



## Return to Indoor Scouting Directions

### November 23 2020

Scout Halls were allowed to open across Victoria from November 9 2020.

Lessor restrictions (e.g. council leased property) may also be in place, you should confirm with your lessor whether there are additional restrictions to access your leased property.

Groups must implement controls to manage physical distancing and hygiene restrictions which will remain in place while the Victorian government gradually lifts restrictions.

The following controls apply to all Scout buildings (including halls, activity centres, training centres, etc). This includes the properties themselves and separate rooms inside any of those properties such as the main hall, training rooms, meeting rooms, dens, huts, stores, etc. These are defined within Victorian DHHS Restricted Activity Directions as **undivided indoor spaces**.

Scout halls cannot be used for overnight activities or accommodation.

### Preparing to open Scout Halls

Before opening halls for section meetings, Groups need to undertake the following preparation actions:

- Develop a COVIDSafe Plan - refer to the generic plan on the Scouts Victoria [website](#)
- Determine the maximum allowed occupancy (see below)
- Confirm with your lessor (e.g. council) that you are allowed to open
- Determine if any Leaders are in an "at-risk" group and discuss options
- Consider any members with disability, medical needs or additional needs
- Acquire sufficient hand sanitiser and cleaning products
- Identify parent drop off and pick up location and process, and provide clear directions (e.g. signage, etc)
- Provide pre-printed section lists to Leaders to record attendance of section meetings
- Identify isolation location for people who become sick during section nights
- Put up posters reinforcing the need for physical separation and personal hygiene etc
- Ensure all Leaders are aware of the requirements in this document
- Communicate requirements with parents before resuming section meetings

### Physical Distancing in the Hall

#### Maximum allowed occupancy for Scout activities

The maximum occupancy for each undivided indoor space at a Scout Halls (whether for use as part of the Scouting program or for Hall hires) is the lesser of:

- Density requirement of 1 participant\* per 4 sqm
- 20 participants\*

\*Participants does not include those required to run the activity. For Scouting activities, the number of persons permitted to gather in an undivided indoor space is in addition to the Leaders (including adult helpers, carers, etc) who are reasonably required to run the activity.

Groups need to determine the maximum allowed occupancy for all undivided indoor spaces, which should be clearly displayed at the entrance to each indoor space. The maximum allowed occupancy is the lower of:

- The number of participants who are permitted to gather as a group in an undivided indoor space, currently 20
- The number calculated by dividing the total area of the undivided indoor space (measured in square metres) by 4 and rounding down. This number remains fixed for each indoor space while physical distancing restrictions are in place.

*Example 1: A Rover den. The maximum number of adults who can gather indoors may be 20 at a given time. However, based on physical distancing requirements of 1 person per 4 sqm, a typical Rover den may be 8m x 4m = 32sqm so has a maximum capacity of 8 ( $32/4 = 8$ ). Therefore, the Rover den has a maximum capacity of 8, irrespective of the permitted size of internal gatherings.*

*Example 2: A Scout hall. The maximum number of youth members who can gather indoors may be 20 at a given time. However, based on physical distancing requirements of 1 person per 4 sqm, a typical Scout hall may be 16m x 12m = 192sqm so has a maximum capacity of 48 ( $192/4 = 48$ ). Therefore, the Scout hall has a maximum capacity of 20, irrespective of the size of the indoor space.*

The Scouts Victoria editable sign to indicate room capacity can be accessed [here](#).

### **Physical distancing during section meetings**

- If you are unwell, stay home (this applies to Leaders, youth members and parents)
- Members aged 12yo and over must wear an appropriate face mask while indoors unless an exemption applies
- No sleepovers or overnight activities in the hall
- Activities can be contact i.e. you do not have to maintain 1.5m physical distancing while undertaking activities, but it should be in place where it is reasonably able to be implemented.
- Halls should be well ventilated, e.g. opening windows and leaving main doors open
- Outdoor activities in the hall grounds are encouraged
- No sharing of food or drink. Food preparation and serving should occur outdoors
- All members should bring personal water bottles and avoid using water fountains

### **Record of attendance**

Record a list of people who have attended (Leaders, youth members, parent helpers, etc) for each section meeting. This information should be kept by the relevant Section Leader and Group Leader for 28 days. This should be a pre-printed list of section members and Leaders and should be checked off by one person – not a sign in register touched by multiple people.

