

Girl Scouts of Kansas Heartland

COVID-19 Guidance

Edition date: August 19, 2021

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❖ Meeting Guidance.....	3
Restrictions by County.....	3
Volunteer awareness.....	3
Product program activities.....	3
Virtual meetings.....	3
Troop Meeting Size.....	3
Large Troops or Gatherings.....	4
Troop Meeting Space.....	4
Troop Meetings in the home.....	4
Troop Meetings on Council Premises.....	5
Hosting Volunteer Planned Events.....	5
Troop and Family-Only Camp.....	6
Transportation (car-pooling).....	6
Day trips and activities.....	6
Travel and overnight stays.....	7
❖ HYGIENE GUIDANCE.....	7
Hygiene and COVID-19 Risk Mitigation.....	7
Personal contact.....	7
Face Coverings.....	7
Food, Dining and Snacks.....	8
Restrooms.....	8
❖ First Aid and Disinfectant Guidance.....	8
First Aid Supplies.....	8
First Aid / CPR Training.....	8
Disinfectants and Disinfecting.....	9
FDA Warning.....	9
❖ Reporting COVID-19 positive incident.....	9
Reporting and communicating a positive COVID 19 case.....	9
❖ Release & Waiver of Liability.....	10
❖ Additional Resources:.....	10
Event Risk Assessment Planning Tool.....	10
CDC One-Stop-Shop Toolkit.....	10

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❖ MEETING GUIDANCE

GSKH has provided COVID-19 safety and health guidance for Service Units to share with their volunteers, recognizing that the timing of resuming in person troop meetings and activities, including all activities related to drop off and pick up of product program supplies, will vary from county to county and even town to town in certain regions of the state. This guidance is intended to be used for volunteers in conjunction with Safety Activity Checkpoints and according to Kansas and SU's local COVID-19 circumstances which remains fluid. This guidance is being provided during a time when infection rates are on the rise in vaccinated and unvaccinated citizens. It is important that you continue to monitor local, state and federal guidelines and the other resources indicated below such as the [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#). GSKH may, but is not obligated to, modify this guidance, from time to time, in its sole discretion.

Restrictions by County

Before implementing local, state and federal guidelines, first and foremost: Check local restrictions for small gatherings in the troop home county. They could vary greatly from county to county, or even from town to town. Check the state [Department of Health \(DOH\)](#) to ensure your compliance with your town and county norms.

Volunteer awareness

Please be reminded, and acknowledge understanding, that COVID-19 is an extremely contagious virus that spreads easily in the community. Everyone should take all reasonable precautions to limit potential exposure for girls, themselves and families. Service Units and troops should highlight this important message in a way that promotes awareness, preparedness, health and community service. It is an important time to be a great Girl Scout and demonstrate Girl Scout values.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic continues to change as infection rates rise and fall in different areas, there may be regional differences or developments that occur after this edition is provided. Continue to follow real-time local, [state](#) and [national](#) directives and discuss plans with families before meetings or events.

Product program activities

Please follow all troop meeting safety guidelines along with individually provided activity guidelines for any product related activity. This includes all activities related to cookie sales and fall product sales.

Virtual meetings

Meeting options may need to be flexible based on the fluid nature of COVID19 risk. Troops that are able to run online meetings as needed (or desired) should continue to do so. GSKH 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 and on the ready, should a second wave occur or shelter in place restrictions reinstated. Continue to use the Safety Activity Checkpoints for Virtual Meetings. GSKH can make available to service units and troops a low cost Zoom license if requested.

Troop Meeting Size

The current suggested maximum is fifteen people (twelve girls and two unrelated adult volunteers). However, check your local restrictions for small gatherings. If more restrictive than 15 people, follow the local restriction. Restrictions vary greatly from county to county, and even from town to town--and can frequently change. If a county allows more than fifteen to gather,

utilize all social distancing practices and follow all preventative guidance (such as face coverings).

Large Troops or Gatherings

For large troops, stay connected with girls while waiting for a safe time for everyone to gather. Large troops are wonderful and are encouraged to stay together!

Some ideas for volunteers:

- Host virtual troop meetings.
- Gather up in smaller groups—such as age-level groups, patrols, or groups of girls with a particular badge they'd like to work on. Multiple groups of 12 girls each can meet simultaneously so long as distance is maintained between groups.

