



Interim Guidance for Overnight Camp Settings (April 30, 2021)

Guidelines for Conducting Business: Any scenario in which many people gather together poses a risk for COVID-19 transmission. All businesses and agencies where groups of people gather in an enclosed space should create and implement a plan to minimize opportunity for COVID-19 transmission at their facility. The guidance below will help overnight camps reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. For additional information, please see CDC's [Guidance for Operating Youth and Summer Camps During COVID-19](#).

Transmission and Symptoms of COVID-19:

COVID-19 is mostly spread by respiratory droplets released when people talk, cough, or sneeze, and particularly when they sing. People in close proximity may inhale these droplets, resulting in virus transmission from one person to another. While it is possible to contract COVID-19 by touching a surface that has the virus on it and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes, risk from this route of transmission is thought to be low. Safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines are the most effective way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and all people eligible for a vaccine should get one. In addition, other personal prevention practices (such as wearing face coverings, physically distancing, handwashing and staying home when sick) and environmental cleaning and disinfection are also important principles and are covered in this guidance. Fortunately, overnight camps can take action to lower the risk of COVID-19 exposure and spread of disease.

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with COVID-19 have reported a wide range of specific and non-specific symptoms of COVID-19.

People with these symptoms may have COVID-19 (but this list does not include all possible symptoms):

- Fever* or chills**
- New cough**
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing**
- Fatigue**
- Muscle or body aches**
- New loss of taste or smell**
- Sore throat**
- Congestion or runny nose**
- Headache**
- Nausea or vomiting**
- Diarrhea**

People with COVID-19 report a wide range of symptoms from no symptoms and mild to severe illness. Even people with no or mild symptoms can spread the virus. Children with COVID-19 may not initially

present with fever and cough as often as adult patients.

*Fever is defined as a measured temperature of 100.4 °F or greater

Actions that are **required** for each topic are taken from the current Executive Order. Actions that are **recommended** for each topic were developed to protect staff and campers to minimize spread of COVID-19. Facilities are expected to make every effort to meet all guidance in this document, specific actions should be tailored to each overnight camp.

Prevention Efforts

It is **recommended** that overnight camps:

- Provide information regarding vaccination and encourage all eligible campers, counselors and staff to [Find Your Spot, Take Your Shot and get a COVID-19 vaccine](#).
- Request that campers, their families, and camp staff follow [guidance for travelers](#) in the 14 days before camp arrival to reduce exposure to COVID-19. Ask unvaccinated campers and staff members to engage in a 2-week prearrival quarantine that includes physical distancing, mask-wearing when not at home, avoiding unnecessary travel, and refraining from indoor social gatherings with people outside of their households.
- Ask campers and staff who are not fully vaccinated to provide proof of a negative viral test taken no more than 1–3 days before arriving at camp. Delay arrival for campers or staff with confirmed positive test results. CDC does not recommend getting tested again in the three months after a positive viral test if the person does not have symptoms of COVID-19. Campers and staff who have had a positive viral test in the 3 months prior to starting camp and have met the criteria to end isolation should have a letter from their healthcare provider documenting the positive test date and stating the individual is cleared to end isolation.
- Assign campers to cohorts or groups and limit the size to align with current mass gathering limits, or fewer depending on space limitations within facility.
 - When campers are with their cohort, they may follow 3 feet social distancing.
 - When campers are around individuals outside of their cohort they should continue to follow the standard 6 feet social distancing.
 - When campers are eating or drinking, they should follow 6 feet social distancing, even among campers within the cohort.
 - Staff should maintain 6 feet social distancing from each other and campers.
 - *However*, campers and staff that are staying in the same cabin or room do not need to practice social distancing or wear a mask when they are together without others nearby.

This guidance covers the following topics:

- [Prevention Efforts](#)
- [Communication and Combatting Misinformation](#)
- [Monitoring Campers and Staff for Symptoms](#)
- [Recommendations for Specific Areas/Activities](#)
- [Cloth Face Coverings](#)
- [Cleaning and Hygiene](#)
- [Transportation](#)
- [Protecting Vulnerable Populations](#)
- [For Facilities Planning to Reopen After Extended Closure](#)
- [Coping and Resilience](#)
- [Additional Resources](#)

Communication and Combatting Misinformation

Help ensure that the information staff, campers, and their families are getting is coming directly from reliable resources. Use resources from a trusted source like the [CDC](#) and [NCDHHS](#) to promote behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19.

