

GUIDANCE FOR CAMPS

Overview

Good public health practices can minimize transmission of respiratory infections, including COVID-19, influenza and common colds. These practices include: proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, enhanced cleaning and disinfecting and staying home when sick.

This document has been developed to support operators/organizers of day and overnight camps in reducing the risk of transmission of respiratory illness among attendees (including workers, campers, volunteers and the general public) by providing options to integrate good public health practices into ongoing operations. The strategies included are built on lessons learned and strategies that were successful throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Businesses and entities should promote COVID-19 vaccination to staff, volunteers and attendees and other eligible persons as part of their public health strategy.

All Albertans are required to follow all applicable Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) orders.

COVID-19 Risk Mitigation

General Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operators are encouraged to review and incorporate measures from this guidance and the General Guidance for COVID-19 and other Respiratory Illnesses into their operating procedures, where appropriate.• Operators should notify families of attendees of the steps being taken to prevent the risk of transmission, and the importance of their role in these measures.
Camps for Children Aged 11 And Under	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The COVID-19 vaccine was approved for children aged 5 to 11 years of age in November 2021. There is currently no COVID-19 vaccine available for children aged 4 years and under.• Due to the recent timing of the vaccine approval, it is expected that vaccine uptake for children aged 5 to 11 and subsequent protective effects of vaccine may take time for this age group. It is strongly recommended that camp operators who work with children aged 11 and under implement additional measures, which may include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The precautions outlined in this guidance;○ Limiting activities which produce more respiratory particles, especially indoors; and○ Using a group-based approach to reduce the risk of transmission, strictly limiting the size of each group and ensuring that there is no interaction between groups of children.
Physical Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Day camp operators are required to maintain two metres spacing between individuals who are not members of the same household. This

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	<p>includes indoor and outdoor settings, communal dining halls, and communal accommodation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day camp operators are encouraged to plan activities and schedules that allows camp participants to spread out in their groups and to have distance between groups. This can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Moving activities outdoors or into larger venues; ○ Limiting the number of campers who can participate in an activity at a time; ○ Staggering meal and shower times for groups of campers; and • Expanding the number of accommodation options available. • Physical distancing is not required for children when participating in youth sport, fitness and performance activities where distancing is not possible (e.g., team sports, drama productions). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ When possible, physical activity should be done outside instead of inside as the risk of transmission is more likely to occur indoors rather than outdoors. ○ For physical activities, operators should, where possible, choose activities or sports that support physical distancing and limit face-to-face activities (e.g., badminton over wrestling). ○ Spectator attendance at indoor sports/performance activities is limited to 1/3 fire code capacity. Attendees must be masked and must maintain two metres physical distance between households. Individuals who live alone may sit with their two designated close contacts. If an activity takes place in a facility implementing the Restriction Exemption Program (REP), the spectators are not subject to distancing or capacity limits, but masking is mandatory.
<p>Cohorts for Overnight Camps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overnight camps are required to operate in cohorts. This includes all overnight camp staff, volunteers and attendees. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A cohort is defined as: a group of campers and staff members assigned to that group of campers, who stay together throughout the day, as well as day-to-day. ○ Cohorts should remain as stable as possible over an extended period, and ○ Should remain the same each time the group meets. ○ If a staff member works with more than one cohort, they are expected to wear a mask at all times (indoors and outdoors) and maintain physical distance as much as possible. • There is no limit on the number of individuals in a cohort, however, it is recommended the cohort remain as small as operationally feasible.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohorts cannot mix with other cohorts or be within in the same room/space at the same time. This includes pickups, drop-offs, mealtimes, playtime, outdoor activities, staff rooms, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If cohorts must share the same room or space for a short period of time (i.e., less than 15 minutes), such as when a child or staff member needs to access a washroom or door, maintain two metres distance between cohorts.
<p>Masking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At a day camp program, all staff, volunteers and children are required to wear a mask in any indoor public space. • At an overnight camp, all staff, volunteers and children are required to wear a mask when they are in an indoor space. • The mask requirement for overnight camps does not include sleeping areas. • Mask use is not required if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The individual is under 2 years of age; or ○ The individual qualifies for a medical exception. • When masks are worn, Alberta Health mask guidance should be followed and can be found here: alberta.ca/masks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Once a mask has been removed, it should be disposed of in a lined trash bin (disposable masks) or placed in a sealed container to be laundered (reusable masks).
<p>Hand and Respiratory Hygiene</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging staff and campers to practice frequent and thorough hand hygiene can help prevent the spread of respiratory disease. Consider measures such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Providing hand washing stations or hand sanitizer in convenient locations around camp, particularly in dining areas and washrooms. ○ Incorporating hand washing into camp schedules and routine. ○ Training staff to practice proper hand hygiene and to encourage campers to do the same. • Programs should adhere to handwashing guidelines outlined in the AHS Health and Safety Guidelines Child Care Guidelines. • Operators offering hand sanitizer should ensure that it contains at least 60% alcohol. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If hand sanitizers are being used with younger children, safety protocols should be in place to prevent ingestion hazards. ○ If parents or guardians have questions about their child using alcohol-based hand sanitizer they should discuss potential alternatives with the operator.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform children and staff of expectations for proper respiratory etiquette (e.g., sneezing into the elbow or a tissue, discarding the tissue immediately into a lined bin, performing hand hygiene).
<p>Shared Equipment and Materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfection of equipment, toys or other materials that are shared by multiple campers or groups of campers. • Assign each group its own equipment or materials, where possible. • Encourage campers to perform hand hygiene before and after handling shared equipment. • Discourage children from bringing non-essential personal items from home. • Equipment or supplies that must be brought from home for a child's day-to-day use should not be used by anyone other than the child.
<p>Screening and Response Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and campers must not attend camp if they are not feeling well or have COVID-19 symptoms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individuals are legally required to isolate for 10 days if they have tested positive or have any core symptoms that are not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition. ○ Although, close contacts of positive cases are not legally required to quarantine, it is strongly recommended that all unvaccinated household contacts of a person infected with COVID-19 stay home for 14 days. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A household contact is defined as a person who lives in the same residence as the case OR who has been in frequent, long-duration, close-range interaction with the person who tested positive. ▪ This definition includes unvaccinated childcare staff who provide direct care for children who are unable to implement good standards of respiratory hygiene (e.g., unable to perform appropriate hand washing, covering coughs/sneezes, using and disposing of tissues). • Staff and campers should self-screen or be screened for COVID-19 symptoms by a staff member, parent or guardian at the start of each day that they attend the camp, using the applicable checklist for their age group (Alberta Health daily checklist (for children under 18; and adults 18 and older)). • Operators are strongly encouraged to have policies for campers showing symptoms of COVID-19. These policies could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not allowing symptomatic individuals to attend camp;

