

COVID-19 Special Scouts@Info Edition 27

Hello Members,

As many of you will be aware, last Friday the Premier and Minister for Health announced Western Australia's full border opening on Thursday, 3 March and with this it will naturally mean there will be greater spread of the COVID-19 virus in WA.

At the same time, it is evident that our daily case numbers are accelerating due to the Omicron outbreak, and it is likely the current size and pace will continue to accelerate. As a result, the State Government is introducing new public health and social measures from 6am today, Monday 21st of February, 2022.

Effective 6.00am Monday, all regions in WA will have the indoor mask requirement, as well as the existing proof of vaccination and contact registration requirements. **This means that masks must be worn indoors, and outdoors where social distancing is not possible. This is currently for high school aged students and above unless they carry evidence of their approved medical exemption.**

A new Level One measures for Perth, Peel, the South West, Great Southern, Wheatbelt and Pilbara regions also came into force at 6.00am today and may be expand to other regions as cases are identified in the community.

Level One measures include the introduction of the 2sqm rule for a number of venues including "community, recreation or youth centre facilities". This will include all Scout Halls in the affected regions. Group Leaders and Group Councils should review the restrictions for their state government region and

The full details of the **Level One** measures can be found at <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/covid-19-coronavirus/covid-19-coronavirus-what-you-can-and-cant-do>

The Scouts WA COVID-19 Action Group predicts that the State or some regions, may move to **Level Two** restriction within several weeks, and Group Leaders and Group Councils should start to prepare for these restrictions as well.

Along with a number of other restrictions, Level Two measures introduce 2sqm rule for outdoor activities and a 4sqm rule for "community, recreation or youth centre facilities". Masks will also be required for people aged 8 years and over (year 3 and over for schools) everywhere indoors, other than in the home, and unless an exemption applies.

Full details of Level Two measures can also be found at the above link.

With regards to Camping in tents the Scouts WA COVID-19 Action Group advises that the 2sqm rule will apply to your region when Level One or Level Two measures are enforced.

Groups and Events/Training Activities that are using dormitory accommodation should contact the venue to discuss what restrictions they will have in place and how it will affect their event.

All Scouts WA Adventure Centres have strict hygiene and COVID-19 Safety plans in place.

Camping advice for Scout groups is taken from public health directions which differs from the Department of Education's Safe Return to School Plan. The Scouts WA COVID-19 Action Group acknowledges that all Scouting activities carry some risk including the risk of transmission of infectious diseases. **There is certainly no requirement for activities to go ahead or for members to attend, and alterations to activities may need to occur.**

Groups and Units may want to consider scheduling camps and sleepover activities away from the anticipated April/May case peaks.

Vaccination is not mandatory for participation in Scouting activities, except as required by public health directions. In line with the World Organisation of the Scout Movement's message, vaccination is certainly something Scouts WA encourages but understands this remains a decision for young people and their families.

All Scout Groups should implement Level One measures, Level Two measures, and the above Camping requirements as they change in your State Government region.

Group Leader and Group Councils should review and display their COVID-19 Action Plans, and ensure the use of the SafeWA and ServiceWA contact registration requirements.

A reminder for all activities:

- Encourage hand sanitation/cleaning on arrival.
- **Remind everyone (parents and youth members) that no one should attend when sick.**
- 1.5m physical distance recommendation remains, including in lining up, activities, opening/closing.
- Clean high touch areas and a regular basis.

Any changes to restrictions will be reviewed by the Scouts WA COVID-19 Action Group and updates provided as indicated.

Group Leaders and Sections Leaders should contact their District Commissioner or Regional Chief Commissioner with any questions.

Ayden Mackenzie

Chief Commissioner

Scouts WA