It is **required** that overnight camps:

- Post signage in key areas throughout the camp facility (e.g., camp entrances, dining areas, restrooms, cabins) to remind people to keep six (6) feet of distance whenever feasible, use face coverings and wash hands (Wear, Wait, Wash). [Know Your W's](#) signs are available in English and Spanish.

It is **recommended** that overnight camps:

- Provide campers, their families, and staff with education about COVID-19 strategies, using methods like videos, webinars, or FAQs prior to the beginning of the camp session.
 - Use reliable sources including: [NC DHHS COVID-19 Webpage](#), [Know Your Ws: Wear, Wait, Wash](#), [NC DHHS COVID-19 Latest Updates](#), [NC DHHS COVID-19 Materials & Resources](#), and the additional resources listed at the end of this guidance document.
- Clearly communicate criteria for when campers will be excluded from camp activities.
- Provide a transparent weekly email of concerns/cases to parents, campers and staff. Respect the privacy of all campers and staff and the confidentiality of personal health information while offering transparency and a reason to be vigilant.
- Consider the ongoing need for regular training among all staff on updated health and safety protocols.
- Partner with other institutions in the community to promote communication and cooperation in responding to COVID-19.

Monitoring Campers and Staff for Symptoms

People with COVID-19 have reported a wide range of [specific and non-specific symptoms of COVID-19](#). Adults should be encouraged to self-monitor for symptoms such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath. More information on [how to monitor for symptoms](#) is available from the CDC.

It is **required** that overnight camps:

- Immediately [isolate](#) sick campers and staff away from others.
- Have a plan to work with local health departments to identify close contacts of confirmed cases in a camp setting.

It is **recommended** that overnight camps:

- If a camper or staff member has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or is presumed positive by a medical professional due to symptoms, the camper or staff member should be isolated away from other campers and staff until they meet the CDC criteria for release from isolation:
 - No fever for at least 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medicine) AND
 - Other symptoms have improved (e.g., coughing, shortness of breath) AND
 - At least 10 days have passed since the individual first had symptoms***A test-based strategy (i.e., negative diagnostic test) is NOT recommended to discontinue isolation or precautions and employers should not require documentation of a negative test before allowing a worker to return.**
- Educate staff, campers, and their families about the signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- Work with camp administrators, nurses, and other health care providers to identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-like symptoms. If the camp has a nurse or other health care provider, they should follow CDC's [Standard and Transmission-Based](#)

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[Precautions](#) when caring for sick people. Increased air quality measures should be used in these rooms, consider providing portable HEPA fan/filtration systems in these areas.

- ❑ Conduct daily [symptom checking](#) to monitor the health and well-being of camp staff and campers during the camp session. Send any staff or camper with symptoms immediately to isolation area to be assessed by onsite medical professionals.
- ❑ For camp sessions that last at least one week, screening testing should be done 3–5 days after arrival at camp in accordance with [CDC travel guidance](#). [Fully vaccinated](#) asymptomatic people without an exposure can refrain from routine screening testing.
 - For questions about antigen testing please email NCDHHS_Antigen@dhhs.nc.gov and to request tests for your camp, please fill out the form [here](#).
- ❑ Staff and campers who have had [close contact](#) with a person who has symptoms should be separated and quarantined, as described in [CDC guidance for community-related exposure](#).
 - However, fully vaccinated staff or campers with no COVID-like symptoms do not need to quarantine or be tested following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. If they are experiencing symptoms, they should be clinically evaluated for COVID-19 and tested for COVID-19, if indicated.
- ❑ While waiting with a symptomatic camper who is under supervision in an isolation area, have a caregiver stay with the camper. If possible, allow for air flow throughout the room where the camper is waiting by opening windows or doors to the outside. The caregiver should remain as far away as safely possible from the camper (preferably 6 feet or more) while maintaining visual supervision. The caregiver must wear a cloth face covering or a surgical mask. If the camper is over the age of two (2) and can tolerate a face covering, they should also wear a cloth face covering or a surgical mask.
- ❑ Immediately inform your local health department if a camper or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- ❑ Support symptomatic or COVID-19 diagnosed staff to stay home as appropriate with flexible sick leave and paid leave policies.
- ❑ Develop plans for backfilling positions of employees on sick leave and consider cross-training to allow for change of staff duties.
- ❑ Have a designated area ready (in health services area of camp) for isolation with designated staff. The sick staff or camper should remain in the designated area until they can be taken home. Afterwards the area must be properly cleaned and disinfected:
 - Close off all areas used by the sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
 - Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
 - Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
 - Campers and staff should not be in rooms that are being cleaned.
 - Follow [NCDHHS Environmental Health Section guidance](#) for cleaning and disinfection recommendations.
 - Use an [EPA-registered disinfectant that is effective against coronaviruses](#). Clean all areas used by the sick person, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, countertops, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures. Use the cleaners typically used at your facility.
 - Cleaning staff should follow all Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and hand hygiene [CDC recommendations](#) for cleaning.
 - Ensure [safe and correct](#) storage of cleaning and disinfection products, including storing them securely away from campers.

