

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

A “New Normal”

When Can We Start Scouting Again?

1. With provinces beginning to ease restrictions and providing detailed plans on a phased return to work, what does this mean for Scouting and in-person meetings?

Safety is our number-one priority. We will take a measured and prudent approach to return to “normal” Scouting activities. Scouts Canada will take advantage of the usual summer hiatus to plan for the return of in-person, outdoor activities in the fall.

All in-person meetings continue to be suspended for the remainder of the summer.

2. With provinces beginning to ease restrictions, what does this mean for summer camps, overnight camps and camping in general?

ALL Scouts Canada properties will remain closed throughout the summer.

Consistent with the suspension of in-person activities for the remainder of the summer and based on advice that camping remains a high-risk activity according to most provincial health guidelines, Scouts Canada will continue to prioritize the safety of our youth, employees, volunteers and parents and suspend all in-person camps and camping activities for the summer.

3. As mass gathering restrictions begin to lift, what does that mean for Scouting?

The majority of mass gathering restrictions are still in place. It is uncertain when they will begin to lift and for how long. Scouts Canada is taking a balanced risk approach, remaining prudent and cautious so we can learn from others and adapt as needed.

We will take this opportunity to focus on supporting the return to in-person, outdoor activities in the fall. As a result, we are developing standards and guidelines to support our Scouters to ensure in-person meetings will follow provincial health and safety requirements. In addition, we are developing a comprehensive and sustainable solution for virtual Section meetings to ensure our youth stay connected and active regardless of restrictions.

We will continue to monitor this situation and expect to take our lead from school boards for school permits and mass

gathering restrictions this fall. Scouts Canada is looking forward to the return of large in-person gatherings. In the meantime, we will continue to be creative by offering opportunities for youth to remain active and engaged so they can continue developing well-rounded skills that help them prepare for future success.

4. What kind of safety and health precautions will Scouts Canada be implementing if they return to in-person activities?

Scouts Canada’s main priority is the safety of the youth in our care, as well as its staff, volunteers and parents. Consistent with provincial requirements, a Pandemic Program & Activity Modifications Standard is being developed to address risk management and health and safety measures controls.

A *Section Meeting COVID Readiness Approval Form* which will include (but not be limited to) protocols around distancing measures, food provisions, cleaning, screening for symptoms and personal protective equipment will be distributed before activities resume in the fall.

We will make this standard, form and supporting documents, available to all, as soon as they are finalized, and with enough notice for Sections to study them and prepare for in-person, outdoor meetings. The safety of our youth is our number-one priority and has been the guiding principle of our response thus far.

5. When is Scouts Canada opening registration?

With the uncertainty of the return to school and variances in provincial re-opening plans, we have taken a prudent yet balanced approach to **not** open formal registration **at this time**.

Instead, Scouts Canada will be **extending current membership** for all youth and Scouters **until December 31, 2020** to support in-person, outdoor activities in the fall.

We have heard your concerns about health and safety and we are also mindful that many families may be dealing with unprecedented disruption. Our goal is to enable mental and physical development for youth across the country.



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Maintaining our current membership allows Scouts Canada to focus on implementing the new safety and health guidelines we will be distributing over the summer to enable in-person, outdoor meetings and to enhance our virtual Scouting model.

Registration will re-open in the fall for the start of a **new Scouting Year in January, 2021**.

6. If the new Scouting Year starts in January 2021—will it end August 31 2021?

When members register for a new Scouting Year starting in January 2021, they will be registering for a **full, 12-month year**. Scouts Canada will be using this opportunity to pilot a January to December membership cycle.

Scouts Canada anticipates that this new membership cycle will provide many benefits for our youth by facilitating Scouting throughout the year and promoting Group continuity throughout the fall.

7. Will Scouts Canada be keeping the same registration fee as previous years?

Scouts Canada has not increased its fee. Scouts Canada will be offering a **12-month membership for a unified flat fee of \$230**. We have kept the fee the same because we are mindful that many families may be dealing with unprecedented disruption.

New this year—\$15 from each paid registration will be returned to the Group.

8. Why is Scouts Canada reallocating \$15 per youth registration to support Groups?

During these uncertain times, when fundraising may be more challenging, Scouts Canada is supporting its Groups by directing \$15 from each paid youth registration back to the Group. By doing so, Scouts Canada hopes to enable Groups to deliver even greater Scouting adventures for youth in the new Scouting year.

9. Will there be an opportunity to register our interest early?

Yes. Scouts Canada is developing the online capability for parents to sign up to be notified when registration reopens. This notification will enable parents to have early access to registration. We will continue to prioritize returning members with a two-week early access window. After, we will add a one-week early access window for non-members who have

expressed interest in signing up, before opening registration to the public.

We will also make it possible for new youth to join Scouts for a **FREE Trial** until December 31, 2020. Our goal is to ensure youth from across the country stay connected and engaged to develop mentally and physically during these times.

We will be sharing more information about the registration notification, the Free Trial and the registration process itself in upcoming communications.

10. Does Scouts Canada expect a decrease in its membership as a result of the pandemic?

We are mindful that many families may be dealing with unprecedented disruption, which is why we have removed some uncertainty by extending membership until December 31, 2020. During this pandemic, we have witnessed the benefits of Scouting through the resilience and community leadership of our youth and volunteers. We are optimistic that by developing strict standards and guidance for in-person, outdoor meetings and a structured online model, we are developing solutions that will ensure the sustainability of Scouting now and long into the future.

11. Many provinces are expecting to have mass-gathering restrictions maintained until late fall. How will this impact Scouts Canada in-person Section meetings?

Scouters are resourceful and adaptable. We have all shown flexibility in dealing with this pandemic. These qualities will enable us to adapt our methods in any way to best serve the youth we support.

We will use the summer months to support the return to in-person, outdoor Scouting activities in the fall. We anticipate that in-person meetings may look different than we were used to. We may need to consider smaller gatherings and adapt our program model if schools do not immediately renew their permits.

Scouts Canada's program is designed around small group participation (the Patrol System). As a result, we are optimistic we will be able to adapt our programming and enable in-person, outdoor activities in the fall. However, we are also planning for the availability of an alternative virtual model in the eventuality of a return to more restrictive COVID-19 measures.



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12. Is Scouts Canada replacing in-person, outdoor meetings with virtual Scouting?

Keeping youth active and outdoors has been the core of our program for over 100 years and that will not change. However, given current restrictions, we have had to adapt. The benefits of Scouting go beyond outdoor activities. Leadership skills, community engagement, social connectivity and resilience are also key benefits of Scouting and occur through virtual meetings if we are creative and flexible. These skills are crucial during these unprecedented times.

Although we are as eager as you are to get back outdoors, we are equally committed to provide our youth with a quality program that will enable them to develop into well-rounded individuals despite current restrictions.

Throughout the summer, Scouts Canada will be developing a comprehensive and robust program to support virtual Section meetings that keep youth active and engaged in Scouting.

13. What about fundraising and Scout Popcorn?

We are currently evaluating different scenarios regarding Scout Popcorn and fundraising. We are encouraged by our online Scouts Seeds pilot campaign this spring. We will communicate our direction once we have more certainty. In the meantime, provincial social distancing guidelines should be followed with regards to fundraising activities.

14. What about bottle drives?

Bottle drives are not permitted at this time, as the potential risk of infection is high for this activity.

