



COVID-19

Frequently Asked Questions for Directors of Overnight Camps

Updated May 27, 2022

CDC recommendations are consistent across youth-focused settings. Camp directors of both day and overnight camps should follow the most recent version of the [Operational Guidance for K-12 School and Early Care and Education Programs \(ECE\) to Support Safe In-Person Learning](#) and accompanying [Frequently Asked Questions for K-12 and Early Care and Education \(ECE\) Settings: Information for School and ECE Administrators, Teachers, Staff, and Parents](#). They can also access additional resources on the CDC COVID-19 [schools landing page](#), which hosts resources related to testing, Test to Stay, quarantine and isolation, and COVID-19 vaccines.

The following frequently asked questions (FAQs) provide additional detail and context for directors of overnight camps.

What should we do when we have campers coming from regions with different COVID-19 Community Levels?

If an overnight camp hosts campers and staff coming from regions with different [COVID-19 Community Levels](#), the risk of introducing COVID-19 into the camp program may increase. Camp administrators should communicate with campers, staff, and their families about following the recommendations outlined in the COVID-19 Community Levels guidance for their county of residence prior to arriving at the overnight camp (for example, campers that live in a county with a high COVID-19 Community Level should wear a mask when in public indoor spaces).

Camps can also consider a pre-arrival [test](#) for campers and staff, even when the location of the camp has a low COVID-19 Community Level, and especially when the camp serves many campers coming from medium or high COVID-19 Community Levels.

When traveling on public transportation, should campers and staff wear a mask?

When traveling, everyone aged 2 years or older—including passengers and workers— [should properly wear](#) a well-fitting [mask or respirator](#) in indoor areas of public transportation (such as airplanes, trains, buses, ferries) and transportation hubs (such as airports, stations, and seaports), especially in locations that are crowded or poorly ventilated, such as airport jetways.


Should overnight campers and staff be vaccinated for COVID-19?

CDC recommends everyone eligible get their primary series of COVID-19 vaccines, and receive booster dose(s) when eligible, so they stay [up to date](#) on COVID-19 vaccinations.

COVID-19 vaccines reduce the risk of people getting very sick with COVID-19 and can also reduce the risk of spreading it. People who are not vaccinated against COVID-19 are more likely to get very sick. COVID-19 vaccines are [safe](#) and [effective](#) at preventing severe illness and death from COVID-19.

People who are up to date on COVID-19 vaccines do not need to [quarantine](#) if they come into [close contact](#) with someone who has COVID-19. This means overnight campers and staff who are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccines can continue attending camp activities if they are determined to be a close contact. Campers and staff who are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccines and identified as close contacts should still follow the [recommendations](#) to wear a well-fitting mask and get tested.

What is considered fully vaccinated for overnight campers and staff coming from abroad?

Refer to [COVID-19 Vaccines for People Vaccinated Outside the United States](#) for recommendations. Before traveling to the United States, international campers and staff who are not US citizens or permanent residents (i.e., Green Card holders) should be aware of the [requirement to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19](#) to board a flight to the United States unless they meet limited exceptions. For information about travel to the United States across a land border, visit the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's [Fact Sheet: Guidance for Travelers to Enter the U.S. at Land Ports of Entry and Ferry Terminals](#). 


Should overnight camps perform COVID-19 testing?

At all COVID-19 Community Levels, overnight camps should use [diagnostic](#) testing for people with [symptoms of COVID-19](#) or for people who have had [close contact](#) with someone who has COVID-19. This can be done through the use of [point-of-care](#), [at-home](#), or laboratory-based testing.

Additionally, camps can consider implementing screening testing when the [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) are medium and high, as outlined in the [K-12/ECE guidance](#). At all COVID-19 Community Levels, overnight camps can consider implementing [screening testing](#) for

- Pre-arrival screening
- Hosting campers from abroad or from regions with varying COVID-19 Community Levels
- For overnight camps serving vulnerable campers (such as those with complex medical conditions)

What should be done if an overnight camper or staff member has symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19?

Campers and staff members who have [symptoms of COVID-19](#) should get [tested](#) and isolate away from other people until they receive their test results. If testing is not available on site, people with symptoms should be referred for testing at a nearby [testing site](#) . Campers and staff with symptoms of COVID-19 who cannot be tested should follow [isolation](#) guidance and isolate separately from people with laboratory confirmed COVID-19.

Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 should isolate away from others for at least 5 days and follow [isolation](#) guidance. Campers and staff can isolate at the camp if there is separate housing and supervision available for managing isolation with protocols that prevent transmission. Multiple campers or staff members who have tested positive for COVID-19 can be housed together to complete at least 5 days of isolation. If it is not possible to separate campers who test positive for COVID-19 from others, they should be sent home if possible to complete the 5-day isolation period. If the camper is sent home, members of their household should follow the [Ongoing Exposure FAQ](#) for information on how to manage COVID-19 for people who live together and cannot be separated.