Recommendations for Specific Areas/Activities

Recommendations for Cabins/Sleeping Areas:

- Consider campers and staff who are staying together in a cabin, bunkhouse, or similar defined space a “household cohort.” Household cohort members do not need to wear masks or physically distance when they are together without non-household cohort members nearby. Campers and staff should always wear masks when together unless staff are part of the household cohort and sleep in the same space as campers. When different household cohorts are using shared indoor or outdoor spaces together during the day or night, continue to monitor and enforce [mask use](#), [physical distancing](#), and [healthy hygiene](#) behaviors for everyone.
- Overnight adventure camps, primitive experience camps, or other camps with overnight tent camping should provide adequate alternatives for handwashing for the duration of the excursion.
- Require handwashing before preparing or eating meals, before and after activities, and other times when hands may be contaminated.

Recommendations for Daily Activities:

- Keep campers and staff in groups by cabin (that is also called “cohorting”) and minimize interactions of groups from different cabins. Campers should minimize interactions with other cabin groups.
- Use the [Interim Guidance for Administrators and Participants for Amateur Sport](#) as a guideline for which sports or activities are lowest risk. When possible, do not participate in contact sports with campers outside of cabin group.
- Perform activities that have the potential to produce respiratory droplets including singing, chanting, shouting, or playing an instrument outside. Campers and staff should wear masks and maintain at least 6 feet physical distance during these activities.”
- For arrival and departure at camp:
 - Implement staggered drop-off and pick-up times, with specific times for each group of campers, if feasible.
 - Use methods that do not require contact to check campers in and out of camp.
 - Ensure parents dropping-off and picking-up campers remain in their vehicles or outside of cabin.
 - Limit visitors to outdoor activities only, and ensure any visitors follow face covering, physical distancing, and mass gathering limit requirements.
 - Clearly provide six (6) feet floor markings in waiting areas and check-in points and modify transportation to and from camp so that individuals can maintain social distance.

Recommendations for Meal Service:

- Stagger meal service so that physical distancing between different cabin groups can be maintained.
- Meal service lines should have floor markings six (6) feet apart. Counselors should oversee family style meals and self-service to assist campers. Remove any contaminated food or utensils, and utensils should be switched out to be cleaned and sanitized between cabin cohorts.

Cloth Face Coverings

Wearing face coverings can help reduce the spread of COVID-19, especially for those who are sick but may not know it.

It is **required** that overnight camps:

- Have all workers, all other adults, and children five (5) years or older wear a face covering indoors, unless the person (or family member, for a child) states that an exception applies.
 - Campers and staff that are staying in the same cabin or room, do not need to wear a mask when they are together without others nearby.
- Visit NCDHHS [COVID-19 response site](#) for more information about the [face covering guidance](#) and to access sign templates that are available in English and Spanish.

It is **recommended** that overnight camps:

- Have all workers, all other adults, and children five (5) years or older wear a face covering when they are outdoors and less than 6ft away from others.
- Provide cloth face coverings for staff, other adults, and children two (2) years or older and ask them to properly launder using hot water and a high heat dryer between uses.
- Campers younger than five (5) should wear face coverings if it is determined they can reliably wear, remove, and handle masks following CDC guidance throughout the day. NOTE: Younger children may be unable to wear a face covering properly, particularly for an extended period of time. Camp staff can prioritize having children wear face coverings at times when it is difficult for children to maintain a distance of 6 feet from others (e.g., during pick-up or drop-off, when standing in line). Make sure face coverings fit children properly and provide children with frequent reminders and education on the importance and proper way to wear face coverings.
- Cloth face coverings should NOT be placed on:
 - Children under the age of two (2);
 - Anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance; or
 - Anyone who cannot tolerate a cloth face covering due to developmental, medical or behavioral health needs.

Cleaning and Hygiene

It is **required** that overnight camps:

- Clean surfaces once a day, prioritizing high-touch surfaces. If there has been a sick person or someone who tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 24 hours, clean and disinfect the space using an EPA-approved disinfectant for SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19).

