



THE BOYS' BRIGADE & GIRLS' ASSOCIATION REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

COVID-19 Response Plan

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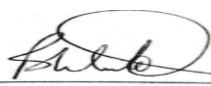
COVID-19 Policy Statement

The Boys' Brigade in the Republic of Ireland is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff and leaders and a safe environment for all our members. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan. The Management Committee and all leaders are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus. We will:

- continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our leaders
- provide up to date information to our staff and leaders on the Public Health advice issued by the relevant authorities
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct hand-washing techniques
- inform all staff, Leaders and children of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt our programme and activities to facilitate physical distancing in line with Government Guidelines
- keep attendance records at all activities to help with contact tracing
- ensure all staff and Leaders engage with induction / familiarisation briefing in line with Youth Sector guidance
- develop a procedure to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at BB activities
- provide instructions for staff and leaders to follow if they or any children develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during work
- implement cleaning in line with government advice

All staff and leaders will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions.

Signed:



President

Date: 25/08/2020

The Response Plan

This Response Plan has been developed by The Boys' Brigade in line with guidance issued by the Government and Youth Sector in The Republic of Ireland to support a safe return to face-to-face activities. This Response plan **applies to Companies in the Republic of Ireland** and will support Companies in:

- understanding the **staged approach** to returning to face-to-face activities
- assessing **hazards and risks** related to Covid-19 and putting **control measures in place** for everyone to follow
- completing the **approval process** to be 'Covid-19 Ready'
- **clearly communicating** with parents/guardians, children & young people and leaders

The Response Plan should be used in conjunction with **the latest Government and Youth Sector and Education guidance** as well as **existing Brigade policies and procedures** (i.e. safeguarding, health and safety, etc).

The following documents form part of our Response Plan:

Guidance

Our Guidance will provide an overview of how the Response Plan should be implemented including how to follow our 'Staged Approach' to returning to face-to-face activities. It will also support leaders in completing the Company Action Log and Covid-19 Ready Risk Assessment by providing guidance to support the planning of a high-quality programme that reflects the need to be able to keep everyone safe.

Company Action Log

This document is a checklist to help leaders ensure they have actioned everything necessary to aid a safe return to face-to-face activities.

Covid-19 Ready Risk Assessment

The template risk assessment needs to be reviewed and completed based on your local plans for returning to face-to-face activities.

The template risk assessment identifies common hazards and the risks they present, with suggestions for control measures which could be put in place. Leaders will need to complete the risk assessment by reviewing what control measures need to be put in place and ensuring these are actioned (i.e. putting up appropriate signage at the venue, etc).

Resources

Ready-to-use activities for all age groups are being provided to support leaders in delivering face-to-face socially distanced activities alongside the provision of resources to support #BBatHOME Virtual Sessions where face-to-face activities are not possible. Leaders will also find a range of additional resources available online including sample letters to send to parents/guardians and posters.

While the guidance and resources will expand and improve over time, the framework will remain consistent.

ALL Leaders-in-Charge of Age Groups and Company Captains/Correspondents are expected to read the framework and guidance; and be involved in reviewing and completing the **Company Action Log** and **Covid-19 Ready Risk Assessment**.

This document will be updated as guidance changes, please check the Coronavirus Update page on the BB website regularly for updates at: <https://boysbrigade.ie/Covid-19>

Staged Approach

A key part of our framework is our Staged Approach to returning to face-to-face activities, which is flexible and will provide clarity to Companies over what activities should be taking place at any given time.

As an organisation we will move through these stages in line with current Government and Youth Sector guidance. Please note flexibility includes the possibility that we may need to return to a previous stage.

Stages	Activities	Description
1	Face-to-Face (socially distanced) Activities & Virtual Sessions	Running Leader led face-to-face (socially distanced) activities at your meeting space or other suitable location where possible. As an alternative, running Leader led Virtual Sessions online to maintain regular engagement with Members.
2	Face-to-Face Activities	Returning to face-to-face activities at your meeting space, without any social distancing measures in line with current Government Guidelines. This will also see the return to offering visits and Residential opportunities as part of our programmes.

BB Companies will **Not** be able to return to face-to-face activities until advised by **The Management Committee** and the *approval* process has been completed.

