

Summer Camp Guidance 2021

Purpose

Provide a comprehensive COVID-19 health and safety overview for summer camp programs in order to prepare and implement a plan for resuming services in accordance with the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Guidance for Operating Youth Camps](#). Schools offering a summer program should continue to follow the existing [Health and Safety Guidance](#).

Definitions

“Summer camp” means any day camp, primitive or outpost camp, or residential camp which conducts a program for children.

“Day camp” means a program that:

- a. Operates during school breaks for more than two (2) hours but fewer than 12 hours each day; and
- b. Does not include child day care services required to be licensed under Rhode Island Gen. Laws § 42-12.5-4.

“Primitive or outpost camp” means a camp or other site at which the basic needs such as places of abode, water supply systems and permanent toilet and cooking facilities are not usually provided.

“Residential camp” means a camp which provides overnight facilities.

Occupancy limits

It is strongly recommended that summer camp group sizes be no larger than 26 children, consistent with the State’s child care regulations.

- This applies for children age four (4) and older.
- Based on current vaccine accessibility for youth, it is strongly recommended that summer camps implement stable groups.
 - Stable groups mean the same 26 or fewer children remain in a group consistently with minimal or no interaction with children in other stable groups.
 - Children should not change from one group to another. For example, a program may have previously had a policy of promoting children to a different age grouping upon their birthday. Under the summer camp guidance, it is recommended that children remain in the same group for the duration of their summer session attendance.

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- If feasible, stable groups should also occupy the same space each day. At some program sites, this may mean different classrooms.

Physical Distancing

- Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to physically distance except where required by Executive Order, regulation or other local authority. Camps may choose to implement physical distancing for all campers and staff regardless of vaccination status.
- Non-vaccinated individuals should maintain
 - Physical distancing of three (3) feet, as recommended when possible, but is not required within each stable group. Children within a stable group may engage in close play with one another.
 - Physical distance of six (6) feet between stable groups. For example, if groups are gathering in a gymnasium as part of the daily activity, the groups must be arranged in the gymnasium so there is at least six (6) feet separating each stable group on all sides from the other groups. For this program, they may choose to measure and tape off spaces where each group can sit or stand.
 - At least three (3) feet while eating and drinking without a mask indoors.
- As of March 19, the use of physical barriers is no longer recommended by the CDC. Where not specified above, all organizations should follow the [general guidance](#) regarding gathering sizes and social distancing.

Face Masks

- Fully vaccinated: Staff and campers need to wear masks indoors, with certain exceptions (see below). They do not need to wear masks outdoors.
- Non-vaccinated:
 - **Indoors.** Mask use indoors is required for people who are not vaccinated, including children. (Please see below for exceptions.)
 - **Outdoors.** There is no state requirement for mask-wearing when outdoors. However, people who are not vaccinated are strongly encouraged to wear a mask in any crowded settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact (within six (6) feet for 15 or more minutes within a 24-hour period) with other people who are not fully vaccinated.
- Camps with universal mask policies, regardless of vaccination status, should make exceptions for the following categories of people:
 - Children under the age of two (2) years;
 - A person with a disability who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, because of a disability as defined by the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.); or
 - A person for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to workplace health, safety, or job duty as determined by the relevant workplace safety guidelines or federal regulations.



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- Camps should refer to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/summer-camps.html> for the use and care of masks.

Screening Procedures

Symptom screening protocols should be consistent with those found in the State's [childcare guidance](#).

- Screening protocols for children and staff need to be developed and communicated to all parents and staff prior to attending camp. Parents must screen children for symptoms of COVID-19 at home each day before camp using a [self-attestation form](#) or an app such as Crush COVID RI. All children and staff must stay home if they fail the screening prior to leaving for camp. Temperature checks are not required for these settings.
- If a child screens positive for any COVID-19 symptoms, the student should get tested right away and the parent/guardian should seek medical advice from the child's healthcare provider. The parent/guardian should also inform the camp of the child's absence.
- Individuals who are fully vaccinated do not need to undergo asymptomatic COVID-19 surveillance testing unless they are exposed to someone with COVID-19 and experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. Please refer to [Testing](#) under the CDC's Guidance for Operating Youth and Summer Camps.
- Camps shall post a self-attestation form upon entry in a visible area for individuals to be screened at the time of drop off. Camps shall conduct a verbal screening for symptoms of COVID-19 using the self-attestation form in [English](#) or in [Spanish](#).
- In the event that an employee or child screens positive for any COVID-19-like symptoms or is currently directed to be in quarantine or isolation, the provider shall send the employee or child home and take any additional necessary and appropriate action, in accordance with applicable laws and current RIDOH guidance.
- Any employees or children sent home may not return to the summer camp until the individual (or his or her parent) provides competent evidence to the camp demonstrating that:
 - The individual was tested negative for COVID-19, has had no fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications, **and** symptoms have improved; or
 - The individual tested positive for COVID-19, but has since met [RIDOH guidelines for ending isolation](#).
- Please see RIDOH's website for how to get a [COVID-19 test](#). Please respect individual privacy. Employers should not disclose the name of any employee who tested positive for COVID-19 except as otherwise required by law.



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Registration and Contact Tracing

- If you are planning to operate summer camps during the summer of 2021, please register your camp using the [Rhode Island Department of Health Summer Camp Registration Form](#) to provide a point of contact and other important information needed for fast and efficient contact tracing in case it is needed. If you have questions about completing this form, please call Michelle Pearson at 401-601-6297 or email Michelle.Pearson.ctr@health.ri.gov. The registration deadline is May 30.
- While not required, camps are encouraged to maintain daily attendance records and lists of campers and staff by pod, as well as parent/guardian cell phone numbers in the event that RIDOH needs to contact the camp to identify close contacts.

