

Girl Scouts of Black Diamond Council Covid-19 In-Person Guidance

Issued: August 2021

The Girl Scouts of Black Diamond Council covers four different states, which have each released information and data regarding the spread of COVID-19. The council has aggregated this information from the states, as well as from GSUSA, to provide guidance and support decision-making related to our specific Council, Service Unit and Troop operations.

COVID-19 is an extremely contagious virus that spreads easily in the community. Take all reasonable precautions to limit potential exposure for girls, volunteers, and families. If your state and/or local guidelines are stronger than those instructed by Girl Scouts of Black Diamond, you are required to follow them.

Girl Scouts of Black Diamond is firm on the need for safety protocols, sanitization and proper hygiene, in effort to keep all Girl Scouts safe.

Before meeting in-person indoors, the following steps are required:

1. All members of the troop and/or Service Unit must review and agree to adhere to the [COVID-19 GUIDE TO GIRL SCOUT GATHERINGS REQUIRED SAFETY PRECAUTIONS](#)
2. All girls/families/volunteers must complete a Participant Waiver [Form](#). Parents/caregivers must take their girls' temperatures before coming to the Girl Scout function.

Troop Meeting Size.

Check your local restrictions for gathering sizes. Restrictions vary greatly from state to state, county to county, and even from town to town--and can frequently change. If a state allows gatherings, utilize all social distancing practices and follow all preventative guidance (such as face coverings).

Pre-screening and Symptoms Check

Prior to in-person troop meetings and activities, all participants should be screened (verbal or written) to ensure:

- They are healthy and have not experienced symptoms associated with COVID-19 in the previous 72 hours.
- They have not knowingly been in contact with someone who has exhibited symptoms or has been confirmed positive with COVID-19.
- They have not been to high-risk geographical regions, particularly those regions that require a 14-day quarantine period.

Volunteers and council staff who are planning events should complete the "Pre-screening and Symptoms Check" step prior to each in-person gathering. The purpose is to implement and demonstrate this important safety step. 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.

NEW to Screening – As girls are checked-in and screened, ask caregivers if their Girl Scout has a medical condition that may prevent them from wearing a mask or a face shield. Participants with a documented medical condition should not be required to wear a face covering. If medical documentation isn't available at that time, allow for a one-time bypass of the Council guidelines and notify the caregiver of the mask or medical documentation requirement for their next Girl Scout activity. Social distancing applies. Read more about the mask update in the masks section of this guidance.

Please be sensitive to the fact that girls may be experiencing symptoms that are similar, but completely unrelated to COVID-19 and not contagious at all, such as menstrual body aches or headaches or allergies or a pre-existing condition. The goal is to keep the meeting 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.

Liability Waiver

Read the COVID-19 Participant Waiver and sign it. Please ensure that you still continue to follow all of the safety guidelines mandated by your state and local guidelines. The waiver ensures that caregivers understand that there is risk involved in participating and that they understand that risk.

Sickness Insurance Available for Activities with 2 or More Consecutive Nights

If you have a trip planned that is longer than 2 consecutive nights, you may purchase the sickness coverage. However, sickness insurance is unavailable for any meetings/activities that last less than 2 consecutive nights. The cost is \$.29 per person per day. If troops wish to do this, please contact Roberta Richmond at 304-553-7030 to get this insurance. Minimum payment is \$5.00.

Reporting a COVID-19 Case

If your troop experiences a confirmed case of COVID-19, please follow this two-step process:

1. Contact your Membership Delivery Manager so that she can provide you with support.
2. Complete the COVID-19 [Incident Report Form](#). Once the form is submitted, you will be contacted by a member of Black Diamond's COVID-19 taskforce with additional information and support.

Travel and Overnight Trips

Trips and overnights should only be taken in states and counties where non-essential travel is permitted. As the viral risk increases (as indicated by data) volunteers should use extra caution when making programming decisions, especially as it relates to travel.