If your county permits larger gatherings, confirm the number of people that are permitted and remind volunteers to allow for proper girl-to-adult ratios. It is strongly recommended to meet outdoors as opposed to indoors, and only when social distancing can be maintained. For more people or large gatherings, when the time is safely appropriate, follow the CDC guidelines:

[Large Gatherings and Community Events.](#)

Answers to the following questions will help guide troop meeting decisions:

- Do state and local law permit larger gatherings?
- How many people permitted?
- Have schools been re-opened for in-person classes?
- Is the event indoors or outdoors? (outdoors is safer than indoors provided social distancing is maintained)
- Can social distancing be maintained?

Always follow CDC guidance and all council guidance available in this document pertaining to large in-person gatherings and/or hosting volunteer planned events.

Troop Meeting Space

Outdoor spaces where social distancing can be maintained are strongly recommended for meetings when the weather permits. Please get advance permission from the property owner or the 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 (sensory or manual)?

Supplement any practices that are less ideal. For example, if the troop arrives after another user group, plan to bring sanitizing wipes to get the space ready for the troop. Another example: if faucets are manual, take some time to show girls how to shut them off with a paper towel and to use paper towels for doorknobs whenever possible.

Face coverings should be worn when meeting indoors based on CDC or local health guidelines.

Troop Meetings in the home

GSUSA suggests no meetings in the home out of concern that there would be greater risk of exposure to other family members. In certain exceptional situations and due to the current COVID-19 risk restricting public meeting options, GSKH will allow in-home meetings as a last resort on a case by case basis, particularly for those troops in rural areas who have regularly

and successfully met in the home, have no elderly or immune compromised family members in the home, and do not have access to a virtual option. However, there will be a meeting place approval process required, which is why the recommendation, ideally, is to stay away from in-home meetings.

To assist with the meeting place approval process, safety checkpoint considerations include:

- The home must be the home of a registered, background checked, council approved Volunteer.
- GSKH requires membership and background checks for all adults living in the home.
- Girls may not meet in a home where a registered sex offender lives.
- The troop needs to be able to focus without disruptions from other household members.
- Animals should be kept in a place that is separate from the meeting space.
- Homeowners should consider any personal homeowner insurance implications. The Homeowner should ask their Homeowner's insurance carrier if there are any insurance exclusions regarding holding troop meetings at the home, in the event an accident or injury occurs.
- Weapons must be completely out of view and stored in a locked space.
- Medication, dangerous cleaning products, or any poisonous substance must be stored in a secure space out of sight, preferably locked.
- Meetings should ideally be held outdoors, perhaps in the back or front yard of the home (this is a COVID-19 specific precaution).
- Ensure that the Hygiene and Risk Mitigation and all other guidance in this document are followed. (this is a COVID-19 specific precaution)
- Face coverings should be worn when meeting indoors based upon CDC or local health guidelines.

Troop Meetings on Council Premises

Since regular troop meeting spaces may not be available, GSKH has council property such as little houses, staff offices, camp property and other limited facilities for troops to meet. It is always best to opt for outside meetings than inside, whenever possible.

All safety guidelines must be carefully adhered to in accordance with CDC, state, local health authorities and as outlined in this document including:

- Restrictions by counties and/or towns
- Volunteer Awareness
- Troop meeting Size
- Large Gatherings (when applicable, over 15 persons)
- Hygiene and COVID-19 Risk Mitigation (enforce social distancing)
- First Aid Supplies
- Disinfectants and Disinfecting
- Personal Contact
- Face Coverings
- Release & Waiver of Liability

Hosting Volunteer Planned Events

As with hosting troop meetings above, volunteer planned events must follow all GSKH guidance provided in this document as well as those provided by the CDC, state and local health authorities. Be particularly careful with respect to complying with state and local guidelines or restrictions concerning large gatherings. Similarly, if the event is being planned at a third-party property or off-site facility, call ahead to ensure the property or facility owners are following the same standard of guidelines and safety protocols. Be prepared to fill in for areas where they

may fall short, bringing disposable face coverings for example. It is the event coordinator's responsibility to ensure girl and guest safety, to the fullest extent possible. The GSKH guidelines in this document apply, with special emphasis on the following (same as Troop Meetings):

