



## **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

### **Safety Plan for SCOUTS South Africa**

**Approved Date:** 9 May 2022

**Effective Date:** 9 May 2022

**Review Date:** 30 June 2022

This is a living document and as regulations are issued by the South Africa Government, this document will be adapted. The latest version of the document will be on our website <https://www.scouts.org.za/members/covid-19-info-for-members/>

## 1. Policy Statement

SCOUTS South Africa (SSA) will respond to COVID-19 using the Regulation framework in terms of the National Health Act, 2003 as amended by the Minister of Health. Our response will be implemented at a National, Regional, District, and Group level for all Adult and Youth Members.

SSA is a values-based organisation that needs to set an example by emphasising a sense of responsibility towards the community and society. We have an obligation to curb the spread of the virus and keep ourselves and our fellow South Africans safe.

While we recommend and encourage members to get vaccinated to assist in reducing the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic impact on themselves and the healthcare system, we recognise the rights of individual members to decline to be vaccinated. There is no mandate nor requirement that all members must be vaccinated to participate in Scouting activities. Furthermore, as vaccination does not provide immunity to COVID-19, we **still require all members**, whether unvaccinated, partly vaccinated or fully vaccinated to comply with all the guidelines as detailed in this document.

Participation in all SSA activities is on an 'opt in' basis, and nobody should feel pressured to do so if they feel that this may put them at increased risk of being infected.

To deal with queries regarding these guidelines, an email [covid@scouts.org.za](mailto:covid@scouts.org.za) has been created. This email can be used to seek clarification of the regulations or advice. This email is not to be used for authorisation of activities. The decision-making powers for activities are spelled out in this document. If you are not satisfied with a decision made, you may appeal to the next-in-line Scouter.

## 2. Purpose

This document is intended to provide the guidance to members to implement the guidelines as set out by the SA Government, in continuing to manage the COVID-19 pandemic. As the new normal sets in, we urge that all SSA members be informed of the policies and act according to the procedures as laid out in this document.

An explanation of SSA's key principles to limit the potential spread of COVID-19 during our activities (the 3Ds) is included in Appendix 1.

## 3. Applies To

The policy targets the following groups:

- All Groups, Districts, Regions and National Levels.
- All Adult and Youth Members, visitors and parents involved in SSA activities.

## 4. Policy Details

This policy is subject to the provisions of any regulations as issued by the Minister of Health, the National COVID-19 Command Council, the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, the President and relevant government departments.

At this stage the response to the pandemic is being managed by the regulations to the National Health Act as updated to deal with the COVID-19 Pandemic. These updated regulations include:

- Gazette 46319 of 4 May

## 5. The Fundamental Rules

- All participants to wear masks at all times, when indoors or while being transported, except when eating a snack or drinking water.
- Every meeting point shall ensure that a bottle of hand sanitizer or soap and water is available for the use of those who inhabit those spaces.
- Social distancing of 1m should be maintained between individuals where possible.
- Stay out of confined spaces, ensuring good ventilation, and first prize, stay outdoors for activities as much as possible.
- No gathering may have more than 1,000 participants indoors and 2,000 outdoors (including all youth and adults participating) or 50% the greatest permissible occupancy of the venue, whichever is the smaller. See the section on Occupancy Certificates below for details.
- No Adult or Youth Member will attend any Scouting event if they feel unwell. If this is the case, they will inform their Scouters accordingly and not attend the event.
- While there is no longer an obligation to have a specific COVID-19 register or record of all participants at a meeting and/or activity, the usual attendance registers and consent forms must be maintained as a means of advising and assisting members should a case of infection occur relating to that meeting, activity or event.

## 6. School Groups

School groups are governed under the framework as published by the Department of Basic Education. Sports and extra-mural activities (like Scouting) are permitted to take place under the Department's guidelines. In addition, the SSA rules should be applied where practically possible.

## 7. Meeting places

Units must take steps to ensure that any SSA facility under their control is used in accordance with the regulations as published from time-to-time by the Minister of Health.

- No venue may exceed 50% of its capacity (see occupancy certificate below for more details);
- No indoor venue may exceed 1,000 people and no outdoor venue may exceed 2,000 people unless all attendees produce proof of vaccination, or a negative Covid-19 test in accordance with the regulations issued by the Ministry of Health;
- To avoid complications unless there are compelling reasons to do so no indoor venue should exceed 1,000 people and no outdoor venue should exceed 2,000 people, in which case the written permission of the Regional Commissioner should be obtained.

## 8. Occupancy Certificate

Each facility needs to display a certificate of occupancy, see link for the certificate here: [https://www.scouts.org.za/wp-content/uploads/Covid-19\\_CapacityComplianceCertificate-1.pdf](https://www.scouts.org.za/wp-content/uploads/Covid-19_CapacityComplianceCertificate-1.pdf).

Occupancy for the entire facility, as well as for each building and outdoor space needs to be specified. For assistance in calculating the occupancy for a building, please refer to Appendix 2.

