greater risk for contracting the virus may exist. Schools or churches may not permit outside groups on premises, so always check and confirm ahead of time.

In the case that you are unable to meet at a location the troop/group normally meets, and you are unable to find another, suitable location, please reach out to your Service Unit Manager for assistance and/or Girl Scouts of Central Maryland at membercare@gscm.org GSCM is working with community organizations, faith based institutions, and business to identify and secure additional meeting venues for troops/groups. **Additionally, GSCM has opened camp properties/units for troops/groups, service unit activities and family camping (see more on travel and overnight experiences in the Activities and Program section below).**

Troop/Group Meetings in the Home: Girl Scout troops/groups may not meet in homes, be it indoors or outdoors, out of concern that the risk of exposure is too great to Girl Scout members and family members. If a troop/group currently meets in a home, they need to find a new location. If troop/group leaders need assistance, they are advised to contact GSCM at membercare@gscm.org for guidance and assistance.

Virtual Meetings: 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 do so. GSUSA recommends maintaining a virtual to in-person ratio of at least 20/80, which means to maintain virtual troop/group meetings at least 20% of the time to keep tech skills and virtual meeting habits fresh.

Troops/Groups may find they are able to have in-person meetings at certain times of the year and therefore may need to shift to virtual meetings during these times. Use the [Virtual Troop Meeting Safety Activity Checkpoint](#) in preparing for virtual meetings. Additionally, visit www.gscm.org for virtual meeting webinars and resources.

Contact us at membercare@gscm.org for other helpful resources to support virtual troop meetings and virtual activities, including gsZoom licenses. Also, check-out [Troop Leader Blueprint](#); here troop/group leaders will find tips and resources for safe in-person and virtual meetings, as well as badges, Journeys and activities for every grade level.

Service Unit Meetings and Activities

In addition to adhering to all GSCM Interim COVID-19 Guidelines for Returning to In-person Girl Scout Activities, service units must follow these additional guidelines when holding service unit meetings and activities.

Service Units may hold meetings and events provided, however, that the total number of persons in an indoor or outdoor setting at any one time shall not exceed 50% of the venue's maximum occupancy.

- Service Units must obtain prior approval and provide GSCM a completed [GSCM COVID-19 Experience Management form](#) before planning and holding any gatherings; submit request and plan to membercare@gscm.org at least thirty (30) days prior to the event.
- It is strongly recommend to meet outdoors as opposed to indoors, and only when social distancing can be maintained. Service Unit activities may not be held in homes, be it

indoors or outdoors, out of concern that the risk of COVID-19 exposure is too great to Girl Scout members and families.

- Follow proper girl-to-adult ratios as outlined in *Volunteer Essentials*.

Additional Event Safety Protocols: In addition to all safety protocols and requirements outlined in this guidance document, service units are to implement the following protocols:

- Prior to participation in any in-person service unit events and activities, all participants (both girl and adult) should be screened. A service unit volunteer should be designated to conduct a symptoms screening of each attendee upon arrival to the event/activity (see the *Health and Safety* section below for the symptoms and screening protocol).
- Participant arrival and departure should be staggered as not to have a large waiting queue to enter the event
- Service Unit meetings/events for are for currently registered girls and adults.
- To ensure and maintain proper social distancing measures, designate six (6) foot spacing with signage, tape or by other means. NOTE: although girls/participants are wearing face coverings they need to maintain six (6) feet of distance from each other.
- Provide participants with a means to sanitize hands during the event by ensuring clean, well-stocked restrooms (i.e., plenty of soap or hand sanitizer) and allow event volunteers to wash/sanitize their hands at least once every 30-minutes throughout the event.
- Post signage at each entrance and throughout the event venue advising participants of the requirement to wear appropriate face coverings during the event, whether the event is held indoors or outdoors.
- During the event, be it held indoors or outdoors, Girl Scouts should be in activity groups of no more than ten (10) girls and two (2) adults; girls and adults are to remain in the same group (no changing group members) for the entire duration of the event. Event volunteers should have a record of which girls and adults are in each group and maintain this record with service unit records for a period of one (1) year. If possible, assign girls from the same family to the same group.
- Consider separate event stations where activity groups rotate from one activity station to another. Ensure that event stations are cleaned in-between each group.

In addition to these GSCM guidelines, follow the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines for Gatherings and Community Events, as well as the event/gathering guidelines from the State of Maryland and the Maryland Department of Health.

