



Public Health Advisory
Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Guidance for Camps and
Educational/Recreational Programs
May 27, 2020

This document provides guidance for operating day camps and educational/recreational programs that provide care for children age five and older whose parents or caregivers are allowed to work outside of their homes during the COVID-19 pandemic. This FAQ provides City of Berkeley Public Health guidance for private and public camps, children’s activity centers, church programs, etc. Camps and educational/recreational programs are an essential service to ensure children are receiving education, recreation, and enrichment activities while they are on a summer break from school.

Informal gatherings and playdates continue to not be allowable at this time. Children outside of the same household may gather only under the care or supervision of childcare establishments, summer camps, and other educational or recreational institutions or programs.

The City of Berkeley wants to balance allowing these essential activities and services with the protection of staff and children, and thus recommends the following guidance outlined below.

City of Berkeley Shelter in Place Order

To slow and decrease the spread of COVID-19, the City of Berkeley joined Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties in issuing a legal order directing their respective residents to shelter at home. The order limits activity, travel, and business functions to only the most essential needs. Governor Newsom issued a similar statewide order on March 19, 2020. Both Orders remain in effect in the City of Berkeley, with the local order prevailing in areas where it is more restrictive than the order issued by the State. For the most recent Health Order and latest advisories, see [here](#).

Shelter in Place Order/Camps and Educational or Recreational Institutions

Childcare establishments, summer camps, and other educational or recreational institutions or programs providing care or supervision for children of all ages that enable owners, employees, volunteers, and contractors for Essential Businesses, Essential Governmental Functions, Outdoor Businesses, or Minimum Basic Operations to work are allowed. List of Essential Workers and businesses permitted to operate can be found [here](#).

Children of owners, employees, volunteers, and contractors who are not exempt under this Order currently may not attend childcare, camps and recreational/educational programs.

The programs listed above may also serve vulnerable populations, including:

- Children who are receiving child protective services or who have been deemed to be at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- Children eligible through the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children.
- Families experiencing homelessness as defined in Section 11434(a)(2) of Title 42 of the *United States Code*, known as the *McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act*.
- Children of domestic violence survivors.



- Families with children with disabilities or special health care needs whose individualized education programs (IEP) and/or individual family support plans (IFSP) include ELC services.

To the extent possible, these operations must comply with the following conditions:

1. They must be carried out in stable groups of 12 or fewer children (“stable” means that the same 12 or fewer children are in the same group each day). * Note: The City of Berkeley’s Shelter in Place Order specifies a group size of 12. However, if a childcare establishment is licensed by the California Community Care Licensing Division (CCCL), they recommend a group size of 10.
2. Children shall not change from one group to another. The group should remain stable for at least three weeks. In other words, children should not change groups from week to week.
3. If more than one group of children is at one facility, each group shall be in a separate room. Groups shall not mix with each other.
4. Providers or educators shall remain solely with one group of children.

Infection Control through Social Distancing

Social distancing is deliberately increasing the physical space between people to avoid spreading illness. A distance of at least six feet is required to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The following recommendations should be followed to the extent possible given the age of the children and nature of the camp activities.

Physical Space Design for Distancing with Educational Activities

- As stated above, limit the number of children to no more than 12 children in a room or space (unless licensed by CCCL and then the smaller more restrictive size of 10 is recommended. This will minimize cross-contagion and promote distancing between children.
- Re-engineer rooms or spaces to put six feet between children’s activity stations, tables, and chairs.
- Involve children in developing social distancing plans using chalk and materials – such as pool noodles and yarn – to create personal space areas.
- Involve children in developing signs, which can be used as reminders to social distance.
- Involve older children in developing social distancing space plans to practice their applied math skills.
- Ensure you have ample space in restrooms and monitor the number of children able to use restrooms to allow for social distancing.

Camp Activities

- Eliminate all-camp gatherings like campfires and sing-alongs, and other activities that bring large groups of children close together.
- Alternatively, bring small groups of children together for storytelling and games.
- Stagger activities so no two groups are in the same place at the same time.
- Encourage individual activities like painting, crafts, and building with blocks, Legos, and other materials.
- Involve the children in developing reminder signs for hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes, and to stay six feet apart.
- Create field games or outdoor activities where you can to provide wider spacing opportunities.



