



In-Person Troop Meetings and Activities – Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Staff and Volunteers

Updated: 7/14/2020

Girl Scouts of Orange County is closely monitoring the COVID-19 updates from the [Centers for Disease Control](#), [World Health Organization](#), [California Department of Public Health](#), and [Orange County Health Care Agency](#). As Girl Scouts, we have a responsibility to our community and ourselves to do all we can to limit the spread of coronavirus.

California is currently in Stage 2 of the State of California's [Resilience Roadmap](#) and statewide [Stay-at-Home Order](#) issued on March 19, 2020. At this time, the Orange County Healthcare Agency and State of California have discouraged small and large group gatherings, which bring together persons from multiple households at the same time for a shared or group experience in a single room, space, or place. To align with state and county guidelines, Girl Scouts of Orange County has cancelled or rescheduled all meetings, including troop meetings, events, and activities through August 31, 2020, or until the State of California moves to Stage 3 on the Resilience Roadmap. Additionally, Girl Scouts of Orange County's Irvine office and all Orange County program centers remain closed until further notice. [Curbside pick-up for online shop orders](#) is available from our Irvine office. Girl Scouts' [online shop](#) is open 24/7 for all your Girl Scout needs. Council staff are telecommuting during our regular business hours, M-TH from 8AM-6PM. If you need to reach your troop support specialist or a specific [member of our team](#), the best way is by email. For general questions, please contact us at customercare@girlscoutsoc.org.

This guidance is provided as of the Edition Date above (when a vaccine is not readily available). Girl Scouts of Orange County may modify this guidance, from time to time, as state and local recommendations change and we will continue to communicate as we receive updated information.

Stage One GSOC Guidelines - 3/19/2020 – 5/21/20:

- In-person activities are restricted in line with the State of California [Stay at Home Order](#), except for essential and permitted activities.
- Facemasks and physical distancing are required for all staff and volunteer interactions.
- All Girl Scouts of Orange County facilities closed.
- Troop activities will be virtual, rescheduled, or cancelled.
- All events and activities will be virtual, rescheduled, or cancelled.
- Service Unit meetings, events, and activities will be virtual, rescheduled, or cancelled.
- Day Camp and Resident Sleepover Camp will be virtual, rescheduled, or cancelled.
- The use of digital tools and meetings is highly encouraged.

Stage Two GSOC Guidelines - 5/22/20 - Present

- In-person activities are restricted in line with the State of California [Stay at Home Order](#), which recommends limiting time outside the home and travel for only permissible activities, such as healthcare, food, outdoor exercise, and recreation (individuals and households only).
- GSOC is aligned with the California Department of Public Health's [Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings](#)):
 - Wear a facemask when not able to maintain six (6) feet of distance from a person who is not a family/household member.

- Stay six (6) feet away from another person who is not a family or household member when in public.
- Higher risk individuals (over 65 or with serious medical conditions) should remain at home.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Do not gather in groups.
- Stay out of crowded places.
- Avoid mass gatherings.
- Wash and disinfect frequently.
- All GSOC facilities closed.
- [Pre-scheduled curbside pick-up](#) only for GSOC shop merchandise.
- Troop activities will be virtual, rescheduled, or cancelled.
- All council events and activities will be virtual, rescheduled, or cancelled.
- SU meetings, events, and activities will be virtual, rescheduled or cancelled.
- Day camp and resident sleepover camp will be virtual, rescheduled, or cancelled.
- The use of digital tools and meetings is highly encouraged.
- Exceptions, such as porch drop offs or car parade recognition activities will require participants to wear facemasks and maintain six (6) feet of physical distance. Please see recommendations for car parades [here](#).

Stage Three GSOC Guidelines-TBD:

Girl Scouts of Orange County is currently in Stage 2 of California's [Resilience Roadmap](#) and in-person activities are not permitted.

- GSOC will align with the State of California [Stay at Home Order](#), which phases in higher-risk workplaces and activities, with modifications.
- GSOC will align with Orange County Health Care Agency recommendations - **TBD.**
- Travel for [permissible activities](#) is allowed.
- GSOC Program Centers and Irvine Headquarters open with limited access. Troop in-person activities may resume, with modifications.
- Service unit in-person meeting and activities involving more than one troop may resume, with modifications.
- All in-person events and activities can resume, with modifications.
- Troop travel is permissible within council jurisdiction, as well as to other states currently in phase three reopening.
- Troops should stay up-to-date on travel warnings and CDC guidance to avoid hot-spot locations. The use of digital tools and meetings is highly encouraged.
- Members should never be pressured to meet in person.
- Please understand that as states advance through reopening stages, there is also the potential to regress if proper guidance is not followed or COVID-19 has a resurgence in a state.

Stage Four GSOC Guidelines-TBD:

Girl Scouts of Orange County is currently in Stage 2 of California's [Resilience Roadmap](#) and in-person activities are not permitted.

- GSOC will align with the ending of the State of California [Stay at Home Order](#).
- GSOC Program Centers and Irvine Headquarters are open for member use.
- Troop in-person activities may continue.
- Service unit in-person meeting and activities involving more than one troop may continue.
- All in-person events and activities may continue.
- Troop travel is permissible.
- Troops should stay up-to-date on travel warnings and CDC guidance to avoid hot-spot locations. The use of digital tools and meetings is highly encouraged.
- Members should never be pressured to meet in person.
- Please understand that as states advance through reopening stages, there is also the

potential to regress if proper guidance is not followed or COVID-19 has a resurgence in a state.