Activities and Programs

At this time, our focus is permitting those troops/groups and service units who are ready to return to in-person meetings, day activities/trips and overnight camping activities. Overnight and international travel is not yet permitted; updates on these activities will be coming at a later date.

Day Trips and Activities: We recommend that individual troops/groups take day trips in-state. If a troop/group takes a day trip to another state, they need to be aware of any current quarantine requirements upon returning. For individual troop/group day trips, troops/groups still need to follow the State and local COVID-19 guidelines.

The following forms are required for participation in day trips and activities (Originals retained by the troop/group leaders with copies provided to each adult in charge):

- *Parent/Guardian Permission for Girl Scout Activities, Trips and Events* (for each individual girls and signed and completed by the parent/guardian)
- A roster of travels, both girl and adults
- *Girl and Adult Health History Records*
- *GSCM Assumption of Risk, Release and Waiver of Liability Relating to Coronavirus/COVID-19.*

In conjunction with *Safety Activity Checkpoints*, follow the same guidance as the *Hygiene and COVID-19 Risk Mitigation* guidance in this document, as well as the guidance below:

- Before engaging in any day trip or activity, check the troop/group readiness against the *GSCM Return to In-person Girl Scout Activities Readiness Checklist*.
- Before engaging in a day trip or activity, check local area restrictions and infection case rate.
- Avoid large scale/group activities.
- Outdoor and virtual activities are encouraged, when possible.
- 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, similar to equipment at the gym.
- Make whatever appropriate accommodations that are necessary. For example, bring extra hand sanitizer if none will be provided for public use at the activity location.

Overnight Camping Activities: The Girl Scouts of Central Maryland remains committed to Girl Scout outdoor/camping experiences. To that end, **as of April 1, GSCM troops/groups are permitted to participation in overnight camping experiences in accordance with these guidelines.**

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 camping activity and continue to practice the *Hygiene and COVID-19 Risk Mitigation* guidance outlined in this document.** Troop/Groups and service units who are planning any overnight camping experience, regardless if the camping activity is on a GSCM camp property or through a third party campground, the troop/group/service unit leadership needs to complete and submit a [GSCM COVID-19 Experience Management form](#).

Although overnight camping activities are often arranged several months in advance, recognize that the COVID-19 risk is fluid; it can and will change, and contingencies should be planned ahead of time for re-scheduling, cancelling or pivoting to a virtual activity. For all planned overnight camping activities, create a timeline and identify a drop-dead date when decisions must be made about whether or not to move forward with the planned activity, based primarily on the safety of our girls, along with financial commitment deadlines and/or other factors.

For outdoor overnights at GSCM properties, be it for troop/group or family camp, please see the specific rental opportunity guidelines below; these guidelines are also found on the GSCM website [here](#).

COVID-19 Guidelines for Rental Opportunities for GSCM Owned Properties

GSCM troops, groups and families now have the opportunity to rent select cabins, yurts and campsites at Girl Scout of Central Maryland camps.

These rentals will be at a member rate and may be paid with check or credit card. This opportunity will be available April 1, 2021 until further notice. Reservations are available for select buildings and campsites at three (3) of our camp properties. A 2-night minimum rental is required. A COVID-19 cleaning bin will be supplied for disinfecting; however, the properties will not be professionally cleaned. All requests will be processed on a first come, first served basis.

In consideration of your permitted use of the camp facility by GSCM, you acknowledge on behalf of yourself and associated members of your party that:

- (1) All those participating in the rental (a) have acknowledged, and will abide by, the *GSCM Guidelines for Returning to In-Person Girl Scout Activities*; (b) have completed the *GSCM Return to Girl Scout In-Person Activities Readiness Checklist*, and (c) have executed the *GSCM Assumption of Risk, Release and Waiver of Liability Relating to Coronavirus/COVID-19*.
- (2) GSCM camp properties are NOT professionally cleaned and/or sanitized. Accordingly, adults/family members must clean and sanitize the reserved unit prior to the arrival or entering of the cabin/toilet/latrines/bathhouse by minors; and again prior to check-out. COVID-19 cleaning bins will be supplied for disinfecting; however, all adults/families are responsible for providing their own personal protection equipment (PPE) and may need to provide additional cleaning/sanitizing supplies.
- (3) The maximum number of individuals permitted within each unit will be clearly displayed. Adults/families must remain compliant and not exceed the number of occupants permitted. The maximum number of occupants is inclusive of all individuals (girls and adults). The number of occupants may be adjusted from time to time to remain compliant with the fluid nature of COVID-19 safety requirements.
- (4) Adults must abide with COVID-19 symptom check requirements prior to entering upon the camp property, which includes temperature checks of anyone planning to attend the outing. Anyone who shows signs of illness or has been exposed to a confirmed or potential COVID-19 case must refrain from attending.
- (5) A list of the names of all occupants must be provided prior to check-in. In the event of a potential COVID-19 case, you must make a prompt report to council in accordance with the *GSCM Guidelines for Returning to In-Person Girl Scout Activities*.
- (6) You will be responsible for preparing all of your own meals and the safe storage of perishable items. Not all units have refrigeration. Please plan accordingly. Unless you are renting a unit that has access to a kitchen, you may not use any camp kitchen facility/dining hall during your stay.
- (7) Face coverings must be worn in accordance with *GSCM Guidelines for Returning to In-Person Girl Scout Activities*.
- (8) Troops, groups, and families are not permitted to utilize any area of camp other than that which has been reserved and for which they have been authorized to use.

