

Membership/Participation Regarding Communicable Diseases Framework

Individuals with communicable diseases—both the acute, which are sudden in their onset, and the chronic, which have been present for a longer period—may be present in our communities. Scouting’s guiding principles regarding communicable diseases include:

1. The responsibility for management of a medical condition(s) lies with the individual or the individual’s parent or guardian.
2. Local Scouting units/chartered organizations determine their own membership and participation.
3. The safety of all participants is paramount, and any process should include a commitment to protecting the individual’s rights of privacy and confidentiality and due regard for the public health interest of others.

Use the framework below to address a situation in which youth or adult members have or are suspected of having a communicable disease.

- Develop a plan. Each case is unique, so the adult member or parent/guardian and youth, unit leadership, and healthcare provider(s) should be included in developing the plan whenever possible. Depending on each situation, a plan may be simple or more complex.
- Reach out to the council for assistance if help is needed. Team members may include:
 - A senior professional staff advisor (preferably the Scout executive).
 - A legal advisor (to ensure compliance with local or state laws about discrimination and disclosure).
 - The council health supervisor.
 - The council enterprise risk management chair or a committee member.
 - Local public health representatives.
 - The individual, parents/guardians if a youth is involved, and the individual’s personal healthcare provider(s).
- Elements of the plan may include:
 - Determination of whether the individual can safely take part in unit/camp activities or program.
 - Activities that are to be encouraged or restricted.
 - Training as needed, e.g., emergency training for camp staff or other unit members.
 - Determine if any reasonable modification(s) are needed for the unit or camp.
 - Review the plan as needed and modify when required.

Resources

- Mayo Clinic—Infectious Diseases:
www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/infectious-diseases/symptoms-causes/syc-20351173
- BSA Safety Moment—Communicable Disease Prevention:
www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/safety-moments/communicable-disease-prevention/