COVID-19 is an extremely contagious virus that spreads easily in the community. Staff, volunteers, and members should take all reasonable precautions to limit potential exposure for girls, volunteers, and families. Learn more about how you can [prevent the spread of COVID-19](#).

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to change as infection rates rise and fall in different areas. There may be regional differences or developments after the publication of this guidance. Girl Scouts of Orange County may modify this guidance, from time to time, as state and local recommendations change. Please continue to follow [local](#) and [national](#) directives.

Stage 3 Considerations for returning safely to troop activities

Girl Scouts of Orange County is currently in Stage 2 of California's [Resilience Roadmap](#) and in-person activities are not permitted.

Use the questions and reminders below to guide your decisions around returning safely to troop activities when we are permitted to do so.

Troop Meeting Space

Outdoor spaces where physical distancing can be maintained are strongly recommended for meetings. Before scheduling your meeting, secure advance permission from the property owner or jurisdiction that provides the location.

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

- Is the space cleaned and touch surfaces (i.e., tabletops, light switches, chairs, 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(s) (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 prepare the space for your troop. If faucets are manual, take time to show girls how to shut them off with a paper towel. Use paper towels for doorknobs whenever possible.

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

For troop meetings in the home

GSUSA and Girl Scouts of Orange County strongly recommend not conducting meetings in the home out of concern there would be greater risk of exposure to your family members. If meeting in your home, GSOC recommends utilizing outdoor space as much as possible and maintaining six (6) feet physical distance between persons at all times.

Troop Meeting Size

[Current California Department of Public Health](#) guidance includes limiting gatherings, events

and extracurricular activities to those that can maintain physical distancing and support proper hand hygiene. Once in Stage 3, troops will determine the number of meeting participants based on the location of the meeting. Outdoor and larger indoor spaces where troops can maintain six feet physical distance will allow for more participants. Small indoor spaces will have fewer participants. However, [check Orange County's guidance](#) for small gatherings. If more restrictive, follow the local restriction. Restrictions vary greatly from state to state, county to county, and even from town to town-- and frequently change.

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

Here are some ideas:

- Host virtual troop meetings (see below).
- Gather up in smaller groups-- such as age-level groups, patrols, or groups of girls with a particular badge they would like to work on.

Transportation

Parent/guardian drop off and pick up of their own girls from meetings is recommended. Carpooling and public transportation should be avoided, when possible, to maintain physical distancing.

Virtual meetings

Meeting options may need to be flexible based on the changing nature of the COVID-19 risk. Troops able to run online meetings as needed (or wanted) should do so. GSUSA and Girl Scouts of Orange County recommend maintaining a virtual to in-person meeting 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.

Other helpful resources can be found [here](#).

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 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. If not, make plans to do so.

Make whatever appropriate accommodations are necessary. For example, bring extra sanitizer if none will be provided for public use at the activity location.

Travel and overnight stays

Beginning in stage 3 of State of California [Resilience Roadmap](#) reopening, simple overnights (including camping at non-GSOC properties) and regional/domestic travel (Level 3, 4, & 5) are permitted following advanced safety guidelines and troop travel reporting requirements. Regarding International Travel (Level 6), following the direction of the US State Department, all international travel will be canceled through Sept. 30, 2020. We will reevaluate at that time.

If you are an **Ambassador troop** that will be graduating (in full or in part) in 2020 and have cancelled (or will need to cancel) trips and activities due to stay at home orders or travel restrictions, we are providing you the opportunity to extend your plans for a full membership year (October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021) by meeting all of the following criteria:

- All participating graduates must be registered as adults for the 2020-21 membership year by October 1, 2020. Note: registration may be paid using troop funds.
- All Girl Scout activities and trips must comply with current CDC, federal, state, and local health guidelines.
- Troop funds shall continue to be managed through the existing troop bank account.
- Troop Finance Reports shall be submitted as usual before June 30, 2020.

Note: If your troop has continuing girl members, the troop and bank account will continue as usual. Graduating girls will participate as adult members.

Hygiene and COVID-19 Risk Mitigation

Follow the [resources developed by local and national public health sources such as CDC](#) or the [Orange County Health Care Agency](#). Share these resources with girls and volunteers and ensure 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. 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 hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Wash hands if you do.
- Volunteers, girls, and parents should be reminded to take temperatures prior to group interaction to confirm they are not running a fever and temperature is a normal 98.6 degrees. Members with fever or temperature higher than 98.6 degrees 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. Create a safe way for girls and volunteers to greet and end meetings instead (like air high fives).

First Aid supplies

Troop first aid supplies should include COVID-19 prevention items, including hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol), tissues, disposable facemasks, 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 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. [First Aid / CPR training resources](#) are available from Girl Scouts of Orange County.

Disinfectants and Disinfecting

[Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces](#) and objects that are frequently touched (i.e., table tops, markers, scissors, etc.). 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 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:

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

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

Face Coverings

Volunteers should remind girls that Girl Scouts wear face coverings (masks) to protect themselves and others. Face coverings are a civic responsibility and 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 the coverings are effective. Some girls or volunteers may not be able to wear masks, due to medical conditions, such as asthma. Contact customercare@girlscoutsoc.org for guidance on how best to handle these particular 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 the council office at customercare@girlscoutsoc.org. A **council staff member**, 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.

Let other volunteers know that council staff, NOT volunteers, will notify parents 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 council staff member.

