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Scouts NSW Response to COVID-19 Rule Changes

Dear Leader,

From tomorrow, Friday 15 May, the NSW Government will ease some lockdown measures, based on health advice, and after the State reduced the number of COVID-19 cases to a manageable level.

For Scouts NSW, we are not yet ready for Groups to return to face to face Scouting.

There are a number of reasons for our decision, but our priority is the health and wellbeing of our members - youth and adults. We need to be comfortable that every Group is able to implement measures that keep their members safe from infection while at Scouts. We are therefore recommending that outdoor Scout gatherings do not proceed at this stage.

The Scouts NSW COVID-19 Task Force, whose members include experienced health professionals, has reviewed every aspect of the outdoors and indoors activities undertaken at Scouts, and has recommended that the current measures remain in place. Some of the reasons include:

- Children are not yet returning full-time to school. Most schools are enabling children to return for just one day a week, with significantly enhanced safety precautions around physical distancing.
- Outdoor gatherings have only been allowed for up to ten people at a time by the NSW State Government.
- Physical distancing measures must be maintained at all times.
- Regional travel and holidays are not yet allowed.
- Penalties apply for those that do not abide by the rules.

We are optimistic that Scouting will be able to resume within the next couple of months, if the NSW Government continues to ease the current restrictions. We are exploring a range of options, including how we handle contact tracing, physical distancing and hygiene measures while delivering Scouting.

We are giving priority for the arrangements for Scout outdoor activities. We know that these arrangements will be different from what we have been used to in the past, and it is imperative that our youth, leaders and families are kept safe while at Scouts.

For now, we encourage you to keep connected to your Groups through your weekly virtual Scout Hall activities, and the inspiring ideas available on [Scouting@Home](#). For those Leaders who are continuing to deliver Scouting to their youth members, we are all grateful for your outstanding efforts. You are offering young people an enduring connection to a program and a suite of activities they clearly love. Thank you for your creativity and personal resilience.

You can find updated information via the [Scouts Guide to Coronavirus](#) page on the Scouts NSW website - it contains lots of helpful materials.

We will continue to update you on these arrangements as they become available.

Yours in Scouting,

Neville Tomkins OAM JP
Chief Commissioner
Scouts Australia (NSW Branch)

To contact the Chief Commissioner, please email chief.commissioner@nsw.scouts.com.au.

Child Safety in Scouting

Scouts Australia NSW is committed to operating as a child safe organisation and implementing child safe policies and practices in accordance with the elements of a child safe institution outlined by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse report entitled Creating Child Safe Institutions.

Remember

All suspicions, concerns or allegations about criminal matters or child protection matters should be reported directly to the Chief Commissioner, the Deputy Chief Commissioner (Youth Safety, Compliance and Support), the CEO or the Child Protection Officer at the NSW State Office.

To make a report use the [online child protection form](#), call 02 9735 9000 or email childprotection@nsw.scouts.com.au.

Imminent Danger

If a young person is in imminent danger, the matter should be reported directly and immediately to NSW Police on 131 444.

Where a report is made to the police, you should also subsequently notify the NSW State Office.

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