

FAQ's

*The Youth Work Sector guidelines issued on 14th September 2021, in line with the Government's Reframing the Challenge Continuing our Recovery and Reconnecting, sets out the maximum groups sizes allowed at the various stages. **The latest guidance from the Department was received on 15 November 2021 and amended the size of pods permitted in youth organisations funded by the Department.***

From the 20th September 2021, BB companies can operate with pods of 6 members (excluding adult leaders) indoors. Multiple pods will be permissible subject to protective measures. Number of pods permissible will have regard to the size of the venue and substantial social distance between individual pods or 1m distancing between individual participants.

From the 20th September 2021, BB companies can hold outdoor activities with no COVID restrictions on numbers but should abide by the supervision ratios set out in the Child Safeguarding Policy.

From the 22nd October 2021, BB companies can operate indoors with no restrictions on numbers attending but must operate pods of 6 members (excluding adult leaders) Multiple pods will be permissible having regard to the size of the venue and substantial social distancing between pods and social distancing between individuals within the pods.

From the 15th November, pods of up to 15 participants will be permitted in BB companies (excluding adult leaders). Where it is an option to operate certain activities in smaller pods, this should be used. Outdoor options should continue to be utilised wherever possible. Continued strict adherence to other elements of public health guidance is critical.

Further amendments to numbers permitted at activities are subject to change in the future in line with current Government guidance.

Outdoor Activities

Q. What if a member or leader does not live within the allowed travel distance for an activity?

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 restriction, however this should be the exception rather than the norm for any organised BB activity.

Q. Is 15 the absolute maximum you can have at outdoor activities?

From the 20th September 2021, all restrictions on numbers attending outdoor youth activities are being removed.

Q. What must company do before organising an outdoor activity?

Where a company has already not done so, they should complete the Covid-19 Ready Risk Assessment and Company Action log or where this has already been completed for the session

2020/2021 this should be reviewed as part of the planning for the activity. If this is the first activity of the session, all leaders should complete the Return to Volunteering Form (even where this has been completed previously). All participants (or parents of participants) at the event should be asked to confirm in advance that the participant have no Covid symptoms, have not been identified as a close contact or been advised to self isolate or been out of the country in the past 14 days.

Activities

Q. Will all Companies have to re-open at the same time?

A. No, once a Company has completed their risk assessments and are happy with the guidelines provided they can go ahead and re-open when they so choose. You will need the buy in from Parents, Leaders and the Church but each Company may have a unique situation.

Q. Would horse-work and trampette be an acceptable activity?

A. Each company which wishes to undertake horse-work and trampette should consider the need for social distancing of Juniors, Company and Senior members and leaders and the wearing of masks and assess whether it is possible to do this whilst ensuring the safety of all involved in such an activity.

Q. Is it advised for a Company to not participate in activities that gets the heart rates up in a social distancing environment?

A. Such activities can take place indoors but companies should ensure that venues are kept well ventilated during the session.

Q. What kind of activities will be available for all sections??

A. Regional HQ is providing termly programme packs to each section in each company for the autumn, spring and summer terms. Also the Programme Hub on the Brigade website has a huge range of activities for all sections.

Q. Can Members participate in high respiratory activities outdoors?

A. Yes

Q. What are the BB guidelines for contact sports?

A. Allowed to take place. The equipment should be sanitised before and after use. Hand sanitising should happen before and after the activity takes place.

Remember to keep a high circulation of fresh air in your halls.

Finance

Q. What do we report to our local ETB now that we can no longer use the grant for the original purpose?

A. Need to keep an open dialogue with your local ETB and let them know that you may spend/ will spend the grant on PPE, mats to outline social distancing in your Parish hall etc.

Q. Can Parent's pay their child's subscriptions through OBM?

A. No, however another form of providing a non-handling of cash would be to provide parents with the Company's bank details so that they can transfer it electronically.

Carpooling

Q. Can Leaders/ Parents provide a carpooling service to their Members?

A. Yes but leaders/parents should use their personal responsibility to judge as to whether everyone wears a mask high frequency areas are cleaned before and after vacating the vehicle and there is adequate ventilation. It is also down to how comfortable Leaders/ parents who usually carpool feel.

Social Distancing

Q. Do the number of people that are allowed in pods indoors include Leaders?

A. No, pods numbers are the number of children in the pod, the adult leaders working with them are in addition to that number. You will need to remember the adult: child ratios laid out in the Child Safeguarding Policy and ensure that they are adhered to.

Q. There are Anchors from 3-4 schools in the Company what do we do to social distance?

A. There is no social distance requirement for Anchors however using pods/ separating the children into groups, so that you have one group per school with one Leader per group (depending on numbers) if there are concerns about schools mixing. Please see page 11 of Covid-19 Response Plan.

Q. What will Companies do if another Organisation overlaps with BB?

A. There will have to be a time to clean the high frequency points within the hall before your Members attend BB.

Q. What will Companies do if there are Sections that overlap?

A. Companies will need to look at their timetable, which may not be the same as previous years. The Company needs to allow cleaning time of high frequency points before and after a group use an area (eg; Anchors in a room for Bible studies and move to hall when Juniors come in to use room for Bible studies).

Training

Q. What is the COVID-19 induction training that the BB will provide?

A. The NYCI have a 15-minute online induction course that also includes a questionnaire and certificate once passed. Please keep a record of your Leaders who have completed the course before re-opening your Company. <https://learning.youth.ie/courses/covid-19-induction-session-for-youth-sector/>

Q. Can Companies record the Leader's induction training information on OBM?

A. There is no area set up on OBM to add this information. A 'flexi-record' is available for a Company to make, in the main 'Company' section where leaders are listed under the 'Members' side menu and a record could be maintained here if a Company chooses.

Q. Will The RoI Safeguarding Panel provide Child Safeguarding Training for new Leaders in the coming Session or for those who need to re-do the course?

A. We will continue to offer Child Safeguarding Training throughout the session, these may be provided as either an online Zoom training course or face to face (when permitted), please email Jenny in HQ to request training and provide numbers.

Vetting

Q. Can Garda Vetting still be processed during this time?

A. Yes, please send the completed vetting forms (NVB1) to Jenny in HQ, along with 2 forms of I.D (* Public Service cards are no longer accepted). It is advised to have your Leaders vetted or re-vetted before you re-open.

Virtual Sessions

Q. Will Companies need to provide a consent form for Parents to complete so that Virtual Sessions can be run this Session?

A. In the communication to parents, whatsapp/email, parents need to reply to opt in and that will act as the consent. Please refer to the Rol's Virtual Sessions Guidelines.

<https://boysbrigade.ie/wpcontent/uploads/2020/08/Virtual-Sessions-Guidelines.pdf>

You will need to keep a record of the parent's consent:

Permission given by:

Date:

Platform of communication: