

## FAQ for Summer Camp Programs

If you have questions regarding any of the response below or would like to submit a question to the FAQ for response, please contact [DHS.Summercamps@dhs.ri.gov](mailto:DHS.Summercamps@dhs.ri.gov).

### I. Registration

**\*Updated**

Q. What summer camp programs are required to register?

A. Summer camp programs, as defined below, intending to serve more than 50 children/youth cumulatively throughout the summer (June 29, 2020 - August 31, 2020) must register at the DHS online portal at <https://appengine.egov.com/apps/ri/campplan> by June 26, 2020. This registration may also be referred to as the summer camp application, or the COVID-19 Plan.

Summer day camps include and are defined in [regulation 8.3](#) as:

- **Day Camps:** a program that: operates during school breaks for more than two (2) hours but fewer than twelve (12) hours each day; and does not include child day care services required to be licensed under R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-12.5-4.
- **Primitive Outpost Summer Camps:** a camp or other site at which the basic needs such as places of abode, water supply systems and permanent toilet and cooking facilities are not usually provided.
- **Residential Camps:** a camp which provides overnight facilities.

Q. Why are summer camps being required to register?

A. Given the implications and potential risks of COVID-19, the State has implemented health and safety regulations and precautions to protect the health and safety of children and ensure summer camp programs adhere to public health protections to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Registering with the State demonstrates a program's commitment to compliance with these health and safety requirements.

**\*Updated**

Q. How can I register my summer camp program?

A. Programs may register online at <https://appengine.egov.com/apps/ri/campplan>.

Q. What is required to submit during the registration process?

A. To view a sample registration form which outlines the required fields and content to be submitted, visit [https://www.reopeningri.com/resource\\_pdfs/Summer-camp-application-5.22.20.pdf](https://www.reopeningri.com/resource_pdfs/Summer-camp-application-5.22.20.pdf).

Q. Is there a cost to register?

A. There is no cost to register.

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Q. Do I need to be licensed by DHS Child Care Licensing to operate a summer camp?

A. Only programs providing care to children under the age of 5 are required to be licensed by Child Care Licensing. Please review guidance on <https://www.reopeningri.com/> or reach out to [DHS.ChildCareLicensing@dhs.ri.gov](mailto:DHS.ChildCareLicensing@dhs.ri.gov).

## II. Health and Safety Regulations - General

Q. Where can I find the most current Health and Safety regulations?

A. The most current Health and Safety regulations for Summer Camps may be found: [https://www.reopeningri.com/resource\\_pdfs/RIDOH-summer-camp-regulations.pdf](https://www.reopeningri.com/resource_pdfs/RIDOH-summer-camp-regulations.pdf).

Q. Will the health and safety regulations change over the summer? If so, how will I find out about the changes?

A. Any revisions to health and safety regulations will be posted on [www.reopeningri.com](http://www.reopeningri.com). Regulations may be updated upon the release of new guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or guidance from the State. It is recommended for programs to visit [www.reopeningri.com](http://www.reopeningri.com) frequently.

Q. I understand I need to develop a written plan for Safe Operations. Do I need to retain a copy onsite?

A. Yes, per 8.6- A,B, copies of the written plan for Safe Operations must be retained onsite and available for review. Regulation 8.7.B.4 notes, “shall post their COVID-19 approval forms and plans as described in 8.6 of this Part in a visible area.”

Q. Are staff and campers required to wear face coverings?

A. Under 8.2.A, programs commit to abiding by [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov) guidance, which requires all adults and staff caring for children, as well as visitors, to wear a cloth face covering to prevent the spread of germs. Face coverings must not be used on children under the age of 2 years old or for whom wearing a mask may cause breathing or medical complications. [Executive Order 20-30](#) states: “Face coverings shall not be required of those who are developmentally unable to comply” or “those whose health would be damaged” by wearing a face covering.

For children over the age of 2 years old who can tolerate wearing a face covering, use is advised but not required. Face coverings should not be worn while swimming or playing in the water.