Failure to abide by these guidelines, the *GSCM Guidelines for Returning to In-Person Girl Scout Activities* and/or any other current GSCM protocols, will result in revocation of your permission to use the facility and may result in additional action as deemed appropriate by GSCM leadership.

Transportation (car-pooling): It is imperative to take all safety precautions when girls are traveling in motor vehicles. If possible, girls from different households should not carpool. Coronavirus transmission risk is high when people are in close proximity which means less than six (6) feet apart. The risk increases when people are in a closed-in area or indoors for longer than ten 10-minutes. When transporting girls, always space out the girls to avoid crowding, have girls wear an appropriate face covering and keep the windows partially open to provide ventilation. Make sure parents/caregivers are aware ahead of time if girls will be in a car together. Always, for every in-person event, meeting or transportation arrangement, conduct the pre-screening process to ensure that coronavirus does not touch Girl Scout gatherings.

Individual parent drop-offs and pick-ups are also an option.

Remember:

- Girls and adults should wear appropriate face coverings when inside of a motor vehicle.
- Keep car window opened, at least partially, to circulate fresh air.
- Consider the personal situation of your girls:
 - Do they live with an immune compromised person that they might put at risk? If so, perhaps make other accommodations for her with her parents/caregivers.
- Prescreen all passengers:
 - Have the families been isolating, and free from contagion? If so, the troop/group may essentially be a safe bubble.

Again, sustained contact within less than six (6) feet for longer than ten (10) minutes within an enclosed area creates high risk for virus transmission, so be very careful with carpool decisions.

Rideshare options are not permitted.

Public Transportation: Public transportation should be avoided whenever possible as large groups of people, indoors, for longer than ten (10) minutes are typical of most public transportation which increases transmission risk. Also, maintaining six (6) feet social distance is often difficult or impossible with public transportation. However, when public transportation cannot be avoided, follow these guidelines:

- 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 an appropriate face covering.
- Obtain parental or legal guardian permission, make sure they are aware.
- Clean hands before and after public transportation travel.

Health and Safety Practices

Vaccinations for girl members and volunteers.

Girl Members. Vaccine and vaccine exemption laws with respect to COVID-19 will likely focus on public and private school attendance initially and more directly than they may for recreational youth organizations. Therefore, when the vaccine becomes available for children, it is best to proceed with the same approach as the laws apply to school attendance.

Adult Volunteers. Based on the current regulatory landscape, volunteers are *strongly encouraged* to voluntarily vaccinate, but they are not required to do so.

You can access FAQs regarding vaccinations [here](#).

Volunteer Awareness: Always remember that COVID-19 is an extremely contagious virus that spreads easily in the community. It is important to take all reasonable precautions to limit potential exposure for girls, volunteers and families. It is an important time to be a safety-minded Girl Scout and demonstrate Girl Scout values.

It is also important to regularly check and follow real-time local and national safety directives and to survey your girls' families for their comfort level with respect to returning to troop meetings.

For every in-person gathering, remember:

- Pre-screening and Symptoms Check forms are used.
- Girls and adults wear appropriate face coverings.
- Outdoors is preferred to indoors, whenever possible.
- Always maintain six (6) feet distance.
- Wash hands.
- No touching the face.
- No sharing utensils and supplies, disposable items are best.
- Carry disinfectant and make sure girls are using it as appropriate.

