

**Guidance for the operation
of summer camps during
COVID-19**

Public Health New Brunswick

June 30, 2021

Guidance for the operation of summer camps during COVID-19

During the recovery phase of the COVID-19 Pandemic, it is critical that both employers and employees have access to child care for their young children to enable them to return to the workforce. As part of the recovery phase, unlicensed day and overnight summer camps will be permitted to operate.

NOTE: The presence of COVID-19 variants are an ongoing concern in New Brunswick. Variants spread more easily than the original COVID-19 virus and have been the cause of many disease outbreaks. Regardless of the recovery phase level/colour, the presence of these variants in an area may result in the revision of these guidelines.

This document has been developed to provide direction to operators of summer camps on the steps they can take to manage their facilities as safely as possible. The goal is to create a safe and healthy environment for staff and children by making the necessary adjustments to help limit the risk of exposure to COVID-19.

NOTE: Summer camps that operate on a seasonal basis or for up to ten weeks in a calendar year are permitted to operate without a licence from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD). Beyond 10 weeks of operation, a licence from the Department of EECD is required. No infant under the age of two is permitted to receive care at any Summer Camp.

During the recovery phase, it is important to understand that these operations are **NOT** business as usual, and that the directives and advice outlined in this document will remain in place until otherwise advised. For updated information on COVID-19, visit the Government of New Brunswick website at <https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/corporate/promo/covid-19.html>

Enabling Conditions to Reduce the Risk of Transmission

Summer camps are permitted to operate at full capacity to allow for summer childcare for working parents with children out of school. By allowing these facilities to operate at their full capacity, no family will be at a disadvantage.

Science has demonstrated that children who carry and transmit COVID-19 may have very few, if any symptoms. Because of this, if an asymptomatic adult infects a child and that child enters a summer camp with no symptoms, there is a risk of that child transmitting the virus to children and staff in the facility.

Good personal hygiene practices are important to prevent all kinds of disease transmission among children. It is important for children to be reminded at the beginning of each day on when and how to wash their hands, how to cover their sneezes properly, and the importance of not touching their face or touching others.

Groupings

At this time, strict groupings of smaller numbers of children are no longer required. However, it is advised that operators consider placing children in one consistent group at the start of a camp and the members of each group remain the same, as much as possible, throughout the duration of the camp. Staff members are also advised to remain with the same groups of children throughout the duration of the camp when possible. Minimal mixing of campers and staff is preferred.

NOTE: Operators may choose to continue to assign campers to consistent groupings at the start of a camp and maintain these groups throughout the duration of the camp for all activities, meals and at night. These groups would not mingle with other groups, would maintain 2m separation from other groups during camp activities and would preferably have the same staff assigned to monitor them. This would allow operators to remove the physical barriers between beds at night for these assigned groups only.

Because children at the camp will no longer be restricted to specific set groups and will be allowed to intermingle, **all stakeholders, especially parents and staff, must be aware that their actions play a critical role in reducing the risk of infectious disease transmission in these facilities.** It is therefore paramount that operators follow the strict controls as described throughout this document.

In addition, parents are advised to heed the following:

- Adults in contact with children attending a summer camp need to be hypervigilant about monitoring for symptoms and arrange for testing immediately if they develop two or more of the following symptoms: fever or signs of fever, new cough or worsening chronic cough, runny nose, headache, sore throat, new onset of fatigue, new onset of muscle pain, diarrhea or loss of taste or smell.
- If children attending a summer camp have a vulnerable adult at home, the parent will want to consider the risk of the child bringing COVID-19 home and exposing the vulnerable adult in the home.

What can you do to help prevent and control COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 Operational Plan

Operators of summer camps must develop an Operational Plan outlining how the operator will manage daily operations to meet the additional measures outlined in this document. The plan should explain procedures on how the operator is able to maintain staff-to-child ratios as per their pre-pandemic operations and implement disease preventive controls such as personal hygiene, cleaning and disinfection, and the management of illness. As part of the operational plan, the operator should ensure that the camp is provided with a safe water supply source, an approved food source, and an approved means of sewage and garbage disposal.

