

# Return to In-Person Guiding

Updated October 1, 2021

Updated information includes:

- Updated vaccine information
- [Addition of singing as a permitted activity](#)
- [Updated guidance on mask use](#)
- [Inclusion of information on medical mask exemptions](#)
- [Updated transportation information](#)

The GGC Return to In-Person Guiding protocols were created to provide a framework for Guiders, girls, members, and families to return to in-person activities.

The following information was considered when drafting these guidelines:

- Provincial return to school plans
- Provincial day care and day camp guidelines
- Ministries of Public Health
- Other published scientific opinions, studies, and reviews

## Regional Approach



These recommendations rely on current scientific and public health understanding that COVID-19 transmission is less likely to occur outdoors, and that masks and physical distancing are effective in decreasing the rate of transmission.

Across the country COVID-19 restrictions and public risk tolerance vary widely. These protocols are intended to provide a flexible framework that can be implemented regardless of unit location.

## Decision Making

The Member Risk team considers many factors before making decisions on Return to In-Person Guiding stages. Factors that are considered include:

- Government response (official announcements, leaked information, local responses/statements)
- New and active cases - both the number and rate (#/100,000 people)
- Rolling 7-day average
- Reproduction rate
- Acquisition route (close contact, outbreak, travel, unknown)
- Testing rate, positivity rate, turnaround time and criteria

## Stages

The Return to In-Person Guiding stages are grouped in broad categories, depending on the type of activities that are allowed in each stage.



Stages may be broken down into two or three different levels (for example, Outdoor 1, 2 and 3). These levels allow for different provinces or regions of the country to operate using protocols that are most in line with the COVID-19 situation in their area.

Although our GGC guidelines may differ from national, provincial, or city recommendations, they are not meant to fully replace of any local or federal government guidelines that a member is subject too. GGC requires strict compliance with both government restrictions and orders, as well as Return to In-Person Guiding protocols.

For example, the Return to In-Person Guiding protocols may require mask wearing in situations when masks are not required by government restrictions. Or a government may place restrictions on gathering sizes, even though this is not captured in the Return to In-Person Guiding protocols.

**In all cases, activities must comply with both GGC and government restrictions. In the case of conflicting protocols, members must follow more restrictive protocol.**

It is the responsibility of all Guiders and Activity Facilitators to review the COVID-19 restrictions in place in their province/territory prior to the activity to ensure that it is being operated in compliance with these restrictions.

Even when indoor activities are permitted, outdoor activities will be prioritized.

## How Will I Know What Stage My Unit Is In?

The national office, in close consultation with Provincial Commissioners, will make decisions about the stage that each province/region is in. These decisions will be communicated on an ongoing basis via two methods from the national office.

- **Online:** each provincial/regional stage will be posted on [Member Zone](#) and [GirlGuides.ca](#), for both Guiders and families to see.
- **Email:** an email will be sent to all adult members when or if a region's stage changes.

## How and When Are These Guidelines Reviewed?

When possible, units will be given advance notice of a change to their provincial/regional stage. In some circumstances a unit may have to move to a more restrictive stage quickly, for example if their province enters a lockdown period.

The stages that each province or region is operating under will be re-evaluated on an ongoing basis throughout the Guiding year with input from Provincial Commissioners and staff. The protocols for each stage will be re-evaluated as the COVID-19 pandemic continues and more data becomes available.

## What Do I Do If Someone Tests Positive or Is Told To Self-Isolate?

All girls, Guiders and/or adult volunteers MAY NOT attend in-person activities if:

- They or a close contact test positive for COVID-19
- They are told to self-isolate by Public Health
- They or a close contact are awaiting COVID-19 test results

Please see the "[Can I go to Guiding if...](#)" document on Member Zone for commonly asked questions about attending meetings.



An individual may return to in-person activities in accordance with the guidelines provided by their local Public Health Unit.

For up-to-date information on how to respond to common COVID-19 scenarios please refer to our [Member FAQs on Member Zone](#).

## Additional Considerations for Vulnerable Populations

If girls or Guiders are part of a vulnerable population, they should be encouraged to speak with their health care provider about best practices for their individual health needs.

