

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

Issued: November 18, 2020

*****All November Updates and New Information is in Green Text*****

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.

The information below is intended to support troops and volunteers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of the fluidity of the situation, this information may change frequently. When it does, we will continue to provide updates to the COVID-19 section of our website.

If your state and/or local guidelines are stronger than those instructed by Girl Scouts of Black Diamond, you are required to follow them.

If you would like to report state updates to the Council, please email Kasey.Jones@bdgsc.org.

Pre-screening and Symptoms Check

Prior to in-person troop meetings and activities, all participants should be screened 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.

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 and Sickness Insurance

In October, we added an activity [liability waiver](#) and optional sickness insurance for troops and Service Units. We highly recommend that you use one or the other. The GS insurance does not cover any COVID related sickness. The current insurance that troops have through their Girl Scout membership pays only in the event of an accident. If troops would like to purchase supplemental insurance to cover sickness (COVID) during their meetings, they can. The cost is \$.29 per person per day. If they wish to do this, please contact Roberta Richmond at 304-553-7030 to get this insurance. Minimum payment is \$5.00, so several meetings can be included on the same form.

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'll be contacted by a member of Black Diamond's COVID-19 taskforce with additional information and support.

Close Contact Defined

The Center for Disease Control formerly defined close contact as being closer than 6 feet of a confirmed COVID case for 15 minutes at one time. As of October 2020, the CDC now defines close contact as being within 6 feet of a confirmed COVID case for a total accumulation of 15 minutes within 24 hours.

Travel and Overnights

Travel and overnights have been a long part of our Girl Scout programming and history. We know that adventures, both near and far, have been sorely missed this year. Many states have worked through the final phase of their reopening plans, which means that non-essential travel is now permitted in all our Council states. Girl Scouts of Black Diamond is permitting travel and overnights at this time. Please keep in mind that as the risk in your county or state increases, we are asking our troop leaders to exercise increased caution to keep girls safe.

Below are some guideposts to operate by:

- Troops should travel in family units as much as possible. Masks are required when traveling in the same vehicle as members from another household.
- Some states have travel restrictions and should be checked for during the planning process. For example, some states require 14 days of quarantine prior to crossing their borders. As Girl Scouts who live by the Promise and Law, we should all respect each state's authority to make these decisions.
- Overnights are permitted in family units only. We know that this limits the amount of travel troops can plan. However, we are still in a pandemic and we must make every attempt to keep our members and our communities safe.
- Black Diamond camps are open for use with some minor restrictions and increased sanitation guidelines. Come cozy up by the fire with your Girl Scout family and friends for a day or a night – socially distanced, of course!
- If there is a travel ban in your county or state, troops should not be traveling within or beyond the borders.
- Black Diamond's in person activity guidance still applies. When your school or county moves from in-person to virtual learning, any Girl Scout activities are required to be virtual
- Black Diamond's tripping application and process still applies. Our program team is ready to guide your troops, as needed.

Singing

If you normally close your meetings with a song, make sure girls and adults are all wearing masks. Singing and shouting both project germs farther than talking, ask your girls to either hum their closing song, or sing quietly, and always, of course, with their masks on.

Masks

Individuals are required to wear masks during any social interactions until there is a vaccination available for COVID-19. While some states have applied age minimums for mask wearing, Girl Scout mask guidance is unique to the standards and guidelines set forth by GSUSA and GSBDC. As a civic duty, all members, regardless of age, should follow our mask wearing guidelines. If an individual has a medical condition that makes it unsafe to wear a mask, social distancing is required.

Girl Scout Gatherings

Girl Scout gatherings will be determined based on school status. If schools are closed, in-person Girl Scout gatherings are not permitted. If schools are open for in-person learning, Girl Scout gatherings are permitted. If the school is partially open for hybrid learning, Girl Scout gatherings are encouraged to be hybrid with small group sizes.