Guidance on this topic may be found at: [https://www.reopeningri.com/resource\\_pdfs/Phase-II/Phase-II-summer-camp-guidance-05.21.20.pdf](https://www.reopeningri.com/resource_pdfs/Phase-II/Phase-II-summer-camp-guidance-05.21.20.pdf).

\*Updated

Q. Can I accept children from out-of-state into the camp program?

A. Per the Executive Order issued on June 29, 2020, any person coming to Rhode Island for a non-work-related purpose from a location with a high community spread rate must self-quarantine for 14 days or until they receive a negative COVID-19 test. Please visit <https://health.ri.gov/covid/> for the most updated list of high community spread locations, instructions for self-quarantine, or information on how to access a COVID-19 test.

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**\*Updated**

Q. Where can I find guidance on transportation?

A. Guidance on transportation is provided by the CDC ([here](#)) and on <https://www.reopeningri.com/> under the icon “Child Care and Youth Activities” ([here](#)).

**\*New**

Q. How would someone register a complaint against a summer camp program?

A. A complaint may be submitted against a summer camp program at <https://dbr.ri.gov/> under the icon “I have a DBR-specific complaint”. **\*NOTE\***: Any report or complaint that involves *suspected child abuse or neglect* must be reported within 24 hours to 1-800-RI-CHILD (1-800-742-4453).

**\*New**

Q. To implement the new health and safety regulations, my program needs additional funding. Is the State providing any funding opportunities?

A. Summer Camps and the Summer Learning Opportunities (SLO) programs may apply for grants at: <https://www.ride.ri.gov/InsideRIDE/AdditionalInformation/Summer.aspx>.

## III. Health and Safety Regulations – Stable Groups and Social Distancing

Q. What is a stable group? Does this include staff?

A. A stable group is defined as “the same individuals, including children, staff, and counselors, being in the same group each day. a. Children shall not change from one group to another. b. Stable groups must occupy the same space each day.” (8.3.A.11). Staff are included in stable group. The maximum size of a stable group is 14 children with 1 staff (8.3.A.11).

Q. Is there a limit to how many stable groups I can have onsite at a time?

A. To determine a camp’s stable group capacity, they must consider their ability to socially distance stable groups (8.5.B) using either a minimum of 14 feet of space between stable groups or the use of distinct classroom or divided space using barriers (8.4.B). The camp must also consider their staffing and ability to reassign staff in the case of staff absenteeism due to illness. Camps must always abide by capacity related to fire and health codes.

Q. Are there times when stable groups can mix?

A. 8.4.C states, “stable groups of children **shall not** mix with other stable groups”. Camps are advised to plan ahead related to staffing and space to ensure stable groups are not mixed throughout the camp sessions.

Q. Am I really expected to socially distance stable groups when we are in outdoor locations like a soccer field, forest trail, or swimming at a lake?

A. Providers should only operate activities where compliance to social distancing requirements can be maintained. This may mean one stable group plays on one end of a soccer field, while another group plays on the opposite end. On trails, start times may be staggered and unique rest locations may be identified for stable groups. Staggered use time may also apply to swimming in lakes or use of lake equipment (such as canoes) to allow for equipment sanitizing between groups. For additional guidance on communal use of pools, please visit: [www.reopeningri.gov](http://www.reopeningri.gov).

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Q. Do camp staff need to maintain social distance if they are working with different stable groups? Does this apply only when children are onsite? For example, before camp begins each day, what does this look like for an all-staff camp meeting?

A. In following CDC guidance, adults working with unique stable groups are advised to maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet from one another at all times. This may mean staggered seating during all-staff meetings. Staff working together within a stable group are not required to maintain social distancing while working in the stable group.

**\*Updated**

Q. When staff do need to interact with different stable groups (example: a camp nurse or director), what precautions should they take?