Units should implement any additional mitigation steps they deem necessary to support inclusion for girls and Guiders in the unit.

Virtual and anytime Guiding are great options for Guiders and girls who are isolating or who are unable to attend meetings.

## Protocols Required in All Stages

### Self-Assessment and Attendance

No one may attend an in-person activity if they are sick and/or present symptoms similar to COVID-19.



All girls, Guiders, volunteers and adult members attending activities are required to complete [GGC's COVID-19 self-assessment prior](#) to each in-person activity.

Guiders will confirm that the girl/family has completed the self-assessment prior to each in-person activity when the girl is dropped off. Anyone who has not completed the self-assessment or had the self-assessment indicate that they need to be tested or to self-isolate, WILL NOT be able to attend in-person activities.

Guiders will maintain an attendance list that will include a record that all self-assessments were completed. Guiders will retain this sheet with the rest of their unit paperwork and can destroy it at the end of the Guiding year.

The [self-assessment checklist](#) and [attendance form](#) are available on Member Zone.



### \* Updated\* Masks

Masks are required to be worn in some Return to In-Person Guiding stages (see [Stage Specific Protocols](#) beginning on page 7). Members are always permitted to wear a mask, even when not required by the Return to In-Person Guiding protocols.

All girls, Guiders, volunteers and families must be provided with information about the use of non-medical mask or face covering.

Masks are required if physical distancing cannot be maintained even if not required in your current Return to In Person Guiding stage. Examples of when masks may be required are:

- If girls cannot reliably maintain physical distance
- When checking safety equipment, such as helmets or PFDs
- When responding to an emergency or providing first aid



## Medical Masks Exemptions

Non-medical masks are not recommended for people who:

- Suffer from an illness or disabilities that make it difficult to put on or take off a mask.
- Have difficulty breathing.
- Are unable to take the mask off by themselves.
- Are children under the age of 2.

Members who are unable to wear a mask for the above medical reasons, or are younger than 2 years of age, are not excluded from participating in GGC activities. When masks are required, but a member cannot wear a mask for a medical reason, they should practice physical distancing, even if not required in their stage.

Members do not have to share the reason or provide proof as to why they are unable to wear a mask. Guiders should be prepared to remind their units that there may be members who are exempt from wearing a mask under the Return to In-Person Guiding protocols, and that physical distancing and hand hygiene will be strictly enforced.

While face shields are NOT a replacement for masks, they may be worn by people who are exempt from wearing a mask under the Return to In-Person Guiding protocols.

Please remember: Wearing a non-medical mask or face covering alone will not prevent the spread of COVID-19. You must also wash your hands often, practice physical distancing when appropriate and stay home if you are sick.

When choosing a mask, we encourage all members to review the [Government of Canada recommendations on non-medical face coverings](#). The current recommendations are that masks be made of **at least 2 layers** of tightly woven fabric, such as cotton, with a third middle layer of filter-type fabric, such as non-woven polypropylene.



### Hand Hygiene

All girls, Guiders, volunteers, and families must be provided with information about proper hand hygiene. Handwashing or hand sanitizing must be available for the duration of the event/meeting. All participants must wash or sanitize their hands at minimum upon arrival at the unit meeting, prior to leaving the meeting, before and after eating or drinking, before and after touching their face and after using the washroom.

During cold weather months, hands do not need to be sanitized when mittens or gloves are being worn. Participants must continue to sanitize their hands before and after eating or drinking, before and after touching their face without gloves/mittens and after using the washroom.

Guiders should make sure they are using a hand sanitizer that is on the [Government of Canada approved hand sanitizer list](#).

A [hand hygiene resource is available on Member Zone](#).



### Cleaning

Commonly used hard surfaces such as light switches, tables, door handles etc. should be wiped down at the beginning and end of each in-person meeting. Guiders should make sure they are using a disinfectant that is on the [Government of Canada approved disinfectant list](#). Shared equipment like markers or balls should also be wiped down before and after use.





## Food and Drink

Guiders may package bulk foods into individual servings prior to activities such as outdoor cooking. Hands must be washed or sanitized before and after distributing food, and before and after eating or drinking. Self-serve buffets are not permitted. Utensils must be used to serve all food.

