

Summer Camp Guidance 2021

Summer camp programs, including day camps, overnight camps and primitive or outpost summer camps, may be open for operation during summer 2021.

Purpose: Provide a comprehensive COVID-19 health and safety overview for summer camp programs to prepare and implement a plan for resuming services in accordance with the RIDOH and CDC guidelines established below. 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 twelve (12) hours each day; and
- b. does not include child day care services required to be licensed under R.I. 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

Summer camp group sizes must be no larger than 26 children.

- This applies for children age 4 and older.
- These groups must be stable groups, meaning the same 26 or fewer children remain in a group consistently without interaction with children in other stable groups.
- Children should not change from one group to another; for example, a program may previously have had a policy of promoting children to a different age grouping upon their birthday. Under the summer camp regulations, children must remain in the same group for the duration of their summer session attendance.
- If feasible, stable groups also must occupy the same space each day. At some program sites, this may mean different classrooms.

Physical Distancing

- Physical distancing of 3 feet is recommended when possible, but is not required within each stable group. Children within a stable group may engage in close play with one another.
- Maintain 6 feet of physical distance 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 7 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.

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As of March 19th 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 and Other Personal Protective Equipment

[CDC summer camp guidance](#) advises all staff, campers and visitors to wear a high-quality mask to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

- Note: masks should **not** be placed on:
 - Babies or children younger than 2 years old
 - Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious
 - Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cover without help
 - If a child with a disability cannot wear a mask, maintain physical distance, or adhere to other public health requirements
- Teach and reinforce the use of [masks](#). Masks should be worn by staff and campers (particularly older campers) in accordance with RI State [guidance](#). Information should be provided to staff and campers on [proper use, removal, and washing of masks](#). Note: mask-wearing is not required during swim.

For mask-wearing and other guidance specific to overnight camps, please see “Additional Guidance for Overnight Camps” on the CDC [website](#).

Screening Procedures

Symptom screening protocols should be consistent with those found in the State’s [child care 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 his or her parent/guardian should seek medical advice from the child’s healthcare provider. The parent/guardian should also inform the camp of their absence.

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; and

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- Has had no fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** symptoms have improved.
- 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.

Registration & Contact Tracing

If you are planning to operate summer camps during the summer of 2021, 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. 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 30th.

Camps are required 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 the RI Department of Health 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 getting vaccinated 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 & 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 & 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 the 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.

Transportation

All camps utilizing transportation for staff and/or campers must follow the transportation guidelines from the [4/1/21 Health and Safety Memo](#) and 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](#).

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).

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Visitors

To reduce the risk of exposure, it is recommended to limit nonessential visitors and/or observers from visiting summer camp programs. Requirements for allowing visitors and/or observers onsite include:

- Maintain a visitor log, and document the arrival and departure time of each individual.
- Require 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.
- Avoid activities and events such as field trips and special performances.
- All camp visitors will be required to have a negative COVID-19 test result obtained within 72 hours before arriving to camp, and wear a mask and practice social distancing while at the facility.

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](#).

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. As of Monday, April 26, sports listed in the high risk category will be allowed.

Pools and Water Activities

Camps should refer to [Summary of Phase III Guidance for Pools \(ri.gov\)](#) for the most up to date guidance around pool and water activities.

Residential “Sleep Away” or Overnight Camps

Residential camps are expected to follow all these guidelines. In addition to the overarching guidelines, residential camps should:

- Form stable groups that are consistent across all camp activities, including sleeping arrangements.
- Require social distance of 6 feet or more between beds whenever possible due to lack of mask-wearing while sleeping. Fully vaccinated individuals should follow RIDOH requirements and guidance specific to them.
- Extra precautions should be taken in shared living spaces, shared meal spaces, and shared restrooms where there are more common surfaces.

Please reference the CDC guidelines found [here](#) for youth summer camps for additional best practices for operating residential camps.

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Resources

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

