

*THE HEART OF VIRGINIA COUNCIL , BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA*

# SCOUT MEETING GUIDE FOR THE PANDEMIC



## **STATE AND LOCAL GUIDELINES**

On this page are the Governor's Executive orders that apply to the Scout Meetings. These orders **MUST** be followed.

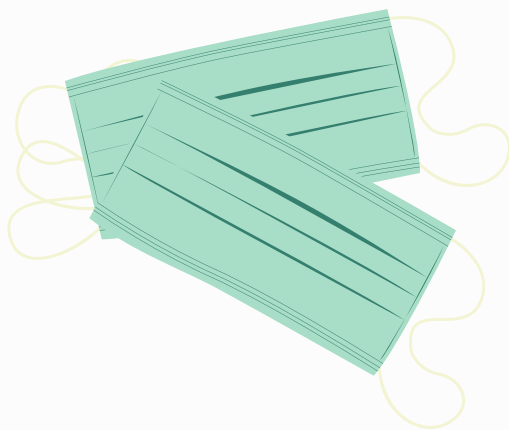
### **COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL GATHERINGS (INCLUDING SCOUT MEETINGS)**

#### **Executive Orders:**

All public and private in-person gatherings of more than 250 individuals are prohibited. The presence of more than 250 individuals performing functions of their employment is not a "gathering." A "gathering" includes, but is not limited to, parties, celebrations, or other social events, whether they occur indoors or outdoors.

#### **The following requirements apply to gatherings:**

- a. Individuals must be at least six feet apart when seated and must practice proper physical distancing at all times. Family members may be seated together.
- b. Mark seating and common areas where attendees may congregate in six-foot increments to maintain physical distancing between persons who are not family members.
- c. Any items used to distribute food or beverages must be disposable, used only once and discarded.
- d. Practice routine cleaning and disinfection of frequently contacted surfaces must be conducted prior to and following any gathering.
- e. Post signage at the entrance that states that no one with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19 is permitted to enter or participate (see page 15).
- f. Post signage to provide public health reminders regarding physical distancing, gatherings, options for high risk individuals, and staying home if sick (see page 16).
- g. Individuals attending must wear cloth face coverings.
- h. If gatherings cannot be conducted in compliance with the above requirements, they must not be held in-person.



## ***KEEP SCOUTING!***

The Heart of Virginia Council encourages all units to conduct meetings and outdoor experiences with their Scouts as long as those gatherings can be held in compliance with the Governor's Executive Orders listed on the previous page. Families and young people need our program now more than ever.

## ***CHALLENGES WITH LARGE GROUP MEETINGS***

Whether they are conducted in person or via videoconferencing, large Scouting meetings like pack meetings and meetings of very large troops present some challenges during the pandemic. We encourage units to focus on smaller group meetings...specifically den and patrol meetings. Large groups can certainly still meet successfully, but these smaller groups are easier to manage online and in-person. Remember that all meetings, whether virtual or in-person, require 2-deep adult leadership and adherence to our Youth Protection Guidelines.

## ***VIRTUAL, FACE-TO-FACE, OR HYBRID?***

The Heart of Virginia Council is allowing all units to meet face-to-face. Even with facemasks and social distancing, this remains the most effective way to deliver the Scouting program to young people.

We certainly understand and support a unit decision to conduct virtual meetings in lieu of face-to-face meetings, and there is a wealth of videos and tutorials available to support units that choose this option.

For units that choose to hold in-person meetings and events, you may find that some families are uncomfortable with face-to-face activities. One option to meet their needs would be to offer a hybrid, where in-person meetings are held, but a webcam is used to allow those families to view the meeting online.

***THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT IS TO PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS AND 'BEST PRACTICES' FOR UNITS THAT ARE CHOOSING TO CONDUCT IN-PERSON SCOUT MEETINGS AND OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES DURING THE PANDEMIC.***



# **HEART OF VIRGINIA COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **POSSIBLE MEETING STRUCTURES**

Some of our normal scouting meeting places will not be open to us this year, so your unit needs to verify that you will have a place to meet or find a new one if necessary.

