

Scouts Canada
Covid Safety Plan for Outdoor Adventures and Overnight Camps

Overview

Nature and the outdoors is a Scouts playground. A place to discover new things and embark on great adventures. A place where youth gain leadership skills by leading their peers on meaningful outdoor adventures. Through a youth-led program, Scouts pave their own path to outdoor adventure and fun; all the while surrounded by committed and passionate volunteers who focus on creating a safe and inclusive environment.

To ensure the sustainability of Scouting as a vibrant community, and youth-leadership opportunity both now and long into the future, we continue to act prudently; not moving first, but learning fast from others in alignment with provincial advice, guidelines and regulations.

Scouts Canada's response to COVID-19 continues to be guided by the following principles:

- Start Scouting when it is safe to do so
- Not be first mover but a fast follower
- Learn from others and the return-to-school process and impact
- Progressive return to Scouting — [stages](#)
- Follow provincial requirements — use a National standard applied in a regional setting & phasing

Overnight adventures and camp experiences are an intrinsic part of the Scouts Canada program, and we believe that they play an integral role in the development of young people. The BC Provincial Health Order for Overnight Camps for Children and Youth, and the BC Camping Association support overnight camps and believe that a conservative approach is appropriate to minimize the risk of disease transmission.

Scouts Canada is committed to maintaining a position of safety leadership and social responsibility. In alignment with our Safety First Policy, Scouts Canada's priority is to ensure that activities are modified to ensure the safety of our members and to reduce the risk of disease transmission.

Definitions:

Patrol: A "patrol" is a general Scouting term for a small team, typically 6 to 8 youth that embodies the Scout Method— Patrol System. Specifically, this refers to Lodges (Colony: Beavers), Lairs (Pack: Cubs), Patrols (Troop: Scouts) and Expedition Teams (Company: Venturers).

Scouter: A volunteer that facilitates section programs for youth participants, and provides a safe and inclusive environment for children and youth to build new skills, competencies and resilience while planning meaningful outdoor adventures and participating in new experiences.

Activity: Any action or meeting involving those registered as members, or those eligible for membership in, Scouts Canada indulging in any gathering for the purposes of Scouting within or outside of Canada. These include, but are not limited to, all Section, Group, functional and other meetings of any kind operating as Scouts Canada. This would include all Section programming, Council meetings, training sessions, events, day camps, overnight camps, and planning sessions for the purposes of Scouting.

Safety Guidelines & Standards

These Standards apply to all departments, functions, Councils, Groups, Sections, staff, volunteers and those acting in support of Scouts Canada activities during a local, national or international pandemic.

- The National Key 3 will determine the scope and duration of activation of these standards.
- Notice of implementation and effective date of these standards shall be given by the CEO of Scouts Canada or a person designated by them to provide notice.
- Incremental or greater requirements specified by Federal, Provincial and/or Municipal health and safety restrictions supersede those outlined in these standards.

The objective is to ensure that appropriate program modifications are both communicated and implemented to reduce the risk of disease transmission among Scouting youth, Scouters, parents and others planning or attending Scouts Canada activities. Activities cannot violate a public health order.

All Scouting in-person activities must ensure program and plans are modified to reduce the spread of illness.

- For the purposes of these standards, an **'activity'** is any action or meeting involving those registered as members, or those eligible for membership in, Scouts Canada indulging in any gathering for the purposes of Scouting within or outside of Canada.
- These include, but are not limited to, all Section, Group, functional and other meetings of any kind operating as Scouts Canada. This would include all Section programming, Council meetings, training sessions, events, day camps, overnight camps, and planning sessions for the purposes of Scouting.

Each Council and/or Group is responsible for ensuring, that they are in compliance with Scouts Canada, Federal, Provincial and Municipal Government health and safety restrictions.

The **two-scouter rule** must always be in effect and maintained.

Scouter to Youth ratio (max 1:8) must be maintained at all times when conducting in-person Scouting Activities. (Some older youth are permitted to operate in certain environments without Scouters present.)

For ALL in-person activities the following requirements are to be adhered to:

Physical Distancing

All Scouting in-person activities will be limited to any gathering restrictions of a municipality or province that the activity/gathering takes place within. Indoor activities are permitted, in addition to the preferred outdoor activities.

Vaccine Mandate

As of November 1, 2021, all eligible youth, adult members, participants and staff must be fully vaccinated in order to take part in in-person activities. Consistent with Federal guidance, the vaccine mandate will extend to include 5-11 year olds. This includes indoor and outdoor activities and meetings.

For more detailed information, please visit Scouts Canada's [Covid-19 Frequently Asked Questions](#)

All Scouting in-person activities continue to use the patrol (team) system method.

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The use of masks are required for Scouting activities and meetings conducted indoors, and are encouraged for outdoor activities.

