



COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions: Youth Camps, Sports Programs, and Other Youth Programs

Revised June 12, 2020

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) is committed to ensuring the safe operation of youth camps and programs during the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) public health emergency.

Per Governor Hogan's [Executive Order 20-05-27-01](#) and the [MDH Amended Directive and Order Regarding Youth Camp Programs](#), outdoor day camps are allowed to operate effective May 29th, 2020, and indoor and residential camps may operate effective 5:00 p.m., June 19, 2020.

Please find below a list of frequently asked questions and some answers to those questions. Businesses should also see the FAQs available on the Business Express website, <https://businessexpress.maryland.gov/coronavirus>, and the Back to Business website, <https://open.maryland.gov/backtobusiness/>, for more information. In particular, see Guidance and Best Practices for [Youth Camps](#) and [Youth Sports](#).

Additionally, if you have a specific question about youth camps that is not answered below, or you cannot find the answer on any of the following resources, please visit [MD Youth Camp and Swimming Pool Questions](#).

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GENERAL

To whom does the [MDH Amended Directive and Order Regarding Youth Camp Programs](#) apply?

This order applies to all youth camps regulated by the State of Maryland. In addition, camp programs that are not subject to regulation under the Youth Camps Act (Annotated Code of Maryland, Health-General §§14-401—411, and Code of Maryland Regulations 10.16.06 and 10.16.07) are still subject to [Executive Order 20-04-05-02](#), which requires businesses, organizations, establishments, and facilities to operate in a manner that does not pose an unreasonable risk of exacerbating the spread of COVID-19, including compliance with all applicable social distancing guidance published by the CDC and Maryland Department of Health.

How large can a group be? How close can they be to other groups? Will group size increase when the limit on large gatherings increases?

Groups can be no more than 15 individuals, including staff/coaches. There can be more than one group on a field or in a gymnasium, so long as they are sufficiently separated to avoid mixing. If limits on gathering sizes in the public are changed, they do not affect the group size limits for youth programs.

For residential (overnight) youth camps, campers should be grouped by sleeping area, with a maximum capacity of 2 adults and 13 children per sleeping area.

How can we limit the number of staff working with a group while keeping staff safe, providing breaks, and providing managerial oversight?

The group size restrictions are intended to prevent people from mixing together as much as is feasible while providing safe and appropriate staffing of activities. Staff should use face coverings, social distancing, and alternative methods of communicating in order to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19, especially from one group to another. Camp operators/coaches should keep careful records of group compositions and changes.

Do participants need to wear face coverings?

Staff should wear face coverings when interacting with other staff, parents, and campers, unless it is not safe to do so, especially when social distancing is not possible.

Children 9 and older, when they can be worn safely and consistently, should wear face coverings indoors, with the following considerations:

- Level of physical activity

- Health issues – asthma, other conditions affecting breathing
- High temperature – coverings can contribute to overheating
- Ability to maintain distance

IMPORTANT: Caution should be used in advising the use of facial coverings during hot days or when children are engaged in vigorous activity. In these settings, facial coverings can increase the risks of heat exhaustion or hyperthermia (heat-related injuries), and may also not be advisable for children with asthma or other respiratory conditions. In general, facial coverings will be most important when campers must be 6 feet or closer from each other for a prolonged (more than 15 minutes) period of time.

Do programs need to screen participants?

Yes, complete the daily temperature check for temperatures over 100.4°F and symptom screening questions and log the information. Temperatures can be taken by staff or the parent or guardian of the participant while being monitored by staff.

Camp administrators/coaches may use examples of screening methods in CDC’s supplemental [Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open](#) as a guide for screening participants and CDC’s [General Business FAQs](#) for screening staff.

How can programs safely transport participants?

Do not mix participant/staff groups, clean and disinfect the vehicle after each use. Provide as much physical distancing as possible and wear face coverings.

The CDC has additional guidance on [using transportation](#) and [cleaning and disinfecting vehicles](#).

If a participant becomes sick or has a confirmed case of COVID-19, what does the program need to do?

Any staff or child exposed to a person diagnosed with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 may not work or attend the program until they have completed self-quarantine following the [CDC guidelines](#). Persons who have recovered from COVID-19, must be cleared for release from isolation according to CDC guidelines.

If a group has a staff member or a child that is found to have a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 at the facility:

- The group shall quarantine following the CDC guidelines. If a residential camp, the camp will send all campers/staff in the group to their homes or quarantine in place with additional requirements based on consultation with the local health department.