If your unit is searching for an alternate meeting location, consider what kind of meeting you're looking to have. Dens and patrols can meet in homes, libraries, garages, churches, etc. Larger meetings (packs, troops, crews) might need to meet online to accommodate their larger numbers.

Scouting loves the outdoors! With proper preparation many Scouting meetings can happen outside, even in inclement weather. A simple dining fly and propane heater can provide an adventurous meeting location.

Your unit can use many online resources to help Scouts connect virtually. Visit [scouting.org/scoutingathome](https://scouting.org/scoutingathome) for a collection of online tips, tools and activities. Additional national resources such as den meeting videos, are available at [scouting.org](https://scouting.org).

Many schools and other organizations require users to submit a COVID-19 safety plan for their group or activity. This guide will at least provide a starting point.

**Units should ask these questions about each activity:**

1. How large is the group that needs to meet?
2. What is the capacity of these facilities?
3. How will you maintain social distancing in these facilities?
4. What activities can you do at these facilities while following the guidelines?



# COMMUNICATION PLAN

Units should establish a communication plan to ensure all parents and leaders are aware of procedures before in-person activities restart, are reminded of procedures before each activity, and are aware of ways they can participate in person and through alternative means.

A unit communication plan should address the following topics:

- \_\_\_ 1. How will communications be sent to parents and leaders? (email, Scoutbook, Facebook group, unit website, etc.)
- \_\_\_ 2. When will communications be sent? (ex. 48 hours before the event, every Tuesday, etc.)
- \_\_\_ 3. Who will send communications about a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19?
- \_\_\_ 4. Who should parents contact if they have a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 in their household?
- \_\_\_ 5. How will alternative ways of participating be communicated to families?

# CHOOSING ACTIVITIES

Now that your unit has completed its COVID-19 plan and secured a place to meet, it is time to actually plan your in-person activities. Start brainstorming fun activities or rethink ways to offer meetings and activities that were cancelled due to COVID-19. Remember to evaluate your ideas against the protocols and considerations of the Executive Orders.

- 1. Is this meeting/activity compatible with the Executive Orders? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No
- 2. What extra precautions need to be taken? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Can this meeting/activity be offered in a hybrid method? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

# TRANSPORTATION

For Unit meetings and outings, the best practice is to encourage only members of the same household to ride together. Any other arrangements are at the discretion of individual parents.

If sharing a vehicle, masks should be worn at all times and passengers should sit as far apart as possible. Surfaces should be sanitized both before and after the trip.





## ***DINING***

If your unit will be serving food, it is very important to take steps to limit the risks of spread. These best practices will help you safely limit the risk of spread:

- Clean and disinfect common surfaces between groups.
- Keep people 6 feet apart.
- Stagger meal times to minimize the number of people dining inside at one time
- Assign seats for the duration of meals.
- Avoid buffet style, salad bars, self-service, table, counter food service, and other configurations that require diners to use shared utensils.
- Prioritize use of "grab-n- go" services (i.e., boxed meals), in which meals are packaged or assembled on a tray for diners to retrieve or plate meals individually.
- Discontinue the use of beverage dispensers (e.g., fountain drink dispensers, common milk pitcher, etc.). Arrange bottles of beverage choices along a table or counter for diners to retrieve.
- Discontinue the use of shared condiments. Offer condiment packets along with the meal.
- Post signs reminding diners of the guidelines such as washing hands, maintaining social distance, using assigned seats, etc.

Remember the following points for serving any food:

1. Plan meals that limit shared utensils.
2. Keep people socially distanced throughout the meal outside of family units.
3. Disinfect and sanitize regularly.
4. Remind and reinforce guidelines.

## ***TENTING***

Camping is a major part of Scouting, but socially distancing in tents presents some obvious challenges. The best practice is to tent individually or with a member of your household. If tents are shared, social distancing should be maintained (6ft) and head-to-toe sleeping is recommended. Individual tents, hammocks and bivys should be considered. Youth Protection guidelines must be followed at all times.

Units should consider the following about each activity:

1. Verify camping facilities/capacity.
2. Verify participant count.
3. Verify the unit & facility have the capacity for all participants to tent while socially distanced. If this is not possible, then you cannot go camping.

