

# GUIDELINES FOR DAY AND OVERNIGHT YOUTH SUMMER CAMPS

**In addition to the Safer at Home Order's mandates and the Guidelines for Safeguarding All Businesses, the following practices are strongly recommended for all camps serving children and teens.**

These recommendations have been developed in conjunction with the recommendations from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's *Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19*, and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): *Guidelines for Disinfecting Your Facility and Child Care Programs During the COVID-19 Pandemic*, and *Interim Guidance for Schools and Day Camps*. This guidance is intended to help camp facilities and programs make informed decisions about COVID-19 and minimize the risk of exposure to both the staff and the children in their care.

The Alabama Department of Public Health strongly recommends that all camps for children and teens that operate in Alabama follow this guidance. Adult day programs and camps for adults are not covered by this guidance.

Please use the [CDC Decision Tree](#) to determine if your camp is ready to open. The American Camp Association (ACA) has created a resource center devoted to COVID-19 that includes information about camp operations, health & wellness, online learning, staffing, and communications. Among the resources that ACA will be publishing in May is a Field Guide for Camps on Implementation of CDC Guidance.

## **Communication to parents, campers, and staff prior to camp start:**

- Communicate to parents/families COVID-19 related instructions in preparation for camp opening (for example: stay home if sick).
- Provide education and training on COVID-19 for camp staff prior to the start of camp using videos, webinars, and frequently asked questions (FAQs).

**ANYONE SHOWING SIGNS OF ILLNESS OF ANY KIND OR WHO MAY HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO COVID-19 SHOULD NOT BE PERMITTED TO ENTER THE CAMP FACILITY.**

## **Drop-off/arrival procedure:**

- Consider staggering arrival and drop-off times and/or plan to limit direct contact with parents as much as possible. If possible, the same parent or designated person should drop off and pick up the child every day. Avoid designating those considered at high risk such as grandparents who are 65 or older.
- Have a staff member greet children outside as they arrive. Designate a staff person to walk children to their room,

and to walk them back to their cars at the end of the day. The staff person greeting children should not be a person at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

## **Promote healthy hygiene practices:**

- Teach and reinforce washing hands and covering coughs and sneezes among children and staff.
  - Face coverings are most essential at times when social distancing is not possible. Staff should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently. Information should be provided to all staff on proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings.
  - Have adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60-percent alcohol content, paper towels, and tissues.

## **Health and safety actions:**

- Intensify cleaning, sanitation, disinfection, and ventilation.
  - Clean, sanitize, and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (for example, playground equipment, sporting equipment, door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains) multiple times per day and shared objects between use.
  - Develop, train and implement increased daily sanitization protocols for common surfaces, restrooms, dining halls, cabins, recreational equipment, and camp facilities.
  - Allow time for cleaning between activities.
  - Avoid use of items that are not easily cleaned, sanitized, or disinfected.
  - Incorporate bathroom breaks and handwashing breaks before and after activities.
  - Take steps to ensure water systems and devices are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown to minimize the risk of Legionnaire's Disease and other disease associated with water.
  - Deep clean and sanitize the camp prior to the start of a new camp session.
  - Clean and disinfect tables, chairs, and counters after use.
  - Hold packages received by the camp for 24 hours before delivering to campers or staff.
- Follow social distancing strategies.
  - Post signage and other messaging to remind campers and staff of physical distancing.
  - Waiting areas should have 6-foot spacing markings.

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Floors should be marked to remind campers and staff to stay 6 feet apart.

- o If possible, camp classes should include the same children in the group each day and the same staff members. Limit the use of “floater” counselors to one per room to provide coverage for staff at meal time and breaks.
- o Keep each group of children in a separate room.
- o Limit the mixing of children (for instance, staggering playground times, and keeping groups separate for activities such as art and music).
- o Space out seating and bedding (head-to-toe positioning) to six feet apart if possible.
- o Cancel all-camp assemblies and field trips.
- o During meals, keep camp groups separated instead of eating together.
- o Do not allow sports or activities such as basketball, football, and wrestling, in which participants cannot maintain social distancing.
- o Spectators may watch outdoor camp activities if they maintain social distancing.
- Limit sharing.
  - o Keep each child’s belongings separated and in individually labeled storage containers, cubbies, or areas and have them taken home each day and cleaned, if possible.
  - o Adjust activities and procedures to limit sharing of items such as toys, supplies, and equipment and clean and disinfect between use.
  - o Offer pre-packaged boxes or bags of food for each child at mealtime and for snacks. Avoid sharing foods and utensils.
  - o If meals are typically served family-style, plate each child’s meal before serving. Use single-use items as much as possible, such as packets of ketchup or salt.
  - o Designate a facility on the camp grounds for staff to take a break.

## Protection of employees and children:

- Train all employees on health and safety guidelines.
- Take steps to limit risk of exposure to children and employees at higher risk for severe illness: people with diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic conditions, and people 65 or older.
- Screen children and employees each day upon arrival for history of exposure and symptoms, and check temperatures.
  - o Any child or staff member with a temperature of 100.4 or above should not be permitted to attend and should

immediately be sent home. Persons who are sent home with a fever should receive medical clearance from a physician before returning.

- Health screenings should be repeated periodically throughout the day for staff and children to check for the development of new symptoms.

## Ongoing monitoring:

- Children who are sick should be separated and cared for by a staff member until they safely leave for home. Parents should be notified immediately of any illness. Rooms and materials used to care for sick children should be thoroughly disinfected after use. CDC recommends waiting 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting, if possible.
- Identify appropriate isolation facilities at the camp.
  - o If possible, the medical area should include multiple rooms, including a waiting area, a room or rooms to isolate those individuals exhibiting new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19, and a separate room for individuals seeking other medical attention.
  - o Establish procedures for safely taking sick people home or to a healthcare facility.
  - o Ensure access to on-site medical personnel, or an on-call physician, for the duration of a camp session.
- Monitor child and employee absences and have a pool of trained substitutes and flexible leave policies and practices for employees who may become ill.
- Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures.

## Overnight Campers:

- If children are staying overnight, reduce the number of children in each cabin and assign the same staff member to the cabin.
- Campers should sleep head to toe in upper and lower bunks. Bunk beds should be spaced as far apart as feasible in cabin. Air circulation through open windows and fans is encouraged.
- Personal fans should be pointed at one camper only; ceiling fans are permissible.

Anyone participating in overnight camping activities should for the next 14 days minimize in-person contact with anyone 65 or older, especially someone with pre-existing health conditions. Minimizing contact includes maintaining social distancing of at least 6 feet from those individuals, wearing a face covering or mask when near them, and not sharing utensils or other common objects with them.