



Interim Guidance for Day Camp or Program Settings Serving Children and Teens (April 30, 2021)

Guidelines for Conducting Business: Any scenario in which many people gather together poses a risk for COVID-19 transmission. All settings 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 day camps and programs serving children and teens reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. This guidance does not apply to day programs and camps for adults. 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, day camps and programs can take action to help 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**



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

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 day camp or program.

Communication to Parents, Campers, and Staff Prior to Camp Start

It is **recommended** that day camps and programs serving children and teens:

- Communicate to parents and families COVID-19 related instructions in preparation for camp opening (e.g., staying home if symptomatic). CDC has provided a [template letter for parents](#).
- Provide education and training on COVID-19 strategies for camp staff using videos, webinars, and FAQs.
- Provide information about vaccinations and encourage all eligible campers, counselors and staff to [Find Your Spot, Take Your Shot](#).

Drop-off/Arrival Procedure

It is **recommended** that day camps and programs serving children and teens:

- Before arrival: Ask parents to be on the alert for any symptoms of COVID-19 and to keep their child(ren) home if showing any signs of illness.
- Stagger arrival and drop-off times or locations by cohort (group) or put in place other protocols to limit contact between cohorts and with other campers' guardians as much as possible.
- Have a staff member greet campers outside as they arrive.
 - Designate a staff person to walk campers to their room, and at the end of the day, walk them back to their cars.
 - The staff person greeting campers should not be a person at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
 - Staff should monitor and discourage congregation at arrival and drop-off.
- Communicate to families about modified drop-off/arrival procedures, including:
 - Designate the same parent or designated person to drop off and pick up the child every day.
 - Avoid designating those considered at high risk such as grandparents who are over 65 years of age, unless fully vaccinated, if possible.

This guidance covers the following topics:

- [Communication to Parents, Campers and Staff Prior to Camp Start](#)
- [Drop-off/Arrival Procedure](#)
- [Monitoring for Symptoms](#)
- [Returning to Camp](#)
- [Preventing Spread in the Day Camp/Program Facility](#)
- [Cloth Face Coverings](#)
- [Cleaning and Hygiene](#)
- [Protecting Vulnerable Populations](#)
- [For Facilities Planning to Reopen After Extended Closure](#)
- [Communication and Combatting Misinformation](#)
- [Additional Considerations](#)
- [Additional Resources](#)
 - [Daily Health Screening for COVID-19 for Anyone Entering the Building](#)



- ❑ Set up hand hygiene stations at the entrance of the facility, so that staff and campers can clean their hands before they enter. If a sink with soap and water is not available, provide hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol. Keep hand sanitizer out of children's reach and supervise use.

Monitoring 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. If a child develops symptoms while at the day camp or program facility, they should be placed in isolation under the supervision of an adult, and return home safely as soon as possible. If a staff member develops symptoms while at the day camp or program facility, they should notify their supervisor immediately and must isolate, and return home. More information see the Appendix at the end of the document and [how to monitor for symptoms](#) from the CDC.

It is **recommended** that day camps and programs serving children and teens:

- ❑ If feasible, conduct daily health checks (for example, [symptom checking](#)) of staff and campers safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations.
- ❑ Camps should establish partnerships with community providers who offer testing, or refer staff and campers for [screening testing](#). Screening testing is particularly valuable in areas with moderate, substantial, and high levels of community transmission.
 - 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](#).
- ❑ Weekly screening testing of unvaccinated staff who may oversee multiple cohorts of campers over the summer will help identify those who are asymptomatic and do not have known, suspected, or reported exposure of the virus that causes COVID-19 and prevent further transmission.
- ❑ Do not let individuals enter the camp if:
 - They have tested positive for COVID-19;
 - They are showing the following COVID-19 symptoms (fever, chills, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new cough, or new loss of taste or smell);
 - Are unvaccinated, and have recently had [close contact](#) (within 6 feet, for 15 minutes or more) with a person with COVID-19.
 - 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.
- ❑ Educate staff, campers, and their families about the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and when people should stay home and when they can return to the day camp or program facility.
- ❑ Develop plans for backfilling positions of employees on sick leave and consider cross-training to allow for changes of staff duties.
- ❑ Support staff to stay at home as appropriate with flexible sick leave and paid leave policies.

