

## **Guidance for Reopening of In-person Scouting Meetings and Activities** **Greater Niagara Frontier Council**

As of June 26, 2020

The Greater Niagara Frontier Council (GNFC) understands that our youth and adults want to get back into Scouting and the outdoors as soon as possible. While we understand and agree with you, we also need to do this in a safe manner. We have outlined several requirements for Unit operations. In this everchanging environment, it is essential to note that State and Regional guidelines will always take priority. ***All recommendations and guidelines issued by any Government entity (CDC, State, County, Dept. of Health) will be considered as requirements, and not suggestions.*** The safety of our Scouts, Leaders, Families, and Community is of paramount importance. Scouts have always been seen as leaders, and we will continue to set a good example for all. Failure to follow either Government or Council guidelines can result in the end of membership with the Scouting program.

### **The CDC currently recommends:**

- Establish and maintain a minimum distance of 6 feet between people.
- Anyone 2 years and older should wear a cloth face covering over their nose and mouth when in settings where it's difficult to practice social distancing. This is an additional public health measure people should take to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in addition to (not instead of) other preventative actions listed.
- Keep at least 6 feet between yourself and others, even when you wear a face covering.
- No sharing or common use items
- Anything that is used/touched must be disinfected before another person can use it.
- No close/near contact sports or activities
- If anyone is feeling unwell, they are not to attend an activity
- If anyone becomes unwell during the event they are to be separated from the group and sent home immediately

As of this writing, it is our anticipation that in-person Scouting will be allowed when Western New York enters Phase 4 of the New State Plan to reopen. The State is still finalizing the plans for Phase 4 but, we believe that they will closely follow the above-mentioned guidelines.

**National BSA** policy/direction to all Councils is to follow the Federal and State guidelines and the direction from the local Department of Health.

The **Greater Niagara Frontier Council** recommends the following requirements for Unit, District & Council operations once Federal, State and Local Restrictions allow in-person Scouting activities to resume.

- Guide to Safe Scouting requirements always apply <https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/toc/>
- Youth Protection Guidelines always apply (including mandatory 2 adults at all times) <https://www.scouting.org/training/youth-protection/>
- Virtual meetings are strongly encouraged

- In-person meetings/activities:
  - All participants (Scouts, volunteers, and family members) must complete and submit the GNFC's **"COVID-19 Screening Form for All In-Person Meetings and Activities"** to the Unit Leader. The forms must be completed each day of multi-day activities and must be maintained by the unit for at least 3 years
  - Activities must meet the New York State definition of Low-Risk Outdoor Arts and Entertainment or Low-Risk Indoor Arts and Entertainment Guidelines as issued by the state on June 24, 2020 <https://forward.ny.gov/phase-four-industries>
  - Social distancing must be maintained
  - Masks must be worn at all times when within 6 feet of a non-household member
  - Scout salute will replace handshakes
  - All shared items (i.e., ropes, books, etc.) must be decontaminated between users
  - Any food/drink at the meeting/activity must be individually packaged
  - Any person that is feeling ill is prohibited from attending or even dropping someone off at the meeting/activity
  - Any person who becomes ill will be immediately separated from the group and sent home. The Unit's District Executive must be contacted anytime this happens, see notification section below
  - Groups cannot exceed 50 people, including but not limited to Scouts, Leaders, family members, and non-Scouting adults
  - No activities involving physical contact between individuals are allowed
  - Attendance must be kept of everyone (Scouts and family members)
  
- Camping
  - **We are in the process of working with our local county Health Departments to reopen our Camp properties for day use and overnight camping in some form. Once the reopening requirements have been finalized and safety protocols have been put in place, we will provide additional details.**

When our Camps do reopen the following procedures and protocols will be in place (with additional ones likely to be added):

- Units must contact the Camping Secretary ([Sara.Falsone@scouting.org](mailto:Sara.Falsone@scouting.org) or 716-512-6216) for complete details about using a camp and to make reservations
- The Camp Ranger/Caretaker will provide guidance on safety and disinfection requirements that must be followed by everyone in camp
- Campsites will be limited to 50% or less of normal capacity
- Only 1 person to a tent, unless they are members of the same household
- No patrol or group style cooking is allowed, all food must be prepackaged or brought by the individual/family, no sharing of utensils or cookware is allowed
- Social distancing requirements will be in place, including the need to wear a mask if less than 6 feet from a non-household member
- Follow all guidelines listed under the In-person Meetings/Activities section
- If you are camping at a non-Scouting venue, you must follow all additional guidelines of the park/campground

- Fundraising
  - Prior to submitting a Unit Money Earning Application, the Committee Chair or the Unit Leader will contact the District Executive to review the Fundraising plan
    - What is the Fundraiser?
    - How many people will be at the fundraiser at any given time?
    - What health and safety precautions are to be implemented?
    - What is the plan if health issues arise?
- Travel
  - The CDC is strongly discouraging any travel not deemed essential. As a result, no Unit will be allowed to travel to a region/state that is closed.
  - If possible only members of the same household should travel together.
  - Masks must be worn by all occupants if traveling in mixed groups.

In a case where the circumstances create the need for clarification, the Committee Chair or Unit Leader will contact the District Executive to obtain that guidance. The District Executive's decision on these matters is binding and carries the same weight as these guidelines.

The health and well-being of our Scouts, their families, our communities, and the Scouting program is of the utmost importance to the Council. **Failure by any individual to follow these requirements will result in an immediate suspension from the Scouting program. Any leader who allows such behavior to occur will be immediately suspended from the Scouting program.**

### Notification

It is the intent of the Council to create a safe and fun program under these stressful times. However, no matter the best laid plans, it is likely that someone may become ill. When anyone at an event becomes ill, they are to be immediately isolated from the group and sent home.

As soon as possible, the adult leader of the event MUST contact their District Executive and provide the following information:

- Who became ill (name and contact information)
- Reason they were at the event/activity (i.e. Scout, Leader, Parent, Sibling)
- Symptoms and when they developed
- How were they isolated
- Name and contact information for all people present and who may have had contact (less than 6 ft)
- What was the nature of the event?

### Virtual Alternatives

Scouting still continues and the above listed guidelines/requirements may be difficult to implement and still have a fun program. If your Unit has not already done so, you should consider virtual alternatives to keep the Scouting program going. Greater Niagara Frontier Council has developed many exciting virtual programs and activities (including Summer Camp options) for our Scouts. Please visit our website to learn more: <http://www.wnyscouting.org/>

**COVID-19 Screening Form for All In-Person Meetings & Activities**  
**Greater Niagara Frontier Council, BSA**

This form must be completed by all Scouts, volunteers, and family members who are present at any Scouting Activities or Meetings. Forms must be completed each day for multi-day events. The forms must be collected and maintained by the Unit Leadership for a minimum of three (3) years from the date of completion.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Scouting Role (Please circle one):**      **Scout**                      **Leader**                      **Family Member**

**Unit # & Type:** \_\_\_\_\_      **District:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_      **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I confirm that I have not experienced any symptoms associated with COVID-19 in the past 14 days, including:

- Fever ( $\geq 100.4$  degrees Fahrenheit)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

**If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, contact your personal doctor.**

\_\_\_\_ I have discussed my symptoms with my doctor and have confirmation they are not related to COVID-19 (e.g. migraines, allergies, etc.)

\_\_\_\_ I confirm that I have not tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days.

\_\_\_\_ I confirm that I have not been in close physical contact with anyone who is either confirmed or suspected to be infected with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.

**If you are unable to confirm that you meet these criteria, you must immediately leave the Scouting activity.**