



COVID-19 Policies for Operation of Summer Day Camps

We are working diligently to develop policies and procedures that support the Responsible RestartOhio guidelines for youth day camps and the accompanying Field Guide for Camps on Implementation of CDC Guidance put forward by the American Camp Association (ACA). The ACA has further provided clear, comprehensive recommendations for camp operations in relation to COVID-19. We are following these recommendations, along with our state guidelines, with the utmost care and consideration for the safety and wellbeing of our campers and staff. If you have any questions about these updated policies and procedures, please reach out by emailing Jennifer.harten@cincinnati-oh.gov.

At a glance:

Explore Nature! (EN) will operate all our Nature Camps out in the parks and Nature Center based camps this summer, in a limited capacity fashion. All camp groups will adhere to the 9:1 child to staff group ratio that state requirements dictate. Each group will be treated as a “cohort,” and have its own “room.” Germ transfer is limited within a cohort through excellent handwashing and commonsense hygiene. Germ transfer between cohorts is designed to be restricted entirely through infectious disease control, such as: physical distancing when indoors in separate “rooms” or camp spaces, disinfecting shared bathroom spaces between cohorts, disinfecting tools whenever possible between cohorts, hand washing, scheduled use of shared space, and group management.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

Do campers have to wear masks at camp?

Yes, all campers are required to wear a face covering while inside a building. However, much of our camp day is spent outside. If we are outdoors and campers can maintain a six foot distance from others they may remove their mask. All camp families must send their camper with a mask to camp. Campers are required to wear a mask when we are doing indoor activities; taking bathroom breaks; and in the event we must take shelter in dangerous weather. If a camper does not have their own mask, disposable masks will be available to all.

Will counselors be wearing masks?

Counselors will be wearing masks for a reasonable part of the day. Counselors will always wear masks when interacting with camp families and parents. Counselors will always wear masks when in closer proximity to campers – less than 6’ if in their own trail group, 15’ if near a different trail group. Counselors may take their masks off during lunch time, and during that time campers will be sitting six feet away from counselors. Counselors may also take their masks off

other times when they can maintain 6' distance from campers in their own group. Counselors would also take off their masks if needing to perform rescue breaths during CPR.

What is the size of the group?

None of our group sizes can exceed 9, because guidelines recommend no more than 9 school age children in a group, or in indoor space, which we would use some times during the camp day and in case of severe weather.

Are campers expected to stay 6 feet apart?

It is not currently a guideline for children to maintain 6' distance within their cohort for an entire camp day. If campers within a cohort are going to be near each other for a greater length of time (for example, during lunch) or if we must move indoors for dangerous weather, they will be distanced. Campers from different cohorts will remain 15' apart at all times, and shared spaces will be disinfected between use.

You're running an outdoor camp, what if it storms?

We will be relying heavily on the great outdoors itself to accomplish physical distancing. Some of the camp "rooms" are outdoor spaces.

Inclement Weather Policy

Cincinnati Parks is committed to providing a safe environment for our campers and staff. Due to current circumstances with the COVID-19 pandemic we will be following the State, Center for Disease Control (CDC,) and American Camp Association (ACA) guidelines to keep everyone safe. We rely heavily on the outdoor environment to conduct our camps and many groups will be totally outdoors. In the event of sustained rain or severe weather is forecasted, we will use weather data and our best judgement to make the call to hold or cancel camp by 8:00 AM the morning of camp. We cannot hold camp in bad weather due to insufficient indoor space for an entire day and follow mandatory guidelines. Camp will **NOT** be refunded that day. If severe weather pops up during the middle of the day we will cancel camp for the remainder of the day and notify camp families to pick up their campers as soon as possible thereafter via email, phone, or text if available. In keeping with ACA guidelines while indoors, in the event of severe weather, we ask that a face covering is provided by families and used by each camper. Disposable facial coverings will be provided to campers in the event that a camper does not have one. Facial coverings are not required if the covering causes anxiety or stress for the camper.

What if someone gets sick at camp?

Following guidelines, if a camper develops a fever or otherwise exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 or any other ailment, they will immediately be moved to an isolated location, while being supervised by a staff member wearing Personal Protective Equipment. Their family will be notified and they must be picked up from camp as soon as possible. Please refer to our policies below for more information about cancellations and refunds.

What if a camper is reported sick outside of camp hours?

Camp families will be notified in the event a serious, contagious illness, including Covid19, is

detected at camp. This will be done anonymously. Please refer to our policies below for more information about cancellations and refunds.

What if a counselor gets sick at camp?

