



Heartland Conference of the United Church of Christ
Outdoor Ministries
Covid-19 Summer Camp Protocols 2021
Updated May 13, 2021



These protocols were developed under the guidelines of the CDC and the Ohio Department of Health. Please note that these plans could change as new information, resources, or CDC guidance becomes available. In consultation with Richland County public health personal, we will be following the CDC guidance on overnight camps as our top guidance.

Please note these comments from the CDC's document on summer camp guidance.

[CDC, April 24, 2021](#), says:

Youth and summer camps can play an important role in the lives of children, including supporting their social, emotional, and physical development. Camps provide opportunities for children to try new activities, develop relationship and social skills, and be physically active. In addition to allowing for free play and unstructured learning, many camps also incorporate educational content, which can help prevent summer learning loss. The present guidance is intended to help camp administrators operate camps while preventing the spread of COVID-19 and protecting campers, their families, staff, and communities.

While fewer children have gotten sick with COVID-19 compared with adults during the pandemic, children can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, get sick with COVID-19, spread the virus to others, and have severe outcomes.^{1, 2, 3, 4, 5} However, children are more likely to be asymptomatic or to have mild, non-specific symptoms; they are less likely than adults to have severe illness or die.^{6, 7} Children with [underlying medical conditions](#) are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Consistent use of the multiple [prevention strategies](#) described in this document can limit the spread of COVID-19 in many settings, including camps and can help camps open safely for in-person activities.^{8, 9, 10}

New COVID-19 variants and prevention in camps
[Multiple variants of the virus that causes COVID-19 are circulating globally.](#) These include several variants that have been detected in the United States. Some of these variants seem to spread more easily and quickly than other variants, which could lead to more cases of COVID-19. Rigorous implementation of prevention strategies is essential to control the spread of these [variants](#). CDC, in collaboration with other public health agencies, is monitoring the situation closely and studying these variants quickly to learn more to control their spread. As more information becomes available, prevention strategies and guidance may need to be adjusted to new evidence on risk of transmission and effectiveness of prevention in variants that are circulating in the community.



Heartland Conference protocols:

Prior to camp:

- **If eligible, staff, volunteers, campers, and family members should get fully vaccinated for COVID-19 prior to camp. This is highly recommended unless the participant or staffs' Dr. advises against it.** Ideally the vaccination series should be complete 2 weeks prior to camp. Bring a copy of your vaccination card to camp.
- **14 days prior to camp session all participants and staff (volunteer and paid), and their families should:**
 - Wear a mask over your nose and mouth in public transportation.
 - Wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer.
 - **Monitor temperature and other symptoms 2 weeks prior to coming to camp.**
 - **If symptom occurs, check with primary physician for direction.** Follow their direction for testing and isolation. **Do not come to camp during time they recommend isolation, or you have a positive Covid-19 test. Bring a negative NAAT/PCR test result to camp.** If they don't recommend testing or isolation, please provide a note from them stating why, for example the symptom is a chronic condition that they are treating.
 - A form will be provided to confirm this that will be turned in upon arrival.
- **Campers, Staff and Volunteer who are not fully vaccinated** (complete vaccine series two weeks prior to camp) **Should engage in a 2-week/14-day prearrival quarantine and testing including:**
 - **Wear masks** at all times when outside of your household
 - **Avoid crowds** or activities where you are not able to maintain 6ft distance from non-household members.
 - Avoid unnecessary travel.
 - **Refrain from indoor social gatherings, including meals,** with people outside of your household.
 - Limit activities in your home to your household family
 - **If you can, have a Covid-19 test,** preferably NAAT/PCR, **done 1-3 days prior** to camp, bring the results. We will have antigen tests available on site. Contact us if you would like to come to camp to test early.
- **If camper tests positive for Covid-19 in the two weeks prior to camp, contact Executive Director of Outdoor Ministries as soon as possible and before camp session starts at jill@heartlanducc.org or 740-901-0734.**
- **Site:**
 - There will be 24 hours between groups using indoor buildings for sleeping.
 - Site staff will clean buildings just prior to new group arrival.
 - HVAC units have been fitted with filters to bring filtration up to the recommended standard, MERV-13.