IF

THEN



STOP	Schools are closed	Virtual Girl Scout gatherings only
CAUTION	Schools are partially open for hybrid learning	Hybrid encouraged, reduction in Girl Scout gathering size
GO	Schools are open for in-person learning	Girl Scout gatherings are permitted and encouraged

Girl Scout Activities and Participation Guidelines

	Maryland	Ohio	Virginia	West Virginia
Group Gathering Size	Schools fully open: Girl Scout gatherings can exceed 50 participants Schools partially closed: Girl Scout gatherings shouldn't exceed 25 participants Schools closed: Virtual Girl Scout gatherings only	Girl Scout gatherings can fall under the guidance of the "Responsible Restart Ohio Child Care" guidelines. If your Girl Scout function can operate within this guidance, the larger group sizes may be applied. If social distancing isn't	Schools fully open: Girl Scout gatherings can exceed 50 participants Schools partially closed: Girl Scout gatherings shouldn't exceed 25 participants	Until the Governor lifts the current group size restrictions, gathering sizes are as follows: Green: Group gatherings of 50+ Yellow: Group gatherings up to 50

		<p>possible at the site where the activity is taking place, group size must remain at 10 or less. See the full guidance from the Ohio Dept. of Health.</p> <p>If schools are closed, virtual Girl Scout gatherings only</p>	<p>Schools closed: Virtual Girl Scout gatherings only</p>	<p>Gold: Group gatherings of 10 or less</p> <p>Orange: Virtual Girl Scout gatherings only</p> <p>Red: Virtual Girl Scout gatherings only</p>
Travel	<p>No travel restrictions in phase three of the MD reopening plan</p> <p>Masks are required when traveling in the same vehicle as members from another household</p> <p>If schools begin to close again, even if just partially, essential travel only</p>	<p>Level 1: can travel Level 2: can travel Level 3: essential travel only Level 4: travel ban</p> <p>Masks are required when traveling in the same vehicle as members from another household</p> <p>Travelers visiting Ohio from states reporting positive testing rates of 15% or more must self-quarantine for 14 days. As of Sept. 23, the states on the list were Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, South Dakota and Wisconsin</p>	<p>Currently no state-wide travel restrictions.</p> <p>Masks are required when traveling in the same vehicle as members from another household</p> <p>If schools begin to close again, even if just partially, essential travel only</p>	<p>Currently no state-wide travel restrictions.</p> <p>Masks are required when traveling in the same vehicle as members from another household.</p> <p>If schools begin to close again, even if just partially, essential travel only</p>
Masks and social distancing	<p>Masks required in all indoor public spaces and outdoors when "unable to consistently maintain six feet of distance" from others</p>	<p>Mask mandate still in effect</p> <p>Gov. Mike DeWine's directive applies to activities in public indoor spaces and outdoors when unable to maintain six-foot social distancing</p>	<p>The state of Virginia has an indoor mask mandate.</p> <p>Social distancing is essential when participating in outdoor Girl Scout activities, when masks may not be a requirement</p>	<p>Governed mask wearing order is in effect.</p> <p>Masks required in all public indoor spaces, unless in a room by yourself with a closed door.</p>

		Social distancing required in group sizes beyond 10		
--	--	---	--	--

Reopening Stages by State

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>

Additional Information

Girl Scouts of Black Diamond Council, Inc. may modify this guidance, from time to time as circumstances change. 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.

Troop Meeting Space. Outdoor spaces where social distancing can be maintained are strongly recommended for meetings. 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)?

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.

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

Troop Meetings in the home. GSUSA strongly suggests 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.

Virtual meetings. GSUSA 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. Use the Safety Activity Checkpoints for Virtual Meetings, to guide your meeting plans: Virtual Troop Meetings.

Other helpful resources can be found here.

Day trips and activities. Call ahead to the facility or vendor to confirm that 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. Make whatever appropriate accommodations that are necessary. For example, bring extra sanitizer if none will be provided for public use at the activity location.

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 parents 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 98.6 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 tapping elbows).

First Aid Supplies. Troop first aid supplies should include COVID-19 prevention items including 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, 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. Talk to your council about alternative methods of 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.

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