Drop-off and pick-up procedures must be modified to ensure compliance with these standards. It is the responsibility of the Scouters to establish these processes at all meetings and activities. This may include use of directional flow, markers and barriers to help reduce crowding, and a designated reception area with Scouters screening and guiding youth.

Transportation

Parents are responsible for the transportation of their own children to and from activities and meetings.

Vulnerable Populations

Adults and Scouters should be aware of the guidance for “Vulnerable Persons” or “At-Risk” persons and take additional risk controls that they determine appropriate, e.g. maintaining physical distance, wearing PPE, reducing potential exposure time. Vulnerable adults must discuss with the Scouter-in-Charge to ensure appropriate risk management controls are acceptable.

Youth with underlying conditions, medical and/or behavioural complexities may attend Scouting activities, however, it is important for parents/guardians to work with their child’s health-care providers so that an informed decision can be made. Parents must inform the Scouter-in-Charge in advance to ensure appropriate risk management controls are considered.

- Where there is a vulnerable person in their household, the member must consider carefully if they should attend

Cleaning & Hygiene

The Scouter-in-Charge will ensure that appropriate levels of hygiene, cleaning and disinfecting, are planned and executed.

- This includes regular cleaning of objects and surfaces touched by many people; and more frequent cleaning of high touch areas

- Use of shared objects, gear and equipment is permitted and should be cleaned between each use.
- For disinfection, use common, commercially available disinfectants such as ready-to-use disinfecting wipes and pre-made solutions (no dilution needed). Refer to the [Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings Guidelines](#) for additional information

Handwashing stations and/or Alcohol Based Hand Rub with a minimum 60% alcohol concentration must be made available.

- Soap and water are preferred as it is the most effective method and least likely to cause harm if accidentally ingested.

Remind participants to cough and sneeze into their elbow, throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene.

Remind participants to avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

Review importance of and when to perform hand hygiene at camp (as per BCCA guidelines).

When Campers Should Perform Hand Hygiene	When Staff Should Perform Hand Hygiene
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When they arrive at camp • Before and after any activities • Before and after eating and drinking (excluding from their water bottle during activities) • Before and after using an indoor space used by multiple cohorts (e.g. arts & crafts room) • After using the toilet • After sneezing or coughing into hands • Whenever hands are visibly dirty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When they arrive at camp • Before and after any breaks • Before and after eating and drinking • Before and after handling food or assisting camper with eating • After using the toilet • After contact with body fluids (i.e., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood) • After cleaning tasks • After removing gloves • After handling garbage • Whenever hands are visibly dirty

Screening

All participants must complete a [self-assessment screening checklist](#) to perform screening of their children or themselves before arriving at the planned Scouting activity.

- It is understood that some allergies or pre-existing conditions may express similar symptoms to COVID-19. If in doubt consult a medical professional.
- Scouters, parents or guardians and youth must not attend the programs or other Scouting activities if they are sick (any illness – not just limited to COVID).
- Where there is another sick person in their household, the member should consider carefully if they should attend.

All persons ordered, and family members (or social bubble) of persons ordered, to quarantine or self-isolate under a Public Health order of a Municipality, Province or an order made under the Federal Quarantine Act are prohibited from in-person Scouting activities.

If a person (youth or Scouter/volunteer) develops symptoms while participating in a Scouting activity the Scouter-in-Charge must follow the [Supporting a Symptomatic Person Guideline](#) and must complete and submit an Incident Report Form to Safe Scouting following the Incident Management Procedure.

- Youth who develop symptoms while at a Scouting activity must be asked to wear a mask and isolate in a separate area until a parent arrives for pickup. The youth must be kept at least 2 metres away from all other individuals.

For the purposes of contact tracing, attendance and screening results must be recorded for everyone attending the activity including Scouters, youth, parents and anyone else on the activity site. Records must be maintained for a minimum of 6 weeks following each activity to facilitate contact tracing in the event of an outbreak.

Emergency Response & Risk Management

Scouters (or a Youth leading an event) are required to complete Emergency Response and Risk Management Assessments prior to any event. An updated hazard identification and risk assessment is conducted for the activity location and planned activity.

An Emergency Response Plan (ERP) is updated to reflect pandemic requirements and local conditions. [ERP – Junior Sections](#) [ERP – Senior Sections](#)

[Modified Adventure Application Form](#) (MAAF) is updated for the site to be visited, expected weather conditions, location and municipal requirements.

Overnight Camping

Colony, Pack, Troop, Company and Crew overnight camping is allowed as permitted by relevant local, municipal and provincial regulations. The Scouter-in-Charge must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Group Commissioner that all the requirements of this Covid Safety Plan for Outdoor Adventures and Overnight Camps have been met and can be maintained throughout the proposed adventure including under an emergency response scenario.