A. Some camp staff may be closely interacting with other staff (e.g., a camp nurse or the program director floating between stable groups to ensure safety). This staff is advised to comply with CDC guidance, including wearing a face covering, washing hands during after interactions, and where possible, maintaining social distance. These additional staff, such as camp nurses or program directors, are not included in the stable group count. In situations where maintaining social distance is not feasible (e.g., a nurse attending to a child's cut), the staff are advised to wear the proper personal protective equipment (or PPE) for this interaction and sanitize all surface areas impacted after use. It is advised for these staff to try to minimize contact with (a) child(ren) or group(s) to less than 15 minutes.

## IV. Health and Safety Regulations – Administration

Q. I see according to 8.7.A, files must be maintained for each camper. Do these need to be kept onsite? If our program is part of a large multi-site program, can these files be retained at our main office?

A. These files must be maintained in a way that they are accessible to DHS review upon request. For large multi-site programs, this may mean materials are maintained at a central location. It is recommended that contact information for each child and their parents or guardians be accessible by each stable group, whether the group is onsite or offsite, in case of emergency.

Q. What other information do I need to keep in a camper's file?

A. Per 8.7.A, at a minimum, a program must collect information on the "Name and home address(es) of the child; Name, phone number and address of each parent and caregiver". It is recommended the program also collect information related to a child's known allergies or medication use, emergency contact information, and the child's primary care physician.

Q. Where can I find guidance on developing a drop-off and pick-up protocol?

A. Guidance for developing a drop-off and pick-up protocol may be found at: [https://www.reopeningri.com/resource\\_pdfs/Phase-II/Phase-II-summer-camp-guidance-05.21.20.pdf](https://www.reopeningri.com/resource_pdfs/Phase-II/Phase-II-summer-camp-guidance-05.21.20.pdf). Guidance is based on [CDC recommendations](#).

Q. Where can I find a copy of the self-attestation form referenced in 8.7.B.2 (to document the screening of symptoms for COVID-19) that is "developed and approved by the DHS and RIDOH"?

A. Screening tools may be found on [www.reopeningri.gov](http://www.reopeningri.gov) in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

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Q. Does the health screening self-attestation form need to be completed every day for each child?

A. This screening form should be completed during drop-off each day the child is at camp.

**\*New**

Q. Do I need to retain a copy of the health screening self-attestation form for every child each day they are present?

A. While a program may choose to retain a paper copy of the health screening form for each child, this is not required. The form may be verbally completed each day the child is at camp. Where this is the case, a provider may choose to laminate the form for re-use and the ability to sanitize the form to minimize germ transfer.

Q. Regulation 8.7.C.1 discourages visitors from visiting a summer camp facility; can my program prohibit visitors?

A. While a program may choose to prohibit visitors to their camp program, it is essential to remember parents and guardians of children in care must always be able to access their children while in the camp's care. Additionally, a program may not be able to prohibit oversight agency staff, law enforcement officials, or other individuals who have a legal right to be on the property.

Q. How long should I retain the visitor log (documenting arrival and departure time, as described in 8.7.C.2)?

A. It is recommended the visitor log be retained for the duration of camp. This may be a beneficial tool in the case of contact tracing were an outbreak or exposure of COVID-19 to become known.

Q. Where can I find a copy of the visitor health self-attestation form described in 8.7.C.3?

A. Programs may use the same screening tool as youth, found on [www.reopeningri.gov](http://www.reopeningri.gov) in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

Q. If a visitor is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 as described on the self-attestation form in 8.7.C.3, can I prohibit them from entering the camp?

A. Yes, a camp may exclude anyone (campers, staff, or visitors) with COVID-19 symptoms if they can't be explained by allergies or another non-infectious cause. For more guidance, please refer to: [https://www.reopeningri.com/resource\\_pdfs/Phase-II/Phase-II-summer-camp-guidance-05.21.20.pdf](https://www.reopeningri.com/resource_pdfs/Phase-II/Phase-II-summer-camp-guidance-05.21.20.pdf).

## V. Health and Safety Regulations –Hygiene and Cleaning

Q. Can we use hand sanitizer as a substitute for handwashing if running water and soap are not accessible?

A. Hand sanitizer is noted in 8.7.E as an alternative to handwashing if soap and warm water are not feasible, such as on a hike or while playing in a field. Handwashing with soap and warm water is the preferred and primary method of cleaning one's hands. If hand sanitizer is to be used, it must have a minimum 60% alcohol content.