- Restrictions by county and/or town
- Volunteer Awareness
- Troop meeting Size
- Large Gatherings (when applicable, over 10 persons)
- Hygiene and COVID-19 Risk Mitigation (enforce social distancing)
- First Aid Supplies
- Disinfectants and Disinfecting
- Personal Contact
- Face Coverings
- Release & Waiver of Liability

When/if the attendees are coming from outside the SU's immediate jurisdiction, become familiar, whenever possible, with the risk factor of the location from which guests are coming. If the risk is high, consider special accommodations or a contingency plan for how best to handle that situation. To support this assessment, Georgia Tech College of Sciences created a [Georgia Tech - Event Risk Assessment Planning Tool](#) which is an interactive map that tracks and provides the COVID-19 risk factor by inputting the number of attendees and the county in question.

Troop and Family-Only Camp

Troop and family only overnight camp is permitted. It is also permitted by reservation at our camp properties. Only one troop or household per site will be permitted at individual camp sites where safety hygiene, distancing and all COVID-19 protocols are to be followed completely. Sleeping arrangements for non-family troop members must be positioned to provide 6 feet or more social distance for those in each space.

Transportation (car-pooling)

It is strongly recommended that individual parents drop off and pick up their own girls from meetings and carpooling or public transportation should be avoided and not encouraged in order to maintain social distancing. When necessary, car-pooling must observe safety precautions.

For example:

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

Remember, 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.

Day trips and activities

In conjunction with Safety Activity Checkpoints, the guidance for Troop Meetings and Hygiene and COVID-19 Risk Mitigation in this interim guidance should be used for day trips and special activities. Call ahead to the facility or vendor to confirm that they are following CDC, local 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 wipe downs in between uses for equipment at the gym. Make whatever appropriate accommodations that are necessary. For example, bring extra sanitizer or disinfectant wipes if none will be provided for public use at the activity location.

Travel and overnight stays

Overnight trips are permitted but must follow all safety guidelines. As always, seek counsel prior approval before planning any overnight stays, follow guidance in Safety Activity Checkpoints and continue to practice the Hygiene and COVID19 Risk Mitigation guidance outlined in this document for the foreseeable future. Recognize that the COVID-19 risk is fluid, it can and will change and contingencies for re-scheduling or pivoting to virtual should always be considered. For all travel, use all health and safety guidance available to ensure the safety of girls such as this COVID-19 guidance provided by this document, and see the Additional Resources located at the bottom of this document, the CDC (always), state and local health authority guidance or restrictions, and Safety Activity Checkpoints.

❖ HYGIENE GUIDANCE

Hygiene and COVID-19 Risk Mitigation

Follow and utilize the print resources provided by health sources such as [CDC](#) or your local public health department. Share these with girls and other volunteers and ensure that they are practiced during meetings and activities. Place signs in the meeting or activity space to remind girls and other attendees 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.

Personal contact

Hugs, handshakes, “high-fives,” and even activities like the friendship circle can transmit COVID-19 from person to person. Create a safe way for girls and volunteers to greet and end meetings instead (like tapping elbows). Note: Use culturally appropriate messages, materials, and resources.

Face Coverings

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 face coverings 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 face coverings, due to medical conditions such as asthma. If you need guidance on how best to handle these exceptional circumstances, please contact volunteer support.

Food, Dining and Snacks

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:

- Encourage girls to bring their own foods to eat (bag lunch or dinner).
- Encourage girls not to share their food after having touched it, such as a bag of chips.
- Individually wrapped items are 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 with face coverings 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, serve everyone on clean plates.
- Use disposable plates, forks, napkins, etc. when possible.
- Encourage girls to bring foods they can easily cook themselves (a prepacked foil pack) or hotdog for outdoor cooking.
- Ensure everyone handling food, those serving, girls, 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 washed and sanitized between each use or bring enough utensils so that each person gets their own.
- Continue recommendation for 6 foot spacing during mealtimes.

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 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 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. Restrooms and toilets are fraught with germs normally, and more so now considering the contagion of coronavirus.

