

Back to Troop: COVID-19 First Meeting Plan

Welcome back to another fun year of Girl Scouts! As you begin to plan for your first meeting you may have several questions as you and your girls' parents are deciding what would be the best way for your troop to meet this fall. You may be thinking of meeting in-person, virtually or maybe a mixture of both. No matter the choice you'll have fun getting together with your Girl Scout sisters. The guide below will help you in starting the conversation with parents and preparing your meeting space in a safe manner for everyone. To assist you in planning your troop meetings/activities review the [GSSNV COVID-19 Guidance for Meetings and Activities](#) document for additional health and safety requirements.

Prior to Your Troop Meeting

● Set Expectations for Families

- Have family members complete the [COVID-19 GSSNV Troop Meeting Permission form](#).
- Connect with families and ask questions to gauge their interest on meeting in-person.
 - Are you interested in resuming in-person gatherings?
 - Are there questions or concerns you have about resuming in-person meetings?
- Be clear on what you expect families and girls to do before and during meetings (stay home when ill, requirement of masks, location requirements, physical distancing, etc.)
- Share any important details about your meeting location, including how they should enter the space.

● Prepare Your Meeting Space

- Plan how will they come into the meeting space. Consider having a designated volunteer greet the girls at a drop off place and give them directions to enter the meeting space to maintain social distancing.
- Use visuals or other methods to encourage social distancing. Make it girl-led by asking the troop for suggestions.
 - Ideas: chairs with their names on them, spots or carpet squares on the floor, masking tape or use sticky name tags to designate where they sit, or hula-hoops to designate space.
- Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces and items.
- Have a clean and dirty container for girls to place used items for you to clean after the meeting

Your First Troop Meeting

● Welcome Everyone Back

- Begin by welcoming families back to Girl Scout meetings, let them know that you are so happy to spend time with them.
- Open the meeting with a question or icebreaker.
 - Share a fun memory from the spring or summer.
 - What did you miss most about seeing your Girl Scouts sisters in person?
 - What is your favorite food to eat in the summertime?

● Talk About Safety and Physical Distancing

- Discuss GSSNV mask and physical distancing guidelines
 - In accordance with GSSNV mask guidance, masks are required at all indoor and outdoor Girl Scout activities to protect yourself and others from spreading or contracting COVID-19.
 - Physical distancing should be utilized at all times.
 - Physical distancing is not a replacement for wearing a mask nor is wearing a mask a replacement for physical distancing. Both should be observed.
- As a group, list the things everyone can do at your troop meetings to stay safe in your meeting space. (examples may include wash hands, keep your distance, no hugs, wear a mask, etc.)
 - If available, write the ideas on a poster or whiteboard.
 - Review the list at the next few meetings until you know the girls are prepared to follow them without being reminded.

● **What if girls express concerns and fears?**

- Acknowledge that things have been different the past few months and because of that we will have to do things differently for now.
- Ask the troop to share what they have been doing differently at home or in the community. From this you can learn commonalities, differences, and/or fears that they might have.
- Listen, invite them to tell you more, stay calm.
- Ask if they have ideas of what helps them to feel better and how they can support one another.
- Remind them that they are powerful and together they can get through this.
- Keep to the routines of the troop and build new fun routines.

After Your Meeting

● **Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces.**

- Review the health and safety portion of the [GSSNV COVID-19 Guidance for Meetings and Activities](#) document for additional information on disinfecting or learn more on the Nevada Health Response website.
- Disinfect all shared items (markers, scissors, etc.) that was used during the meeting.
- If sharing a space with other troops, ensure you end your meeting at least 30 minutes before the next troop so cleaned areas have time to dry

Engaging Girls That Are Unable to Meet In-Person

● **Consider various ways to ensure all girls are engaged and connected.**

- Offer a virtual and/or call-in option.
- Create a year plan of your meetings in the Volunteer Toolkit, parents/caregivers will be able to access meeting plans by logging in.
- Send meeting activities ahead of time for families to do it themselves (via email, mail or drop-off/pick-up, or through the Volunteer Toolkit).
- Follow-up with families that aren't able to join so that girls can still stay connected with troop leaders, do some reflection or share photos so the girls can see what they all did.