

WLACC

Health and Safety Update – December 2021

Happy Holidays everyone.

The safety of our Scouts, volunteers, employees, and communities continues to be our top priority. We must continue our vigilance to assure that youth and their families are safe while they enjoy the many benefits of Scouting.

The critical need of today is for all to understand the rationale for our caution and actions. Because of the pandemic, fewer youth have joined Scouting. To welcome new members and their families, we must demonstrate that we are safe and are concerned with the health of all. The success of the Scouting program depends on conducting regular meetings and activities in a safe and responsible way.

This is an update that includes 12/6/21 information from National Scouting Office.” We expect everyone in Scouting to follow the measures listed below, which are based on CDC guidance. Members, staff, and volunteers must also follow all federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance. In addition, we have instructed local councils to consult with their local and state health departments, as well as local chartered partners, to implement appropriate protocols to help keep members, volunteers, and employees safe.”

1. Isolate if you are sick, and do not attend any activity/meeting/event if you, anyone you live with, or anyone you have recently been around feels unwell.
2. Do not attend any activity/meeting/event if you or anyone you live with has been tested for COVID-19 or another illness and does not have the results back yet.
3. If you are not fully vaccinated, wear a face covering or mask that covers your nose and mouth and stay at least 6 feet apart from people you don't live with.
4. Wash your hands often with soap and water. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
5. Until further notice, international travel is not considered an official Scouting Activity.
6. As always, please exhibit the Scout Oath and Law as we continue to navigate a safe return to the activities we enjoy.

Camping this Winter

If your programs or activities require a valid Part C, it must be in place. As a reminder, if you are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19, please ensure you have approval from your health care provider prior to attending.

We also encourage anyone whose medical condition or history has changed significantly since their last physical exam to get approval from their health care provider prior to attending.

Annual Health and Medical Record <https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/ahmr/>

Use this re-charter time to update unit physical forms for youth and adults. The above site will take you to the forms that are fillable on the site. For each level of scouting and activity type, there is information on who needs the form, which pages are needed by length of an activity or event, and how often they need to be renewed.

Best wishes to all for a healthy, happy holiday season and a fantastic New Year.

Contact Diane Freeman MSN, RN, PHN at 818-321-3046 Dianesfreeman@gmail.com for any questions.

Addendum to WLACC Health and Safety Update – December 2021

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q. If a Scout or volunteer has close contact with someone who is COVID positive, can they participate in unit activities if they are vaccinated?

A. The WLACC asks vaccinated individuals who have had close contact with someone who is COVID positive not to participate until they receive a negative COVID-19 test taken 3-5 days after exposure.

Per the CDC, the definition of “close contact” is someone who was less than 6 feet away from an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes over a 24-hour period.

While the CDC states that fully vaccinated students, teachers, and staff (or, in our case, vaccinated Scouts, siblings, leaders and other adults) with no COVID symptoms do not need to quarantine at home following close contact exposure to someone with COVID-19, it nonetheless recommends they do. Further, it urges those individuals to get tested 3-5 days after exposure and not go to school or school events in-person (in our case, Scout meetings or activities) during the period from exposure to receiving a negative test result.

Q. If a Scout or volunteer has close contact with someone who is COVID positive, can they participate in unit activities if they are not vaccinated?

A. WLACC follows the specific recommendations of both the CDC and the Los Angeles County Department of Health, which is that it asks individuals who are not vaccinated and have had close contact with someone who is COVID positive to not participate in Scout activities for 14 days, regardless of COVID test results they may receive sooner than that time period, and to then receive a negative test result before resuming participation in activities.

Per the CDC, the definition of “close contact” is someone who was less than 6 feet away from an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes over a 24-hour period.

Q. What is the quarantine period for someone exposed to COVID-19?

A. For vaccinated individuals, after following the testing procedures designated above for their vaccination status, the WLACC recommends the exposed individual quarantine until they receive a negative test result.

For unvaccinated individuals, as explained above, the WLACC asks the exposed individual to quarantine for 14 days, and to then receive a negative test result before resuming participation in Scout activities.

Q. Is a specific type of test preferred/required?

A. Tests taken at a testing site are preferred owing to their greater accuracy, but home kits are now permissible and, of course, more convenient.

Q. Are masks required when outdoors?

A. The WLACC adheres to the current CDC and L.A. County Department of Public Health recommendations, which is that those who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people. Regardless of vaccination status, the CDC recommends youth maintain at least 3 feet distance for outdoor activities.

So as not to single-out anyone's vaccination status, the WLACC recommends that all individuals continue to wear masks outdoors when the activity involves sustained close contact. However, a unit may approach it differently if those who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask and youth maintain at least 3 feet distance.

Q. What are the reporting requirements if it is discovered that someone at a unit event/gathering/meeting has tested positive for COVID-19?

A. WLACC continues to maintain that a Scout or Scout adult who receives a positive COVID result report that status to council, specifically now to Laura Clay (818-785-8700 Ext.132, or Laura.Clay@scouting.org), in order that the council can be prepared for various possible eventualities.

Within the unit, parents should be notified of any positive status, so they are informed of any possible exposure to their Scout or themselves, including the date and time of exposure.

Q. How are the WLACC's decisions regarding COVID-19 made, and why are guidelines sometimes inexact and subject to continual changes?

A. The WLACC guidelines for COVID-19 are set by its Health and Safety Committee, which is comprised of 8 volunteers who are doctors and healthcare professionals. The committee has been meeting monthly throughout the COVID pandemic to review its guidelines and change them as appropriate, using the recommendations of the Center for Disease Control, the California Department of the Public Health, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, and the Boy Scouts of America. Where possible, it focuses on input from these sources specific to schools and youth sports activities.

The circumstances of the pandemic continually change, so the committee's guidelines continue to change accordingly. As a result, they sometimes cannot be absolute, instead asking units and individuals to make thoughtful, considered decisions using the available data, and erring on the side of caution.

For Eagle Scout Workbooks and any other advancement related items: please note that the Council will not penalize any Scout for circumstances out of their control. We will keep you updated as this evolves.

Additionally, information published on the WLACC website can sometimes become quickly out-of-date as circumstances evolve.

If you have specific questions, please contact your district executive or other district staff member, or the WLACC Health and Safety Committee Chair, Diane Freeman, and they will do their very best to get you answers quickly. Diane may be reached at: 818-321-3046, Dianesfreeman@gmail.com.