It is **recommended** that overnight camps:

- Support healthy hygiene by providing supplies including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol (for staff and school aged campers who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, cloth face coverings (as feasible), and no-touch/foot pedal trash cans.
- Provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol) at the entrance to cabins, cafeterias, and other high-volume areas when available. Systematically and frequently check and refill hand sanitizer stations; and provide soap and hand drying materials at sinks.
- Teach and reinforce hand hygiene for adults and campers such as washing hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (about as long as it takes to sing “Happy Birthday” twice).

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- Monitor to ensure both campers and staff are washing hands correctly. In addition to usual handwashing, everyone should wash hands:
 - Before and after eating meals and snacks,
 - Before and after any activities,
 - After blowing noses, coughing, or sneezing or when in contact with body fluids,
 - After using the restroom.
- Stagger bathroom breaks during activities so single cabin cohorts are using restrooms during the same break period.
- Provide training for campers and staff about hand hygiene, physical distancing, and cough/sneeze etiquette:
 - Encourage staff and campers to cover coughs and sneeze into their elbows, or to cover with a tissue.
 - Encourage staff and campers to avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors, using fans, or other methods. Do not open windows and doors if they pose a safety or health risk to people using the facility.

Transportation

Overnight camps using transportation on camp premises or for offsite activities are required to:

- Have all workers or riders (including adults and children five years or older) wear face coverings when they are or may be within six (6) feet of another person outside of their cohort.

It is **recommended** that overnight camps using transportation on camp premises:

- Have adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors (e.g., hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol for safe use by staff and older campers).
- Separate campers with as much space as the vehicle allows while maintaining safe transportation practices, ideally six (6) feet away (e.g. one rider per seat in every other row).
- Consider keeping windows open while the vehicle is in motion to help reduce spread of the virus by increasing air circulation, if appropriate and safe.

Protecting Vulnerable Populations

Information on who is at higher risk for severe illness due to COVID-19 is available from the [CDC](#) and [NC DHHS](#).

It is **recommended** that overnight camps:

- Enable staff to self-identify as high risk for severe illness to minimize face-to-face contact and reassign work to minimize their contact with campers and other staff.
- Provide accommodations for high risk individuals (minimize interaction with campers, more spacing, wear face covering).

For Facilities Planning to Reopen After Extended Closure

It is **recommended** that overnight camps:

- Refer to the following CDC guidance:
 - Guidance for [Schools and Child Care Programs](#)

- [Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes](#)
- ❑ Take steps to ensure [water systems and devices](#) (e.g., sink faucets, drinking fountains, showers, decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown to minimize the risk of Legionnaire’s Disease and other diseases associated with water. When reopening a building after it has been closed for a long period of time, it is important to keep in mind that reduced use of water and ventilation systems can pose their own health hazards. There is an increased risk for the presence of Legionella and other bacteria that come from stagnant or standing water.
- ❑ Train all staff and communicate with families on the following:
 - Enhanced sanitation practices;
 - Social distancing guidelines;
 - Screening practices; and
 - COVID-19 specific exclusion criteria.
- ❑ Make sure adequate supplies are available to meet cleaning requirements.

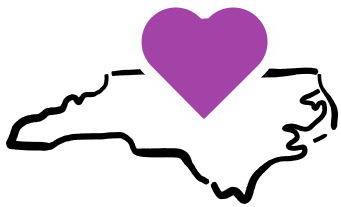
Coping and Resilience

It is **recommended** that overnight camps support coping and resilience by:

- ❑ Provide staff and families with information on help lines to access information or other support in reference to COVID-19, e.g. 211 and Hope4NC Helpline (1-855-587-3463).
- ❑ Promote [Wellness Resources](#) to campers, their families, and staff.
- ❑ Provide access to mental/behavioral health support for both campers and staff. See [Managing Overall Health](#) and [Behavioral Health Guidance](#) for more information.

Additional Resources

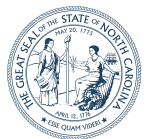
- NC DHHS: [North Carolina COVID-19](#)
- CDC: [Suggestions for Youth and Summer Camps](#)
- CDC: [Suggestions for Youth and Summer Camps: Readiness and Planning Tool](#)
- CDC: [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#)
- CDC: [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)
- CDC: [Reopening Guidance](#)
- CDC: [Coping with Stress](#)
- EPA: [Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2](#)
- FDA: [Food Safety and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- HHS/OSHA: [Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)



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**Staying apart brings us together.
Protect your family and neighbors.**

Learn more at nc.gov/covid19.



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