

Girl Scout Camp Q&A: Measles Safety in South Carolina

Is Girl Scout camp still happening as scheduled?

Yes. All camps (Camp Cathy, Camp Mary Elizabeth, and Camp WaBak) are operating as planned. We will be following the American Camp Association (ACA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) summer camp guidance, including preseason planning, health protocols, immunity documentation, and isolation procedures to keep campers safe.

Why is measles a part of the registration conversation/health form?

Measles is highly contagious, up to 9 in 10 unprotected people can become infected when exposed. Summer camps are settings where children and adults play closely together, and this increases the risk of spreading. South Carolina is experiencing a large, ongoing outbreak with hundreds of cases, primarily in Upstate regions.

Who can attend camp?

All girls are welcome, regardless of Girl Scout membership status. Girl Scouts and nonmembers may register. As part of our safety and prevention efforts, all of our Summer Camps follow [South Carolina Department of Public Health's \(SCDPH\) Vaccine Requirements](#) for K-12 programs. Each attendee must provide a copy of their immunization record, and dates of the most recent Tetanus and MMR vaccines. Those with medical or religious exemptions as outlined by [SCDPH](#) are required to upload a copy of their exemption form.

What steps are Girl Scouts of South Carolina-Mountains to Midlands taking *before* the summer begins to prevent measles from spreading?

Per CDC guidance, Girl Scouts will:

- Maintain immunity documentation for campers and staff
- Train staff to identify symptoms
- Prepare mask and isolation procedures
- Prepare an isolated, ventilated space for use during camp
- Communicate health requirements early to families

Should my child receive additional vaccines before camp?

The two dose MMR vaccine is recommended for best protection (97% effective). Families should discuss questions with their healthcare provider, and the SC Department of Public Health (SCDPH) provides additional vaccination guidance.

Can my child still attend if we choose not to vaccinate?

Yes, as long as they meet the requirements accepted by [SCDPH](#) for medical or religious exemptions and upload a copy of their exemption form.

How will Girl Scouts keep shared spaces (cabins, dining hall, program areas) safe?

We will have masks and designated isolation spaces for anyone suspected of having measles. and we will encourage those who feel sick to stay home. We will also consistently monitor campers for symptoms.

If we experience an outbreak, we will follow CDC guidelines to include: After a person with measles symptoms leaves the isolation space, it will remain vacant for at least two hours. Then, the staff will clean and disinfect the space with an EPA-registered disinfectant per CDC's recommendations.

What happens if a staff member—not a camper—gets measles?

We will notify all potentially exposed individuals. Our staff must provide the same immunization documentation as our campers.

What symptoms should I watch for before camp begins and what should I do if my child(ren) is sick before camp?

Early symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes
- A rash appearing 3–5 days later, beginning on the face and spreading downward.

Keep your child(ren) at home and call your healthcare provider if they show fever, cough, runny nose, red/watery eyes, or rash. We ask that your child(ren) remain at home until they are cleared by a medical professional.

What will Girl Scouts do if a camper shows symptoms onsite?

We will immediately*:

- Give the camper a well-fitting mask
- Move them to a designated isolation space
- Contact their caregiver for prompt pickup

**These steps come directly from CDC's "first 10 minutes" action list for camps.*

Will families be notified if there is a measles exposure at camp?

Yes. In coordination with the SCDPH, we use CDC's official notification templates to inform families. Messages differ depending on whether a camper was:

- Exposed but immune, or
- Exposed and not immune (may require up to 21 days away from camp).

How will you communicate medical updates during the camp season?

If a camper in your girl's unit or group becomes ill, we will first confirm details directly with that camper's family, including symptoms and diagnosis, *before* sharing any information more broadly.

If your girl shows symptoms (fever, cough, etc.) and needs to go home we will:

- Notify you immediately
- Ask that your girl be evaluated by your healthcare provider
- Follow up with you afterward to see how your girl is feeling and if a diagnosis has been made
- **Measles can only be confirmed through laboratory testing**

If we receive a confirmed measles diagnosis, we will communicate promptly and clearly:

- An email will go out to all families whose girls are attending/attended camp that week
- The email will outline:
 - What happened
 - The level of risk
 - Any next steps or precautions
 - Guidance recommended by public health officials

Our goal is to ensure every family receives the information that's relevant to their girl's specific situation.

Could my child be excluded from camp due to measles exposure?

Possibly. If public health determines your child was exposed and does not have immunity, they may need to stay home for up to 21 days after last exposure to prevent spread. This is part of CDC's standard measles response protocol.

What happens if my child gets measles and cannot attend camp?

If your child is unable to attend due to a measles diagnosis, you have two options: (1) We can transfer the registration to a different week of camp; or, (2) if we cannot find a week that works, we will issue a refund with appropriate documentation from a medical provider. Please contact customer@gscc-mm.org or **1-800-849-GIRL** in the event this occurs.