Pre-screening and Symptoms Check: Prior to in-person Girl Scout meetings and activities, all participants should be screened to ensure:

- They are healthy and that they have not experienced symptoms that are associated with COVID-19 in the previous 72-hours; [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\) Symptoms of Coronavirus](#).
- That they have not knowingly been in contact with someone that has exhibited symptoms or has been confirmed positive with COVID-19 or a person waiting to see if they are positive; and
- That they have not been to high-risk geographical regions particularly those regions that require a specific quarantine period.

Note: The CDC defines “**close contact**” as follows:

- You were within six (6) feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a total of 15-minutes or more.
- You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19.
- You had direct physical contact with the person (hugged or kissed them).
- You shared eating or drinking utensils.
- They sneezed, coughed or somehow got respiratory droplets on you.

When planning any Girl Scout in-person activity, the *Pre-Screening and Symptoms Check* step should be completed prior to each in-person gathering. If an attendee answers a question that would indicate a likelihood or a known possibility that they could be a carrier of the virus, they should be asked not to attend the gathering.

Please keep in mind that when adult volunteers and parents are answering these questions, they need to answer them with respect to both their personal lives and their professional occupation. The goal is to keep the meeting/activity safe from contagion and do the very best to ensure our girls are educated and healthy, not to make it unnecessarily difficult or uncomfortable for girls to gather safely.

Hygiene and COVID-19 Risk Mitigation: Follow the [resources developed by credible public health sources such as CDC](#) or your local public health department. Share these with girls and volunteers and ensure that they are practiced during meetings and activities. Place signs in the meeting or activity space to remind girls and volunteers to engage in [everyday preventive actions](#) to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

- 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 (or the same time it takes to sing 'Make New Friends' twice), 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. Girls and adults should wash hands upon entering the meeting space. The FDA has advised consumers not to use certain hand sanitizers due to unsafe ingredients. The CDC provides an updated list of products that should never be used. Be sure to check [FDA updates on hand sanitizers consumers should not use](#) and stay away from products deemed unsafe.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Wash hands if you do touch any part of your face.

Personal Contact: Hugs, handshakes, "high-fives," "elbow taps" and even activities like the friendship circle or friendship squeeze can transmit COVID-19 from person to person. Refrain from these gestures for the time being. Create a safe way for girls and volunteers to greet and end meetings/activities instead. During in-person meetings/activities, all participants must maintain a physical distance of six (6) feet. When seated at tables, it is recommended that participants face one way or sit on one side of the table.

Singing: If you normally close your meetings/activities with a song, make certain girls and adults are all wearing appropriate face coverings. Singing and shouting both project germs farther than talking, ask your girls to either hum their closing song, or sing quietly, and always, of course, with wearing their face covering.

First Aid Supplies: Troop/Group and Service Unit first aid supplies should include COVID-19 prevention items including hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol), tissues (consider individually packed tissues or have girls bring their own), disposable face coverings, disposable gloves, 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/caregivers should be checking temperatures and COVID symptoms prior to and allowing their girl(s) to attend an in-person Girl Scout activity only when their Girl Scout's temperature is normal and is not experience any of the symptoms of COVID.

First Aid / CPR Training: Keep skills up-to-date for any emergency. Contact Girl Scouts of Central Maryland about alternative methods of training that may be available during this time and/or for any questions about current first-aid/CPR certification extensions.

Disinfectants and Disinfecting: Adult volunteers, not girls, are responsible for [routinely cleaning and disinfecting surfaces](#) and objects that are frequently touched (i.e., table tops, markers, scissors, door handles, light switches, etc.). It is recommended that girls have their own supplies for use at the meeting, if possible. In the case where supplies need to be shared, they must be disinfected in-between each use.

Ensure sufficient disinfecting supplies are on-hand for meetings. Use a household cleaner, or see the [EPA's list of effective cleaners](#) approved for use against COVID-19. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.).

Household bleach (per CDC guidelines use regular, unscented 5%-6% household bleach) is effective against COVID-19 for up to 24 hours when properly diluted. Check that the bleach is not expired and determine if it can be used on a given surface. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.

To prepare a bleach solution, mix: (in a well-marked appropriate container)

- 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water or
- 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

See the [CDC's website](#) for more on cleaning and disinfecting community facilities.

Face Coverings: In accordance with [CDC recommendations](#) and the [State of Maryland mandate](#), face coverings are required to be worn at all times at both indoor and outdoor in-person Girl Scout meetings and activities.

Based on guidance from the CDC, double masking is recommended and provides the best protection for girls, adults and the community at large; especially in circumstances where social distancing is limited. Troops/Groups and Service Units should follow CDC guidance and best practices in relation to double masking, adjusting masks for a proper fit, etc. For additional guidance on CDC guidelines around mask wearing, volunteers should review the information here: [Improve How Your Mask Protects You | CDC](#)

Volunteers should remind girls that Girl Scouts wear face coverings (masks) not only to protect themselves, but to protect others.