- Sports with shared equipment or physical contact, like soccer, basketball, baseballs, softball, and tennis, can only be played within the same stable group of children, and equipment should be cleaned daily at minimum.
- Swimming is permitted as long it occurs with the same stable group of children. The number of groups will be limited by the ability to keep the groups at least six feet apart within a pool or body of water.
- Do as many activities outdoors as possible.

Mealtime

- Discontinue buffet-style food options and offer pre-packaged foods when possible.
- Use disposable single serve utensils, that are ideally individually wrapped
- Stagger mealtimes to increase personal space and avoid mixing of groups.
- Set up a tent or two when weather prevents eating outside.
- Avoid sharing tables whenever possible, and clean tables in between groups.

Additional Infection Control Measures

Daily Operation Modifications:

- Stagger arrival and/or dismissal times. These approaches can limit the amount of close contact between students in high-traffic situations and times.
- Limit the presence of volunteers for classroom activities, mystery readers, cafeteria support, and other activities unless they can remain stable within one group.
- Establish procedures for drop-off and pick-up to maintain physical distancing. Consider moving the sign-in station outside the facility. Provide hand sanitizer or handwashing facilities to use before and after families sign in and out. Do not share pens. Ask parents to bring their own pens when signing children in and out. If check-in is electronic, clean and disinfect the screens or keyboards frequently.
- Implement drop off services to avoid parents coming into the camp or recreation facility.
- Plan for absenteeism of staff and children.
- Identify critical job functions and positions, and plan for alternative coverage by cross-training staff.
- Determine what level of absenteeism will disrupt continuity of programming.

Create a communications plan for the families you serve

- Include strategies for sharing information with staff, children, and their families.
- Include information about steps being taken by the camp or program facility to prepare, and how additional information will be shared.
- Share resources with the school or camp community to help families understand how to prevent spread and when to keep children home.
- Any communication to children and families should include information that helps them make safe, informed decisions and educates them on how to remain healthy.
- Children and families should avoid close contact with those who are sick.
- Encourage families to talk to children about simple, but effective prevention tips, such as covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve (not hands), wearing face coverings when around others, and washing hands frequently



Distribute the following fact sheets and resources to children (where age-appropriate), their families, and staff:

- General CDC fact sheets to help staff and students' families understand COVID-19 and the steps they can take to protect themselves:
 - [What you should know about COVID-19 to protect yourself and others](#)
 - [Prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick](#)
 - [Stop the spread of germs – help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses like COVID-19](#)

Health Screening

- Screen children and staff for fever or cough daily, before entering the program.
- Children or staff who are sick with other illnesses that meet the usual exclusion criteria should also stay home.
- If a staff member or child shows signs of respiratory illness (a new cough, complaints of sore throat, or shortness of breath), a fever of 100°F or above, they should enter a separate room, or be safely isolated with a staff member, and be sent home as soon as possible.
- Seek medical care immediately if symptoms, such as a high fever or difficulty breathing, become more severe.

Stay Home when Sick

- Staff and children should stay home when they are sick.
- If a child or a staff member has a new cough or other illness symptoms, they should not come to school even if they have no fever. However, it is not uncommon for people, including children, with COVID-19 to have cough without fever, especially early in the course of illness.

When It's Safe to Return to Camp or Educational/Recreational Program

Ill children or staff should not return to work or program until:

- Their respiratory symptoms are improving
- They have had no fever for 72 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines, and
- At least ten days have passed since illness onset.

What to do when there is a confirmed positive COVID-19 case in the camp or educational/recreational program

1. If you are made aware of a confirmed COVID-19 case before Public Health, please immediately **notify Berkeley Public Health (BPH) at 510-981-5292**. BPH will collaborate with you to determine next steps.
2. **Dismiss students and most staff for 2-5 days.** This initial short-term dismissal allows time for BPH to help determine appropriate next steps, including whether an extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or slow further spread of COVID-19.
 - BPH's recommendations for the scope and duration of dismissals and closures will be made on a case-by-case basis using the most up-to-date information about COVID-19 and the specific cases in the community.
 - Discourage staff, participants, and their families from gathering or socializing anywhere. This includes group child care arrangements, as well as gatherings at places like a friend's house.



