

Verdugo Hills Council

Protocols for indoor and outdoor meetings, events and activities.

January 5, 2022

Please note updates are highlighted in yellow.

These protocols will be reviewed and updated as we receive changes from the CDC, State of California and Los Angeles department of Public Health.

Please note that all BSA requirements that were altered for Covid will end as of March 1, 2022.

Restrictions on meetings and activities imposed by the LA county health department due to Covid-19 were updated on July 16, 2021 due to an increase in transmission rates in LA County.

This document and Protocols provide an update on what units can do now. We encourage and request that everyone comply with appropriate health guidelines, get vaccinated (everyone 12 and older) and be flexible in the planning and execution of all Scouting events.

Available now:

- Meet in person indoors or outdoors following all Los Angeles County Health Department guidelines. (Please refer to the next page for a review of Protocols)
- Conduct overnight activities including camping and backpacking following the current County Health Guidelines in the county. (Please refer to the following pages for a review of relevant protocols)
- Schedule outdoor unit meetings in parks and at your chartered organization if permitted.
- Attend VHC programs, reserve Camp Verdugo Oaks for unit overnight camping and for unit day events. Cub Scout units and individuals may sign up for Rocket Academy.
- Develop a unit program plan for the next 12 months. You can combine in-person and virtual activities to best suit your unit.
- **Encourage all members 5 years or older to get fully vaccinated including boosters.**

Updated VHC Protocols for In-Person Meetings and Activities

The following is a summary of Protocols for holding in-person Scout meetings and activities.

- Meetings and activities may be held indoors or outdoors; however, it is recommended that units meet outside as much as possible.
- **EVERYONE** participating in indoor meetings and activities **is required to wear a face covering**. **The 7/16/2021 LA County Department of Public Health has ordered that face coverings be worn in indoor settings regardless of vaccination status**. For meetings and activities held outdoors, are encouraged but not required to wear face coverings. The use of face coverings is recognized as an effective means of reducing COVID transmission risk.
- Talk with your Scout families. Not all families are ready or want to start in-person meetings now. Tell them they have participation options. Do not force families to attend.
- Conduct fun in-person meetings.
- Eagle Projects no longer need to follow cohort protocols. Participants should follow the protocols for meetings and activities as updated on or after 6/22/2021. If the Eagle project includes overnight activities, then participants should also follow the protocols for overnight outings.
- **Isolate if you are sick, do not attend any meetings/activities/events, if you or anyone you live with or anyone you have been around feels unwell for any reason.**
- **Do not attend any meetings/events/activities if you or anyone you live with has tested positive for Covid-19 or another illness and do not have their results back yet.**
- **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.**
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water is not available.**
- **Until further notice international travel is NOT considered a Scouting activity.**
- **The State of CA and the LA County Department of Public Health have both issued an indoor masking directive. For Scouting activities, we strongly recommend wearing surgical masks (or 3 ply masks), N95 or KN95 masks.**
- **Units should not allow its participants to use neckerchiefs, single layer cloth masks, and gators. Neckerchiefs, gators and single ply masks have been determined to be largely ineffective against the transmission of the Omicron variant.**
- **As always, follow the Scout Oath and Law.**

Note: The main impact to Scouting activities of the relaxation of state and county COVID protocols is to eliminate the use of cohorts for meetings. Units should still encourage safe COVID practices which include minimizing close contact, wearing face coverings where the risk of transmission may be higher, hand washing and other sanitation measures. And emphasizing activities that are outdoor as much as possible. **The Verdugo Hills Council strongly encourages all adults and youth 5 years of age and older to get fully vaccinated. There may be some council events and activities that will require full vaccination.**

Protocols for Overnight Outings (Unit Based)

Units can hold their own overnight camping activities effective June 13, 2021. The following is a summary of the overnight unit camping trips following State and County protocols.

