



Suffolk County Council Boy Scouts of America COVID-19 Unit Activity Guide (Updated 10/11/2021)

Stay healthy, Be safe, and Have Fun!

Youth group overnight camping is allowed per NYS and Suffolk County Departments of Health subject to certain CDC requirements. The threat of COVID-19 has been greatly reduced, but not eliminated. COVID-19 preventative measures should still be taken.

For your unit's Scouting activities, the BSA National Council has provided a restart guide. You can download it here by clicking on [Restart Scouting Checklist](#). Additional Suffolk County Council unit activity guidelines are listed below.

For more information on COVID-19 guidelines, check the following links for the State of New York, BSA National, CDC, and Suffolk County Council for staying current on COVID-19 requirements:

- Your District Safety Champions are your Suffolk County Council primary source for answers to your COVID-19 questions and any other safety related questions. They are listed along with contact information at the bottom of the Suffolk County Council [Scouting Safely](#) webpage.
- New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) [What You Need to Know](#) webpage.
- NYSDOH [Cluster Zone Initiative](#) webpage for information on gatherings within designated [NYS COVID-19 cluster zones](#)
- [BSA National COVID-19 FAQ webpage](#) (Includes additional COVID-19 related answers on Camping this Fall/Winter and Advancement).
- [CDC Things You Need to Know About the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Safer Travel Tips for families with unvaccinated children](#)

Additionally, the Suffolk County Council Service Center and Scout Shop are open for business. The hours are Monday – Friday 10am – 5pm for the service center, 10 am – 5pm for the Scout Shop. The store is also open Saturday from 10 am – 4 pm. Baiting Hollow Scout Camp is open and will be operating amazing programs year-round. Be sure to check out Baiting Hollow Scout Camp for more information.

Our COVID-19 guidelines are based on State of New York Department of Health (NYSDOH) requirements & CDC. Before beginning any unit event, please have the latest information available from the State of New York, understanding that this can and may possibly change from week to week. Currently:

- All BSA Youth Protection guidelines are to be adhered to.
- Involve the key leaders of your Chartered Organization to get their input and approval for in-person meeting plans.
- Masks & Social Distancing:
 - Masks should be worn during all indoor meetings along with appropriate social distancing where possible.
 - Masks need not be worn during outdoor activities, but appropriate social distancing should be observed where possible.
 - Determine and observe any mask and COVID-19 protocols of third-party venues, e.g., schools & houses of worship, used for unit meetings.
- Be sure you have parent permission for all events. No prescreening form is necessary, but units should keep rosters of participants who attend the event.
- Anyone who is sick or exhibiting any symptoms of the coronavirus must stay home or will be sent home.
- Have adequate sanitation supplies on hand.
- Groups may share food and drink incorporating all sanitation and safe food handling procedures.
- Be vigilant in ensuring everyone washes their hands thoroughly and maintains physical distancing.



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Department of Health Services

The New York State Department of Health strongly encourages children’s camps to ensure all staff and eligible campers are vaccinated. CDC recommends that everyone aged 12 years and older is vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as possible to keep from getting and spreading COVID-19. Camps can help increase vaccine uptake among campers, their families, and staff by providing information about COVID-19 vaccination, promoting vaccination, and establishing supportive policies and practices that make it as easy and convenient as possible for staff and others to get vaccinated.

Given New York’s progress and the diminished risk of COVID-19 within the community, New York State has lifted most COVID-19 restrictions, except the mask requirement for unvaccinated individuals and in certain settings (e.g., health care) as advised by the CDC. With the removal of the State’s minimum standard for operating, children’s camps are free to choose to lift all or some restrictions, continue to adhere to the State’s COVID-19 guidance archived at <https://forward.ny.gov/archived-industry-guidance>, or implement other health precautions for their employees and patrons.

Masks remain strongly recommended, not required, for children in child care settings and camps when indoors, consistent with CDC guidance. In accordance with CDC guidelines, at overnight camps, campers and staff who are staying together in a cabin, bunk, or similar defined space do not need to wear masks when they are together without members from other cabins/bunks nearby. At all other times, unvaccinated staff should wear face coverings indoors in accordance with CDC guidelines. Any mask requirements that the camp implements must adhere to all applicable federal and state laws and regulations (e.g., Americans with Disabilities Act).

Camp operators should consider the impacts of a positive case on contacts with unvaccinated campers and staff when determining the camp’s policy for cohorts/stable groups. A positive case would require all contacts who are unvaccinated to quarantine individually at home or onsite for overnight camps. CDC recommends that “campers should be assigned to cohorts that will remain together for the entire camp session without mixing, to the largest extent possible.” For more information see CDC’s [Guidance for Operating Youth Camps](#).

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