❖ FIRST AID AND DISINFECTANT GUIDANCE

First Aid Supplies

Troop first aid supplies should include COVID-19 prevention items including hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol), tissues, disposable face covering, and disinfectants. Trash baskets or bags should be supplied for meeting and activity spaces, if not already available. Disposable or no-contact thermometers may be added to supplies if available and not cost-prohibitive.

First Aid / CPR Training

Keep skills up to date for any emergency. Refer to www.kansasgirlscouts.org for training that may be available during this time.

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

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

FDA Warning

The FDA advised consumers (6/19/2020) not to use any hand sanitizer manufactured by Eskbiochem SA de CV in Mexico, due to the potential presence of methanol (wood alcohol), a substance that can be toxic when absorbed through the skin or ingested. FDA has identified the following products manufactured by Eskbiochem: All-Clean Hand Sanitizer (NDC: 74589-002-01)

- Esk Biochem Hand Sanitizer (NDC: 74589-007-01)
- CleanCare NoGerm Advanced Hand Sanitizer 75% Alcohol (NDC: 74589-008-04)
- Lavar 70 Gel Hand Sanitizer (NDC: 74589-006-01)
- The Good Gel Antibacterial Gel Hand Sanitizer (NDC: 74589-010-10)
- CleanCare NoGerm Advanced Hand Sanitizer 80% Alcohol (NDC: 74589-005-03)
- CleanCare NoGerm Advanced Hand Sanitizer 75% Alcohol (NDC: 74589-009-01)
- CleanCare NoGerm Advanced Hand Sanitizer 80% Alcohol (NDC: 74589-003-01)
- Saniderm Advanced Hand Sanitizer (NDC: 74589-001-01)

Methanol is not an acceptable ingredient for hand sanitizers and should not be used due to its toxic effects. Stay completely away from sanitizers containing methanol.

Consumers who have been exposed to hand sanitizer containing methanol should seek immediate treatment, which is critical for potential reversal of toxic effects of methanol poisoning.

❖ REPORTING COVID-19 POSITIVE INCIDENT

Reporting and communicating a positive COVID 19 case

Reporting and communicating a positive COVID 19 case should be managed by a council staff member. **Volunteers do not manage COVID-19 communication responsibilities.**

Contact Jennifer Urban, Human Resources Director jurban@gskh.org, in the event of a COVID-19 positive case.

Remember:

All health information is private/confidential and to be shared only on a need to know basis. There are laws and regulations governing sharing of health data.

Council staff, NOT volunteers, will notify parents and others about a positive case; the person's identity is confidential.

The Human Resource Director will:

- Record the facts.

COVID-19 Guidance for Girl Scouts of Kansas Heartland

- Create a file to keep all information related to the incident together, including emails.
- Confirm and trace the positive case.
- Notify the facility or homeowner where a troop has met.
- Alert the state department of health.
- Contact the parents of anyone who may have been exposed, or other adult volunteers.

Remember - Do not share the positive person's identity.

❖ **RELEASE & WAIVER OF LIABILITY**

The Girl Scouts of Kansas Heartland COVID-19 Release and Waiver provided in the documents section at www.kansasgirlscouts.org is what can be used to emphasize and document the assumption of risk and waiver of liability related to COVID-19 in order to protect the council, SU and troop.

❖ **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

Event Risk Assessment Planning Tool

This current interactive map published by Georgia Tech College of Sciences is a planning tool for troop meetings, service unit meetings and Girl Scout events. Insert the size of a meeting (number of attendees) on the sliding scale to the left and then click on the destination state and county 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 levels of infection, by county, nationwide. Find out more information on this interactive tool by visiting the Georgia Tech college of Sciences homepage.

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

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

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. Some of the notable subjects are copied in the below links, but all of them are very good and worth a review. This One-Stop-Shop site is updated regularly as situations arise and was most recently updated on February 3, 2021.

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

Topic Specific Links:

[Suggestions for Camp and Camp Administrators](#)

[Toolkit for Childcare Programs and Summer Camp](#)

[People with Disabilities](#)

[Toolkit for Youth Sports and Activities](#)

[Toolkit for Domestic Travelers](#)

[Travel in the United States](#)

[Visiting Parks and Recreational Facilities](#)

[Social Media Toolkit](#)

[COVID-19 Resource Center for Camps – American Camp Association](#)