To enable leaders to get together to plan and prepare for returning to face-to-face activities, **leaders will be permitted to meet from 1st August**. Such meetings must follow current social distancing guidelines.

Check the current stage we are operating regularly at : <https://boysbrigade.ie/Covid-19>
In the event that local lockdown measures are imposed where your BB Company meets you must follow the local guidance in place.

Preparing to Restart

As we prepare for a return to face-to-face activities, there are specific things leaders will need to do ahead of being able to restart.

We know that circumstances for all our volunteer leaders will be different, some may be key workers, others may be cocooning, and we know that this could impact on the timescales for returning to face-to-face activities.

Companies should not automatically seek to return to face-to-face activities as soon as possible, as in the short term the safest and most appropriate approach may be to deliver the programme remotely through Virtual Sessions and/or #BBatHOME activities.

Companies are encouraged to consult leaders, parents/guardians and children & young people about plans to return to face-to-face activities.

We would encourage leaders to **start planning for a return to face-to-face activities at the earliest opportunity**, so that as and when it is safe and there is local readiness to restart face-to-face activities Companies will be in a position to do so. This is based on anticipating that it will take several weeks for leaders to meet as a staff team, review the Response plan and guidance, put control measures in place and complete the approval process to be 'Covid-19 Ready'.

It is important to note that completing the approval process and being ready to return to face-to-face activities does not necessarily mean you must or need to re-start face-to-face activities immediately.

Companies may wish to consider how their plans offer a gradual and phased return to face-to-face activities that will enable continued support for the most vulnerable families and ensure the programme being offered is accessible to all.

In considering the return to face-to-face activities **the following MUST be in place:**

- Ability to meet **Government and Youth Sector and Education guidance** in line with how this is applied to BB activities.
- Ability to meet **existing Brigade policies and procedures** including safeguarding, managing risk, etc
- **Risks to leaders, children and young people**

and the community can be managed.

- Ability to **maintain social distancing**.
- Ability to **ensure hygiene levels are maintained**, including frequent hand washing and enhanced cleaning arrangements.
- **Contingency planning** to be able to return to a previous stage.

You will also need to review and implement additional controls above and beyond the BB Response plan to ensure you comply with guidelines issued by:

- **Local Church** – it is important that at an early stage there is dialogue with the local Church and Leaders will need to request risk assessments and follow any guidelines and control measures issued by the Church.
- **Meeting Space** – if the venue where your activities will take place is not part of your Church you will need to request risk assessments and follow any guidelines issued by the venue.

For example, where a Local Church or Venue requires something above and beyond what is set out by the BB framework or guidance then the BB Company **MUST** follow this.

As part of considerations for restarting and moving through the approval process leaders should consider the activities that they will offer and should be confident that a high-quality programme can be delivered whilst maintaining social distancing and other control measures. Guidelines and advice to support leaders in programme planning and running activities can be found in this guidance (see page 9).

We are fully **aware that Government guidance is changing regularly**, and we want to assure leaders that we will be reviewing our guidance in accordance with these changes.

To enable Companies to make final preparations and manage expectations we will where possible provide 2 weeks' notice of any changes to the stage we are operating at and set out at that point specific guidance for your District.

You can check the current stage we are operating at online at any time at <https://boysbrigade.ie/Covid-19>

See **step by step process** that Companies should follow to help them prepare for a return to face-to-face activities on page 7.

District Activities

Where a District wishes to run an event or activity, please contact Rol HQ to ascertain the correct procedures to follow.

Step by Step Process for Preparing to Restart

The **step by step process** that Companies should follow to help them prepare for a return to face- to-face activities:



Approval to Restart

All Companies will be required to be '**Covid-19 Ready**' before being able to restart face-to-face BB activities.

Being '**Covid-19 Ready**' means having:

- reviewed and understood the **BB Response Plan and Guidance**
- completed the **Covid-19 Ready Risk Assessment** (for each age group)
- completed the **Company Action Log**
- completed the **Local Approval Process**

Whilst the **Company Action Log** is completed at a Company level, a **Covid-19 Ready Risk Assessment** **MUST** be completed for each age group reflecting the differences in the programme, age, ability etc of the children and young people.