Testing

- If your business or organization wishes to put in place a testing plan, there are many resources available. The State of Rhode Island has a robust testing infrastructure in place to ensure that every Rhode Islander who wants a COVID-19 test can get one. Click [here](#) for information about the State's free testing sites to your staff and customers.
- For businesses looking to implement a more specialized plan with on-site rapid testing, feel free to reach out to our Business Testing Contact Center at 1-888-662-4354 or email RIDOH.COVID19BizTesting@health.ri.gov to learn about your options.
- Testing in combination with other prevention behaviors like physical distancing, wearing a mask, hand washing, and vaccination can significantly reduce risk of transmission of COVID-19. When programs implement testing combined with prevention strategies, they can detect new cases to prevent outbreaks, reduce the risk of further transmission, and protect individuals from COVID-19.

Quarantine and Isolation Procedures

- The camp must notify RIDOH at 401-222-8022 if any employee or camper has confirmed he or she has tested positive for COVID-19. The hotline is available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Please follow the most current RIDOH quarantine and isolation [requirements](#).
- Camp administrators, nurses, and other healthcare providers must identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who has COVID-19 symptoms or who has tested positive but does not have symptoms. If the camp has a nurse or other healthcare provider, they should use [Standard](#) and [Transmission-Based Precautions](#) when caring for sick people. For more information, please see [What Healthcare Personnel Should Know About Caring for Patients with Confirmed or Possible COVID-19 Infection](#).



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- Camp administrators may consider implementing several strategies to prepare for when someone gets sick. For a full list of recommended strategies and best practice, please see the CDC's guidance on [preparing for when someone gets sick](#).

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Consistent cleaning, disinfecting, and good ventilation practices reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

Camps should adhere to [CDC guidance for summer camps](#) regarding the cleaning and disinfecting of all surfaces and spaces and to general [CDC guidance on the process of cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting surfaces](#).

Ventilation

If indoors, ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible (e.g., opening windows and doors). Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk – such as falling or triggering asthma symptoms – to campers using the facility.

For further information please refer to the [CDC's Guidance for Ventilation in Schools and Childcare Programs](#) and [Ventilation in Buildings](#).

Transportation

All camps utilizing transportation for staff and/or campers must follow the transportation guidelines from the [Back to School RI: Health and Safety Guidance](#).

Clear Communications Plan

- Communicate summer camp plans, policies, and/or procedures, to allow for information to be clearly messaged to parents, guardians, and oversight agencies.
- Translate information in the languages most frequently used by your campers.
- Continue to message the importance of employees staying home if they are sick.
- See additional [CDC communication resources here](#).

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Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

- Increased handwashing hygiene must be practiced by all summer camp programs to reduce the risk of contagion spread.
- Conduct hand hygiene before entering and exiting any facility.
- Teach and reinforce [handwashing](#) with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and increase monitoring to ensure adherence among campers and staff.
- If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can be used (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer. For example, a group may be taking a nature trail walk where there are no accessible bathrooms.
- Encourage staff and campers to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can be used for staff and older campers who can safely use hand sanitizer.

Visitors

To reduce the risk of exposure, a camp organization may choose to limit nonessential visitors and/or observers from visiting summer camp programs by

- Maintaining a visitor log and documenting the arrival and departure time of each individual;
- Requiring individuals to respond to a self-attestation for the purpose of screening for symptoms of COVID-19. Programs should maintain these forms onsite for oversight agencies to review.

If a provider intends to serve youth indoors during inclement weather, enrollment numbers should be in adherence to group size and social distancing parameters set forth in this guidance.

Supplies

Each organization should develop a plan for sourcing and maintaining any additional supplies needed to continue safe operations. See the [CDC recommended supply guidance](#).

Drop-off/Pick-up Procedures

Summer camp programs are required to create a drop-off and pick-up protocol as a part of their plan that adheres to CDC guidelines. See recommended [CDC strategies here](#).

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Close Contact Sport Activities

- When planning sport activities, please refer to the [Youth and Adult Sport Guidance](#) put forth by RIDOH and the Rhode Island Interscholastic League (RIIL).
- Staff and campers must continue to wear a mask while indoor (except in circumstances outlined in the “Face Coverings” section. For outdoor sport activities, masks do not need to be worn regardless of vaccination status. For more information on Sports and Athletic Activities please refer to [CDC Guidance for Operating Youth and Summer Camps](#).

Pools and Water Activities

Camps should refer to the State’s [Aquatic Venues regulations](#) or the most up to date guidance around pool and water activities.

Residential “Sleep Away” or Overnight Camps

Residential camps should refer to www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/summer-camps.html, Section 4.B. Additional Guidance for Overnight Camps, for best practices on operating residential camps.

Resources

- [CDC Suggestions for Youth and Summer Camps](#)
- [COVID-19 Info - Rhode Island Interscholastic League \(riil.org\)](http://COVID-19%20Info%20-%20Rhode%20Island%20Interscholastic%20League%20(riil.org))
- covid.ri.gov
- [Suggestions for Youth Programs and Camps: Readiness and Planning Tool \(cdc.gov\)](#)
- [COVID-19 – Resource Center for Camps | American Camp Association \(acacamps.org\)](http://COVID-19%20-%20Resource%20Center%20for%20Camps%20|%20American%20Camp%20Association%20(acacamps.org))
- [Town Hall April 20 - Public Health Officials \(vimeo.com\)](http://Town%20Hall%20April%2020%20-%20Public%20Health%20Officials%20(vimeo.com))