Returning to Camp after symptoms or diagnosis of COVID-19

Day camps and programs serving children and teens should:



- ❑ Adhere to the following CDC guidelines for allowing a camper or staff member to return to the day camp or program facility.
 - Per CDC guidelines, if a camper or employee has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or is presumed positive by a medical professional due to symptoms, the individual should be excluded from the camp until:
 - No fever for at least 24 hours since recovery (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 first symptoms***A test-based strategy is no longer recommended to discontinue isolation or precautions and employers should not require documentation of a negative test before allowing a worker to return.**
 - Per CDC guidelines, if an individual has been diagnosed with COVID-19 but does not have symptoms, they should remain from the camp until 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test

Preventing the Spread in the Day Camp/Program Facility

[Social distancing](#) can decrease the spread of COVID-19. Social distancing (“physical distancing”) means keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home. Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people; do not gather in groups; stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings.

Day camps and programs serving children and teens are **required** to:

- ❑ Post signage in key areas throughout the camp facility (e.g., camp entrances, dining areas, restrooms) 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 day camps and programs serving children and teens:

- ❑ 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.
- ❑ Only allow campers and staff who are required for daily operations and ratio inside the camp facilities.
- ❑ Install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain at least six (6) feet apart (e.g., reception desks).
- ❑ Waiting areas should have six (6) feet spacing markings. Floors should be marked to remind campers and staff to stay six (6) feet apart.
- ❑ Limit nonessential visitors and activities involving external groups or organizations.



- When eating meals, keep camp groups separated rather than having all campers eat meals together.
- 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.”
- Spectators may watch outdoor camp activities as long as they are maintaining social distancing of at least six (6) feet apart.
- Outdoor water play using sprinklers is considered similar to playground usage. However, water for outdoor play cannot be collected or recirculated and must drain quickly to avoid puddling.
 - Any structure, chamber, or tank containing an artificial body of water used by the public for swimming, diving, wading, recreation, or therapy, together with buildings, appurtenances, and equipment used in connection with the body of water must be approved and permitted according to the Rules Governing Public Swimming Pools, 15A NCAC 18A.2500.

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.

Day camps and programs serving children and teens are **required** to:

- 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.
- Visit NC DHHS [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 day camps and programs serving children and teens:

- Have all workers, all other adults, and children five (5) years or older wear a face covering 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 those old enough 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. Individuals should be reminded frequently not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands. 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

Day camps and programs serving children and teens are **required** to:

- ❑ Follow [NC DHHS Environmental Health Section guidance](#) for cleaning and disinfection recommendations.
- ❑ Use [an EPA-approved disinfectant that is active against coronaviruses and follow manufacturer's instructions for use and contact time.](#) . 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 day camps and programs serving children and teens:

- ❑ Support healthy hygiene by providing supplies including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol (for staff and older campers who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, cloth face coverings, and no-touch/foot pedal trash cans.
- ❑ Provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol at every entrance, exit, in cafeteria, and each classroom if supplies are available.
- ❑ Teach and reinforce hand hygiene guidance for [adults](#) and [children](#) 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).
- ❑ Monitor to ensure both campers and staff are washing hands correctly. In addition to usual handwashing, everyone should wash hands:
 - Upon arrival in the morning
 - Before and after eating meals and snacks
 - After blowing noses, coughing, or sneezing or when in contact with body fluids
 - After using the restroom
- ❑ 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.
- ❑ Incorporate frequent handwashing and sanitation breaks into camp activities.
- ❑ Hand sanitizing products with 60 percent alcohol may be used in lieu of handwashing when outdoors if hands are washed upon returning indoors.
- ❑ Routinely check and refill/replace hand sanitizer at entries, soap, and paper towels in bathrooms.
- ❑ Discourage sharing of items that are difficult to [clean, sanitize, or disinfect](#). (Children's books are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection.)
- ❑ Keep each camper's belongings separated from others' and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas.

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 day camps and programs serving children and teens:



- ❑ Enable staff that self-identify as high risk for severe illness to minimize face-to-face contact and to allow them to maintain a distance of six (6) feet from others, modify job responsibilities that limit exposure risk, or to telework if possible.

For Facilities Planning to Reopen After Extended Closure:

It is **recommended** that day camps and programs serving children and teens:

- ❑ 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.
- ❑ 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.

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 [NC DHHS](#) to promote behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19.

It is **recommended** that day camps and programs serving children and teens:

- ❑ 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.
- ❑ Share reliable COVID-19 information with staff and families in multiple ways such as websites, social media, newsletters that include videos, hosting online webinars, or distributing printed materials like FAQs. Ensure that families are able to access communication channels to appropriate staff at the camp facility with questions and concerns.