Part of the **process will involve consulting with the local Church** in relation to the Parish hall **or local school** in relation to the school hall to ascertain their requirements of The BB Company as they meet on their premises.

The local approval process will require sign-off from the following leadership roles:

- **Company Captain/ Correspondent**
- **Leader or Officer in Charge** of each age group

It is recommended that a copy of the completed Covid-19 Ready Risk Assessment and Company Action log be provided to the local **Church/School** where BB will be taking place.

Once the approval process has been completed, the Company will be ready to restart face-to-face activities as and when Boys' Brigade activities in the Republic of Ireland can recommence

Approval is **NOT** required at District/Regional level although BB RoI Headquarters may carry out compliance checks on a sample of Companies.

Therefore please ensure that all documents are available on request.

A reminder, that you should **regularly review your risk assessment and the control measures** in place based on current guidelines and changing circumstances (ie, moving from virtual to face to face activities or outdoor to indoor activities). Each time your risk assessment is reviewed you should use the update log on the final page of the risk assessment.

Guiding Principle for Safety in the Company

It is the duty of the Company Captain/Correspondent to satisfy himself/herself that all individuals who are given any element of responsibility for children and young people are competent.

He/she must also be satisfied that in all activities due consideration is given to the safety of children, young people and leaders.

Online Resources

Check out a range of online resources to support your return to face-to-face activities at:

<https://boysbrigade.ie/Covid-19>



To support the staged approach to returning to face-to-face

Guidance on Planning and Running Activities

Practical Guidance to support Leaders

The guidance in this section will help you to prepare and plan for the practical side of returning to face-to-face activities whether indoors or outdoors. The guidance covers a wide range of factors and questions that should be considered as you come together as a staff team.

As well as following the response plan and guidance to become “Covid-19 ready”, you will need to continue to put in place risk assessments for the overall programme and individual activities, as normal.

A reminder that you should also continue to follow all other existing Brigade Policies and Procedures.

To support the staged approach to returning to face-to face activities, the Brigade is producing a range of programme resources to support Leaders, including ready-to-use activities. More details about the programme being delivered for the Autumn Term can be found on page 27.

COVID-19 & Symptoms

We still don't know exactly how COVID-19 spreads from person to person. Although it is clear that people can become infected when droplets land directly on them or they touch contaminated objects or surfaces.

The **main symptoms** of coronavirus are:

- **A fever (high temperature – 38 degrees Celsius or above)**
- **A cough** – this can be any kind of cough, not just dry
- **Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties**
- **A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Most people with coronavirus have at least 1 of these symptoms. Individuals with symptoms **must self-isolate** and should **NOT** attend BB face-to-face activities for at least 14 days. Also, any person living with someone who is self-isolating or waiting a COVID-19 test must restrict their movements for 14 days. It should be noted that recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

You can reduce your risk of getting and spreading the infection by:

- Avoiding direct hand contact with eyes, nose and mouth
- Maintaining good hand hygiene
- Avoiding direct contact with people who have a respiratory illness and avoid using their personal items e.g. a mobile phone
- Covering your nose and mouth with the inside of your elbow if you cough or sneeze, or use a disposable tissue which you then dispose of in the nearest bin
- Following social distancing measures
- Self-isolating if you, or a member of your family, have symptoms, or if you have been contacted by a contact tracer as having been in contact with someone else who has been confirmed as having the virus.

Note: The use of disposable gloves is **NOT** recommended except when carrying out cleaning, the wearing of face coverings at BB face-to-face activities is not necessary when social distancing can be maintained, however if social distancing cannot be maintained it is advised that face coverings may be necessary. Please find more information about face coverings on page 11.

Further advice on symptoms and mitigation's can be found at: <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>

Managing Numbers & Groups

Leaders will need to assess the number of individuals (including children, young people and leaders) that can be safely accommodated for face-to-face activities at any one time.

The following factors will be important in determining group size and how you plan your programme:

- Anchors are not expected to maintain social distancing however leaders should try to ensure 2m social distancing with Anchors, where this is not possible Leaders should wear face masks.
- Junior Section and Company Section are expected to maintain 2m social distancing, where this is not possible Leaders and Company Section should wear face masks.
- Maximum permitted group size, including leaders as per Government Guidance and venue capacity.
- Number of leaders available to lead or support activities.
- The setting (or venue) and whether it is indoors or outdoors.
- Ability to manage enhanced cleaning.
- Ability to manage personal hygiene (i.e. washing hands regularly).
- Working in smaller 'self-contained' groups.
- Planning for full participation from children & young people.

