

# Returning to Scouting during COVID-19

**Day to Day Scouting – Running your Scout Group and Sections**



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## **Introduction**

This resource has been designed to assist Scout Groups and their sections return to Scouting particularly if they have taken a break during the COVID-19 situation.

No resource can cover every aspect of every Groups operation and Scout Groups will have to define their own specific protocols based on their particular circumstances and latest updates from Scouting Ireland (SI Roadmap) and the HSE guidelines.

## **Group Preparation Getting Back to Scouting**

Prior to each Scout Group getting back to scouting, each Scout Group will need to introduce measures for the health and safety of youth members, families, scouters, and the broader community in which they operate. To this end it is advised that each Group should facilitate a **“Group Planning Meeting”** (all Scouters in the Group) either virtually or socially distant, to devise and agree the protocols for their specific Scout Group.

## **Plan of action**

### **Scout Den/ Meeting Facility**

- Installation / Provision of Hand Sanitisation
- Social Distancing Protocols and Respiratory Hygiene
- Signage
- Establish Hygiene and Cleaning protocols for touch points and programme materials.
- Establish protocols regarding arrival and collection of members for meetings and activities.
- If using third party facility (School, Community Hall) check availability and protocols required.

### **Audit of Scouter Availability**

- Scouters available to return to Scouting.
- Scouters availability who may be compromised (reassignment of tasks).
- Scouters not returning due to temporary or other commitments
- New scouters. (Training required)
- Issue Pre-Return to Scouting Questionnaire COVID-19 to Scouters (SI Roadmap)

### **Tailored Communications**

- All scouters
- Parent / Guardian and young people (if appropriate)
- Facilities management if appropriate.

### **Parent / Guardian Protocols**

- Ensure all sections have good communications with Parent / Guardian.
- Check all members are returning to Scouting.
- Issue the Pre-return to Scouting Questionnaire COVID-19 to Parent / Guardian emphasising the relevance and importance of the completion and return of this information in advance of the actual return of young people to their section.
- Drop off to and from meeting facility should be defined to maintain social distancing
- Member acceptance and release protocol for meetings defined or re-iterated.

### **Return to Scouting Communications.**

If your Group has continued to Scout be it in person or virtually during the COVID-19 Situation, then you probably have had multiple communications with Parents / Guardians.

If your Group has well established method of direction communication with Parents / Guardians, then this is probably the best medium through which to communicate your message. ***E-mail, SMS text, What's App or other.***

But as with all communications your message should be Clear, Concise, Instructive and Reactive e.g.

**Clear:** - "*The Rath*" Cub pack will recommence Cub meetings on Monday next 7<sup>th</sup> September.

**Concise:** - Meetings will take place in *St Patrick's National School* Starting at 7.00pm sharp and finishing at 8.15pm. The Pack will be split in two parallel-running programmes to help with Social Distancing protocols.

**Instructive:** - Due to COVID-19 new protocols have been established for the safe participation of your child. We ask Parents / Guardians to strictly adhere to the new protocols for the benefit of all.

**Reactive:** - Please ensure your child brings the Pre-return to Scouting Questionnaire COVID-19 form with them on the first night. (in appendix below)

### **Other Communications**

You may also need to communicate with other third parties regarding your resumption of Scout meetings and activities: -

- Facilities Owner/Management/Parish
- County Commissioner
- Support Officer

## **Managing Forms including online forms**

It is important that Scout Groups revise and or establish protocols for the management of forms and any data they collect during the Covid-19 situation. Follow SI data protection protocols for all personal information collected.

Please note: Scouting Ireland/the scout group is permitted to collect this sensitive personal data for the purposes of maintaining safety within the workplace in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The legal basis for collecting this data is based on vital public health interests and maintaining occupational health and will be held securely for the designated 14 day minimum for contact tracing purposes and then securely destroyed.

### ***Pre-Return to Scouting Questionnaire COVID-19***

This form will need to be completed again if a Member falls ill for any reason and is returning to Scouting once fully recovered while the COVID-19 situation persists and impacts on Scouting.

### ***Activities Consent Form***

This form should be updated on a return to Scouting. (ref. scouts.ie)

### ***Electronic Forms***

Where a group uses electronic forms for the collection and storage of personal data should ensure that their processes confirm to the Association's Data Protection Policy <https://www.scouts.ie/Data-Protection/>

## **Advice to Parents / Guardians if a member falls ill at a meeting or on an activity**

Parents / Guardians should be informed that any child who displays any symptom of an impending illness should not attend any activities or meeting until such symptoms have passed.