Examples may include pre-made s'mores kits, grilled cheese kits or tin foil dinners. Guiders may also continue to provide pre-packaged food such as granola bars or bags of chips. Hands must also be washed or sanitized before and after eating.

Food and drinks can be picked up or served inside. All eating and drinking must happen outside or unless otherwise noted.



## \*Updated\* Transportation

Transportation may take place using private vehicles, public transit, chartered bus, train, or plane.

### Private vehicles

Carpooling is considered an "indoor activity" and is only permitted for units in Indoor stages. Everyone in the vehicle (girls, Guiders, volunteers, family members, or other) must follow Indoor protocols for the duration of the journey, including masking.

For units in Outdoor stages, only members from the same household may share a personal vehicle. In Outdoor stages, transportation using public transit, chartered bus, train, or plane is permitted, so long as members wear masks for the duration of travel and follow the transportation providers guidelines.

## \*Updated\* Singing

Singing is considered a high-risk activity because it is likely to generate respiratory droplets and aerosols through which COVID-19 is transmitted.

Due to the high-risk nature of signing, it is only permitted during GGC activities under the following circumstances:

- Singing is permitted under current local, regional, and provincial/territorial restrictions
- All singing activities take place outdoors.
- Physical distancing of 2m is maintained between all participants for the duration of the singing activity
- If masks are required in the Return to In-Person Guiding stages, they must continue to be worn, in addition to physical distancing, when singing takes place.

## Water Activities

### Masks

Members are not required to wear masks while on or in the water. Everyone on shore or on the pool deck must wear a mask if indicated by their Return to In-Person Guiding stage, including any GGC lifeguards and watchers. Lifeguards provided by a facility must follow their facility's guidance on masks. Lifeguards and participants must remove their masks when entering the water. Masks are not required when in a canoe, kayak, or on a stand-up paddle board.

## Red Level Activities

Red level activities in confined spaces (such as caving/spelunking) are not permitted at this time.



## Vaccines

As of October 22, 2021 all girls 12+, adult members and non-member volunteers must be fully vaccinated to take part in in-person activities. This includes indoor and outdoor activities, regular unit meetings, camping and outdoor experiences, and in-person cookie selling.

Those who are not fully vaccinated by October 22, 2021 will be offered opportunities to participate in Guiding virtually or volunteer in a capacity that does not require meeting in person.

For detailed information visit the [Vaccination Frequently Asked Questions](#) on Member Zone or [Vaccination Policy FAQs](#) for Families on GirlGuides.ca.

## In-Person Cookie Selling and Fundraising

In-person cookie selling and other in-person fundraising may take place as long as they meet the protocols for the stage that the unit is in. For example, selling cookies in outdoor locations and door-to-door are permitted in Outdoor stages, while selling cookies in indoor locations is permitted in Indoor stages.

Please consult the ['How to Sell Cookies Safely'](#) document for more information.



## Stage Specific Protocols

### Virtual & Anytime Guiding



#### Permitted Activities

Virtual and anytime Guiding is permitted. No in-person activities are permitted.



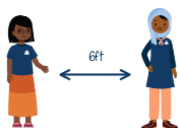
### Outdoor 1

#### Outdoor Day, Virtual & Anytime Guiding



#### Permitted Activities

Green and yellow activities are permitted.  
Red level activities are permitted except for activities in confined spaces (such as caving/spelunking).  
No overnight activities or travel may take place.



#### Physical Distancing

Everyone physically distances 2m.



#### Masks

Required for everyone.



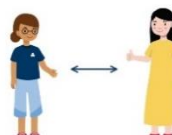
#### Gathering Size

Must follow government restrictions.



#### Meeting Space

Outdoors only.  
May include tent/picnic shelter with 2+ sides open for maximum ventilation.  
May be held in member yards or in shared outdoor spaces such as apartment/condo green spaces provided appropriate approval is obtained.



#### Drop Off & Pick Up

Must occur **outside**.  
Adults must physically distance from other adults and girls.  
When possible, only one adult from each household should drop off girls at a meeting and no extra people should attend drop off/pick up.







### Food and Drink

Eating and drinking is only permitted outdoors.  
Sharing of food is not permitted.



