

Frequently Asked Questions

In-Person Troop Meetings Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Volunteers

12-1-20 to 1-31-21

Thank you for reviewing the In-Person Troop Meetings - Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Volunteers. Below you will find answers to some of the questions you may have.

Who is making the decisions for Girl Scouts of Nassau County regarding restrictions due to Covid-19?

In February 2020 a Girl Scouts of Nassau County Response Team was formed with staff members from several areas of the council. They were assigned to review and monitor the health crisis to determine what would be necessary to ensure the health and safety of the membership including girls, volunteers, and staff. The Girl Scouts of Nassau County Response team reviewed recommendations from many sources including local and state health departments, CDC and American Camp Association to develop and update GSNC Guidelines as needed. They will continue to do so in the coming months.

What is an Outdoor Troop Meeting?

An Outdoor Troop Meeting should be considered your regular troop meeting that normally takes place in school or community building, it has just been moved outdoors. It can last up to one hour in length and serve up to 26 people total including girls, leaders, parents and speaker/presenter.

Do I need to get approval to hold an Outdoor Troop Meeting?

Yes at this time you need to complete and submit an [Outdoor Troop Meeting Request Form](#) online. It needs to be submitted 2 weeks prior to your meeting date. You can request up to three meeting dates if they will all occur at the same location and time. All requests will be reviewed within 5 business days. An approval email will be sent, you need to receive the approval email to proceed with your meeting.

How was the Outdoor Troop Meeting group size determined?

It was determined that smaller group sizes ensure that all safety measures including wearing a mask and social distancing can be monitored and guaranteed by the adults present. Just as New York State is requiring smaller class sizes we are doing the same for troops. After receiving feedback from troop leaders with larger troops we have now increased our Outdoor Troop Meeting size to no more than 26 total participants.

What activities can be done during an Outdoor Troop Meeting?

All the activities that you normally do at a troop meeting can happen during an Outdoor Troop Meeting, working on badges and journeys, planning meetings with the girls, games, songs, etc. And just as you are able to take a hike/walk around the schools grounds you can do the same at a park. With the increased group size of 26 you may want to invite one parent per girl for certain activities.

Can we have an instructor or speaker attend our Outdoor Troop Meeting to work with the girls?

Yes, an adult instructor or speaker such as a Yoga Instructor, Art or Dance Teacher or maybe a Naturalist may attend to work with the girls at the meeting as long as they are in the count for the group size permitted. Visitor should be sent the same Outdoor Troop Meeting Requirements information and review the COVID-19 Health Screening questions before participating.

What isn't considered an Outdoor Troop Meeting?

Anything other than a regular troop meeting would not be permitted. This includes anything that would require completing an actual trip application even if it is held outdoors such as but not limited to; horseback riding, boating, ceramic classes, art classes, and amusement parks.

Why are trips and local activities not permitted?

We are concerned about the interactions and cleanliness of locations as well as staff following proper procedures. We feel its best that troops interact together but not with others.

Why are there no in-person council sponsored programs at this time?

In-person council sponsored programs are not permitted at this time because these types of programs fall into the category of trips and local activities, which are currently not permitted.

Why are we unable to meet in a private home, front or backyard?

GSUSA strongly suggests no meetings in the home out of concern that there would be greater risk of exposure to other family members. GSNC determined bringing people to a backyard or front yard would present the same concern.

Can adult groups meet if they follow the same guidelines?

Yes under these new guidelines adults are permitted to meet outdoors following the same criteria and process. Meetings can be organized for Service Unit business, trainings and planning purposes.

Please Note: Person leading the meeting should complete the Outdoor Troop Meeting Request Form using Service Unit Number so there will be a record of the meeting taking place.

All council level meetings will continue to be virtual.

When can we return to indoor troop meetings?

At this time, we are unable to give you a date, these current guidelines are in effect until January 31, 2021. Please know that we are continuing to monitor the situation and will be issuing updated guidelines in late January.

When can we take a trip or attend an event?

Trips, travel and overnight stays are prohibited through January 31, 2021. This date will be reviewed and extended as needed.

Can a troop be the color guard at an Outdoor Ceremony and/or parade?

At GSNC we feel it is important to continue some of annual traditions within your community when it is safe to do so.

Outdoor Ceremony: It is acceptable for a troop to act as a color guard at an outdoor ceremony if the following conditions are in place: Troop must be 6 feet from other members of the ceremony as well as 6 feet from each other wearing masks. Participation in the ceremony should last no more than an hour.

Parades: Participating in parades is not permitted at this time.

Why are Cadette, Senior and Ambassador Troops permitted to meet for two hours?

To allow more time for them to work on higher level Girl Scout leadership activities including journeys towards their Silver or Gold Awards.

Can Service Units organize any in-person community service projects or events?

The only type of in-person meetings permitted at this time are Outdoor Troop Meetings. No in-person events or community service projects involving girl participation can be held.

Will there be any opportunities for girls to participate in a community service Project?

GSNC will be announcing its Girl Scouts Feeding NY project later this month for a Dec 19 food collection. Girls, with their families will have the opportunity to participate in a contactless service project with Island Harvest Food Bank and other NY councils to help fight hunger in NY. Girls will also be able to earn the Girl Scouts Feeding NY patch with patch challenge activities. More information to follow after Thanksgiving.

Service Projects are an important part of Girl Scouting how can we continue to participate safely?

Working with the girls you can be creative and think outside the box as to how girls can participate individually. What can they work on during a troop meeting, at home or with their family that can be sent or donated to an organization to serve a need or bring comfort? Could they do a contactless collection on their block using flyers and a collection bin? Could they make something? Could they make notes, cards, and pictures to be sent? The possibilities are endless.

We are struggling working on Bronze and Silver Award troop projects, any ideas?

Consider doing an in-person outdoor meeting or virtual meeting for the planning of the project. Since we recognize that every girl can't do everything for a project, the work is normally divided. Girls can execute their part individually with their family.

Is there any suggestions and/or guidelines in regards to Thanksgiving and the holiday season regarding Outdoor Troop Meetings?

Although we have not created any specific GSNC Guidelines on this topic, we do want to share some things to take in to consideration when scheduling and holding Outdoor Troop Meetings. We suggest discussing the NYS travel restrictions that are in place and ask parents to not permit their daughter to participate in person if they have traveled or spent time with out of state guests.

Current NYS guidelines/requirements for any travelers coming to NY:

<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>