

# COVID-19 Tips for Girl Scout Meetings



All gatherings must abide by the rules for indoor/outdoor gatherings in addition to adhering to the [Covid-19 Safety Precautions for Girl Scout Gatherings](#).

Please refer to [GSSJC's COVID-19 webpage](#) for the latest information on council facilities that are open for Girl Scout gatherings.

Troops or groups should make every effort to be inclusive of every member of the group. If a member is unable or uncomfortable attending in-person gatherings, be creative and make her feel included. Here are some ideas:

- Have girls take a few minutes to write notes to her during the event. You can mail them or drop them off for her to read.
- Drop off supplies so that she can do the activity at home. For example, if your troop plans to gather in a park to carve pumpkins, you can drop off a pumpkin carving kit for her to do the activity at home.

## MEETING INDOORS DURING COVID-19

Health officials suggest coronavirus is spread more easily indoors than outdoors. However, meeting indoors in large a space that allows for social distancing is still possible, so long as you adhere to the current [Rules on GSSJC's website](#) and the council's [Covid-19 Safety Precautions for Girl Scout Gatherings](#). Some options include:

- GSSJC resource centers – check [here](#) for a list of open locations and information about how to reserve space for your troop.
- School athletic facilities or recreation centers – for example: Basketball courts or gyms (Note: that these are safer if they can be opened for outdoor air ventilation and are not advised when fitness activities have been/are underway due to aerosolization potential of the virus during fitness).
- Places of worship with large banquet halls, etc.
- Library activity rooms

Availability of these meeting spaces varies by community.

The meeting site should be cleaned and disinfected by adults, following [CDC guidelines](#), before and after the meeting.

## MEETING OUTDOORS DURING COVID-19

It's hot outside in Texas in the summer and fall. But meeting in the morning or in the evening makes getting together outside possible. Some meeting locations to consider include:

- GSSJC camps – [check here](#) for a list of open locations and information about how to reserve space for your troop.
- Parks - even if playground spaces are closed, lawns, pavilions and other spaces typically remain available
- City halls, county courts, or other government facilities
- Parking lots - for example: churches, schools, service centers or a scout house parking lot
- A troop member's yard or driveway
- School athletic facilities – for example: baseball, softball, soccer or football fields
- Places of worship that have outdoor areas

Contact your city's government offices or local outdoor locations to determine if other open spaces are available. Follow your local community's guidelines for park, lake, river, or other open space closures.

When planning, consider whether restroom facilities are available at the meeting site and advise participants if no restroom is available.

Be sure to have girls bring their own water or provide water bottles to ensure everyone stays hydrated.

Consider bringing pop-up tents to provide shade and marking individual participant "zones" so distancing requirements are maintained.

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## HOW TO HELP GIRLS MANAGE SOCIAL DISTANCING

Younger girls may need help in remaining safely distanced. Consider clearly marking each girl's personal space to help them understand their boundaries. Here are a few easy ways to do this:

- Have each girl sit or stand in her own hula hoop or on her own beach towel or picnic blanket
- Use sidewalk chalk or lay down tape to draw a "personal space" square for each meeting participant. Using sidewalk chalk, girls can decorate their own square while you meet.

## HOW TO PLAN SOCIALLY DISTANCED GROUP ACTIVITIES

Badge earning and journeys are certainly on the list of activities that can take place according to the Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council Group Meeting Guidelines. Here are a few more ideas:

- Drive-in movie – go as a troop, but have each girl stay in the car with her caregiver
- DIY "drive-in" movie – each girl creates her own car out of a cardboard box and stays in it to watch a movie on a portable screen in a park or other outdoor space
- Drive-through zoo or safari – go as a troop, but have each girl stay in the car with her caregiver. Share photos and stories in a Zoom meeting afterward.
- Picnic or tea party online or outdoors – each girl brings and enjoys her own food and drinks but eat together as a group. You can suggest everyone follows the same recipe to encourage girls to try something new. Or assign themes like "your favorite dessert" or "middle eastern meal" and have girls talk about their choices.
- Geocaching
- Scavenger hunts
- Bike riding
- Kite flying
- Yoga
- Obstacle course races– set up a quick obstacle course then time each girl as she goes through individually (think: run to this line, hop on one foot through these squares, turn around three times in this circle, jump until you cross the finish line)
- Pictionary
- Use sidewalk chalk to write positive messages on sidewalks in a park or neighborhood.
- Butterfly release – purchase caterpillars, watch them crystalize, then everyone meets to release.
- SWAPS – make SWAPS to leave on neighbors' porches to show you're thinking of them or write cards and letters to staff and residents at a nursing home or retirement community and report your service.
- Learn to sew to make masks for the local food bank to distribute and report your service.
- Check locally for group-oriented community service projects, as well.

## Don't forget – meeting virtually means fun, too!

Virtual troop meetings and community meetings are still strongly encouraged, and when in-person gatherings are convened, a virtual option should be made available if possible.

Meeting online doesn't have to feel like school or work. GSSJC will continue offering council-hosted virtual events and troop meetings. You can host your troop meetings using [Zoom](#). To make meeting planning easy, troop leaders will find PowerPoint templates for badge earning and fun Girl Scout meetings as well as songs, games and ceremonies in the Online Community. If you're not confident about hosting virtual meetings, watch for one of our workshops to help get you started. Here are a few other ideas:

- Play free, online group games like [trivia quizzes](#), [skribbl.io](#) or [Scattergories](#)
- Tackle an online escape room to keep your next meeting social and engaging
- [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) for virtual meetings and [internet safety pledge](#) are available to ensure the continued safety and well-being of girls and volunteers while meeting virtually. [E-communication guidelines](#) developed by GSSJC must be followed too.