### Washrooms

Encourage families to use the washroom prior to activity. Limit capacity to washroom to allow for physical distancing.

**Recommendation:** Washroom use should be at 50% capacity or less. (Exceptions may be made for girls who require a support person to use the washroom.)





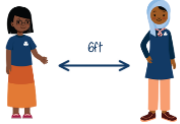
## Outdoor 2

### Outdoor Day, Virtual & Anytime Guiding



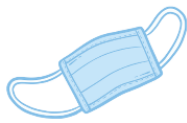
#### Permitted Activities

Green and yellow activities are permitted.  
Red level activities are permitted except for activities in confined spaces (such as caving/spelunking).  
No overnight activities or travel may take place.



#### Physical Distancing

Everyone physically distances 2m.



#### Masks

Not required unless physical distancing cannot be maintained. Guiders may request that masks be worn. See [Masks](#) section.



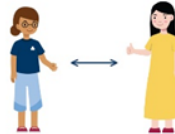
#### Gathering Size

Must follow government restrictions.



#### Meeting Space

Outdoors only.  
May include tent/picnic shelter with 2+ sides open for maximum ventilation.  
May be held in member yards or in shared outdoor spaces such as apartment/condo green spaces provided appropriate approval is obtained.



#### Drop Off & Pick Up

Must occur **outside**.  
Adults must physically distance from other adults and girls.  
When possible, only one adult from each household should drop off girls at a meeting and no extra people should attend drop off/pick up.



#### Food and Drink

Eating and drinking is only permitted outdoors.  
Sharing of food is not permitted.



#### Washrooms

Encourage families to use the washroom prior to activity. Limit capacity to washroom to allow for physical distancing.  
**Recommendation:** Washroom use should be at 50% capacity or less. (Exceptions may be made for girls who require a support person to use the washroom.)



## Outdoor 3

### Outdoor Day, Virtual & Anytime Guiding

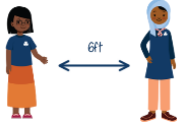


#### Permitted Activities

Green and yellow activities are permitted.

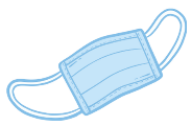
Red level activities are permitted except for activities in confined spaces (such as caving/spelunking).

No overnight activities or travel may take place.



#### Physical Distancing

Not required.



#### Masks

Not required unless physical distancing cannot be maintained. Guiders may request that masks be worn. See [Masks](#) section.



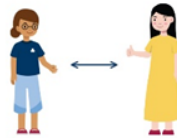
#### Gathering Size

Must follow government restrictions.



#### Meeting Space

Outdoors only.  
May include tent/picnic shelter with 2+ sides open for maximum ventilation.  
May be held in member yards or in shared outdoor spaces such as apartment/condo green spaces provided appropriate approval is obtained.



#### Drop Off & Pick Up

Must occur **outside**.

Adults must physically distance from other adults and girls.

When possible, only one adult from each household should drop off girls at a meeting and no extra people should attend drop off/pick up.



#### Food and Drink

Eating and drinking is only permitted outdoors.

Sharing of food is not permitted.



#### Washrooms

Encourage families to use the washroom prior to activity. Limit capacity to washroom to allow for physical distancing.

**Recommendation:** Washroom use should be at 50% capacity or less. (Exceptions may be made for girls who require a support person to use the washroom.)



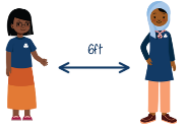
## Indoor 1

### Indoor 1, Outdoor 2, Virtual & Anytime Guiding – Day Activities Only



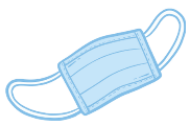
#### Permitted Activities

Green and yellow activities are permitted.  
Red level activities are permitted except for activities in confined spaces (such as caving/spelunking).  
No overnight activities or travel may take place.



#### Physical Distancing

Everyone physically distances 2m.



#### Masks

Required for everyone.



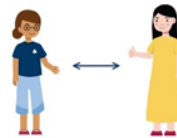
#### Gathering Size

Must follow government restrictions.



#### Meeting Space

Outdoor meeting spaces are preferred.  
Indoor meeting space must fall within provincial and regional health authorities' guidelines.  
Larger meeting spaces with good ventilation such as the ability to open windows are preferred.



