Adapt to the new normal, and still have FUN!

The purpose of this guide is to help volunteers keep youth engaged and provide a robust program under the limitations of a pandemic. By following these guidelines, your Unit can:

- Incorporate safe events and service opportunities into the Unit schedule, and
- Keep youth socially connected with each other and their leaders.
In-Person Unit Meetings and Activities

All in-person meetings and activities must follow these safety requirements:

- All local and state governments, both where the unit is chartered and where the meeting or activity is to take place must clearly permit the activity in terms of gathering size and ability to maintain proper social distancing. All of their and the Federal CDC guidelines must be followed for all phases of the meeting or activity (such as feeding, housing/tents, swimming etc.). Find updated CDC information here.
- Chartered organizations must approve in-person activities and/or meetings prior to restoring them. Units should also consult with their chartered organization to determine the best path forward for the unit’s Scouting programs.
- Parents should be surveyed, and a majority of the parents in the Scouting unit must approve restoring in-person activities.

Additional Safety Precautions:

- Require all adults and youth to wear masks.
- Provide hand-sanitizer and encourage frequent hand-washing.
- Plan activities that do not require close contact or shared materials.
- Ask youth to bring their own snacks or meals when applicable.

Where should we meet?

The safest locations for face to face activities is outdoors. Scouting activities are to continue to take place outdoors until the change in seasons makes it necessary to meet indoors. At that time, Scouting meetings and activities may take place indoors. Local building capacity restrictions must be met, masks are required, and social distancing must be practiced at all times.

- A local park with a pavilion
- A scout camp property
- The parking lot of your chartered organization (with permission)
- We do not recommend meeting at family residences.
Virtual Unit Meetings

All virtual meetings and activities must follow these Youth Protection requirements:
- Meetings and breakouts must have at least two adults present at all times.
- Get permission from each youth’s parent/guardian before recording meetings.
- Do not post a link to your meeting on Facebook or other public internet sites; send out via email or other secure method.
- Require a security password to enter the meeting and only share with your Unit.

Additional considerations:
- To protect youth privacy, don't require youth to have their videos on.
  - Instead, encourage using virtual backgrounds or fun filters if possible or setting up a profile picture with their bitmojis.
- Check in with youth throughout the meeting with non-verbal tools like the chat box or "thumbs up"/"clapping" reactions.
- Use fun online assessment tools that "gamify" learning material.

Technology Tools

Video Conferencing Applications:
- Zoom
- Google Meet
- UberConference

Collaboration and sharing:
(Communicate with the whole group, and share documents & links on desktop or mobile)
- Google Classrooms
- Slack
- GroupMe

Gamification and Polls:
(Unique ways to engage virtually with Scouts)
- Kahoot!
- Nearpod
Camping & Transportation Guidelines

All Unit outings and camp-outs must follow the same guidelines as required for in-person meetings as well as the following:

- Camping outings are limited to no more than 72 hours.
- Campsite group size is only limited by the maximum gathering size according to State regulations.
- For most locations, this maximum is 50 people (as of Sep. 2020).
- Tent camping is to be done one youth in each tent unless they are household members, the same gender, and less than two years apart in age. Adults are also one to each tent unless they are spouses that live together. Tents are to be spaced at least six feet apart. Follow all Youth Protection Guidelines.
- Preparing and serving food is limited to the fewest number of adults practical who prepare and serve individual portions to the entire unit. The exception to this practice is an individual preparing food for only him or herself.
- The safest method for transportation is that only household members are in a vehicle. This may not always be practical. When necessary, people outside of a household may travel in a vehicle together. Unless the vehicle is a large van, (4 rows of seats) there should not be more than four people in a vehicle, and they are to sit as far apart as possible. Masks are to be worn at all times. If possible, carpool with people who interact together in other venues such as sports teams or schools.
- As always, all Boy Scouts of America policies are to be followed, including those in the Guide to Safe Scouting.
Decide what activities the Crew members want to do (see page 6 for ideas!).
Decide what camping opportunities to participate in.
Plan to do at least one service project for your charter partner or community (see page 6 for ideas!).
Plan the meeting dates and select an outdoor location to meet at.
Plan ways to recognize Crew members who earn awards.