# PROGRAM SAFETY

Every activity should be evaluated for safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. Not all activities that have been safe in Scouting will be safe during the pandemic, it is also important to remember that safe does not mean risk free. Factors to consider when picking an activity include ability for all participants to stay six feet apart, a lack of necessity to share equipment, and ease of sanitizing any equipment that must be shared between each use.

Every activity should be evaluated for the following (any 'no' answers indicate a change of plans will be needed):

1. Can all participants stay 6 feet apart? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Will each participant have their own equipment to use? ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. Can shared equipment be sanitized? ☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Can food be shared by individual households only? ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. Is frequent hand washing or sanitizing possible during this activity? ☐ Yes ☐ No

# HYGIENE STATIONS

Units should develop a hygiene station to be used at every event. Depending on the type of event this could be a location for hand sanitizer, a designated hand washing sink, or a "camp sink" like the one found here:

<https://www.instructables.com/id/Camp-Sink-Temporary-Hand-Washing-Station/>.

For events that are longer in duration, or involve any activity that will soil hands, we recommend having a hand washing option available.

Before each activity units should ensure these steps are followed:

- ☐ 1. Determine if hand sanitizer or hand washing is ideal for this activity.
- ☐ 2. If hand washing is preferred, determine if the activity location has suitable facilities.
- ☐ 3. If suitable handwashing facilities are not available, determine how to construct a substitute.
- ☐ 4. Establish a plan to clearly mark and notify families of the location of hygiene stations.



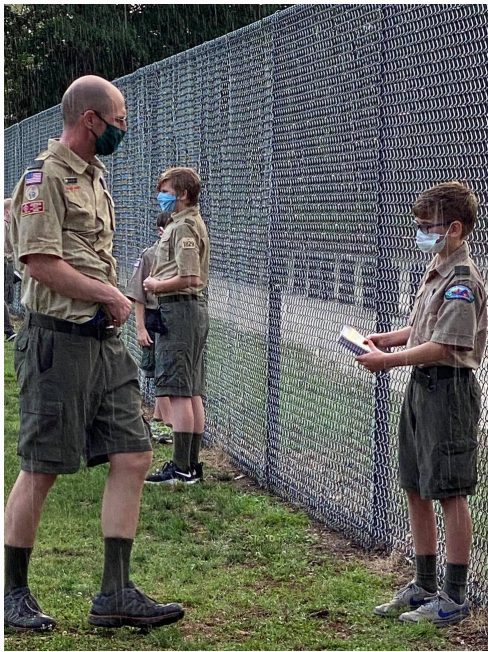
# PRE-EVENT SCREENING PLAN

(OPTIONAL BUT RECOMMENDED)

All participants should complete the screening checklist before participating in an activity.

Before each event units should ensure these steps are followed:

- \_\_\_ 1. All potential participants should receive the screening checklist at least 48 hours before the event.
- \_\_\_ 2. Units should print and bring extra copies of the screening checklist to the event.
- \_\_\_ 3. Units should collect a completed screening checklist from every individual present or confirm the screening checklist has been completed by each individual present.





# ***MEETING***

# ***IMPLEMENTATION***

## ***FOLLOW UNIT COVID PLANS & REINFORCE GUIDELINES***

At the beginning of every meeting, it is important to make sure that everyone is aware of the unit's COVID-19 plan and to remind everyone of relevant considerations for that meeting. The plan only works if it is enforced, so it is everyone's responsibility to monitor and reinforce the guidelines throughout the meeting.

## ***MONITORING FOR COVID-19 DURING AND AFTER MEETINGS***

People with COVID-19 may show no signs or symptoms of illness, but they can spread the virus. Some people may be contagious before their symptoms occur. Someone with COVID-19 may pass the health screenings and be allowed into program activities.

Primary symptoms of COVID-19 to watch for:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Fever               | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Muscle pain             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Cough               | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Sore throat             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Shortness of breath | <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Fatigue                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Chills              | <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Congestion              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Headache            | <input type="checkbox"/> 10. Loss of taste or smell |

Take the following steps to help catch possible cases and prevent the spread of COVID-19:

1. Monitor participants for changing health conditions and symptoms of COVID-19 during all meetings.
2. Remind participants that they should avoid high risk individuals during the next 14 days.
3. Remind participants to monitor for symptoms and notify a leader if they are diagnosed within 14 days.