#### Drop Off & Pick Up Location

Must occur outside.  
Adults must physically distance from other adults and girls.  
When possible, only one adult from each household should drop off girls at a meeting and no extra people should attend drop off/pick up.



#### Food and Drink

Eating and drinking is only permitted outdoors.  
Sharing of food is not permitted.



#### Washrooms

Encourage families to use the washroom prior to activity. Limit capacity to washroom to allow for physical distancing.  
**Recommendation:** Washroom use should be at 50% capacity or less. (Exceptions may be made for girls who require a support person to use the washroom.)



## Indoor 2

### Indoor 2, Outdoor 2, Virtual & Anytime Guiding – Day Activities Only

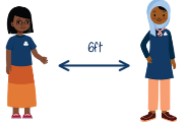


#### Permitted Activities

Green and yellow activities are permitted.

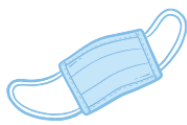
Red level activities are permitted except for activities in confined spaces (such as caving/spelunking).

No overnight activities or travel may take place.



#### Physical Distancing

Everyone physically distances 2m.



#### Masks

Not required unless physical distancing cannot be maintained. Guiders may request that masks be worn. See [Masks](#) section.



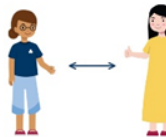
#### Gathering Size

Must follow government restrictions.



#### Meeting Space

Outdoor meeting spaces are preferred. Indoor meeting space must fall within provincial and regional health authorities' guidelines. Larger meeting spaces with good ventilation such as the ability to open windows are preferred.



#### Drop Off & Pick Up Location

Must occur outside. Adults must physically distance from other adults and girls. When possible, only one adult from each household should drop off girls at a meeting and no extra people should attend drop off/pick up.



#### Food and Drink

Eating and drinking is permitted indoors or outdoors. Outdoors is preferred. Sharing of food is not permitted.



#### Washrooms

Encourage families to use the washroom prior to activity. Limit capacity to washroom to allow for physical distancing.

**Recommendation:** Washroom use should be at 50% capacity or less. (Exceptions may be made for girls who require a support person to use the washroom.)



## Overnight Stages

These protocols are for any activity that requires an overnight stay under 72 hours, including but not limited to:

- Group sleepovers
- Camping
- Adventure camping
- Adventure tripping
- Travel touring
- Historic and educational tours involving an overnight stay

The current scientific understanding is that the risk of COVID-19 transmission increases when people spend longer amounts of time together, even when those people are wearing masks and physically distancing. To balance the benefit of overnight activities with this increase risk of COVID-19 transmission, the Overnight protocols are very restrictive.

*We understand that the restrictiveness of these protocols may be frustrating to some members. While it may be very difficult for some units to follow these protocols, there are units who will be able to plan and take part in overnight activities using these protocols. We look forward to updating the restrictions as public health recommendations for youth overnight activities continue to evolve.*

## Mask Requirements in Overnight 1 And 2 Stages

Masks are no longer required when outdoors during Overnight 1 and 2. Masks continue to be an important tool to protect against the transmission of COVID-19. Participants may choose to wear a mask while outdoors and should not be discouraged from doing so.

Masks must be worn if:

1. Physical distancing is unable to be maintained (i.e. to check safety equipment or in the case of an emergency)
2. Indoors for any reason (i.e. washrooms, picking up food, or any other time your overnight stage permits indoor activities)

As we adjust to these new protocols, some participants may feel more comfortable to continue to wear a mask while in a group setting. Please remember that kindness is important, and participants should not feel pressured to remove their mask.

## Overnight Activity Planning

Currently all overnight activity planning must take place using the protocols for Overnight 1. Please see below for more details. Units will be advised if they may operate under a different set of protocols in the future.

The priority continues to be for activities to occur outdoors. This includes, but is not limited to, camping and adventure activities, historic or interpretive tours, craft and science activities.

Throughout the activity there should be little interaction with members of the public. For example, public tours, group activities with non-GGC members, etc. are prohibited. Members may attend private tours or activities that occur in a public space such as museums or art galleries, provided that they are able to maintain distance from members of the public. Members of the public should not be travelling with GGC members during an activity or tour.