Camping in tents or shelters is preferred. Overnight accommodations in hard-sided tents, Adirondack shelters, individual huts or other camp buildings and large halls and facilities are permitted as long as there is sufficient airflow and ventilation.

Ventilation should be optimized by use of screen doors, screened windows, etc.

Masks must be worn in camper accommodations and only removed when sleeping.

Sleeping accommodations should provide physical distance between heads (1m wherever possible)

- Bunk beds – position camper on top bunk in opposite direction of camper on bottom bunk.
- Side by side accommodations – position campers head to toe
- End to End accommodations – position campers toe to toe wherever possible, otherwise head to toe to maximize distance between heads.

Access to cabins, tents, and shelters should be limited to campers who reside in them.

There must be separate accommodations based on gender identity for youth participants; Scouters under 18 years of age; and adults (including parents, adult resource people, and Rover Scout participants).

Food provisions for Overnight Camps

As much as possible, for Scouts and Venturers, cooking in a small groups/ patrols is encouraged, allowing youth to also practice the Outdoor Adventure Trail & Camping Skills. The youth can also develop their meal-planning skills, practice cooking new menus and be self-contained: planning, purchasing, carrying, storing, cooking, cleaning, and eating their own meals.

For Beavers and Cubs or if having youth cook in small groups is not possible, cooking should be done by a designated cook with Foodsafe accreditation. Staff served buffet style meals are permitted. Food should be distributed by designated individuals using methods that avoid gathering and overcrowding. Cooks and food distributors/servers should be wearing masks and gloves while cooking and serving food.

- All persons will practice proper hand hygiene upon entry to the dining hall and after eating.
- Youth should be reminded to wash/sanitize hands before and after eating.
- When dining in halls, food distribution should ensure that there is no crowding and gathering.
- Singing is not permitted in dining hall or enclosed areas.
- Youth should be encouraged to not share food and beverages.
- Campers and staff should be encouraged to bring an individual water bottle or other beverage container to camp for their personal use to support hydration needs.
- After cooking and before next use, all cooking equipment should be cleaned and sanitized. A sanitization area should be set up for youth to be able to wash and sanitize their dishes.
- Youth should be reminded to wash/sanitize hands before and after eating.
- If these conditions cannot be met – an overnight camp is not permitted.

First Aid

Every Scouting adventure requires an emergency response plan, which will include first aid and emergency medical care coverage. We believe that everyone involved in Scouts Canada activities should be prepared to provide emergency aid. Our goal should be for every youth to be appropriately competent in emergency aid to others. Particularly for [Category 2 and Category 3 adventurous activities](#), youth should be prepared to respond to emergencies. This is part of our goal to prepare them for success in life.

At a minimum at least two qualified first aiders (Standard First Aid) are required for every Category 2 and 3 activity.

- The FA attendant and patient should wear masks while care is being provided.
- When possible, the FA attendant should guide the patient to do their own first aid (e.g. an older camper could put on their own band-aid).
- Use approved procedures, mask, gloves, and eye protection for all first aid applications. See PPE measures section 9.4 in [British Columbia Camping Association Guidelines](#)

- If CPR is required, use a pocket mask with a viral filter or a bag-valve-mask with an HME filter to protect the first aider from possible infection. See section PPE measures.
- For back country camping – Wilderness First Aid certification may also be required.

Emergency First Aid PPE

The following PPE needs to be available for staff use in the event of a first aid emergency that could be deemed high risk (i.e. aerosol generating activities such as chest compressions, ventilations, high flow oxygen administration-greater than 5 lpm, suction, abdominal thrusts/back blows).

- Respiratory Protection: N95 Mask (non-valve) or Surgical Mask (3-layered).
- Eye Protection: Where possible face shields or personal protective goggles should be used during high risk first aid scenarios.
- Body Protection: Long-sleeved water resistant gowns should be used to prevent body contamination.
- Bag Valve Mask with Viral Filter (e.g. HEPA): for use during ventilations. Viral filters must remain in their original packaging.
- Pocket Mask with a Viral Filter (e.g. HEPA): viral filters must remain in their original packaging. More information can be found at [WorksafeBC](#).

The Group Commissioner needs to approve all first aid requirements as per Scouts Canada's ByLaws Policies and Procedures' [First Aid Standards](#) and review risk management plans for all camping and outdoor adventures.

Approvals

The Scouter-in-Charge must complete a [Modified Adventure Application Form](#) ("MAAF") and an [Emergency Response Plan](#) for all outdoor activities or those activities away from the usual meeting place. This includes Category 1 outdoor activities.

The Group Commissioner may approve one application form for multiple activities in the same location, including multiple days, if they are satisfied that the risk conditions and risk controls are not materially different from the initial discussions, verification and approval.