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During Camp:

Arrival:

- Campers and staff will follow this procedure.
- **No carpooling will be allowed for non-vaccinated participants.** Only household adult members may drop non-driving participants off, except for Grand and Family camp. Minor campers may come with the adult they will be with for the Grands and Family event.
- **We will use a “drive through drop off” procedure** for anyone not driving themselves to camp.
 - **Families will be assigned a 10-minute window to arrive and check in between 3-5pm.** This will be emailed to you one week prior to your camp session.
 - All persons in vehicle must put on mask prior to beginning check in procedure.
 - **Only camper will leave the vehicle in drive through.**
 - Camper will use hand sanitizer prior to interacting with staff for check in.
 - **Health check will be done at vehicle**, screening form will be used will include at minimum:
 - Negative Covid test (excluding fully vaccinated with no symptoms)
 - Present result from 1-3 days prior, or
 - Take Antigen test at camp.
 - Temperature check
 - Questions to confirm possible exposure to Covid.
 - Symptom check
 - Submit prior to camp health monitoring form.
 - Other communicable disease screening
 - Review Health form and medications
 - Review pick-up plans with parent/guardian.
 - Check in staff will take camper and luggage to cohort group/area.
 - Anyone driving themselves to camp will follow same drive-up procedure. At successful completion they will be directed where to park their car for the duration of the session.
- **Criteria: If the following are present, camper or staff will not stay at camp.** They will be recommended to go home and check with their primary health care provider. They may return with a negative PCR test or note from their physician.
 - **Known exposer** or close contact to anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or suspected of having Covid-19 in the past 2 weeks (
 - **Symptoms of COVID-19** in the last 14 days (exception if a negative PCR test 1-3 days prior to camp with no symptoms during that time is provided)
 - Two **positive COVID-19 tests** (or one with symptoms)
 - Campers or staff with complete covid vaccine (two weeks from last shot), must show card to be exempt:
 - Known exposure is ok to participate if no symptoms are present.



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At camp:

Health checks:

- **Temperature and symptoms check** will be done for every person **every day**, at least once a day
 - All adults may do a self-check and document.
 - Minor participants will be checked by designated staff member or adult family member.
 - All will use same form to document the daily required checks.
 - Participants should be always aware of their health and notify the Health Supervisor if symptoms are suspected any time of day. Adults with supervisory responsibility of minors should observe their behaviors for display of symptoms throughout that day and refer to Health Supervisor as needed
 - **If any symptoms are present, present to Health Supervisor immediately.**
 - **Immediately isolate** and seek medical care for any individual who develops symptoms while at camp.
 - COVID test will be administered.
 - Parents of minor campers will be notified.
 - All symptoms will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Health Supervisor and the Executive Director of Outdoor Ministry will have final say as to next step.
 - **A Parent, or designee, needs to be available to pick up a sick child, immediately, if needed.**
 - **Family cohort of sick camper:**
 - Will quarantine from the rest of the camp cohorts.
 - We will consistently monitor their health.
 - Those without symptoms will continue activities as a cohort.
 - Will not participate in multi-cohort activities or meals.
 - Asymptomatic members will be tested 4 days later or on last day.
 - Parents will be informed upon check out that their camper was exposed and to watch for symptoms the next two weeks and to let us know if they become positive for Covid-19.

Cohorts:

- **Everyone will be assigned in a cohort**, at least following adult to camper ratios, according to where they are sleeping.
 - **These cohorts will be considered a “household cohort”** for the time at camp.
 - If everyone in multiple “household cohorts” are vaccinated they may also function together as a larger cohort.
 - Staff who are not supervising campers in cohorts overnight, should be considered as a staff household cohort according to whom they are sharing sleeping space. If all staff not sleeping with campers are



Heartland Conference of the United Church of Christ
Outdoor Ministries
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Updated May 13, 2021



vaccinated, they may be considered one household cohort regardless of where they are sleeping or how many there are.

- Participants will be exposed to others in their household cohort.
- If a person in the household cohort gets sick, everyone in that group will be considered close contact exposed.
- **Sleeping:**
 - Household cohorts should be consistent and not change throughout the week.
 - Recommend resident camp session household cohorts include 2 adults to allow adequate staff coverage for programming and breaks. If an adult need to be replaced, they may only be replaced with an adult that has been isolated for sleeping and eating, or in a fully vaccinated household cohort.
 - **Everyone will sleep “head to foot”.** Beds and bunks will be marked as to where the heads and feet go. Beds will be at least 36” apart.
 - Capacity will be set based on these guidelines.