Additional Considerations: 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](#)

APPENDIX

	If a person has COVID-19 symptoms at the facility	If a person at the facility tests positive for COVID-19
Isolation at the Facility	Immediately isolate the person that has COVID-19 symptoms including fever, chills, shortness of breath, new cough, or new loss of taste or smell and send them and any family members living in the same household home as soon as possible.	Immediately isolate the individual and send them and any family members living in the same household home as soon as possible.
Waiting with a Child Who Needs to be Picked Up	While waiting for a child who is sick or has tested positive for COVID-19 to be picked up, have a caregiver stay with the child in a room or area isolated from others. If possible, allow for air flow throughout the room where the child is waiting by opening windows or doors to the outside. The caregiver should remain as far away as safely possible from the	



	If a person has COVID-19 symptoms at the facility	If a person at the facility tests positive for COVID-19
	<p>child (preferably 6 feet or more) while maintaining visual supervision. The caregiver must wear a cloth face covering or a surgical mask. If the child is over the age of two (2) and can tolerate a face covering, the child should also wear a cloth face covering or a surgical mask if available. Cloth face coverings should not be placed on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	
Notification to Local Health Departments	<p>N/A. (Recommendation should be made to consult a healthcare provider, and if confirmed to be COVID-19, report would be made to local health department at that time.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediately notify the Local Health Department of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 case(s) among campers and/or staff. • Have a plan to work with the Local Health Department to identify close contacts of confirmed cases in the day camp setting. • Work with the Local Health Departments for follow-up and contact tracing.
Exposures	<p>N/A. (If a healthcare provider confirms COVID-19, work with Local Health Department to determine close contacts as in box on the right.)</p>	<p>The Local Health Department will determine who is a close contact to a person with laboratory confirmed COVID-19, and what the next steps should be. To prevent further spread, close contacts should remain in quarantine after their last known exposure to the person, unless they test positive (in which case, criteria below under “Returning to Camp” would apply). Quarantine periods could be less under certain circumstances, and at the discretion of the LHD. Persons who are fully vaccinated (i.e., at least 14 days after a second dose of a 2-dose series or one-dose of a single-dose series) do not need to quarantine if they have no symptoms after an close contact.</p>
Cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close off all areas used by the person who had symptoms of COVID-19 and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting (for outdoor areas, this includes surfaces or shared objects in the area, if applicable). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close off all areas used by the person who tested positive for COVID-19 and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting (for outdoor areas, this includes surfaces or shared objects in the area, if applicable).



	If a person has COVID-19 symptoms at the facility	If a person at the facility tests positive for COVID-19
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ventilate area to outside air and wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible. In most cases, it will not be necessary to close down an entire building. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning or disinfecting to reduce risk to individuals cleaning.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People should not be in rooms while they are being cleaned. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area. Follow NC DHHS Environmental Health Section guidance for cleaning and disinfection recommendations. Use an EPA-registered disinfectant that is active 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. 	
Closure	<p>There may be no need to close the day camp or program facility if the Local Health Department determines that close contacts are excluded and there is sufficient space to continue normal operations. The Local Health Department may in some situations determine that closure of a facility is needed; this will be determined on a case-by-case basis.</p>	
Notification to Parents and Staff	<p>If follow up information obtained from a health care provider for the sick individual requires it, the Local Health Department will work with the facility to inform parents and staff as appropriate.</p>	<p>The Local Health Department will assist to notify staff and families that there was an individual who was in the facility that has tested positive with COVID-19 and that a public health professional may contact them, if staff or their child is identified as a close contact to the individual who tested positive. Notify staff and families that they should maintain confidentiality in accordance with NCGS § 130A-143 and all other state and federal laws.</p>
What Local Health Departments Will Do	<p>The Local Health Department will determine the next steps based upon the health care provider's evaluation of the sick individual. On a case-by-case basis, other considerations may also be taken into account, such as whether possible exposure to COVID-19 may have occurred.</p>	<p>The Local Health Department staff will interview the person who tested positive for COVID-19 (or their family member, if it is a child). As part of the interview, public health staff will identify individuals who were in close contact (defined as within 6 feet for 15 minutes or longer). Public health staff will</p>



	If a person has COVID-19 symptoms at the facility	If a person at the facility tests positive for COVID-19
	<p>If testing is indicated and result is positive for COVID-19, the Local Health Department will work with staff and families to implement control measures for COVID-19 as described to the right.</p>	<p>attempt to reach out to close contacts and inform them that they need to quarantine at home for 14 days (or possibly less under certain circumstances, and at the discretion of the LHD) after their last contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19. Persons who are fully vaccinated (i.e., at least 14 days after a second dose of a 2-dose series or one-dose of a single-dose series) do not need to quarantine if they have no symptoms after an close contact. Public health staff will recommend the close contacts be tested to identify additional positive cases. Close contacts testing negative during quarantine may still need to complete the full original 14 day quarantine.</p>