

COVID-19 Guidelines – January 2023

Soon, we will be three years into the declared COVID-19 pandemic. We have all adopted a few basic behaviors and precautions to protect our health, that of our families and others we encounter through the day. Frequent hand washing and not sharing personal items are examples of precautions that help reduce community spread of COVID-19 and its variants as well as flu, RSV, and other illnesses. In addition to encouraging preventive behaviors, we strongly encourage all Girl Scout members (both girl and adult), as they are able, to be fully vaccinated and boosted. This will provide the greatest degree of protection and allow the most flexibility in planning and enjoying Girl Scout activities.

Some of our sister Girl Scouts or someone in their family may be at high risk for serious disease. Out of respect for their health and comfort level, and to allow inclusion in Girl Scout activities, we support troop or service unit leadership teams in establishing greater protection than GSCWM requires. We also trust their judgment to determine if greater protection is advised due to local conditions or the nature of a particular activity.

The following guidelines are based on current guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), recommendations from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, local boards of health, and GSUSA resources. As you are likely aware, the CDC is classifying counties based on risk level. Recommended prevention actions vary with the level of risk.

Please check [here](#) to determine your county risk level and, if you are camping or taking a field trip, the level of the county where your activity will be held. Girl Scouts are expected to follow the prevention guidelines provided on the website for their risk level.

Please continue to check the GSCWM website (www.gscwm.org) for the most current COVID-19 updates and don't hesitate to contact us at info@gscwm.org if you have questions.

GUIDELINES

- Every participant in a Girl Scout meeting or activity must do a quick health check before they leave home and not attend if they are showing any signs of illness. Here is a quick [Screening Form](#) with questions to guide you (this is a tool, not a requirement).
- While masks are no longer required, we remain mask friendly. Any participant, especially if not vaccinated and boosted, is encouraged to wear a mask if they are more comfortable doing so or if their parent/guardian instructs them to do so.
- Singing is a big part of Girl Scouts that also effectively spreads aerosolized virus particles. We strongly recommend physical distancing (three feet between participants) and wearing a mask while singing more than a song or two.
- Girl Scout groups must comply with the requirements of the meeting or activity location.
- Maintain comfortable distancing and good ventilation - spread out, go outdoors, open windows and doors, open tent flaps whenever possible.
- Frequently wash hands with soap and water, especially before eating, after using the restroom, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. Have hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol and not containing methanol) available.
- Personal items (hair ties, brushes, towels, etc.) and drink containers must not be shared.
- Individuals who have been **exposed** to COVID-19 must wear a mask for ten days following the encounter and test at day six, or earlier if they experience symptoms of illness. Check [here](#) for CDC guidance on reducing the risk of exposure, determining if you were exposed, and actions to take if exposed.
- **Returning to Girl Scout activities (including campouts) after a positive test**
 - You can find full CDC guidance for people with COVID-19 [here](#)
 - The infected individual may participate when the following have been met:
 - ✓ No fever for at least 24 hours - without the use of fever reducing medication **AND**
 - ✓ Respiratory symptoms have improved **AND**
 - ✓ At least five (5) days have passed since symptoms first appeared or since the positive test result was received, if the individual does not have symptoms (is asymptomatic) – Day zero is the first day of experiencing symptoms or a positive test result

- ✓ Masks must be worn for five days following the mandatory five-day quarantine period
- Symptomatic individuals testing negative for COVID-19 may return to Girl Scout activities when:
 - ✓ The alternative diagnosis is resolved (e.g. strep throat) **AND**
 - ✓ Symptoms have improved **AND**
 - ✓ They have no fever for at least 24 hours - without the use of fever reducing medication
- Transportation To and From Activities
 - Masks must be worn when taking public transportation
 - It is imperative to take all safety precautions when girls travel in motor vehicles. Since the risk of COVID-19 transmission is high when people are in close proximity and in a closed-in area, additional safety precautions are recommended.
 - Parents must be notified ahead of time if girls will be in a car together.
 - Space girls out as much as possible to avoid crowding.
 - Keep car windows at least partially open to circulate fresh air.