Meals/snacks:

- **Eating/Drinking:**
 - Always use restroom and wash hands just prior to meal.
 - Will be done with cohort
 - Will be done outside as much as possible.
 - Cohorts will be scheduled to eat cold “hike lunches” or cabin/destination breakfasts frequently and some will also have cookouts, if staff have appropriate training.
 - Replace masks when not actively eating/drinking, especially for conversation when inside.
 - Singing before or after meal should happen while outside, masked and distanced from other groups.
 - When in common area together:
 - Will be at least 6 ft from other cohorts.
 - Cohorts will be assigned a specific table for the entire time they are at camp.
 - Cohorts will arrive and leave meal together.
 - Schedule will stagger to allow one cohort arriving and departing meal one at a time.
 - Everyone must stay seated at table during meal
 - Except for scheduled second round for serving seconds or dessert
 - Serving:
 - Kitchen staff will use gloves and cloth face coverings to prepare and serve meals.
 - No buffets or salad bars will be served. Cafeteria style or modified family style will be used for serving.



Heartland Conference of the United Church of Christ
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- No common or self-serve items will be used or shared between household cohorts.

Mask wearing:

- **All campers and staff** (including volunteers and paid staff) **will always wear masks when:**
 - In any **indoor** location that is not their single household cohort sleeping area.
 - Outdoors and **unable to** consistently **maintain a distance of six feet** or more from individuals who are not members of their cohort.
 - **When singing or doing other activity with vocal projection.**
 - Masks do not need to be worn when in cohort and distanced from other cohorts.
 - Participants should always have more than one mask on hand so that they can easily replace a dirty mask with a clean one. Recommend everyone carry a bag of clean masks and a bag for dirty masks in their day pack.

Activities:

- **Activities will be outside as much as possible.**
- All camp or more than one cohort activities:
 - **Everyone should wash or sanitize hands before and after activity.**
 - **Should occur outside.**
 - **Everyone will be masked.**
 - **Remain at least 6ft from participants other cohorts.**
- Activities lead by specialist outside of cohort:
 - Will occur outside.
 - Everyone will be masked.
 - Specialist will be at least 6 ft from group.
 - Specialists will not be counted in adult to child minimum ratio.
 - Cohort staff will interact with campers at closer than 6 ft to assist with project or activities for further support to specialist directions.
 - Activities specialists will keep detailed contact tracing logs, or schedules.
- Swimming
 - Swimming shall be done one cohort at a time, when possible.
 - Masks shall be worn in the changing rooms, restrooms.
 - If cohorts share pool time:
 - Floating rope will designate each cohort area.
 - There will be designated areas on the pool deck for each group that is at least 6 ft apart.
 - As much as possible swimmers should try to maintain distance in pool. Swim noodles would be a great tool for games and free time to encourage distancing.
- Activities with equipment
 - All hands should be washed or sanitized prior to and after every activity.



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- Priority recommendation is that each cohort has their own set of supplies only used by them and cleaned daily.
- Second option for shared equipment:
 - equipment is used outside only.
 - allowed to sit for at least an hour in the sun.
 - or cleaned after group and prior to next group.
- **Special activities such as singing, drama, musical wind instruments, chanting, shouting, cheering, or any activity that involves forced air to come out of mouths or noses:**
 - Activities will be held outside.
 - Will be in cohort groups.
 - If multiple cohorts are involved, the groups should be distanced at least 6 feet and preferred 8ft or more feet.
 - Masks will be worn by all.
 - Musical wind instruments should have masks that mouthpiece fits into and bell covers.
- **Sports and Athletic activities:**
 - Should be done **outdoors**.
 - When **multiple cohorts** are participating:
 - **Wear masks**
 - **maintain physical distance from other cabin household cohorts and**
 - **Avoid playing close-contact or indoor sports.**
- **Limit nonessential visitors**, volunteers and activities involving external groups or organizations as much as possible.
 - **Parent or family programs should be done via zoom or other virtual experience.**

Severe Weather Emergencies:

- When possible, shelter will be taken only with family/household cohort.
- When cohort must share shelter:
 - Everyone will be masked.
 - Cohorts will remain together and not mix. Will distance pods as possible.
 - Staff will be on the edges of their family/cabin cohort with kids in the middle.
 - Any participants that are full vaccinated will be next to the staff with unvaccinated campers in the middle.
 - We will remain in the shared shelter for the minimum time required based on the storms progress.

Departure:

- Departure will be a drive through process similar to arrival.
- Other family members will not get out of car.
- Staff will confirm appropriate adults and assist camper and luggage into car.



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Site:

- Communal spaces and equipment should be cleaned and disinfected thoroughly between uses.
- Conduct rigorous cleaning throughout the day of all facilities used by campers and staff including bathrooms, common program space, offices, etc., at least once a day.