Scouters likewise who display any symptoms of illness should absent themselves from Activities and meetings until such symptoms have been checked out or have passed.

If a Scout or Scouter falls ill at a meeting or activity then the following protocol should be followed: ***Isolate, Evacuate, Record, Follow up.***

**Isolate:** Isolate the member(s) from other members. A minimum of 2 metres isolation is required and if using a separate room, ensure SI Safeguarding Guidelines are followed.

**Evacuate:** Call the Parent / Guardian to come and collect the youth member

**Record:** Record the matter in your incident log and/or complete an incident report form.

**Follow up:** Follow up the next day with the Parent / Guardian to check how the youth member is, or check with the Scouter to check how they are and to ascertain the cause of the illness.

The above should be carried out discretely to ensure privacy and so as not to alarm other members or to start speculation that it could be a case of COVID-19.

### **Notification**

If a Scout Group is notified that a member has a confirmed case of COVID-19, NI Scout Groups should notify Track and Trace, or the HSE in ROI and follow their directions. The Scout Group should co-operate with the appropriate authority regarding contact tracing communication. The Scout Group should not undertake this task themselves

Should a Scout Group be faced with this situation they should notify and seek advice from their Support Officer. The Support Officer will then notify National Office of any confirmed case of COVID-19 in or close to a Scout Group.

### **Member/Family diagnosed with Covid-19**

At all times you should take the advice of the HSE

### **Cluster in the Community.**

If a group finds itself operating in a community where a cluster is identified the group should follow whatever guidance is provided by HSE and or seek advice from their Support Officer and or National Office.

## Scout Group COVID-19 Protocol

If your Child becomes unwell for any reason during an Activity or Meeting, as a precaution your child will be discretely isolated, and you will be contacted immediately to collect them.

**The Policy of the Group will be to: -**

**Isolate**

Isolate the member(s) from other members present

**Evacuate**

Call the Parent / Guardian to come and collect the Scout

**Record**

Record the matter in our incident log and or complete an incident report form.

**Follow up**

Follow up the next day with the Parent / Guardian to ascertain the cause of the illness. Further follow up will be necessary to see if there are any developments.

**Notify**

Only if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 will the Parent / Guardian of all members of the Group be notified of such a situation and advice given.

**Confidentiality\***

If there is an occurrence of a COVID-19 with a member of a Scout Group, the confidentiality of the member will be maintained.

### Pre-return to Scouting Questionnaire COVID-19

This questionnaire must be completed by Scouters and Youth Members at least three days in advance of returning to Scouting.

If the answer is yes to any of the below questions, you are advised to seek medical advice before returning to Scouting.

Name of Member \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

	Question	Yes	No
1.	Do you have symptoms of cough, fever, sore throat, loss or change to your sense of smell or taste, Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties or flu like symptoms now or in the last 14 days		
2.	Have you been diagnosed with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection in the last 14 days?		
3.	Are you a close contact of a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in the last 14days (i.e. less that 2metres for more than 15 minutes accumulative in 1 day?)		
4.	Have you been advised to self-isolate at this time?		
5.	Have you been advised by a doctor to cocoon at this time?		
6.	Have you been advised by your doctor that you are in an at-risk group?		

I confirm, to the best of my knowledge that I have no symptoms of COVID-19, am not self-isolating or awaiting results of a COVID-19 test.

Please note: the organisation is collecting this sensitive personal data for the purposes of maintaining safety within the Scout Group in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The legal basis for collecting this data is based on vital public health interests and maintaining occupational health and will be held securely for the designated 14 day minimum for contact tracing purposes and then securely destroyed

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

*This form is as per page 24 of [Scouting Ireland's Scouting through COVID roadmap](#) and should be used in conjunction with the roadmap.*

### **Sample Checklist for Scout Groups**

*This Sample checklist* supports planning and preparation, control measures and induction needed to support getting back to scouting for youth members, scouters, parents /guardians and others.

This checklist should be adapted to suit each Groups individual situation. Each Scout Group should continue to check with [SI COVID-19 updates](#).