### **Physical distancing during drop off / pick up**

Parents / carers should maintain physical distancing during drop off and pick up. Groups must establish a clear process for this activity and communicate expectations with parents.

In particular:

- Parents should not wait inside the hall as part of the drop off / pick up. If possible, have a separate entrance and exit for parents to drop off / pick up
- Parents should have a dedicated location to wait where they can maintain physical distancing (this could be in their own vehicles, etc)
- Drop off and pick up should not take more than 15 minutes – section nights should run on time, so parents are not waiting for extended periods
- Particular care should be taken when section meetings run back to back, consider extending the period between section meetings to allow for drop off / pick up and extra cleaning
- Conversations between Leaders and parents should occur by telephone or online, not at the end of section meetings
- Provide a box where forms can be dropped off without contact between Leaders and parents
- Make sure that you continue any Duty of Care requirements to youth members protected under court orders or intervention orders – such as meeting the person picking the youth member up at the door.

### **Communication with Parents**

Groups should contact parents prior to the start of resuming Section meetings at the halls to ensure they are aware of the requirements for not attending if their child is unwell, drop off / pickup processes, providing water bottles, etc. This could be undertaken proactively using a video meeting with a Leader at the hall showing the locations and signs, etc.

Parents should be informed that attendance data, including their child's name and contact details may be provided to public health officials if an attendee at section meeting subsequently tests positive to COVID-19.

## Hall Hires

Halls can be opened for hire subject to the following restrictions:

Commercial hirers are allowed to hire Scout halls and must comply with their own Industry Restart Guidelines. Hirers must have their own COVIDSafe Plan that must be reviewed by Scouts Victoria.

Private hirers must follow a Scouts Victoria COVIDSafe Plan

### Hall hire capacity restrictions

Private hirers: must follow indoor private gathering limits for households, weddings etc

All other hirers: As per Scout program limits

## Hygiene in the Hall

### Promote personal hygiene and provide hand washing facilities

- Hand sanitiser (or washing facilities) will need to be in place at entry and exit points for all members to use at the start and end of section nights
- Posters emphasising good personal hygiene
- Remind youth members to cough or sneeze into elbow or tissue etc
- DHHS Poster on good hygiene can be found here:  
[https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/202003/Slowing%20the%20spread%20of%20coronavirus\\_Poster\\_A4\\_English-30032020.pdf](https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/202003/Slowing%20the%20spread%20of%20coronavirus_Poster_A4_English-30032020.pdf)

### Cleaning halls before and after section nights

- Clean frequently touched surfaces - for example, tabletops, chair backs, door handles, handrails, light switches, toilets, taps, kitchen surfaces, cupboard handles, and equipment used in activities
- Clean surfaces and fittings when visibly soiled and immediately after any spillage.
- Use either detergent (either as a solution that can be mixed with water, or as wipes) or a 2-in-1 detergent and disinfectant (in solution, or wipes)
- Undertake a more thorough clean at least once per week, using a detergent in solution followed by a separate disinfectant.
- Safe Work Australia provide a guide for cleaning workplaces, that can also be used at Scout halls [https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-04/COVID-19\\_Cleaning-Checklist.pdf](https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-04/COVID-19_Cleaning-Checklist.pdf)

## If somebody gets sick while at a Scout meeting

If somebody becomes unwell at Scouts, they will need to return home.