## **9. Camping Overnight Activities**

Overnight camping creates a number of unique challenges to the principles contained in the 3D's, and all precautions need to be put in place to safeguard our members. Wherever possible, members are encouraged to make provision for each person to sleep in their own tent or shelter. We recommend no sharing of such tents/shelters, except by members of the same family living in the same household, to limit the possibility of exposure to infection. Where tents or shelters are used, there should be sufficient space between these to comply with the social distancing rules and manage exposure.

If tents are to be shared by non-family members, this must not exceed 50% of the person capacity that the tent was designed to accommodate. Where tents are to be shared, the express written permission of the parent / guardian of any youth members sharing a tent must first be obtained.

Likewise, adult members must be consulted where there is a need to share accommodation arrangements (i.e., on training courses or overnight activities). By sharing accommodation with another SSA member, adult members are deemed to have consented to the risks associated with this from a Covid-19 perspective.

## **10. Hostel Accommodation**

Hostel accommodation may be used to its full capacity, provided that where non-related youth members are sharing accommodation, the express written consent of their parents / guardian should be obtained acknowledging and allowing such sharing of accommodation.

## **11. Service of Food to Members**

The preparation and serving of food is an important part of the SSA programme. Activity leaders must consider the 3Ds and limiting any potential Covid-19 risks, during such an activity. Buffet or self-service type meals are discouraged, and rather meals should be either served or provided as pre-plated options.

## **12. Campsites**

To be recognised and classified as an accommodation facility, campsites must issue an invoice to those making use of the facility. The Warden of the campsite must ensure compliance with the Regulations on the property, including:

- Setting out an occupancy certificate;
- Requiring all guests to wear facemasks when in indoor, public areas.

## **13. COVID Symptoms Screening and Isolation**

The government regulations for symptoms and isolation need to be followed. This can be found at: <https://www.gov.za/covid-19/about> .

It is also important for the responsible adult leader or activity leader to consider how they will respond should a member present COVID-19 symptoms either on arrival or during a meeting and/or activity. While the COVID-19 screening questionnaire is no longer required, basic visual symptom screening on arrival, or direct verbal questioning or confirmation the person is not feeling unwell, is recommended. Likewise, should a member become sick, and display COVID-19 like symptoms

during the meeting or activity, they should be isolated from the group immediately and checked by the responsible First Aider / medical personnel.

**14. Resources referred to in this policy:**

- <https://www.gov.za/coronavirus/guidelines>
- <https://www.scouts.org.za/wp-content/uploads/Always-Wear-a-Mask-COVID-19-Poster-v2.pdf>
- <https://www.scouts.org.za/wp-content/uploads/Wash-Hands-Regularly-COVID-19-Poster.pdf>
- <https://www.scouts.org.za/wp-content/uploads/Keep-Your-Distance-COVID-19-Poster-v2.pdf>
- <https://www.scouts.org.za/wp-content/uploads/SSA-CORONA-AWARENESS-HALL-POSTERSFINAL.pdf>

## **APPENDIX 1: The Key Principles to Limit the Spread of Covid-19 (3Ds)**

SSA supports the concept of prevention through the three D's – Dosage, Distance and Dispersion. If in doubt about an activity or action, refer back to the 3D's and work through the logic of them:

**Dosage** - All Members are encouraged to wear facemasks (preferably of a N-95 or similar make) when attending Scouting events. Adult and Youth Members must wear facemasks when indoors, including in large, communal tents. Members must provide their own re-useable mask. These will be worn at all times when indoors. Ensure that masks are disposed of correctly and in an environmentally safe manner (if they are disposable) and rewashed daily if they re-washable.

To become infected, you need to have contact with a minimum dose, which takes time and exposure to people with the virus. So, we recommend limiting the time spent in contact with other people to minimise the exposure to possible infection. We also recommend all participants ensure the proper sanitising /washing of hands takes place before and after activities.

**Distance** – Social distancing should be encouraged particularly when indoors. Distancing means that you are less likely to be infected by someone else. This means physical contact (e.g. shaking hands) should be kept to a minimum and keeping a distance of 1m between people. While Schools no longer require social distancing amongst learners, SSA believes that we should continue to implement appropriate social distancing in our activities, where practically possible. We acknowledge that some activities (e.g. training or demonstration) may require limited duration closer contact, and in such circumstances the wearing of face masks and normal disinfection protection must be observed

**Dispersion** – Activities in the outdoors are encouraged. SSA is of the opinion that indoor activities should be kept to a minimum, where practically possible. Small, enclosed spaces with closed windows are high risk, especially when they are crowded. We therefore recommend staying out of confined spaces, ensuring good ventilation, and first prize, staying outdoors as much as possible.

## **APPENDIX 2: How to Calculate the Occupancy Certificate**

Occupation is calculated as follows:

- Full capacity = 1sqm/person
- Seating capacity = 4sqm/person

Example: Space of 90sqm

- Full capacity = 90 people
- Seating capacity = 22 people

In the case of oddly shaped spaces when determining the occupancy of the space in question care must be taken when determining the 50% occupancy of the room to ensure that people in the space can have at least 1m between themselves and other occupants of the space. The maximum number of attendees at any Scout venue is to be determined based on the largest available gathering space, and according to the type of activity being contemplated.

The occupancy certificate should specify the maximum capacity of the venue (i.e. 50% of the full capacity).