

# MD105 - Suggested General Guidelines for Lions Santa Sleigh Events under COVID-19 Conditions and Restrictions

1. Santa's Sleigh provides both a major fundraising activity for most Lions Clubs and a very much enjoyed seasonal family activity for the communities which we serve. This note is not a definitive or compulsory document, but it has been produced in response to the many requests for guidance from Clubs on this matter, and in response to requests to some Clubs by local authorities when considering a collections licence for a document to show that Lions Clubs have addressed the safe operation of Santa's Sleigh under COVID-19 regulations. The suggestions made are for each Club to consider and adopt as they consider appropriate, with Clubs being mindful of the legal penalties which can apply to individuals and Clubs should the legislation on gatherings be breached. Every Club is autonomous and is responsible for taking decisions on how they operate and their compliance with national and local regulations.

**NB:** Clubs should please check the websites of the devolved national governments and local authority websites covering your own area regularly, as the official regulations and recommendations change on a frequent basis.

2. Please take these notes in the spirit in which they are offered, as no exemption has been secured for Lions fundraising events and activities from the overriding governmental regulations on the number of persons gathering. The general maximum is for 6 persons gathering for any purpose indoors and outdoors (but with a higher number permitted outdoors in Wales), and with no contact or interaction permitted between different groups of 6. On that basis, whether inside or outside, a maximum of 6 persons can be with Santa's Sleigh at any one time -including Santa! Social distancing regulations should always be observed, which means that no member of the public or Lion should come within 2 metres of another person (or 1 metre plus in England, if 2 metres is not possible) - including Santa - and that the contact details of all Lions and helpers should be recorded in advance and retained for Track and Trace purposes.
3. There are typically 2 scenarios for Santa Sleighs:  
either A) a static float and collection typically at a supermarket or garden centre with Lions holding collecting buckets  
or B) a mobile float with a vehicle towing the Santa Sleigh on a trailer around an advertised route and Lions or helpers collecting funds from the public into collecting buckets during that route.  
For both static and mobile sleighs, the relevant permissions from the owners and local authority licences if applicable should be obtained, and a detailed written Risk Assessment for insurance purposes must be completed. Social distancing should be enforced and Lions and helpers, including Santa, should not have close contact with the public, including not having children placed on Santa's sleigh for photographs or to whisper the contents of their Santa letter to him. The maximum of 6 persons gathering (except where specifically permitted, such as outdoors in Wales) should be applied, with Santa and the Lion 'elves' counting towards that figure.

## **SANITISING COSTUMES AND SANTA'S SLEIGH**

The costumes worn by Santa and Lion helpers should not be passed from person to person without being washed and sanitised, each and every time between wearers. Every Santa must have their own allocated beard for which they are responsible and which they retain and sanitise for their own use only, and the sleigh should be sanitised by wiping with anti-bacterial

wipes at least every hour. The wearing of masks should be complied with by all Lions taking part where appropriate and where required, and regular hand sanitising protocols should be undertaken.

### **GIFTS**

If small gifts of sweets or other gifts are given to children visiting the sleigh these should be offered as sealed packets on a socially distanced basis without close contact.

### **4. MONEY**

Ideally donations should be accepted by card reader which should be the responsibility of a single designated Lion for each session, (and fully sanitised between each donation by each user) and cash donations should be collected in sealed closed buckets placed at least 2 metres from the Lion responsible for each bucket.

In addition to the COVID-19 safety regulations, the long standing financial and legal regulations of the Charities Commission and Fundraising Regulator require charitable cash donations to be placed in sealed containers by the member of the public making the donation, and collecting receptacles to be sealed and opened and counted under specified conditions, so the sealed collection buckets should be collected at the end of each session and isolated and secured for counting. The World Health organisation acknowledges that there is a chance of transmission of COVID-19 virus from bank notes and coinage, so it is recommended that each separately isolated collection bucket should be labelled with a time and date and then quarantined in a secure place for 72 hours before being opened and counted. Cash, once counted, should be bagged and deposited with the bank in full accordance with the banks' COVID-19 protocols for accepting deposits of coinage and bank notes.

**NB:** Quarantined collection buckets waiting to be counted should be stored at normal room temperature and should not be stored at less than 5 degrees centigrade, as it is understood that the virus remains dormant but still infectious for an extended period of time at very low temperatures.

We hope that these notes are useful and that everyone can find a safe and legal way to bring Santa on his Lions Sleigh to the many children who will be eagerly waiting for him!

With our very best wishes to everyone for a safe and enjoyable Santa's Sleigh activity.

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