If they show signs of COVID-19 symptoms, especially fever:



- Isolate them from the rest of activity (see below for additional considerations if the participant is a youth member)
- Contact their parent to take them home (note that an unwell adult can drive themselves if able)
- Call 000 if the condition becomes serious, such as difficulty in breathing

Explain to them or their parents that they should call the COVID-19 hotline 1800 675 398 or contact their GP. If their symptoms include fever, the Leader in Charge should contact the Scouts Victoria Emergency Line on 03 8543 9877

Extra care is required during isolation if the unwell participant is a youth member.

- It is important to keep the youth member relaxed, and not arouse concern in others. Calmly ask them to follow you away from the space where the main activity is occurring.
- The youth member should remain 2m away from others and wait in a separate area away from others, such by the hall door or possibly outside the hall for their parent to collect them. Try to be in-sight of other adults at this time.
- Leaders need to reassure and support the youth member. They should not feel forgotten or criticised by others.

### **If a confirmed case of COVID-19 previously attended a Scout meeting**

It is likely that the Group will be made aware of a potential close contact through being informed directly by the affected person (or their parent) or as part of a follow up of confirmed cases by public health officials or from Scouts Victoria.

- Call the COVID-19 hotline 1800 675 398
- Provide attendance records of meetings that the affected person has attended to public health officials
- Notify the property lessor (e.g. local council etc) if appropriate
- Notify the Scouts Victoria Emergency Line on 03 8543 9877
- In conjunction with public health officials and Scouts Victoria, notify other attendees that they may have been exposed and follow DHHS advice on quarantine requirements.
- Close the hall and clean and disinfect the rooms and indoor spaces where the people in attendance at the meeting may have been.
- Do not use the hall until the cleaning and disinfection process is complete and you have obtained approval from Scouts Victoria (and the hall lessor if appropriate).

### **Members who are in “at-risk” groups or who do not wish to attend face to face Scouting at this time**

No Leader, youth member, parent, etc should feel pressured to attend face to face Scouting at this time. Scouting remains a voluntary organisation.



Leaders and youth members with health issues that put them at risk of serious illness from COVID-19 should not participate in indoor activities but can support in other ways. Discuss options within your Group Council and your District can support with resources too.

Group Rostered Parents and Adult Helpers could help with providing a second adult on activities.

The Victorian Department of Human Services has information for people at risk available at <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-public-coronavirus-disease-covid-19#who-is-most-at-risk-of-being-very-sick-from-coronavirus-covid-19>

## **Scouts Victoria and Victorian State Directives**

Our guidance during the coronavirus pandemic contributes significantly to our obligations for a Duty of Care to our members and the wider community. Not meeting the guidance could put our responsibilities to our members and the wider community at risk. At all times, groups must follow the directives of Victorian Public Health Authorities and Scouts Victoria. Localised outbreaks may require groups to again restrict activity and those groups must respond accordingly.

The Group Leader is responsible for implementation of and monitoring compliance with the COVID-19 directions at the local group. The Group Leader may be referred to as the COVID Contact or COVID Officer for the Group, if necessary. District and Region Commissioners are responsible for assisting Groups in implementing and monitoring COVID-19 directions consistent with their defined roles within Scouts Victoria.

The responsibility for development, implementation and monitoring of COVID-19 directions, policies, rules and guidelines is with the Scouts Victoria Coronavirus Emergency Management Team (Coronavirus EMT) consisting of the Chief Commissioner, Deputy Chief Commissioner, Assistant Chief Commissioner - Personnel, State Commissioner - Risk and Safety and Executive Manager.

The State Commissioner - Risk and Safety can be referred to as the COVID Contact or COVID Officer for Scouts Victoria, if necessary.

The Chief Commissioner has ultimate authority over all uniformed activities within Scouts Victoria.

If you become aware of a Scout activity that may not be compliant with the requirements, contact the Scouts Victoria 24-hour Emergency Line on 03 8543 9877

## **Questions**

If you have any further questions, refer to the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) or send an email to [coronavirus@scoutsvictoria.com.au](mailto:coronavirus@scoutsvictoria.com.au)