If a counselor gets sick at camp, they will immediately go home and be quarantined until they can be tested for the novel coronavirus. Camp staff will participate in a daily temperature and symptoms check. If camp staff are symptomatic, or have a temperature above 100 degrees, they will not report for work, and they will immediately seek testing.

2021 REFUND POLICY:

Cincinnati Parks will fully honor refunds at any time a camp family chooses to withdraw their camper(s) registration due to COVID-19 concerns.

Cincinnati Parks will refund camp if we must cancel camp due to infectious diseases.

Cincinnati Parks will not refund in the event of weather that either causes campers to be picked up early or to entirely miss a day of camp. Please see our weather policy above.

STAFF TRAINING:

Camp staff will receive COVID-19 related training prior to the first week of summer camp. CDC guidelines will be followed during the training to allow for distancing and disinfection of materials. Camp staff will further be trained in proper mask usage, proper handwashing, and proper disinfection protocols.

CHECK-IN/CHECK-OUT PROCEDURE:

Explore Nature! will be implementing a new check in/check out procedure.

Check-in/check-out will take the form of a car line. Cars will wait single file, then proceed to a designated drop-off location. More information describing this process will be contained in each camp's Parent Letter via email.

We respectfully request adults dropping off and picking up their campers wear a facial covering when interacting with staff in the car line, unless it is unsafe for that person to do so. Staff will be wearing facial coverings.

It is recommended by state guidelines that the same parent/guardian conduct pick-up and drop-off each day, but we recognize the exceptional burden that places on working families. As we seek to comply with guidelines, we request that families please limit as much as possible the number of adults participating in check in/check out.

It is imperative that adults stay in their vehicles during check-in/check-out. Ideally, sunscreen and bug spray will have already been applied, but if it is necessary to get out of the car to help your camper with something prior to the start of their camp day, please pull over somewhere near the camp welcome site (but out of the way of other vehicles) and please take care of anything BEFORE getting into check-in/check-out lane.

Check-in procedure will include taking your camper's temperature and answering questions about symptoms and exposures. Check-in policy states that any individual answering "yes" to these questions or with a fever of 100 degrees or higher may not stay at camp.

In the last 14 days, has your camper tested positive OR is waiting on test results for COVID-19? Within the last 72 hours has your camper, or a person your camper has *CLOSE daily contact with (immediate family, grandparents, neighbors) displayed any of the following symptoms?

-Cough

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

In the last 14 days, to the best of your knowledge, have you had *CLOSE contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19?

In the last 14 days, to the best of your knowledge, have you had *CLOSE contact with someone who has been tested for COVID-19, the test results are not yet available, and the person had the symptoms of COVID-19 (described above) at the time of the contact?

*CLOSE = within 6 feet for a period of time longer than 15 minutes

A staff member will conduct the check in station and direct your camper to wash her or his hands. A second staff person will direct your camper to their “cohort” and “room.” At the check in station, staff perform instant-read, no-contact temperature checks on each camper each morning in addition to the symptom questionnaire/health check.

At the end of the day, the process is reversed, and campers will wash their hands immediately before sitting down with their group for pick-up.

DURING THE CAMP DAY:

We will immediately send home any child or employee who has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher or otherwise displays symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell).

Please bring your camper’s belongings to camp all in one bag with their name clearly marked on the outside of the bag, on their lunch bag, and the water bottle (we cannot use drinking fountains, please pack enough water for the day). Other optional items that need to fit in the bag: raincoat, towel, extra shoes on creek day, bug spray, or sunscreen. This bag will stay at the campers “room,” in a basket which we will provide each camper for the week.

Each Cincinnati Parks Explore Nature camp operates with slightly difference space amenities, but in each case, we will promote social distancing in the following ways:

- Each cohort’s “room” will be marked out so that campers can remain socially distanced while in an enclosed space
- Campers will be encouraged to maintain 6’ between them during trail time, and hike groups will not combine during the day
- We have selected camp games which promote distancing whenever possible
- We will provide baskets for campers to store their camp bags for the week, avoiding the use of shared table space. All camper personal items must fit into these baskets. (if your campers items fit into a standard backpack, this should be fine)
- We will provide “craft kits” of highly touched items for each camper to use for the week, in individual bags for their baskets

Our handwashing policy has always been for everyone to wash hands: after using the restroom, after handling bodily fluids, after handling animals, before handling food and before eating lunch. To that, we add that everyone will wash hands: upon arrival for the day, after eating lunch, after handling cleaning supplies (staff only), after doing activities where campers may

have touched the same object, and directly before departure. Hand sanitizer may be used when soap and water are not available.

