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### Major Rolling Back of COVID-19 Restrictions

Dear all,

I am pleased to share the news with you that the NSW Government has announced a significant easing of COVID-19 restrictions, which come into effect from next Monday 7 December 2020.

This comes as great news for our Scout Groups across New South Wales, many of whom have had to make significant adjustments to their weekly program and outdoor activities throughout the year to accommodate the restrictions.

It also comes at a great time with the festive season fast approaching and as Groups look forward to their end of year gatherings and celebrations.

I am hopeful that the comprehensive submission from Scouts NSW to the NSW Government seeking variation to their previous rules had some impact on their decision.

#### Overview of Changes

From Monday 7 December 2020, the NSW Government will ease the following restrictions, placing our Groups, Districts, Regions, and other Formations another step closer to returning to the full complement of the Scouting program:

- Enforcement of the 1 person per 2 square metre rule in venues including indoor community facilities such as Scout Halls
- Up to 100 people allowed at outdoor gatherings (up from 50)
- Up to 3,000 people (including spectators) allowed at other outdoor events including those considered as community sport activities, subject to the 2sqm rule. In Scouting, the following activities fall into this category:
  - archery
  - bushwalking, hiking
  - boating (includes canoeing, kayaking, sailing, rafting, sailboarding)
  - challenge rope (includes crate stack, high ropes, low ropes and rope bridges. Note that temporary flying fox is currently prohibited)
  - cycling
  - fishing
  - orienteering
  - rock (includes natural and artificial abseil, bouldering, canyoning, caving and climbing)
  - scavenger hunt
  - swimming
- Up to 50 performers indoors (subject to the 2sqm rule), with no maximum cap outdoors. In Scouting, this applies to events such as Gang Shows.
- Up to 5,000 people at outdoor events that are fenced, ticketed and seated (subject to the 2sqm rule). In Scouting, this applies to events such as Peak Award Ceremonies.

In addition to these changes by the NSW Government, the Scouts NSW COVID-19 taskforce at its meeting on 2 December, made the decision to revise the requirements for provisional approvals for day activities located greater than 20 kilometres from the Scout Hall, as well as scheduled overnight activities.

From 4 December, Groups who organise day activities (including District activities) scheduled to take place beyond the 20 kilometre radius of their Scout Hall or regular meeting place are no longer required to submit a request for provisional approval.

Groups who organise scheduled overnight activities at Scouts NSW Activity Centres and Campsites with an approved COVID-19 Safety Plan are also no longer required to submit a request for provisional approval.

At present we are not requiring Groups to resubmit their COVID-19 Safety Plans. However, all Groups are advised to update signage indicating the maximum capacity at their Scout Hall or meeting place to reflect the 1 person per 2 square metre rule. Copies of this poster can be found [here](#).

Groups that have remained closed during the pandemic and now wish to reopen under these eased restrictions, will need to submit their [COVID-19 Safety Plan for Scout Hall](#) prior to opening. Similarly, Scout Camps and Activity Centres that have not yet re-opened will need to prepare the site and submit their [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#) [here](#).

#### The Road Forward

This significant rolling back of COVID-19 restrictions across New South Wales is a credit to the excellent work of the community, who have followed social distancing guidelines throughout the year.

While these changes provide a glimmer of a more normal Scouting experience, we all need to remain vigilant, maintain social distance and follow the COVID-19 Safety Plans we have in place to keep us all safe and healthy.

As we have seen over recent times, conditions and restrictions can change quickly, so I encourage you to continue visiting the [Scouting Guide to COVID-19](#) page on our website to stay up to date with announcements and their ramifications on Scouting activities.

We are grateful to each and every one of you for your patience and understanding over what has been the most trying of years.

As restrictions continue to ease, we look forward to the prospect of meeting and holding activities with the full number of youth members and adult leaders present in 2021.

In the meantime, if you have a question, please email [feedback@nsw.scouts.com.au](mailto:feedback@nsw.scouts.com.au).

With best wishes,

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](mailto:chief.commissioner@nsw.scouts.com.au).

#### Youth Safety in Scouting

Scouts 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 Scouts NSW State Office. To make a report use the [online youth protection form](#), call 02 9735 9000 or email [youthprotection@nsw.scouts.com.au](mailto:youthprotection@nsw.scouts.com.au).

#### Imminent Danger

If someone is in danger NOW, call 000. When a report is made to the Police, you must subsequently notify the Scouts NSW State Office.

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