

Scouts BSA Troop 350 COVID-19 Guidelines (Updated December 2024)

Overall Guidance: The CDC no longer sets COVID-19 threat levels based on the prevalence of positive tests, as they did during the height of the pandemic. Instead, they now use broader community-based metrics to provide public health recommendations, such as masking, based on the level of impact in a specific area. Troop leaders should reference published CDC guidance for Madison, AL, and tailor specific measures accordingly. While Boy Scout Troop 350 does not currently require masking, social distancing, or other COVID-19-specific precautions during activities, these measures are optional and left to individual discretion unless otherwise mandated by the meeting location or local public health authorities. The following guidance is provided as a precautionary measure for situations where there is an elevated risk of COVID-19. While the normal and ongoing status quo assumes no significant risk of COVID-19, these guidelines are in place to ensure readiness and safety should circumstances change.

Indoor Meetings: Troop, Patrol, Merit Badge, PLC, Board of Review, Eagle Project, Eagle Ceremony, Committee, Gear Garage, Service Project, etc.

- **St. John's Property:** Use of facilities will be coordinated on a case-by-case basis with St. John the Baptist Catholic Church. Obtain permission for any indoor activities (e.g., Parish Hall, Gear Garage).
- **House Rules:** Follow the specific rules set by the meeting location (house, business, building, property, etc.). If these rules conflict with the guidelines below, follow the more restrictive policy.
- **Exposure:** Anyone exposed to COVID-19 within the past 5 days should not attend meetings.
- **Symptoms:** Anyone experiencing illness symptoms within the last 48 hours should not attend. Symptoms include but are not limited to cough, fever, chills, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.
- **Face Coverings:** Masks are optional. Those choosing to wear a mask are encouraged to do so, especially if they have health concerns or are in close contact with others.
- **Physical Distancing:** Indoor gatherings should maintain physical distancing as much as possible. For crowded situations, wearing masks is recommended.
- **Shared Equipment:** Minimize the use of shared equipment. If sharing is necessary, sanitize items between users.
- **Hand Hygiene:** Encourage frequent handwashing or use of hand sanitizer.
- **Cough/Sneeze Etiquette:** Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your elbow, even if wearing a mask.
- **Physical Contact:** Avoid unnecessary physical contact such as high-fives, handshakes, or hugs.

- **Training:** Review these guidelines at the start of each meeting and ensure all Scouts and Scouters are trained in these safety protocols.
- **Personal Items:** Bring personal mess kits, utensils, and water bottles to avoid sharing.

Outdoor Meetings: Troop, Patrol, Merit Badge, PLC, Board of Review, Eagle Project, Committee, Gear Garage, Service Projects, etc.

- **House Rules:** Follow the rules of the meeting location. If there is a conflict with the guidelines below, follow the more restrictive policy.
- **Notification:** Notify the Charter Organization Representative (COR) or the location POC of any intent to meet outside regular meeting times.
- **Exposure:** Anyone exposed to COVID-19 within the past 5 days should not attend.
- **Symptoms:** Anyone experiencing illness symptoms within the last 48 hours should not attend.
- **Physical Distancing:** Maintain physical distancing during outdoor activities. Masks are recommended if distancing is not possible.
- **Face Coverings:** Masks are optional. Those choosing to wear one should be supported in their decision.
- **Shared Equipment:** Limit shared equipment. Sanitize items between uses if sharing is necessary.
- **Cough/Sneeze Etiquette:** Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your elbow.
- **Physical Contact:** Avoid unnecessary physical contact such as high-fives, handshakes, or hugs.
- **Training:** Ensure that all Scouts and Scouters are trained in safety protocols at the beginning of the meeting.
- **Meeting Planning:** Encourage planning activities that naturally allow for physical distancing. Examples include outdoor skills training or physical fitness activities.
- **Personal Items:** Bring personal mess kits, utensils, and water bottles to avoid sharing.
- **Communication:** Consider using a mic, speaker, or bullhorn to communicate instructions to large groups.

Campouts

- **House Rules:** Adhere to the rules of the camping location. Follow the more restrictive policy if conflicts arise.
- **Indoor Activities:** Follow the “Indoor Meetings” guidelines for any indoor activities during campouts.

- **Tenting:** Scouts may share a tent with consent from their guardians. Follow BSA Guide to Safe Scouting tenting guidelines (e.g., scouts sharing a tent must be within 24 months of age).
- **Exposure:** Anyone exposed to COVID-19 within the past 5 days should not attend.
- **Symptoms:** Anyone experiencing illness symptoms within the last 48 hours should not attend.
- **Temperature Checks:** Conduct a non-contact temperature check for all participants before activities. The temperature must be below 100.4°F.
- **Physical Distancing:** Maintain distancing during all campout activities. Masks are recommended if distancing is not feasible.
- **Face Coverings:** Masks are optional but recommended in close quarters or crowded situations.
- **Shared Equipment:** Minimize shared equipment. Sanitize items if sharing is necessary.
- **Cough/Sneeze Etiquette:** Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your elbow.
- **Physical Contact:** Avoid unnecessary physical contact such as high-fives, handshakes, or hugs.
- **Training:** Review safety protocols at the beginning of each campout.
- **Travel:** Scouts may travel together to and from campouts with guardian consent.
- **Cooking/Meals:**
 - Assign an adult to monitor COVID-19 compliance during meal preparation.
 - Wash or sanitize hands thoroughly before cooking or eating.
 - Wear masks while handling food and practice good hygiene (e.g., covering coughs, avoiding face-touching).
 - Ensure proper distancing while eating and drinking.
 - Bring personal mess kits, utensils, and water bottles to avoid sharing.

Disclaimer: Participation in Scouts BSA Troop 350 activities is voluntary, and individuals do so at their own risk. Troop 350 is committed to following best practices and established guidelines to mitigate exposure and transmission of COVID-19. However, despite these efforts, the possibility of exposure cannot be fully eliminated. By attending activities, participants and their guardians acknowledge and accept this inherent risk.