Operators are to have their COVID-19 Operational Plan available for Public Health staff to review. This may occur during an unannounced visit or a pre-scheduled visit by a Public Health Inspector.

For information on the process of planning for and creating a COVID-19 Operational Plan, operators can refer to the following link: <https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/eco-bce/Promo/covid-19/covid-op-plan-guide.pdf>

It is strongly recommended that operators providing unlicensed childcare follow the [Phase 2 COVID-19 Guidelines 6.28.2021.pdf \(nbed.nb.ca\)](#) when drafting their operational plans.

This guidance provides information that may be used by summer camp operators to ensure that facilities are operated and maintained as safely as possible during this time and has specific advice on outbreak management, cleaning and disinfection and other processes necessary to prevent disease transmission that operators may use during regular operation.

COVID-19 Awareness

Operators of summer camps are to provide parents with information on the additional COVID-19 related measures that are required for child attendance during the recovery phase. The operation must also post signage such as hand washing and personal hygiene etiquette throughout the camp. Information can be found on the [New Brunswick Coronavirus webpage](#) (Click on **Guidance and Resources** and then [Posters and Awareness Resources](#)).

Records

Operators of summer camps must have up to date records of household members for each child attending the camp e.g. names and contact numbers.

Operators of summer Camps must keep a complete list of staff, volunteers, and children and visitors who work, attend or visit the facility regardless of the duration. This must include their names, contact information, and the date and time they are in the facility.

A daily log must be kept for each camp that would include the names of those in the camp, the daily attendance record, and, if applicable, the names of campers in each group and the date the group was established. This information is requested to assist Public Health with contact tracing, if a COVID-19 case might have attended a Summer Camp. See **Appendix B: Summer Camp – Sample Daily Group Log**.

All these records must be made available upon request from government officials.

Drop-off and Pick-up

It is encouraged that only one identified adult per family be responsible for the drop-off and pick-up of the child or children at the camp. Staggering these times should be conducted when needed to reduce the number of people at camp at the same time. These activities should be managed outside, unless the adult absolutely needs to come into the facility. If this is the case, masks must be worn inside. When interacting with other adults inside of the facility and social distancing is not possible, community masks must also be worn.

Screening for summer camps

Provide clear rules at the door regarding entrance permissions. Post signage at the entrance advising of the screening process.

Parents are responsible for reviewing the screening questions (daily, if a day summer camp) with their children and only sending their child to the summer camp when they are well and have met the criteria outlined in the screening questionnaire. See GNB Website for [screening tool](#) for COVID-19. Those who are sick with symptoms of COVID -19 must stay home, contact 811, and cannot return until fully recovered. If tested, Public Health will inform the individual or parent when isolation may be lifted.

Operators must have parents complete the form in Appendix D, recognizing their responsibility for the screening of their children prior to attending summer camp. This form is only required to be completed once by parents. When parents drop their children off, staff are to ask parents if they reviewed the screening questions with their child and confirm that their child meets all of the criteria of wellness.

Staff must assess themselves for symptoms by completing the [screening tool](#) prior to attending the summer camp. The operator is to ask staff who arrive if they reviewed the screening questions and confirm that they meet all of the criteria of wellness.

Note: Children or staff who have been identified by their primary care provider as having seasonal allergies or who suffer from chronic runny nose/nasal congestion are not required to be excluded based on these symptoms.

Depending on how the pandemic progresses in New Brunswick, this guidance could be relaxed or become more stringent.

Cleaning and Disinfection Procedures

Increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces is essential in controlling the spread of viruses, and other microorganisms. All surfaces, especially those general surfaces that are frequently touched, such as doorknobs, handrails, toys, etc., should be cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily and when soiled. Toys that have been put in a child's mouth must be cleaned and disinfected, and then rinsed with potable water before being used by another child. For safety, cleaning and disinfection products should always be stored out of reach of children.

A cleaning and disinfection schedule must be in place with clear accountabilities assigned to specific staff.

When choosing an environmental cleaning product, it is important to follow product instructions for dilution, contact time and safe use, and to ensure that the product is:

- Registered in Canada with a Drug Identification Number (DIN).
- Labelled as a broad-spectrum virucide.

