



Return to In-Person Meetings and Activities FAQ-October 1, 2020

Q: Is there still a 12 total participant limit for troop meetings and activities?

A: As the State of Florida has now reached Phase 3, we have suspended our group size limitations. Troops may meet in person at the discretion of all participants involved. We want to provide a troop experience that is both realistic and practical for social distancing. If your troop is not able to meet in person, we suggest continuing virtually. If you have a larger troop, you may ask girls to RSVP to in-person activities, and rotate between smaller groups, such as age-level groups, patrols, or girls interested in a particular badge. These are ways to stay connected until you all feel comfortable meeting together or have a secured meeting location. You may also consider hosting an in-person meeting while allowing girls to log in via Zoom or another platform to take part in the meeting virtually.

Q: Our troop is under 12 total members. Will we still be on the catalog for new girls to join?

A: Yes. Troops are listed on the catalog for a maximum of 12 girls. Once your troop reached 12 or more girls, you will automatically be removed from the catalog, unless you have indicated a desired number of girls beyond 12. Should your troop have an extenuating circumstance, such as limited meeting space, please contact customercare@gsgscf.org for guidance.

Q: We don't have a meeting place right now. What do we do?

A: Finding new meeting places in light of the current situation is difficult. Many organizations are not open to outside groups. Please network within your communities to seek alternate locations, including outdoor spaces where feasible. Our member engagement team is also working to identify any new potential meetings locations. Until a space is identified, we encourage you to continue to meet virtually.

Q: Will the council properties be available to use for meetings?

A: Our council properties (Camp Honi Hanta, Camp Caloosa, Gulfcoast Event and Conference Center, Council Headquarters, and the Arcadia and Collier Girl Scout Houses) are open to Girl Scouts only, no outside groups until further notice. Opening our council properties exclusively to Girl Scout members maximizes space availability for troop use. You may reserve spaces for meetings two times per month, on either the first and third or second and fourth weeks, so we may accommodate as many groups as possible. Reservation requests will be first come, first served.

Q: Can we meet at a private home for troop activities?

A: Meetings in home are permitted. Special consideration must be taken to ensure that the space is adequate for social distancing and that there is not increased risk of exposure to COVID-19 for members or residents of the home. Troops must complete the [Meeting Place Agreement for Personal Residences](#) and submit this for approval before meeting. All members of the leadership team must view the space and approve of the location. Adequate sanitizing must take place before each meeting and non-members are not permitted to be present during meetings.

Q: Some of the families in my troop aren't comfortable with face-to-face meetings yet. How do we include these girls?

A: Every family should judge their level of comfort, and as an inclusive organization, we want to provide a pathway of participation that will suit all of our families. Include girls virtually, post plans in your Volunteer Toolkit for families to log in and view, and share other participation pathways for interested families, such as the Juliette program. Girls can participate independently as a Juliette until ready to rejoin the troop in person.

Q: As a volunteer, I'm not yet comfortable with face-to-face meetings. What should I do?

A: Just as we want all families to have a participation pathway that is comfortable for them, we want to be sure all volunteers do as well. Work with the leadership team of your troop to determine what you will plan as you move forward. You can continue virtually, host a drive-by event for your troop, allow volunteers that are comfortable in-person to carry out in-person activities, etc. Just be sure to communicate with families and offer alternative pathways of participation if your troop is not meeting in-person or virtually.

Q: Are face coverings required?

A: Yes, face coverings are a civic responsibility and a sign of caring for the community. Volunteers should remind girls that Girl Scouts wear face coverings (masks) not only to protect themselves, but also to protect others. 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 the coverings are effective. Some girls or volunteers may not be able to wear masks due to medical conditions, such as asthma. Contact us for guidance on how best to handle these exceptional circumstances as they arise.

Members may remove their mask if they are able to safely and consistently maintain social distancing of at least six feet from all other participants. Caution should be used when facilitating meetings or activities, as the monitoring of participants to maintain consistent social distancing is the responsibility of the volunteer(s) in charge of the meeting or activity. Should you feel you are not able to consistently social distance, participants should wear their mask at all times. Members engaging in rigorous outdoor activity may remove their mask if they are able to safely and consistently maintain social distancing of at least six feet from all other participants.

Q: Is carpooling permitted?

A: Carpooling and public transportation should be avoided whenever possible to maintain social distancing. If carpooling is necessary, all individuals must wear a mask for the duration of the trip. All individuals should sanitize their hands and high touch surfaces, such as door handles and seat belts, prior to entry and exit. When feasible, driving with the windows open for increased ventilation is recommended.

Q: When will overnight travel be permitted?

A: We are continually monitoring the situation in our state and across our 10 counties. We will continue to reevaluate our policies and directives for troop activity. Social distancing and masks are difficult to consistently maintain during overnight activities. Therefore, overnight trips will be suspended until further notice.

Q: Is there a waiver for parents/caregivers to sign?

A: We have updated our current [Parent/Caregiver Consent Form](#) and we ask that you have one for each girl completed for the new troop year and before hosting any in-person activities or troop meetings. This document will ask families to acknowledge the risk of meeting in person as well as basic health and safety standards, such as hand washing, checking their girl for symptoms, etc.

Q: Our families are not concerned with the virus and are fine with meeting the same way we used to. Do we need to abide by this guidance if they all agree?

A: Yes. The guidance laid out in our reopening plans are now GSGCF policies and standards based on best practices of CDC, GSUSA, and the State of Florida. All volunteers must review and complete an updated [Volunteer Position Agreement](#) before resuming meetings.

Q: If I plan a day trip, is there a chance you will cancel travel again?

A: Yes, if necessary in response to national, state, and local health and safety protocols, as well as with guidelines issued by GSUSA. It is best to review travel policies with your vendors before purchasing tickets or making reservations to evaluate the cancellation policy. GSGCF will not be responsible for any monies lost due to cancellations, as they are out of our control. You may want to plan day activities with your troop, but not purchase tickets for attractions (zoo, aquarium, etc.) until the day of the trip, when feasible.