

Troop Meeting Space

Outdoor spaces where social distancing can be maintained are strongly recommended for meetings when the weather permits. Volunteers should get advance permission from the property owner or the jurisdiction that provides the location.

For meetings held at public facilities, volunteers should contact the facility ahead of time and ask:

- Is the space cleaned, and touch surfaces (e.g., 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)?

Volunteers should supplement any practices that are less ideal. For example, if the troop arrives after another user group, they should plan to bring sanitizing wipes to get the space ready for their troop. Or if faucets are manual, volunteers should take time to show girls how to shut them off with a paper towel and to use paper towels for doorknobs.

Meetings may not be held in fitness centers or gyms because the atmosphere in sports facilities is aerosolizing, making them a higher risk for contracting virus.

Troop Meetings in the Home

Girl Scouts of Western Ohio suggests no meetings in the home out of concern that there would be greater risk of exposure to other family members. In certain exceptional situations and due to the current COVID-19 risk restricting public meeting options, we recognize that in home meetings may be the only option.

Before deciding to meet in a troop member's home, you should discuss the implications thoroughly with families and ensure it is the best option for the troop. In addition to following all [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#), as well as State and Local mandates, you must agree to adhere to the following:

- The home must be the home of registered, background-checked, council-approved Volunteer.
- Girls may not meet in a home where a registered sex offender lives.
- Only registered Girl Scout members (girl and adult) may be present at the meeting location.
- Animals should be kept in a place that is separate from the meeting space.
- You should consider any personal homeowner insurance implications. Any property damage incurred during the meeting is the responsibility of the homeowner. You may consider asking your homeowner's insurance carrier if there are any insurance exclusions regarding holding troop meetings at the home, in the event an accident or injury occurs.
- Weapons must be completely out of view and stored in a locked space.
- Medication, dangerous cleaning products, or any poisonous substance must be stored in a secure space out of sight, preferably locked.
- Girls should be encouraged to bring snacks from home or serve only pre-packaged food. No buffets, potlucks, or sharing of snacks should occur.

- Meetings should ideally be held outdoors, perhaps in the back or front yard of the home (this is a COVID-19 specific precaution).
- Mask and Social distancing mandates should be followed.
- Follow hygiene and Covid-19 Risk Mitigation guidelines as outlined below.

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 other 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°. Members with fever or temperature higher than 98.6° should skip the in-person gathering until their temperature is normal.

[See the CDC's website](#) for more on cleaning and disinfecting community facilities.