Leaders should consider:

- What the maximum group size is based on current social distancing guidelines? This should not necessarily be the maximum allowed but based on your assessment of all factors above.
- Breaking sections into smaller groups (pods) with the same leaders working with a pod throughout the meeting. Leaders should not move between pods. Can a pod do all their activities in one room rather than moving around building? Can larger rooms be divided up to accommodate a number of pods?
- How to split children, young people and leaders into appropriate group sizes, where you cannot accommodate everyone in one group, based on maximum group size? Working as smaller 'self-contained' groups will reduce the risk of infection spread especially if the group uses the same space throughout the meeting. Where possible avoid groups moving around and using different spaces, where is necessary the space MUST be cleaned between usage.
- Do you need to change the time you start or finish activities or the day you meet? This may be necessary to remove any crossover between age groups and create opportunities for different groups to meet face-to-face when it would not otherwise be possible on one night.
- Could you offer a blended approach to programming with face-to-face activities one week and a Virtual Session the next week? This would allow a larger group to be split in two to enable all children and young people to have the opportunity to attend face-to-face activities every other week.

The Meeting Space

Leaders will need to consider the appropriate setting to be used as a meeting space for a return to face-to-face activities in line with determining the maximum group size.

The following factors will be important in determining the most appropriate meeting space:

- Current social distancing guidelines and ability to maintain this.
- Dialogue with Church and or provider of the meeting space.
- Availability and maximum capacity.
- Sufficient locations within the meeting space for 'self-contained' groups to meet separately.
- Reviewing Risk assessment – identifying the hazards and control measures in place.
- In using indoor spaces, remember to only use large and well-ventilated spaces.
- Enhanced cleaning is in place before and after activities.
- Access to hand washing and cleaning equipment.
- Clear signage throughout the meeting space.

Leaders should consider:

- Does the maximum capacity for the meeting space impact on maximum group size? The maximum group size will need to be lowered if it is higher than the maximum capacity for the intended meeting space.
- Is the normal meeting space the most appropriate setting/venue to run face-to-face socially distanced activities? Use of an alternative indoor meeting space or outdoor space should be considered. Consider the use of outdoor spaces where multiple groups could operate as separate groups at the same time.
- Are there additional control measures put in place by the setting/venue that need to be added to the BB Covid-19 Ready Risk Assessment? Request a copy of the risk assessment for your setting/venue and review this and incorporate control measures into your risk assessment.
- How can you best use the space you have available? Consider how you allocate spaces to specific groups and how groups move around the meeting space - maintaining social distancing.
- Is appropriate signage already in place to help maintain social distancing? Consider use of one-way systems and additional signage.

The Meeting/Programme

The structure of the meeting and programme planning is always important in the delivery of youth and children's work, and leaders will need to review the existing programme as part of preparations to return to face-to-face activities.

The following factors will be important in delivering a high-quality programme:

- The frequency and period of time you meet together.
- The format of your meeting.
- Involving children, young people and leaders in shaping the programme.
- Setting expectations for children, young people and parents/guardians.

Leaders should consider:

- Will you be able to meet every week? Could you meet for a shorter period initially as part of a gradual return to face-to-activities? This could help to build confidence for both children & young people and leaders, reducing the time the group is together will reduce the opportunity for infection spread.
- Do you change the structure of your meeting? For example, planning in hand hygiene breaks so that children, young people, and leaders can wash their hands in between activities.
- Are there things you would normally do that are no longer possible?
- Where a number of sections meet in one venue, one after the other on the same day, leave a minimum of 30 minutes between groups to allow for cleaning of high frequency points (door handles, bathroom facilities, equipment, kitchen facilities etc).
- Having children arrive in their uniform or appropriate clothing for activity to avoid use of enclosed settings like changing rooms.
- Could you ask your children and young people which activities they have been missing the most? Consider how you can incorporate them into your programme.
- Creating opportunities for leaders to come together to share ideas and help plan for your return.
- How will you set the expectations of members for your return? Make sure they are aware of what the programme will look like and what will be on offer through communication in advance of the first meeting. Also consider what briefing you will provide for children and young people when they arrive for the first meeting back.