- All protocols for in-person meetings outlined on the previous page apply to overnight outings. Additional protocols as outlined below also apply.
- All outing participants are strongly encouraged to be fully vaccinated if eligible. *
- Follow Youth Protection Training (YPT) guidelines.
- As much as possible, follow social distancing. Stress the importance of personal hygiene and camp sanitation to reduce the risk of infection.
- If sleeping in tents the current **VHC protocols** are that tents are limited to 50% capacity. For example, if you are using a 2 man tent then only 1 person sleeps in the tent. If you are using a 4 man tent then you can have 2 sleeping in that tent. If more than 1 person is sleeping in a tent then all must sleep opposite each other. If you are using a 3 man tent it then is a 1 man tent.**
- Due to LA County indoor mask mandate, the Verdugo Hills Council **strongly recommends** that units do not sleep indoors until further notice.
- Perform a COVID screening of all outing participants.*** If someone develops symptoms of COVID then isolate them from the rest of the group and get them home as soon as practical.
- Under current LA County guidelines of July 16, 2021 all individuals in a car pool must wear a face covering while in the vehicle. It is also recommended to have the windows open.**
- Read the National reopening guidelines.
- When cooking at any activities the cooks must wear gloves, face shield or face covering. There can be no buffet type serving allowed. **Cooks will serve all food.**

*People are considered “fully vaccinated” against COVID-19 two weeks or more after their second dose in a two dose COVID-19 vaccine series, such as Moderna or Pfizer or two weeks

or more after a single dose COVID 19 vaccine, such as Johnson and Johnson. All Scouts, Scouters, Scouts, and parents must get a booster if they are of the age to be eligible to be considered fully vaccinated.

**The CDC, State and County health departments stress the importance of good ventilation as a risk mitigate.

***A COVID screen consists of checking if outing participants are exhibiting any known COVID symptoms. It is highly recommended by the Verdugo Hills Council to include temperature checks as part of a screening processed.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for COVID-19 Unit Indoor and Outdoor Meetings and Activities

What health protocols is the Verdugo Hills Council following?

The Verdugo Hills Council is following the National Boy Scouts of America, CDC, State of California and the Los Angeles County protocols for all indoor and outdoor meetings and activities.

Do units still need to follow cohort protocols?

No units do not need to follow cohort protocols at this time.

Do units need to continue with COVID related record keeping?

Yes, Verdugo Hills Council strongly recommends to continue to keep a record of all those in attendance at indoor or outdoor meetings and activities.

Are participates required to wear face coverings at meetings and activities?

The updated (7/16/21) LA County Department of Public Health requires that all adults and youth to wear face coverings when indoors, regardless of vaccination status. For meetings and activities held outdoors participates are not required to wear face coverings if they can maintain social distancing. The use of face covering is recognized as an effect means of reducing COVID transmission.

Are temperature checks required at the beginning of a unit meeting?

Temperature checks are no longer required at the start of a meeting. The Verdugo Hills Council strongly recommends to continue the practice of temperature checks for all unit activities.

Is carpooling for Scout activities and meetings permitted?

Private carpools with members of multiple households are permitted. Everyone is required to wear a face covering regardless of vaccination status. It is further recommended that windows be down to increase airflow.

Will sharing a tent be allowed?

The Verdugo Hills Council policy is that all tents will be at 50% capacity for both youth and adults. If the capacity of tent as stated by the manufacturer as a 2 man tent then only one person can sleep in the tent, if the manufactured states it is a 4 man tent then 2 may sleep in that tent. In the case of odd numbers the capacity will be at the next lower size. In Cub Scouting, families may share a tent at 100% capacity. Scouting families cannot share tents per the Guide to Safe Scouting.

Can units travel outside the council, county and state for overnight camping activities?

Yes. Units must comply with all protocols for the county they are camping in and Verdugo Hills Council protocols.

Do I need to register unit meetings and activities with the Verdugo Hills Council?

No, it is not a requirement to register your unit meetings and activities with the council at this time.

Council Camps and Council-Run Activities

What are the vaccination/testing requirements for youth and adults attending council camps and activity programs?

It is **strongly recommended and may be required for some** Verdugo Hills Council events or activities that all people eligible to be **fully vaccinated must be.** For those not fully vaccinated it is required to have a negative COVID test 72 hours prior to attending camp or activities.

Will there be temperature checks at council events?

Yes, at all council programs and training activities there will be temperature checks.

Will we have to fill out the Camp COVID checklist?

Verdugo Hills Council

Yes, for all council events and training it will be necessary to fill out the COVID precamp checklist and bring with you.