**Fundraising**

- Complete the budget planning worksheet to find the total cost of your program and how to fund it.
- Determine expenses and revenue.
- Determine fundraising needed to cover expenses.
- Come up with strategies to raise funds that do not require close contact (i.e., online book sales, socially distanced drive-through car washes).

**Training**

- Make sure all adult leaders are Youth Protection trained.
- Complete Venturing Advisor Position Specific Training.
- Look for virtual training opportunities through the Council.

**Recruitment**

- Set a goal and plan to recruit new members.
- Utilize peer-to-peer recruitment and have Crew members bring friends to meetings and activities.
- Recruit new parents and communicate your plan to Scout families.
- Conduct an outdoor or drive-through Crew Open House.
Service Opportunities & Unit Outings

In a time where people need more help than ever, finding safe opportunities to serve the community is challenging. Many organizations will need to make special arrangements for your group or may not be accepting volunteers at all. Consider the safe service opportunities below to keep your youth engaged with their communities.

**Safe ways to serve your community:**
- Write letters to healthcare workers or nursing home residents.
- Clean up litter at a park, stream, or public property.
- Partner with a school to provide virtual tutoring to younger kids.
- Provide a virtual outdoor experience for nursing home residents.
- Make and donate face masks to your local hospital.
- Work with your local Meals on Wheels to deliver food to vulnerable seniors.
- Partner with your school to deliver meals to youth in need.
- Participate in Scouting For Food (register here).
- Connect with organizations to volunteer from home (search by zip code here).

**Safe Unit Outing Ideas:**
- Attend Fall Fun Rally on Sep. 26.
- Plan a hammock camp-out on 3-notch at S-F Scout Ranch.
- Go on a float trip with solo kayaks or canoes.
- Tee up at Top Golf or play a round of golf at local course.
- Participate in a District/Council Camporee.
- Go hiking, biking, and boating (even within the city limits!).
- Create your own "mystery hike" based on the game, "Clue".
Additional Resources

Utilize the links below to stay up-to-date on safety guidelines, National BSA policies, and additional ideas for safe Scouting activities.

**Safety & Policy Guidance**

**CDC Guidance for Parents:**

**CDC General COVID-19 Prevention Guidance:**

**Missouri COVID-19 Regulations:**

**Illinois COVID-19 Policies:**
https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/

**St. Louis City & County Regulations:**
https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/health/communicable-disease/covid-19/index.cfm#CP_JUMP_808128

**National BSA COVID-19 Policies and Advancement Revisions:**

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**Additional Scouting Ideas**

**General Venturing Resources:**
http://www.bsa-grc.org/unit-resources/program-planning/venturing-program-planning/60042

https://www.scouting.org/programs/venturing/crew-resources/annual-program-planning/

**Additional Service Ideas:**

https://scoutermom.com/21913/service-projects-while-social-distancing/
For over one hundred years, the Boy Scouts of America has prepared young people for life through some of the most outstanding leadership and growth programs available nationally. Whether it’s camping, hiking, community outreach or building remote controlled robots, Scouting offers exciting programs designed to inspire, build character and instill the values that boys and girls need to succeed today.

We offer programs for girls and boys ages 6-21. Scouting programs foster and strengthen self-confidence, ethics, respect for others, academic skills, and leadership abilities that stay with them their entire lives.

The Greater St. Louis Area Council, one of the largest in the Boy Scouts of America, has more than 66,000 members and nearly 15,000 adult volunteers. They come from 51 different counties in the Southeast Missouri, Southern Illinois and St. Louis Metropolitan areas.

The council, headquartered in St. Louis, serves these areas with offices located in St. Louis, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, Belleville, Illinois, Decatur Illinois, and Herrin, Illinois.

Scouting units in the Greater St. Louis area Council are chartered by over 1,000 different community groups that include civic, non-profit, religious, educational and business organizations throughout the region.