What should overnight camps do during the days following the end of the isolation or quarantine period?

Campers and staff who have completed at least 5 days of [isolation or quarantine](#) need to wear a well-fitting mask around other people through day 10. These campers and staff can return to daytime activities, provided they wear a mask. They should be separated from the group when they cannot wear a mask, for example when they are sleeping or eating.

Campers who have completed at least 5 days of isolation or quarantine should be housed together (one area for those completing isolation and another area for those completing quarantine) for sleeping during days 6-10. [Improve indoor ventilation](#) as much as possible in all cabins or bunkrooms, in addition to those with campers who have been in isolation or quarantine.



People who are up to date on COVID-19 vaccines do not need to [quarantine](#) if they come into [close contact](#) with someone who has COVID-19. This means overnight campers and staff who are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccines can continue attending camp activities if they are determined to be a close contact. Campers and staff who are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccines and identified as close contacts should still follow the [recommendations](#) to wear a well-fitting mask and get tested.

Are overnight camps able to use the Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC) funding for testing?

On March 30, 2022, CDC notified all ELC recipients that it would be exercising expanded authority to extend the ELC Reopening School supplement funding through July 31, 2023. Recipients are encouraged to continue using school testing funding to meet current K-12 COVID-19 testing needs for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year and summer, including for summer camps. Existing guidance and flexibilities remain unchanged. For more information, visit the two resources below:

- [ELC Reopening Schools Revised Guidance: Support for Screening Testing to Reopen & Keep Schools Operating Safely \(cdc.gov\)](#) 
- [ELC Reopening Schools FAQ – Revised Version, as of September 28 \(cdc.gov\)](#) 

What if there is an outbreak at an overnight camp?


If an overnight camp program is experiencing a COVID-19 [outbreak](#),   camp directors should have a plan to quickly isolate those who have tested positive or are showing symptoms of COVID-19. Camp directors should consider adding prevention strategies regardless of the [COVID-19 Community Level](#). For example, those with an existing screening testing program may increase the frequency of [testing](#). They may also put in place prevention strategies, such as mask use, that are recommended at high COVID-19 Community Levels, even if the overnight camp is within a community that is at a lower COVID-19 Community Level. Overnight camp programs that are experiencing outbreaks should work with their state or local health department in accordance with state and local regulations. Health departments should provide timely outbreak response support to camp programs.

Overnight camps can also consider implementing [broad-based testing](#) programs similar to those implemented in other congregate settings, such as correctional facilities and homeless service settings, to identify infections and prevent further spread of COVID-19. For example, this could mean testing an entire cohort, cabin, or dormitory when there is a case rather than trying to identify all close contacts.

My overnight camp serves campers who are more likely to get very sick (i.e., children with some types of disabilities and others at high risk). Are there any special considerations for them?

In communities that are at a low COVID-19 Community Level, some people will choose to wear a mask based on personal risk and/or preference. They should be supported in their decision to do so. In addition, when the COVID-19 Community Level is medium, people who are more likely to become very sick should talk to a healthcare provider about wearing a well-fitting mask and taking other precautions. They can wear a [mask or respirator](#) with greater protection in public

indoor spaces at all times, but especially in an area with a high [COVID-19 Community Level](#). Because some campers with disabilities cannot safely wear a mask, overnight camps may need to consider other prevention strategies—such as cohorting and avoiding crowding—when the COVID-19 Community Level is medium or high.

If a camper tests positive and is more likely to get very sick from COVID-19, [treatment may be available](#). Camp administrators can work with the camper's parent, guardian, or caregiver to contact a healthcare provider right away after a positive test to determine if they are eligible, even if symptoms are mild. They can also visit a [Test to Treat location](#)  and, if eligible, receive a prescription from a provider. They should not delay: Treatment must be started within the first few days to be effective. Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 should follow guidance for [isolation](#).

Can overnight campers and staff engage in off-site activities?

Engaging in activities that take place outside of the camp can increase the chances of introducing COVID-19 into the camp. If camps choose to participate in activities off-site, they should check the [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) of the counties they plan to visit and follow the appropriate recommendations as outlined by the COVID-19 Community Levels.

What should staff consider when they leave the camp on their days off?

When camp staff are away from camp (for example, during days off), they should follow the recommended prevention strategies outlined in the [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) based on the county they live in and/or will be visiting during their time off. If the COVID-19 Community Level is medium or high, consider having camp staff do a [test](#) when returning after time spent away from camp. To help reduce the potential for transmission in the camp setting, people who leave camp for more than 24 hours could be tested upon their return and again at least 5 days after.