Below are some guideposts to operate by:

- Some states have travel restrictions and should be checked for during the planning process.
- Overnight accommodations are permitted in non-family units, unless the state mandates otherwise.
- If there is a travel ban in your county or state, troops should not be traveling within or beyond the borders.
- Black Diamond's tripping application and process still applies. Our program team is ready to guide your troops, as needed. Please allow ample time for this process, as the process may take a bit longer during this pandemic.
- Employ head to feet arrangements in sleeping environments.

Singing

Masks are required for indoor Girl Scout activities, including singing. When singing outdoors, participants should be socially distant or masked to prevent the spread of airborne germs.

Masks

Indoor Activities - If you are coming from or going to an area of high viral transmission, you are required to wear a mask during indoor Girl Scout activities. This also applies to riding in vehicles with individuals outside of your immediate household. These requirements apply to everyone, regardless of vaccination status.

Outdoor Activities - Masks are not required in outdoor settings where social distancing is an option.

More Restrictive Guidelines - When in public locations, be mindful of and adhere to any stricter guidelines. Individuals should follow their state's mask wearing guidelines for indoor and outdoor gatherings if they are more restrictive than the guidance given by Girl Scouts of Black Diamond.

Troop Meeting Space

Get advance permission from the property owner or the jurisdiction that provides the location. Make sure that you understand and follow any COVID guidance that they may have.

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? Will your group be the only one in that space?
- What type of faucets / soap dispensers are available in the restroom (sensory or manual)?

Then, consider whether you can supplement any practices that are less ideal. For example, if you will arrive after another user group, plan to bring sanitizing wipes to get the space ready for your troop. Another example: if faucets are manual, take some time to show girls how to shut them off with a paper towel. Use paper towels for doorknobs whenever possible.

Troop Meetings in the Home

GSBDC strongly recommends no meetings in the home out of concern that there would be greater risk of exposure to other family members. The recommendation is to stay away from in-home meetings for the time being. Prior approval is required for any Girl Scout activity held in a home and there are extra precautions that must be taken and all adults in the household may be subject to criminal background check screening guidelines. Please allow two weeks for this process. Check with your Membership Delivery Manager for guidance related to meeting locations.

Virtual Meetings

Use the Safety Activity Checkpoints for Virtual Meetings to guide your meeting plans.

Day Trips and Activities

Call ahead to the facility or vendor to make sure that you understand and are able to adhere to their COVID safety measures.

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.

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.
- Volunteers, girls and caregivers should be reminded to make sure temperatures are taken prior to group interaction to confirm the individual is not running a fever and temperature is a normal 98.6 degrees. Members with fever or temperature higher than 100 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. Create a safe way for girls and volunteers to greet and end meetings.

First Aid / CPR Training and Supplies

Keep skills up to date for any emergency. Talk to your council about alternative methods of training that may be available during this time.

Troop first aid supplies should include COVID-19 prevention items, such as hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol), tissues, disposable facemasks, 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, caregivers should be checking temperatures and allowing their girl(s) to join group activities only when temperatures are normal.

Disinfectants and Disinfecting

Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched (i.e., tabletops, 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.).

See the CDC’s website for more on cleaning and disinfecting community facilities.

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 food 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 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 mask and gloves.
- Avoid “serve yourself” buffets.
- If serving family style, have one person, wearing clean gloves and a mask, 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 foilpack) 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.

More Information

Maryland

https://governor.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/MD_Strong.pdf

<https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/>

<https://garretthealth.org/covid-19-information/>

Ohio

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/responsible-restart-ohio/>

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/public-health-advisory-system>

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/OPHASM/COVID-19-Risk-Level-Guidelines-GP.pdf>

Virginia

<https://www.virginia.gov/coronavirus/forwardvirginia/>

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>

West Virginia

<https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx>

Close Contact Defined

Close contact is defined by CDC as someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

For additional COVID-19 guidance listed on our council website, visit <https://www.bdgsc.org/en/about-girl-scouts/covid19updates.html>.