Managing Drop-off/Pick-up

There will be increased risks during drop-off and pick-up times, and due consideration should be given to the logistics involved in keeping everyone safe.

The following factors will be important in managing the logistics for drop-off and pick-up:

- Clear communication with parents/guardian and children and young people in advance.
- Maintaining social distancing.
- Minimising exchange of items between home/BB.
- Reducing the number of people involved in drop-off/pick-up.

Leaders should consider:

- Do you need to stagger times for drop-off and pick-up and/or could you use separate doors for arrivals and departures? This could help avoid too many people arriving at the same time and/or through the same space.
- Could you ask parents to hand over children at door rather than entering premises at drop off?
- Could leaders return children to parents at door or walk children out to parents in their cars at pick up time to reduce contacts and numbers enter premises?
- Do you need to mark out or provide signage to help maintain social distancing? It will help to set expectations from the moment children and young people arrive.
- Could you ask parents/guardians to avoid bringing siblings during drop-off or pick-up? This will be important in reducing the risk of infection spread.
- Could you ask the parents/guardians to call when they are outside, and you can let them know when they are able to come into the Parish hall safely?

Our Responsibility to Leaders

As well as a responsibility to children and young people, we also have a responsibility to our leaders in keeping them safe and ensuring they are supported and involved in preparing for a return to face-to-face activities.

The following factors will be important in making sure leaders are safe and feel supported:

- Number of leaders available to lead and support activities.
- Vulnerable persons (ie; those shielding) should be advised not to attend face-to-face activities.
- Opportunities for leaders to be involved in planning.
- Pastoral support and training for leaders.
- Appropriate briefing and awareness of control measures before restarting face-to-face activities.
- COVID-19 Induction Training
This can either be the Youth Sector specific training provided online by DCYA/NYCI or COVID-19 induction training done in conjunction with a leader's profession. <https://learning.youth.ie/courses/covid-19-induction-session-for-youth-sector/>
- Completion of Return to Volunteering Forms- This must be completed by all Leaders 3 days in advance of re-opening activities. <https://boysbrigade.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Return-to-Volunteering-form.docx>

Leaders should consider:

- Which leaders will be available to lead and support activities? How will this impact your return to face-to-face activities in the short and long term?
- How will you communicate with and involve all leaders in the planning for face-to-face activities? You are encouraged to hold a staff meeting as part of your preparations to return, from 1st August 2020 leaders are able to meet together providing they follow social distancing guidelines.
- What opportunities are available to leaders who do not wish to return to face-to-face activities straight away, to keep them involved? Are there roles behind the scenes that they could help with including programme planning, administration, etc.
- What support are you providing to leaders returning to BB activities after an extended break?
- Where working in 'self-contained' groups, which leaders will be working with specific groups? Who will take the responsibility for that group? The roles leaders have in supporting specific groups will be important, as leaders will **NOT** be able to move between groups during the same meeting. Leaders can work with different groups meeting on different days (i.e. Anchors on Monday and Juniors on Wednesday).

Hygiene and Cleaning

One of the most effective ways of reducing risk for Covid-19 is with good hygiene practices. Groups will need to ensure they implement and continue hygiene procedures before, during and after BB activities.

The following factors will be important in maintaining good hygiene:

- Cleaning of the meeting space before arrival of children and young people (including cleaning of spaces between groups, if multiple groups will use the same space)
- All leaders should maintain good hygiene and hand washing and encourage children and young people to do likewise:
- Wash your hand properly and often. Hand should be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (or with hand sanitizer where soap and water not available):
 - After coughing or sneezing
 - Before and after eating
 - Before and after preparing food
 - If you were in contact with someone who has a fever or respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing).
 - Before and after being on public transport if you must use it
 - Before and after being in a crowd
 - When you arrive and leave buildings including your home or anyone else's home
 - Before having a cigarette or vaping
 - If your hands are dirty
 - After toilet use
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough and sneeze.
- Put used tissues into a bin and wash your hands
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.
- Do not share objects that touch your mouth – for example bottles or cups.
- Hand sanitiser should be available at all entry and exit points as well as in all locations activities are taking place. This **MUST** be used by all, especially when arriving and leaving.
- Frequent cleaning of high contact surfaces (door handles, toilets, tables, equipment etc) throughout the session.
- A sufficient supply of cleaning equipment, soap and hand sanitiser at all times, including cleaning PPE for leaders (i.e gloves). Safe storage of cleaning equipment and disposal of rubbish.
- Allowing for hand hygiene breaks between activities.