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If a camper becomes symptomatic onsite, keeping them apart from other attendees and arranging for them to return home immediately. ● Programs are encouraged to keep records of a camper’s known pre-existing conditions. ○ Written confirmation by a physician that a camper’s or staff member’s symptoms are due to a chronic illness is not necessary.
<p>Rapid COVID-19 Screening Tests</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rapid COVID-19 screening is not required for staff, campers or other attendees at camps; however, rapid screening programs are one strategy for reducing the risk of COVID-19 in camp settings. If offering rapid screening tests, operators should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Follow manufacturer’s instructions when completing rapid COVID-19 testing. ○ Test at the intake portion of the camp, prior to parents/guardians leaving. ● Any individuals who test positive for COVID-19 on a rapid screening test must stay apart from all other attendees, and commence isolation as soon as possible. ● Rapid screening tests should not be offered to any person who has been a confirmed positive case of COVID-19 in the previous six weeks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Operators should encourage caregivers to disclose any positive COVID-19 tests the participant has had which occurred in the 90 days preceding the start of camp. ● All COVID-19 screening is to be completed and reported in accordance with the Guidance for Organizations on Rapid Asymptomatic COVID-19 Screening. ● More information on rapid testing availability can be found at alberta.ca/rapid-testing-program.aspx.
<p>Staff and Volunteers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Operators are encouraged to train staff on their camp’s policies for maintaining distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, cleaning and disinfecting, and any other updated policies or procedures related to preventing transmission of COVID-19.
<p>Transportation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Operators, staff and campers are expected to follow CMOH Orders requiring mandatory masking when using publicly accessible transit, taxis or commercial ride shares. ● If a child becomes symptomatic during the trip, a mask should be made available if they are not already wearing one. The driver should contact the camp operator to make the appropriate arrangements for the child to be picked up (see screening and response plan above).