#### ***Planning and Systems***

- ✓ Is there a system in place to keep up-to-date and disseminate information within the Scout Group regarding updates and advice from Scouting Ireland and Government departments?
- ✓ Have you a system in place to provide youth members and Parents / Guardians with information and guidance on the measures that have been put in place to help prevent the spread of the virus and what is expected of everyone to adhere to these practices?
- ✓ Have you displayed the COVID-19 posters and markings in suitable locations?
- ✓ Have each Section a Covid-19 contact log in place?
- ✓ Have you reviewed and updated risk assessments to take account of any controls to help prevent the spread of COVID-19?
- ✓ Have you updated emergency plans, if necessary, to take account of the COVID-19 response plan?
- ✓ Are scouters familiar with the [SI Roadmap?](#)

#### ***Scouters and Youth Members***

- ✓ Have you made available to each scouter and youth member a Pre-return to Scouting Questionnaire COVID-19? This needs to be completed and returned 3 days before returning to scouting?
- ✓ Have you advised scouters and youth members they must stay at home if sick or if they have any symptoms of COVID-19?
- ✓ Have you told scouters and youth members/family what to do and what to expect if they start to develop symptoms of COVID-19 at the scout meeting/activity?

#### ***Training and Induction***

- ✓ Have you advised scouters to complete the [NYCI COVID-19 Induction session](#) for Youth Services?
- ✓ This course can be updated on Scouters membership profile on MMS as an external course.
- ✓ Have first aiders reviewed their practices on infection prevention and control re: hand hygiene and use of PPE as appropriate?

### ***Buildings / Equipment***

- ✓ Ventilate all rooms
- ✓ Does your water system need flushing at outlets following low usage to prevent Legionnaire's Disease?
- ✓ Have you visually checked, or had someone check, all equipment in the scout den/place of meeting for signs of deterioration or damage before being used again?
- ✓ Have you a system in place for the scout den/place of meeting, including all equipment, chairs, tables, doors and frequent touched surfaces points, to be cleaned before reopening? And resources available to support this?
- ✓ Ensure waste is regularly collected, including waste bins emptied regularly.
- ✓ Have you a cleaning rota in place?

### ***Control Measures in place Hand / respiratory hygiene***

- ✓ Have you accessed supplies of hand sanitiser/soap and any necessary PPE?
- ✓ For Scout Groups with scout dens: Are there hand washing/hand sanitising stations in place to accommodate youth members, scouters and Parents / Guardians and those collecting members?
- ✓ Have arrangements been made for youth members and scouters to have regular access to handwashing/hand sanitising facilities as appropriate?
- ✓ Are hand sanitisers easily available and accessible for all youth members, scouters– e.g. in each room and at entry and exit points to scout dens? Where groups meet in shared facilities, has the Scout Group developed a plan to have hand sanitization available?
- ✓ Have you made arrangements to ensure hand hygiene facilities are regularly checked and well-stocked?
- ✓ Does the alcohol-based hand sanitiser have at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol as the active ingredient?
- ✓ Is everyone aware where hand-sanitising stations are located?
- ✓ Ask Section scouters to speak to youth members when they need to wash their hands or use hand sanitiser? This includes:
  - before and after eating and preparing food
  - after coughing or sneezing
  - after using the toilet
  - where hands are dirty
  - before and after wearing gloves
  - before and after being on public transport
  - before leaving home
  - when arriving/leaving the school /other sites
  - after touching potentially contaminated surfaces
  - if in contact with someone displaying any COVID-19 symptoms

- Ask Section scouters to speak with youth members of the importance of good respiratory measures to limit the spread of the virus?
- avoid touching the face, eyes, nose and mouth
- cover coughs and sneezes with an elbow or a tissue
- dispose of tissues in a covered bin

***Physical Distancing:***

- ✓ Have you identified all available scout den space/place of meeting, including outdoor space, to be used to maximise physical distancing?
- ✓ Have you considered revising the layout of the rooms and furniture if necessary?
- ✓ Have you structured youth members and their scouters into Small Groups/Sixes/Patrols?
- ✓ Have you taken steps to limit contact and sharing of common facilities (halls, doorways, entrances) between arrival and departure times?
- ✓ Have you made arrangements to limit interaction on arrival and departure from place of meeting i.e. community centre and in other shared areas?
- ✓ Have you encouraged walking or cycling to the scout meeting as much as possible?
- ✓ Have you made arrangements, in so far as practicable, to open additional access points to scout den/place of meeting, to reduce congestion?
- ✓ Can you provide a one system for entering and exiting the place of meeting, where practical? Have you arranged for scouter meetings to be held remotely or in small groups or in large spaces to facilitate physical distancing?