Leaders should consider:

- What signage and reminders are needed around the meeting space?
- Who will be responsible for cleaning spaces and equipment and when this will be done? You should be aware of when the space was last used and cleaned, so you are clear about what you will need to do to ensure it is clean and ready for use by your group. Leaders should check with Parish or venue management what cleaning schedule is being operated in the premises.
- How will you incorporate hand hygiene breaks between activities? These should be planned into your programme and consideration should be given to facilities used for this. Where there are not sufficient sinks to wash hands, then a hand sanitiser should be used.
- Who is responsible for the supplies of hygiene/cleaning equipment? Ensure you are aware of who is responsible for these supplies and where these are kept.
- Do we need to provide PPE for young people and leaders? Whilst PPE, including masks, are NOT required for face-to-face activities where social distancing can be maintained, individuals may wish to wear masks, and this should be allowed. Where appropriate social distancing cannot be maintained, leaders and Company Section should be asked to wear face masks. Be aware of how you will dispose of rubbish safely.

Use of Equipment

The careful use of equipment, especially shared equipment, will be key in reducing risk whilst ensuring a good programme can be offered to children and young people.

The following factors will be important in the safe use of equipment:

- Where possible, each child should have their own equipment e.g. own scissors, glue stick, colouring pencils etc for craft/badgework. Where that is not possible, equipment can be shared only with a small 'self-contained' group.
- Allowing for hand hygiene breaks after using shared equipment.
- Equipment shared between multiple groups MUST be cleaned between usage.
- Equipment which can be isolated for a minimum of 72 hours presents a reduced risk of infection spread.
- Minimising exchange of items between home/BB.
- Discourage sharing of items which are difficult to clean or disinfect.
- Whistles should not be used at any time as alternative alert mechanisms can be used. Alternatives could include ringing a bell, claves, timers, vocal signal through cupped hands, anything that does not need to be blown by mouth to avoid spreading droplets.

Leaders should consider:

- Which activities can be run with reduced sharing of equipment?
- What additional equipment will be needed for activities? Where allocating individual equipment how will this be labelled and stored?
- Preparation of craft/badgework materials at minimum of 72 hours before activity and placing them in individual bags for participants to minimize risk of infection spread.
- What process will be in place for cleaning equipment when used between multiple groups?
- How can you maximise the use of electronic communications and payments? Provide parents/guardians with bank details to pay subscriptions by electronic fund transfer. You could also more generally use email, text messages and WhatsApp groups to communicate with parents/guardians.

Transport

The use of transport by BB groups should be kept to a minimum. However, where providing transport is essential then leaders should plan ahead.

The following factors will be important in the safe provision of transport:

- Maintain social distancing as per current local guidelines.
- All individuals must wear a mask.
- Public transport usage should follow current local guidelines.
- Vehicles must be thoroughly cleaned before and after usage.

Leaders should consider:

- Is providing transport essential?
- Encouraging parents/guardians to drop children and young people directly at the venue.
- Clear communication of guidelines to follow when using transport (i.e social distancing, masks etc) and steps to take to ensure these are followed.

Activities

Being able to run a high-quality programme is important, and leaders will need to consider what activities they are able to run within the guidelines set out.

The following factors will be important in considering activities you are able to run:

- Ability to maintain social distancing.
- Avoiding physical contact between persons from different households.
- Avoid high risk activities such as singing, playing instruments that are blown into, shouting.
- Ensuring thorough cleaning of kitchen and all equipment to be used in food preparation/cooking. Ensure all those preparing/cooking food have washed hand thoroughly before working with food.
- Ensure that Anchors and Juniors are spaced at least 1m apart when doing table-based activities. Leaders should continue to try to maintain a 2m distance if not possible they should wear a facemask.