While parks are, and have throughout the COVID-19 pandemic remained open to the public, our nature centers are closed to anyone but summer campers and staff.

We will take every precaution we can to stop the spread of germs between cohorts. For example, after one cohort has used the bathroom and before the next group uses the bathroom, frequently touched surfaces in the bathroom will be disinfected using a disinfectant approved for SARS-Cov-2 usage.

In an effort to reduce mixing between cohorts, we will eliminate opportunities for all groups to mingle. For example, there will be no large parent meeting on Monday. We will not combine groups for full camp introductions or presentations. We will not have camp-wide games.

The same counselors will remain with their cohort throughout the day and week when at all possible. Each camp will have two support staff who are also counselors. (These support counselors are paid camp staff members who is not currently assigned as a group lead for the week. They coordinate drop off and dismissal, move campers to their “room” each day, assist in bathroom management and provide breaks to counselors. They will wear masks and stay distant from the campers.)

If cohorts are going to share materials, those materials will be disinfected prior to the next group touching them. For example, digging tools, binoculars, bug jars, etc. will all be cleaned and disinfected immediately after use by camp staff. We will work to provide groups their own materials as much as possible.

All camp spaces and “touch points” will be sanitized each evening.

CONFIRMED CASES:

If it becomes known during the course of a camp week that a camper or counselor has tested positive for the novel coronavirus, the entire camp will be informed. Anonymity will be maintained. That camp member’s cohort will be ended for the remainder of the week, and those individuals should complete isolation or quarantine procedures in coordination with the local health department and be tested prior to returning to the program. That camp member’s area at camp will be closed and undergo deep cleaning and disinfection. Prorated refunds will be provided to the other camp families in the suspended cohort for the remainder of the week. If those camp families choose to withdraw their camper from any additional weeks for which they are registered, refunds will be provided for those as well. Other cohorts will continue for the week, but refunds will be given if families choose to withdraw from camp. If a camper or counselor in another cohort tests positive, camp will be suspended for a minimum of 14 days, with refunds for all camp registrations. Day camp providers must immediately notify the Department of Job and Family Services in writing if a child or employee test positive for COVID-19.

If it becomes known over the course of a camp week someone in the camper’s immediate family has tested positive for COVID-19, that camper should complete isolation or quarantine procedures and be tested in coordination with the local health department prior to returning to the program. Refunds will be given.

If a staff or camper develops COVID-19-like symptoms during the day (fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell), they will be isolated while under supervision of a staff member until they can be picked up from camp. At that point, it is strongly recommended that the camper wear a facial covering, if it is safe for the camper to do so, and they will be provided one if they do not have their own. All

camp families will be informed of the situation, which will be reported as an unconfirmed illness at camp. Anonymity will be maintained. That individual must be tested, with a negative result, prior to returning to the program.

Refunds will be provided for any family who misses camp for reasons relating to COVID-19.

TIPS FOR PREPARING YOUR CAMPERS FOR CAMP:

If you have attended a Cincinnati Parks Explore Nature camp in the past, please know that we are working hard to continue to provide a fun experience for your camper, but it will not be the same experience as before. It may be helpful to explain ahead of time that counselors will share rules for the day that are designed simply to keep everyone at camp healthy. Campers can help counselors follow the rules by listening to the guidelines and doing their best to comply. Our counselors appreciate when campers help everyone have a safe and fun time!

Campers should know that just because counselors are wearing masks does not mean they are sick. It is only a precaution for preventing germ transfer. They are just following the rules 😊 We are not requiring campers to wear masks, but we would like for them to bring one for themselves and keep it in their bag. Campers are encouraged to wear a mask if that is something you are doing as a family, and something they are comfortable with. If your child can not wear a mask, they must maintain 6' distance from everyone else in their cohort while we're inside that space together.

You may consider using these talking points from respected sources when you talk with your children:

Girl Scouts of America: "How to talk to your kids about the coronavirus"

<https://www.girlscouts.org/en/raising-girls/happy-and-healthy/happy/coronavirus-and-kids.html>

Kids Health: "Corona Virus (COVID-19): How to talk to your child"

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-how-talk-child.html>

Centers for Disease Control: "Talking with Children About Corona Virus Disease 2019"

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/talking-with-children.html>

CANCELLATIONS:

If you will be requesting a refund for a cancelled week of camp, we will of course honor it.

However, would you consider making all or part of your registration fee into a donation to help Explore Nature fulfill it's mission of nature education well into the future?

THANK YOU for choosing a Cincinnati Parks Explore Nature Summer Camp! It is our pleasure to provide a safe, fun, enriching summer camp experience for your family.

Sincerely,

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