## ***COVID-19 AWARENESS CHECKLIST & POSTERS***

The following four pages are the participant Health Screening Checklist and 3 posters that Scout units can reproduce and post at meetings. These posters meet the requirements of the Governor's Executive Orders.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit#: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Temperature on day of departure: \_\_\_\_\_ (CDC defines fever as 100.4 or greater)

## Participant Health Screening Checklist

### For use at events, camps and outings

All participants, visitors, vendors, etc. (youth and adult) should use this checklist to screen for potentially communicable diseases.

This checklist must be completed before departure on the day of the event. It will be reviewed upon arrival.

### Part I: Higher Risk for Serious Illness

Are you in a higher-risk category as defined by CDC guidelines? If so, we recommend that you stay home unless you have approval from your health care provider.

The CDC describes those at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 as those who are/have:

- ☐ 65+ years old
- ☐ Obesity (BMI of 30 or higher)
- ☐ Smoker
- ☐ Breathing issues (moderate to severe asthma, cystic fibrosis & lung disease)
- ☐ Circulation issues (high blood pressure, coronary artery disease, stroke cardiomyopathies, heart abnormalities)
- ☐ Diabetes, type 1 or 2
- ☐ Uncommon conditions (sickle cell diseases, severe blood disorder, or HIV infection)
- ☐ Immunosuppression (chemotherapy or transplantation)
- ☐ Chronic kidney or liver disease
- ☐ Children who are medically complex

### Part II: Recent Interactions

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Do you have COVID-19 or are you currently awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Have you been in contact with anyone who has COVID-19 or is ill with a respiratory illness but has not been tested for COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Have you or anyone you have been in close contact with live, work or travel in an area with a large outbreak of COVID-19 disease (hot spot) in the last 14 days?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Are you or anyone you have been in close contact with under current advisement by public health to quarantine or self-isolate?

**If any question is answered yes, the individual must stay home.**

### Part III: Health Screening

Do you have any of the following symptoms which are related to a new/recent illness and cannot be attributed to another health condition?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Fever or chills                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No New loss of taste or smell |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Cough                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Headache                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Diarrhea                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Fatigue, muscle or body aches               |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Sore throat, congestion or runny nose       |   |

**If any are checked yes, the individual must stay home until cleared by a physician.**

# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY NOTICE

In the interest of protecting public health and safety  
by reducing the spread of infectious disease  
**PLEASE DO NOT ENTER THIS BUILDING**  
if, during the last 14 days, you:

Have the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Have had known exposure to  
a COVID-19 case or contact  
with someone suffering  
symptoms of COVID-19.

**Unit participants MUST wear a cloth face covering in accordance  
with Executive Order 63.**

What can you do?

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- When in public, wear a cloth face covering over your nose and mouth.
- Practice physical distancing by keeping at least six feet distance from others when possible.

Your cooperation will help reduce the spread of COVID-19  
and ensure the ongoing function of our communities.

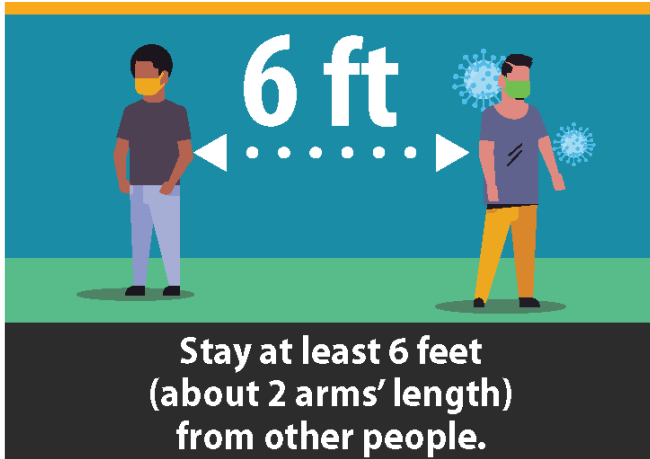
**#WeAreScouts**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®  
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# Stop the Spread of Germs

**Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.**



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)



# NOTICE

**FACE MASKS ARE  
REQUIRED  
TO ENTER**



*Thank you for keeping  
our community safe.*