Leaders should consider:

- Making use of the BB programme resources which have been designed to incorporate the guidance for running activities.
- Are all children and young people able to fully participate in activities? Where children with additional needs require individual assistance, this is best provided by a member of their household, as social distancing does not apply.
- How can you adapt activities to minimise risks as much as possible? For example, rather than throwing and catching a ball, could you pass it backwards and forwards by foot.
- Could you make up individual activity packs for young people in advance of your meeting? This could help by reducing setup during the meeting or reducing the possibility of infection spread through putting out or passing resources around.
- Encourage young people and leaders to bring their own drinks and/or snacks which are clearly labelled.

Recording Attendance & Administration

Keeping track of attendance and staying on top of administration at this time is extremely important.

The following factors will be important in considering how you stay on top of administration:

- Making sure you have up to date personal details for all children, young people and leaders.
- Collecting paperwork and/or monies safely.

Leaders should consider:

- How do you currently keep track of attendance? As current Brigade regulations require these records to be kept indefinitely, our attendance records will suffice for Government guidelines for contact tracing. Leaders should record attendance for all BB activities regardless of the length of time.
- How will you make sure you capture any changes to personal details? Could you put a request out to parents/guardians to let you know if any details have changed via electronic communication? Where possible refrain from using paper forms to collect changes to personal details. A reminder that you should make sure Online Brigade Manager (OBM) is up to date based on those joining being added or those leaving being removed within 4 weeks.
- You will need to consider if OBM is not kept up-to-date or is not being fully utilized in your Company, a contact tracing form must be completed for each person adult and child/young person in attendance at each BB activity
- How will you safely collect subs? Encourage online transfers where possible, or ask that subs are handed over in a marked envelope which is left for 72 hours before opening.

Shielded and Vulnerable Members & Leaders

It is important we continue to protect those who are more vulnerable and are shielding by ensuring all members have the opportunities to join in BB activities.

The following factors will be important in considering how to protect vulnerable members:

- Those at high risk from Coronavirus should be advised not to attend face-to-face activities.
- Ensure everyone is kept informed on plans to return to face-to-face activities and how they can access opportunities.
- It is important that we ensure all members have the opportunity to join BB activities, we need to plan to be inclusive whilst protecting those who are more vulnerable and/or are cocooning.

Leaders should consider:

- What opportunities can you offer to those that are not able to attend face-to-face activities? We would encourage leaders to offer alternative opportunities through Virtual Sessions or #BBatHOME activities where possible. Guidance and resources can be found at <https://boysbrigade.ie/Covid-19> and also on The Republic of Ireland's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/BoysBrigadeROI>
- Could you get in touch with individuals to discuss their situation and how you could support them? How will you maintain regular contact?

First Aid and Emergency Situations

Leaders need to be prepared and ready to deal with first aid or emergency situations which may occur during BB activities.

The following factors will be important in considering how you deal with emergency situations:

- In an emergency you should follow normal BB policies and procedures for dealing with and reporting incidents.
- You do not have to stay 2 metres apart if this would be unsafe (i.e. you must administer first aid, etc).
- Anyone who provides assistance and comes into physical contact or within social distancing guidelines should wear PPE where practical and MUST wash their hands before and immediately afterwards.
- PPE including masks, gloves and hand sanitiser should be added to all First Aid Kits or be available for use as required.
- Action Plan for dealing with an individual with Coronavirus symptoms during BB activities.

Leaders should consider:

- Do you have sufficient leaders with appropriate first aid training?
- How will you go about making sure PPE is available? In the first instance you could check with your Church or the provider of your meeting space to find out if this is already available.

Action plan for dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19

What to do if a leader, child or young person becomes unwell and believe they have been exposed to COVID-19.