- Individuals may not work at or attend until completing self-quarantine and obtaining clearance from the individual's primary care physician.
- Follow the program's exposure control plan.
- Communicate with the local health department and parents.
- Based on consultation with the local health department, the entire facility may be closed based on level of contact and potential exposure.
- Wait 24 hours, then complete extra cleaning/disinfection of the facility, all areas not just high touch surfaces, and wait at least 5 days to bring in the next group.

If a staff member or a child develops symptoms of COVID-19 during a program, safely isolate the person and place a mask or face covering. Contact the program's health supervisor and the parent/guardian and arrange for safe transportation to a healthcare facility or home.

YOUTH CAMPS

Which youth camps are allowed to operate?

Indoor and outdoor camps, including day camps, sports camps, MDH-regulated youth camps, and other supervised activities for youth led by trained staff are allowed to operate, subject to certain conditions and Executive Orders in effect. Residential and overnight camp programs are also permitted, effective 5:00 p.m. June 19, 2020.

Please check with your local health department about reopening requirements or limitations in your jurisdiction. It is the responsibility of each youth camp and youth program to ensure they comply with all State and local requirements, including the [Maryland Department of Health Order Regarding Youth Camp Programs](#), before reopening.

Can out of state children attend Maryland camps?

The MDH Amended Directive and Order Regarding Youth Camp Programs states that out of state campers (those whose legal residence is not the State of Maryland) are not permitted.

The out of state restriction does not apply to camp staff.

Do campers need to complete a 14 day quarantine if they travel outside of the State before starting camp?

There are no requirements for campers to quarantine or self-isolate, unless they have symptoms, are ill, or have had a close contact with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19, per [CDC guidelines](#).

What precautions should be taken by individuals with a higher risk for severe illness if they contract COVID-19?

Individuals (staff and campers) should discuss the risks with their healthcare provider before attending or staffing the youth camp program. For more information see the CDC guidance for [People Who Need to Take Extra Precautions](#).

Our camp has an outdoor pool - can it open, and under what guidance?

Per the [Governor's Executive Order](#) (06/10/2020) and the [MDH Amended Directive and Order](#) (6/10/2020), all outdoor pools may open as of May 29, 2020, and all indoor pools and aquatic centers may open as of 5:00 p.m. June 19, 2020. Please refer to these documents, the available [guidance](#), and any additional requirements of your local jurisdiction to ensure your pool facility may reopen. Please see <https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/OEHFP/CHS/Pages/AquaticFacility.aspx> for links to these resources, as well as a separate FAQ for the operation of swimming pools.

Should camps administer medication to campers? If so, how can they do so safely?

The Governor's Executive Order and the MDH Directive and Order do not change the requirements for administration of medications in a camp setting.

MDH-licensed youth camps should follow standards for medication administration in the youth camp regulations, COMAR 10.16.07, including procedures if medication cannot be administered at home.

YOUTH SPORTS AND SPORTS ACTIVITIES

Can participants share equipment, including sports equipment like baseballs and basketballs?

The best practice is to provide individual equipment for each participant. If equipment is shared, reinforce healthy hygiene and wash hands immediately after using equipment. Don't use equipment that cannot be easily disinfected between uses.

Frequently clean and disinfect equipment and gear, and all high-touch surfaces per CDC guidelines.

Are there restrictions on contact youth sports?

The [Amended MDH Order Regarding Youth Camps](#) does not allow close physical contact during sports activities for regulated youth camps. Players and coaches should maintain physical distancing. Coaches and staff may modify play by:

- focusing on individual skill building versus competition;
- using dummies for training drills; and
- shifting to individual-based competitions (e.g., Punt, Pass, and Kick football competitions).

Non-regulated camps should follow the CDC guidance for youth sports in [Considerations for Youth Sports](#).

Resources

- Maryland Department of Health Amended Directive and Order Regarding Youth Camps: <https://phpa.health.maryland.gov//Documents/2020.06.12.02%20-%20MDH%20Order%20-%20Amended%20Youth%20Camps.pdf>
- Guidance and best practices for youth camps and youth sports: <https://open.maryland.gov/backtobusiness/>
- Guidance from CDC for businesses: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html>
- Guidance from WHO for businesses: <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/getting-workplace-ready-for-covid-19.pdf>
- Additional information for businesses on planning for and responding to coronavirus disease is available on Maryland's Business Express website: <https://businessexpress.maryland.gov/coronavirus>
- Maryland Department of Health Youth Camps website: <https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/OEHFP/CHS/Pages/YCCertification.aspx>