

GSWNY COVID-19 Guidance FAQs 2-2-21

Please see updates in yellow.

Q1: My usual meeting space is not currently available, or I'm concerned I won't have access to my usual troop meeting place in the winter.

A1: If you are interested in meeting in-person now and your meeting place is not available, we encourage you to utilize outdoor public spaces such as local parks, and GSWNY properties are currently available for bookings on weekends, and some of our properties are available for troop meetings. Please contact customer care@gswny.org if you are interested in booking a GSWNY property.

For the winter, we will be working with service units to identify available meeting places, as well as the potential to expand our utilization of GSWNY service centers and properties. We await the decisions from school districts as to whether they will be available as meeting spaces.

In the meanwhile, we encourage you to connect with your meeting place to determine their plans. You may share the GSWNY COVID-19 guidelines with them so they may see the steps Girl Scouts is taking to keep their meeting places safe.

Q2: If we can maintain social distance (6+ feet), do we have to wear masks? Do we have to wear masks if we are outside?

A2: Yes, our guidelines state that girls and adults must wear masks in addition to social distancing (6+ feet). These guidelines apply in both indoor and outdoor settings.

An exception is when girls and adults may be eating or drinking. Follow social distancing and hygiene practices to create a safe environment in these cases.

Q3: Does GSWNY offer a medical exemption for masks?

A3: Girls and adults who identify a medical exemption can contact customer care@gswny.org to request a reasonable accommodation.

Q4: What is the meeting size in Phase Four?

A4: Meeting Size. Smaller gatherings are generally considered to be safer, and GSWNY recommends that you limit the size of gatherings as much as possible, for example if you have 10 girls in your troop, limit activities to the 10 girls plus the required number of approved volunteers to fulfill supervision ratios. Based on the most recent NYS requirements [for Phase 4](#), the current maximum gathering size is up to 50 people. However, [check your local restrictions](#) for small gatherings. If more restrictive, follow the local restriction. Utilize all social distancing practices and follow all preventative guidance (such as face coverings).

If you have a troop/service unit larger than 50, stay connected while you wait for a safe time for everyone to gather. Some ideas:

- Host virtual troop or service unit meetings (see below).
- Gather up in smaller groups—such as age-level groups, patrols, or groups of girls with a particular badge they'd like to work on.

NYS allows for outdoor activities where the total size of attendees are greater than 50, but may have restrictions on total occupancy size, such as outdoor movies, zoos, concerts, etc. Your troop may attend these events where the total size is larger than 50, however, in those cases, your troop must stay separate from the larger group, maintaining social distance and following all other guidelines.

Q5: What is the baseline temperature that is considered a fever?

A5: NYS school guidelines updated that any temperature 100 degrees and over should result in members (girl & adults) staying home and not attending any Girl Scout activities.

Q6: Can we host any meeting or activity at our home?

A6: All Girl Scout activities are prohibited from being facilitated in and at the home, whether inside or in a yard. In an effort to continue to mitigate the risk of the virus, and to ensure girl safety, no home in-person programs or meetings are allowed.

Q7: Are funds available to assist troops in purchasing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for my Girl Scout Troop?

A7: Yes, PPE purchases are a legitimate troop expense and troops can either use troop funds if available, and GSWNY will also provide financial assistance as this is a new and unexpected necessary expense for troops. In addition, Troop Leaders can request funding to purchase related Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at up to \$100 per troop for reimbursement (Example: thermometers, disposable facemasks, disinfectant, hand sanitizer/solution). Troops larger than 12 members may require more supplies and can note the additions on the form for review.

Q8: Can you provide guidance on media photos?

A8: Media Guidelines: we understand that families and troops want to take photos to document girls' participation in Girl Scouting and that photos are treasured memories, and also can showcase girls' accomplishments.

Due to the risk of COVID-19, all photos must comply with the above guidelines including wearing masks and social distancing. GSWNY reserves the right to refrain from posting any photos that do not align with safety guidelines, and also remove public photos, including photos submitted by troops and families to local media.

Girls can be documented without masks if they are participating at home, or with members of her family. Girls in photos with other non-family members of the troop must be wearing a mask and social distancing in accordance with GSWNY COVID-19 guidelines.

Q9: Are there any exceptions?

A9: One exception is during a ceremony, if a family wishes for a girl to remove her mask for a photo, that is acceptable as long as she is socially distanced from others, and the photo must be of the girl alone, or with family members, and that this is only for a minimal amount of time to take the photo.

Q10: How will in-person programs be affected if a WNY county is placed in a yellow, orange, or red zone by NYS?

A10: If any county is placed in a COVID-19 microcluster by NYS, there may be additional restrictions. If any county is placed into the yellow zone, that county will need to limit group sizes to 25 or less. If any county is placed in the orange zone, that county will need to limit group sizes to 10 or less. If any county is placed in the red zone, that county will need to suspend in-person programming per NYS guidelines. Yellow zone restrictions may be applied across the council, and orange, or red zone restrictions will be handled county by county, and will not be applied across the council, unless NYS advises.

Q11: Will Cookie delivery and in-person booth sales operate as planned?

A11: Cookie delivery is scheduled from March 3rd-March 6th. Troops can schedule their pick-up times in Smart Cookies when they place their cookie and recognition orders.

- **Cookie Cupboards** will be open March 11- March 27. Pick-ups can be scheduled by the troop through Smart Cookies.
- **Family cookie pick-up**- product is picked up on a porch or open garage. Families should not enter troop leaders' homes. Troop should schedule 15-20 minutes between each pick-up.

- **In-person troop booths and community drive throughs** along with Virtual booths can be arranged. To participate in a booth lottery and to schedule a troop secured booth in the cookie finder go to the booth tab in Smart Cookies. Troops can request a location or schedule their own in-person booth.

For direct sale guidelines and helpful resources go to <https://www.gswny.org/en/cookies/cookies/for-cookie-sellers/resources-abc.html>.

Q12: Can troop leaders and volunteers arrange contactless delivery/pick-up of program supplies for girls/families in the orange zone?

A12: Yes, as long as they follow all COVID-19 safety guidelines and social distancing.

Please Note: Details regarding red zone are not currently released but we continue to monitor NYS guidelines and we expect to be able to offer curbside retail and delivery.

Thank you for all that you do, and please contact Customer Care if you have any questions: customercare@gswny.org or call 1-888-837-6410. In an emergency, please call 1-800-882-9268.