



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

Q: Our troop has more than 12 total people. What do we do?

A: While we know that there are many troops with more than 12 total members, we are starting with a staggered and safe approach to resuming in-person activities. GSUSA and the CDC still advise against larger group gatherings, so we are following those guidelines. We also want to provide a troop experience that is both realistic and practical for social distancing. We suggest continuing virtually, asking girls to RSVP to in-person activities, and rotating between groups such as grade-level groups and patrols, or gather with girls interested in a particular badge as ways to stay connected until you can all be together. 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 has fewer than 12 total members. Will we still be open in the catalog for new girls to join?

A: At this time we will waive the 12-girl minimum. Troops may be listed in the catalog for a maximum of 10 girls, until our meeting size guidelines increase. At that time, troops will again be listed with the 12-girl minimum. Troops that already have more than 10 girls should follow the suggestions provided for larger groups.

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 working diligently to identify potential new meeting locations. Until a space is identified, we encourage you to continue meeting 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 will be allowed 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, to 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 homes 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](#) form and submit it for approval before meeting. All members of your troop leadership team must view the space and approve 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 we 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 your 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: When will the next phase begin? (Gatherings of more than 12, overnight trips, etc.)

A: We are continually monitoring the situation in our state and across our 10 counties. As schools reopen, the CDC releases new guidelines, and our state enters Phase 3, we will reevaluate our policies and directives for troop activity. Overnight trips will be suspended at least until the State of Florida reaches Phase 3, and our guidelines will be reevaluated at that time.

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 GSUSA, the State of Florida, and the CDC. 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 their 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.