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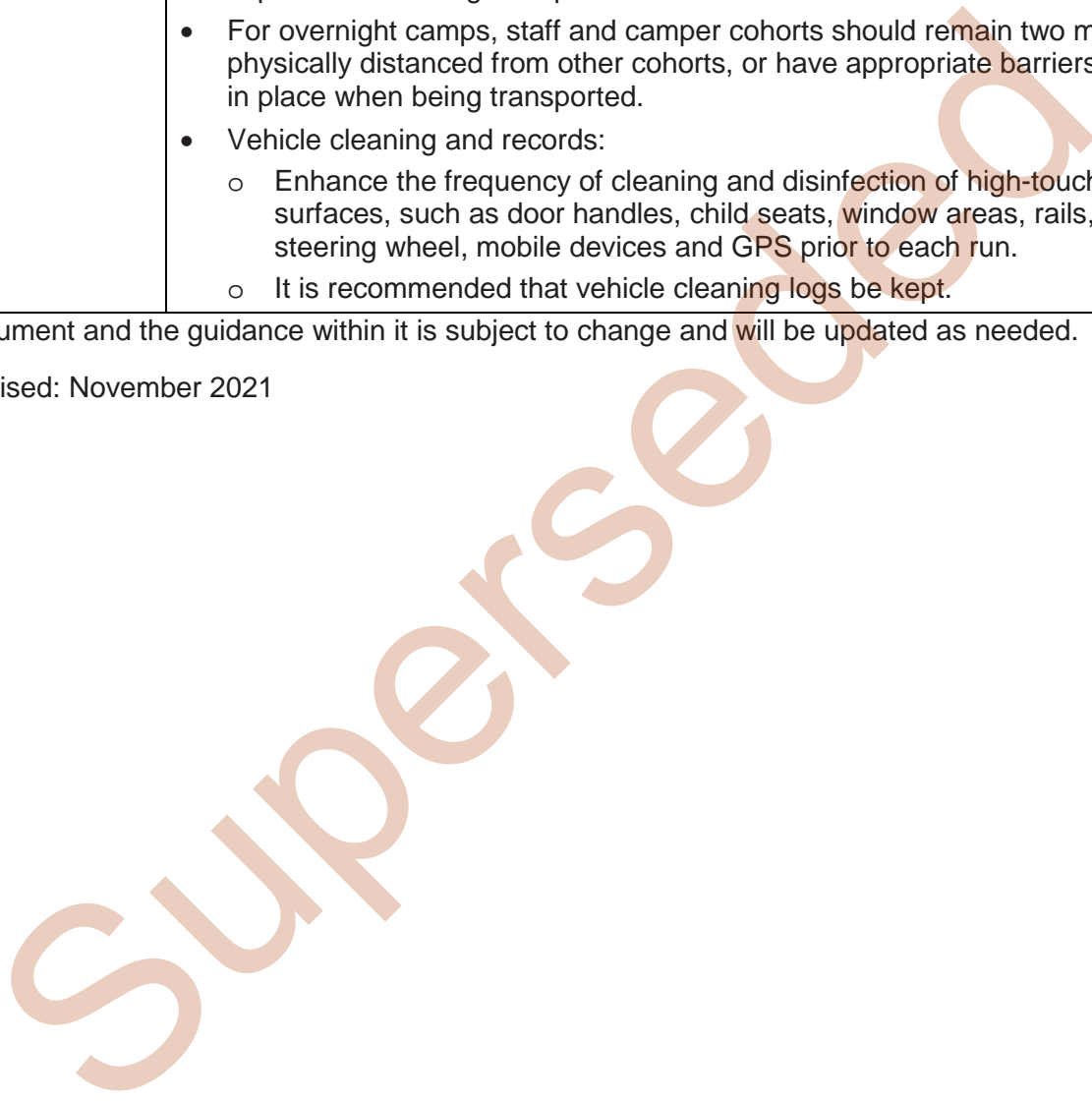
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- For day camps, staff and campers should remain two metres physically distanced from other staff and campers, or have appropriate barriers put in place when being transported.
- For overnight camps, staff and camper cohorts should remain two metres physically distanced from other cohorts, or have appropriate barriers put in place when being transported.
- Vehicle cleaning and records:
 - Enhance the frequency of cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces, such as door handles, child seats, window areas, rails, steering wheel, mobile devices and GPS prior to each run.
 - It is recommended that vehicle cleaning logs be kept.

This document and the guidance within it is subject to change and will be updated as needed.

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