3. Administrators will be asked to help identify adults or children who may have had contact within **six feet of the ill individual for more than fifteen minutes during the time period between two days prior to when the individual's symptoms appeared and the last time the individual attended the childcare, educational or recreational facility**. Regardless of how long the facility remains closed, close contacts should home-quarantine for 14 days from the last date of close contact. If any of them develop a fever, cough or shortness of breath while in quarantine, they should contact their health care provider and follow the return to work/camp/program guidance outlined above.
 - Close contacts are currently defined as household members, intimate partners, home caregivers, and those who have spent prolonged, close face-to-face contact with the case during their infectious period. For that last category, the information is obtained by Public Health staff who interview the case (or in the case of a young child, the parent/guardian), or other caregiver(s).
5. Implement the [CDC's interim cleaning and disinfection recommendations for community facilities with suspected/confirmed coronavirus disease 2019](#).
6. **Communicate with staff, parents, and students.** Coordinate with local health officials to communicate dismissal decisions and the possible COVID-19 exposure. When developing your communication, be mindful of:
 - Maintaining confidentiality when releasing details about the situation, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, and possibly HIPAA. Balancing that with transparency is critical.
 - Tailoring information/messaging for different audiences – messages to those at impacted sites may differ somewhat from public messages.
 - Avoiding messages that stigmatize a site or group of people.

Personal Hygiene Practices

Adapted from: <https://campnurse.org/education-and-resources/resources/>

- Children and staff should wash hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol (if hands are not visibly dirty) before and after eating, drinking, touching eyes/nose/mouth, toileting or diapering, and physical contact with each other. Keep soap dispensers filled. For more information click here: [Handwashing: Make it Really Effective](#)
- Children and staff should cover coughs with a sleeve or tissue. Keep tissues and “no touch” trash cans close by.
- We know humans (especially children) appreciate touch and we are relational beings. Consider how we might encourage elbow bumps, or “fist bumps from afar”.
- Children will use touch since nonverbal communication is 80% of our messaging. Think about ways to encourage handwashing or hand sanitizer after touch and make it part of the fun experience.
- **Staff should wear a [cloth face covering](#) over their nose and mouth.**
- Children attending child care or educational/recreational programs, should wear cloth face coverings to reduce the risk for transmission if the parent and provider determine they can reliably wear, remove, and handle masks following CDC guidance throughout the day, but children under 12 are not required to wear cloth face coverings. A cloth face covering is not intended to protect the wearer, but may prevent the spread of virus from the wearer to others. This would be especially important if someone is infected but does not have symptoms. Medical masks and N-95 respirators are still reserved for healthcare workers and other first responders,



as recommended by current CDC guidance. Acceptable face coverings can be made of a variety of cloth materials, be factory-made or hand sewn, or can be improvised using bandanas, scarves, t-shirts, sweatshirts or towels. Face coverings should be washed frequently with detergent and hot water and dried on a hot cycle. Ideally, wash your face covering after each use, and have a dedicated laundry bag or bin. Make sure the covering is comfortable – you don't want to have to keep adjusting the mask, which means touching your face. Always wash your hands, or use hand sanitizer, before AND after touching your face or face coverings.

- Consider making cloth face coverings with the children as a camp craft activity.

What are the recommended cleaning and disinfecting practices?

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends the following practices:

- Facilities should develop a schedule for cleaning and disinfecting. An example can be found here: <https://nrckids.org/files/appendix/AppendixK.pdf>
- [Routinely clean, sanitize, and disinfect](#) surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, especially toys and games. This may also include cleaning objects/surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops, nap pads, desks, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures. Use the cleaners typically used at your facility. If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label. For disinfection, most common EPA-registered, fragrance-free household disinfectants should be effective. Guidance is available for the selection of appropriate for childcare settings. https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV20_19.aspx
- If possible, provide EPA-registered disposable wipes to staff members so that commonly used surfaces such as keyboards, desks, and remote controls can be wiped down before use. If wipes are not available, please refer to CDC's guidance on [disinfection for community settings](#).

Additional Information

American Camp Association https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/coronavirus-information-camps?utm_source=homepage&utm_medium=click&utm_term=coronavirus

Association of Camp Nursing https://campnurse.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID-19-FAQs_april20.pdf
<https://campnurse.org/education-and-resources/covid-19-considerations-for-camp/>

World Health Organization (WHO) <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidance for Childcare Programs that Remain Open <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html>

Centers for Disease Control: Caring for Children <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/children.html>

California Department of Public Health (CDPH)



City of Berkeley
Health, Housing and Community Services
Public Health Division

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx>

California Department of Industrial Relations Division of Occupational Safety & Health Publications Unit <https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/Coronavirus/COVID-19-Infection-Prevention-in-Childcare-Programs-Guidance.pdf>