## Suggestions for Accommodations

Finding suitable accommodations may be challenging. Some suggestions for finding accommodations are:

- University, college or boarding school residences
- Camps or retreat centres
- Borrow or rent tents from other units, camps, Scouts, provincial or national parks

## Planning Group Camping

Provinces, areas and districts may be interested in planning group camping activities for units. These types of activities are permitted by GGC if they are permitted under public health orders and government recommendations. Camps for groups in Overnight 1 or 2 must be planned so that units participate in activities separately from each other.



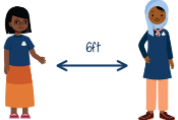
## Overnight 1

### Outdoor 1, Virtual & Anytime Guiding



#### Permitted Activities

Green and yellow activities are permitted.  
Red level activities are permitted except for activities in confined spaces (such as caving/spelunking).  
Camping and travel under 72 hours permitted.  
No plane travel. No group accommodations.



#### Physical Distancing

Everyone physically distances 2m.



#### Masks

Required for everyone when indoors. Not required when outdoors. Follow the mask requirements for Overnight 1 and 2 stages [on page 11](#).



#### Branch

Guides or older.



#### Gathering Size

Must follow government restrictions.



#### Activity Location

Outdoor only, except while sleeping, using the washroom and picking up food.



same roof).

#### Accommodations

Tents and rooms may only be shared by individuals who live in the same household (under the



#### Transportation

Transportation may take place using private vehicles, public transit, chartered bus, or train. If private vehicles are used, indoor restrictions apply.



#### Food and Drink

Food and drinks can be picked up or served inside. All eating and drinking must happen outside or in private accommodations.



#### Washrooms

Limit capacity to washroom to allow for physical distancing.  
**Recommendation:** Washroom use should be at 50% capacity or less. (Exceptions may be made for girls who require a support person to use the washroom.)





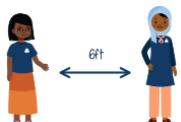
## Overnight 2

### Indoor 1, Outdoor 2, Virtual & Anytime Guiding



#### Permitted Activities

Green and yellow activities are permitted. Red level activities are permitted except for activities in confined spaces (such as caving/spelunking). Camping and travel under 72 hours permitted. No plane travel. No group accommodations.



#### Physical Distancing

Everyone physically distances 2m.



#### Masks

Required for everyone when indoors. Not required when outdoors. Follow the mask requirements for Overnight 1 and 2 stages [on page 11](#).



#### Branch

Guides or older.



#### Gathering Size

Must follow government restrictions.



#### Activity Location

Indoor and outdoor. Preference given to outdoor activities.



roof).

#### Accommodations

Tents and rooms may only be shared by individuals who live in the same household (under the same



#### Transportation

Transportation may take place using private vehicles, public transit, chartered bus, train, or plane. If private vehicles are used, indoor restrictions apply.



#### Food and Drink

Food and drinks can be picked up or served inside. All eating and drinking must happen outside or in private accommodations.



#### Washrooms

Limit capacity to washroom to allow for physical distancing. **Recommendation:** Washroom use should be at 50% capacity or less. (Exceptions may be made for girls who require a support person to use washroom.)



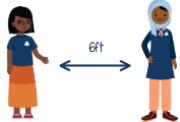
## Overnight 3

### Indoor 1, Outdoor 2, Virtual & Anytime Guiding



#### Permitted Activities

Green, yellow and red activities are permitted.  
All overnight activities must be within Canada.



#### Physical Distancing

To be determined.



#### Masks

To be determined.



#### Branch

All branches.



#### Gathering Size

Must follow government restrictions.



#### Activity Location

Indoor and outdoor. Preference given to outdoor activities.



#### Accommodations

Tents and rooms may be shared. Preference is for those in the same household.



#### Transportation

To be determined.



#### Food and Drink

Food and drinks may be consumed indoors or outdoors.  
Preference is for outdoors.



#### Washrooms

Limit capacity to washroom to allow for physical distancing.  
**Recommendation:** Washroom use should be at 50% capacity or less. (Exceptions may be made for girls who require a support person to the use washroom.)