Face coverings 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 girls and adults wear their covering properly so that coverings are effective. Some girls or volunteers may not be able to wear face coverings, due to medical conditions. Contact GSCM for guidance on how best to handle these exceptional circumstances as they arise.

Food, Dining and Snacks: If food, dining or snacks are necessary as part of the activity, be careful when handling and serving food and have girls be careful with each other when eating. Safety recommendations for food, dining and snacks include:

- If possible, encourage girls to bring their own foods to eat (bag lunch or dinner) or plan to have snack/food available at the activity.
- If possible, encourage girls to their own drink/water bottle or provide each girl a bottle of water/beverage; ensure water bottles/drinking cups are clearly marked with the girl's name.
- Encourage girls not to share their food after having touched it, such as a bag of chips.
- Individually wrapped items are highly recommended.
- If providing snacks, especially if unwrapped, have one person, wearing gloves, hand out items to each person, such as with cupcakes or cookies.
- Use a serving spoon or scoop rather than reaching into a bag or bowl of snacks.
- Use a buffet line only if staffed with a safely protected server wearing appropriate face covering and gloves.
- Avoid "serve yourself" buffets.
- Public dining only as permitted in your local jurisdiction.
- If serving family style, have one person, wearing clean gloves and appropriate face covering, serve everyone on clean plates.
- Use disposable plates, forks, napkins, etc. when possible.
- Encourage girls to plan a menu of foods they can easily cook themselves (a prepacked foil pack) or hotdog for outdoor cooking.
- Ensure everyone handling food (i.e., those serving girls and adults) wash hands (even if they will be wearing gloves) prior to any food prep or meals, following CDC handwashing guidelines.
- If sharing outdoor cooking utensils (roasting forks), they should be completely washed and sanitized (the whole roasting stick, not just the fork part) between each use or bring enough utensils so that each person has their own.
- Continue recommendation for six (6) foot spacing during meals.

Restrooms: Be very careful in public restrooms. Most public restrooms will regulate the number of people using the restroom at the same time, depending on the size. If there is no regulator or signage, have volunteers ensure girls take appropriate turns to maintain social distancing and that they wear their face coverings in the restrooms.

It is ideal to have automatic flushers and sensory faucets to wash hands. If these are not available, girls and adults should get in the habit of using a tissue or paper towel to open doors and latches, touching as little as possible. If the restroom is large, have girls use every other stall and avoid using stalls with a person in the stall next to them at the same time. Have girls wait outside the restroom, rather than all girls waiting inside a large restroom for use of the facilities. Restrooms and toilets are fraught with germs normally, and more so now considering the contagion of coronavirus.

For outdoor meeting locations that do not have indoor restroom facilities, but rather portable toilets or latrines that have no handwashing station, the troop/group or Service Unit leadership needs to provide hand sanitizer.

[Additional Information](#)

CDC One-Stop-Shop Toolkit: The One-Stop-Shop CDC page offers an array of topic specific COVID-19 guidance. There are many topics to review. This One-Stop-Shop site is updated regularly.

Main page: [COVID-10 One-Stop Shop Toolkits](#)

Event Risk Assessment Planning Tool: This current interactive map published by Georgia Tech College of Science can be helpful to Service Units in assessing the risk of holding an event in a specific state and county. To use the tool, enter the size of the event (i.e., number of participants) on the sliding scale and then click on the state and county name on the interactive map. Once the map link is clicked, a likelihood percentage appears which indicates the risk of COVID-19 exposure or the likelihood of contracting COVID at a gathering given the level of infection by county, nationwide.

[Georgia Tech - Event Risk Assessment Planning Tool](#)

[Georgia Tech College of Sciences - Homepage](#)

[Clarification of Terms per Girl Scouts of Central Maryland Guidelines:](#)

Social Distancing: Sustained contact of a minimum of six (6) feet. Remember, within less than six (6) feet for longer than 10-minutes creates higher risk for virus transmission.

Face Covering: “Face Covering” means a covering that fully covers a person’s nose and mouth, but is not a Medical-Grade Mask. The term “Face Covering” includes, without limitation, scarves and bandanas. See the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) definition and guidelines on cloth face coverings [here](#). Face coverings with vents or holes are not acceptable to wear at Girl Scout meetings and activities.