Q. Where can I find additional guidance on handwashing practices?

A. Handwashing guidance, as well as posters and communication materials for public use, are available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html#HandHygiene>.

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## \*Updated

Q. Where can I find additional guidance on how to clean and sanitize our program equipment and facilities?

A. The CDC provides [guidance](#) on cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting program space and equipment. Additional information may be found at: [https://www.reopeningri.com/resource\\_pdfs/Phase-II/Phase-II-summer-camp-guidance-05.21.20.pdf](https://www.reopeningri.com/resource_pdfs/Phase-II/Phase-II-summer-camp-guidance-05.21.20.pdf). The CDC also provides an online PPE Burn Rate Calculator to help your program adequately anticipate your PPE and cleaning supply needs and the rate at which you will utilize them. The calculator can be found [here](#).

Q. What should be included in the “cleaning record” required in 8.7.F.1?

A. This documentation may include: the date and time of the last cleaning, name of the individual who performed the cleaning, and what was involved in the cleaning (e.g., wiped table tops with bleach solution).

Q. How long must I retain these cleaning records?

A. It is recommended cleaning records be retained for the duration of camp. This may be a beneficial tool for the program to ensure spaces have been properly cleaned in the case of an outbreak or known exposure of COVID-19.

## VI. Distance Learning Programs

### \*New

Q. I operate a distance learning program. Do I need to register as a summer camp?

A. Distance learning programs only need to register if they are providing in-person learning opportunities for more than 2 hours per day *and* anticipate serving more than 50 children cumulatively throughout the summer. Programs which in-person sessions are less than 2 hours per day or are 100% virtual would not need to register as a summer camp.

### \*New

Q. Is the State providing funding opportunities for distance learning programs?

A. Summer Learning Opportunities (SLO) programs may apply for grants at: <https://www.ride.ri.gov/InsideRIDE/AdditionalInformation/Summer.aspx>. Grants are available for distance learning programs that are in-person as well as up to 100% virtual.

### \*New

Q. I am a summer camp operator and children in our program are participating in distance learning. How can I support them?

A. Tips for supporting distance learners are noted below and include page numbers for quick reference to the Distance Learning Guidance available at: [https://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/COVID19/Distance\\_Learning\\_Guidance\\_2020.pdf](https://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/COVID19/Distance_Learning_Guidance_2020.pdf).

Tips include:

1. **Establish a routine** (p. 5): Clear and consistent routines provide stability and security for youth. Establishing a consistent time and space for the youth to log-in for their distance learning will create accountability in completing the task and allow the youth to know when and how to prepare for their learning.
2. **Have technology ready** (p. 6): As a program provider, you may need to provide access to internet or a device for the youth to complete their distance learning. Be sure to discuss these expectations with

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their parent during enrollment. Where access to technology becomes a barrier, visit:

<https://www.ride.ri.gov/InsideRIDE/AdditionalInformation/COVID-19TechnologyInformation.aspx>

3. **Communicate** (p. 7): Communication should be open between parents, youth, the summer camp provider, and the distance learning provider. When in doubt, or if you have a question, reach out to those around you! This will minimize miscommunication, which may result in frustration.
4. **Know your learners' needs:** In order to best support youth in their learning, it is important you understand their unique needs. These may include considerations around their age or stage of development, social-emotional need, multi-lingual ability, mental or physical ability, or other factors. Specific guidance for the following are available in the Distance Learning Guidance (linked [here](#)):
  - a. Early Childhood Considerations (p. 10)
  - b. Elementary Level Considerations (p. 12)
  - c. Secondary Level Considerations (p. 15)
  - d. Supports for Differently-Abled Learners (p. 19)
  - e. Supports for Multi-lingual Learners (p. 21)

For additional guidance or specific questions, please contact: [summer@ride.ri.gov](mailto:summer@ride.ri.gov).