**Relevant Links and Resources:**

**NCYI Covid-19 Induction Training for Scouters:**

<https://www.youth.ie/training/covid-19-induction-session-for-youth-sector/>

**SI Back to Scouting Roadmap:**

<https://www.scouts.ie/Covid-19/Advice/Scouting-Through-Covid-Roadmap.pdf>

**ROI Government Guidance on use of facemasks:**

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/aac74c-guidance-on-safe-use-of-face-coverings/>

**Relevant Links for Northern Ireland Scout Groups:**

<https://www.eani.org.uk/supporting-children-and-young-people>

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus>

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-and-what-they-mean-you>

**SI Programme Resources for all sections:**

<https://scouting360.ie/>

**FAQ's around Programme and COVID:**

<https://scouting360.ie/covid-faqs/>

**Code of Good Practice:**

<https://scouts.ie/Scouter/Management-Resources/Policies-Procedures/All-Official-Policies/SID-39-05-Code-of-Good-Practice.pdf>

**Sample Risk Assessment Scout Group/Section**

Area	Risk	Solution	By	Responsibility
<b>Scout Den Meeting Hall</b>				
Hand Hygiene	Sanitisation	Provide Hand Sanitisers/ Squirty Bottles, Paper Towels and disposal facilities	Group/COVID-19 Officer	Group Council
Doors/ Touch Points	Un-sanitised	Wiped down before and after meetings	Scouter	Scouter in Charge
Doors	Air Circulation	Leave Open during Meeting	Scouters	Scouter in Charge.
Signage	Reminder COVID-19	Adequate & High-Profile Signage	Group/COVID-19 Officer	Group Council
Toilets	Contamination	Ensure Cleanliness and surfaces wiped	Scouters & Youth Members	Scouter in Charge
Toilets	Contamination	Restrict the number of Toilets available	Scouters	Scouter in Charge
Toilets	Contamination	Reminded of Hand Hygiene	Scouters	Scouter in Charge
<b>Programme Equipment</b>				
Programme Equipment	Contamination	Wipe down before and after use	Youth Members	Scouter in Charge
Programme Equipment	Contamination	Store in Sanitised Boxes /Cupboards where possible	Scouters	Scouter in Charge
Furniture	Contamination	Wipe down Before and After use	Scouters & Youth Members	Scouter in Charge
<b>Personal Hygiene</b>				
Hand Hygiene	Contamination	All members Sanitise on arrival	Scouters & Youth Members	Scouter in Charge
During Meetings	Contamination	All youth members have sanitation breaks during Meetings	Scouters & Youth Members	Scouter in Charge
Coughing Protocol	Aerosol dispersal	Establish Protocol	Scouters & Youth Members	Scouter in Charge

<b>Administrative Functions</b>				
Medical Forms	Exposure & Health knowledge.	All forms are returned and up to date	Parent / Guardian & Scouters	Scouter in Charge
Communication	Lack of understanding of protocols	Clear concise Communication with Parent / Guardian & Scouters	Scouter In Charge	Scouter in Charge
<b>Activities</b>				
Activity	Establish a set of Protocols for each Activity		Scouters	Scouter in Charge
<b>Physical Distancing</b>				
Indoor Meetings	Cross Infection	Use Small Group System and Safe Distance	Scouters & Youth Members	Scouter in Charge
Outdoor Meetings	Cross Infection	Use Small Group System and Safe Distance	Scouters & Youth Members	Scouter in Charge
Outdoor Activities	Cross Infection	Use Agreed Group Protocols	Scouters & Youth Members	Scouter in Charge
Transport	Cross Infection	Encourage Household Units/walking and cycling	Parent / Guardian	Parent / Guardian
Public Transport	Cross Infection	Public Transport Protocols + encourage walking/cycling	Scouters & Youth Members	Scouter in Charge

<b>Compromised Scouts and Adults (with underlying medical conditions)</b>				
Scouts	Infection	Discuss Options with Parent / Guardian and define Risk	Scouters	Scouter in Charge
Adult	Infection	Individual has responsibility to assess risk and act accordingly	Individual	Scouter in Charge Informed.

**Note 1:** *The Scouter in Charge may vary from Meeting to Meeting or Activity to Activity but this must be understood by each Scouter.*

**Note 2:** *Where appropriate Scouts should be involved in implementing Risk minimisation.*