- If someone becomes unwell at any BB activity with symptoms such as cough, fever, difficulty breathing, the unwell person should be removed to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.
- If possible, find a room or area where they can be isolated behind a closed door.
- If it is possible to open a window, do so for ventilation.
- Request the individual wear a face mask to prevent contamination of area and close by personnel. If it is not possible for the person caring for the individual to maintain a distance of 2m they should wear a face covering or mask.
- If the person with the suspected case is a child, the parents/guardians should be contacted immediately.
- Assess whether the individual who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home/be brought home by parents who will call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home.
- Facilitate the person presenting with symptoms remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home and facilitate them calling their doctor. The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. Advice should be given to the person presenting with symptoms to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the waste bag provided.
- If the person is well enough to go home, arrange for them to be transported home by a family members, as soon as possible and advise them to inform their GP by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used.
- If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, contact 99 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.
- Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow up actions and recover.
- Arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation and work areas involved. This will involve the area being cleaned as soon as practicably possible, this area/room should not be used until the area/room has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry. Persons assigned to clean the area should avoid touching their face while they are cleaning and should wear household gloves and a plastic apron. Clean the environment and furniture using disposable

cleaning cloths and house detergent followed by disinfection with a chlorine based product. Pay special attention to frequently touched surfaces, the backs of chairs, door handles and any surfaces that are visibly soiled with body fluids. Once the area/room has been cleaned and disinfected and all surfaces are dry, the room can be reused. If a leader or child diagnosed with Covid-19 spent time in a communal area or if they used the toilet facilities, then the areas should be cleaned with household detergent followed by disinfectant as soon as is practically possible.

- The HSE will inform any leaders who have come into close contact with a diagnosed case via the contact tracing process. Leaders may be asked to provide details of those who were in attendance at the activity to allow for contact tracing. The HSE will contact all relevant persons where a diagnosis of Covid-19 is made. The instructions of the HSE should be followed and leaders and children confidentiality is essential at all times.
- Where a suspected case of Covid-19 has been confirmed, the Captain/Correspondent should inform Regional HQ.

Communicating with parents/guardians and children and Young People

Communicate all new measures and rules which will need to be implemented related to Covid-19 with parents in advance of resumption of any activities. Ensure that parents and children understand what measures are obligatory.

Ensure that parent/guardians and children and Young People are fully aware of all symptoms of Covid-19. The most common signs and symptoms of Covid-19 are available on the HSE website.

Ensure all parents understand the need to immediately self-isolate for 14 days and to phone their doctor in the event of onset of any Covid-19 signs or symptoms or to restrict their movements if they or their child have had recent close contact with a suspect or confirmed Covid-19 case. Further information and when and how to self-isolate and restrict movement are also available on the HSE website.

Do you have Questions?

Please contact our Regional Administrator by email at jennyweekes@boysbrigade.ie or by phone on +353 1 296 4622

Supporting Programme Resources

Stage 1- Face-to-face (socially distanced) Activities & Virtual Sessions

Supporting programmes that encourage leader led activity through face-to-face (socially distanced) activities or #BBatHOME Virtual Sessions. BB HQ UK will provide resources to support both programming options with a Programme Planner accompanied by Activity Cards and Themed Programme Activity Cards.

These resources will be delivered on a monthly basis throughout the Autumn Term (September, October, November, December) and will be available 4 weeks beforehand to support programme planning (i.e. September's resources available early August).

<https://boys-brigade.org.uk/bbathome/virtual-sessions/>

Stage 2- Face-to-face Activities

Once we are able to do so, we will return to our normal termly programming for all age groups. It is our intention that from this point BB HQ UK will be providing Programme Planners and Activity Cards for the Company and Seniors age groups as well as Anchors and Juniors.

<https://boys-brigade.org.uk/bbathome/face-face-socially-distanced-activities/>

Face to face outdoor activities can commence from 26th April 2021, in pods of up to 15 (including members and leaders) provided that the space available allows for at least 1m social distancing to be adhered to. Multiple pods of up to 15 may operate at an activity provided no mixing of leaders or members happens between the pods and the space available allows for at least 1m social distancing to be adhered to.

In line with current Government guidance, youth work staff and volunteers, may, with the permission of the management of their service, exceed the prevailing domestic travel restrictions in order to facilitate the provision of youth services. Similarly, where necessary, a young person may, within reason, exceed the prevailing domestic travel restrictions in order to attend a funded youth service. Therefore, a Captain may issue a letter to a leader or member to travel to attend an organised BB activity if it is further than the current travel restrictions, however this should be the exception rather than the norm for any organised BB activity.