All soiled surfaces should be cleaned before disinfecting, unless otherwise stated on the product.

The following hard-surface disinfectant products meet Health Canada's requirements for emerging viral pathogens. These authorized disinfectants may be used against SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>

If using household bleach, the following is recommended	
Disinfectant	Concentration and Instructions
Chlorine: household bleach – sodium hypochlorite (5.25%)	1000 ppm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 teaspoon (5 ml) bleach to 1 cup (250 ml) water or • 4 teaspoons (20 ml) bleach to 1 litre (1000 ml) water • Allow surface to air dry naturally

Precautions when using bleach:

- Always follow safety precautions and the manufacturer's directions when working with concentrated solutions of bleach. To avoid injury, use appropriate personal protective equipment during handling (read the label and refer to the material safety data sheet).
- A bottle of bleach has a shelf life, so check the bottle for an expiry date.
- Never mix ammonia products with bleach or bleach-containing products. This practice produces chlorine gas - a very toxic gas that can cause severe breathing problems, choking and potentially death.
- When mixing a chlorine bleach solution, it is important to pour the chlorine into the water and not the reverse.
- Do not pre-mix the water and bleach solution, as it loses potency over time. Make a fresh solution every day.
- Clean the surface before using the chlorine bleach solution.
- Chlorine bleach solution might damage some surfaces (e.g., metals, some plastics).
- Try not to breathe in product fumes and mix in a well-ventilated area. If using products indoors, open windows and doors to allow fresh air to enter.

For summer camps that have closed because of an outbreak, refer to Appendix C: Cleaning Guide for Re-opening a Summer Camp after a COVID-19 Outbreak.

Personal Hygiene Etiquette

Hand washing

Handwashing is one of the best ways to protect yourself and others from getting sick from COVID-19 and other germs. Ensure handwashing facilities and/or hand-sanitizing products are readily available.

Children must be monitored to ensure they are washing their hands correctly.

Hand Washing with Soap and Water

To wash your hands properly with soap and water, follow these steps:

- Wet your hands and apply liquid soap or clean bar soap.
- Rub your hands vigorously together, scrubbing all skin surfaces.
- Pay special attention to the areas around your nails and between your fingers.
- Continue scrubbing for at least twenty seconds. Sing the Happy Birthday song twice!
- Rinse your hands and dry them well.
- Turn off taps with paper towel.
- Open door of bathroom with paper towel in hand and then dispose in waste basket.

Using Hand Sanitizer

Alcohol-based hand sanitizers with a minimum 70% alcohol that have been approved by Health Canada may be used by children and staff if they do not have access to soap and water, and if their hands are not visibly soiled. Children are to be supervised when using these sanitizers.

Hand sanitizer products must not be ingested and must always be kept out of reach of children.

As with all health products, Health Canada recommends that people always follow the directions on the product label. Check whether a product and its claims have been authorized for sale by Health Canada by searching the [List of Hand Sanitizers Authorized by Health Canada](#). Authorized hand sanitizers have an eight-digit Drug Identification Number (DIN), or Natural Product Number (NPN).

To clean your hands properly with alcohol-based hand sanitizers, follow these steps:

- Apply hand sanitizer.
- Rub into the front and back of hands, between fingers, around nails (especially cuticles), thumbs and wrists.
- Rub until dry.

Staff and children must practice good hand hygiene. They must wash their hands frequently with soap and water, especially:

- on arrival;
- before and after meals;
- after using the toilet;
- after blowing nose, coughing or sneezing;
- after playing with shared toys;
- after handling animals or their waste;
- when taking medications; and
- after playing outside.

In addition, staff are required to wash their hands:

- before and after handling food;
- after helping a child use the toilet;
- after breaks;
- before and after changing diapers; and

- before and after giving medications.

Other Personal Hygiene Etiquette

- Every child shall have their own grooming materials, and these are to be stored in a way to prevent cross-contamination. They should be adequately identified and segregated.
- Avoid touching the face, eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover the mouth and nose with a disposable tissue or the crease of the elbow when coughing or sneezing. Dispose of used tissues immediately and then wash hands.
- Ensure signage on personal hygiene etiquette such as handwashing; and sneezing and coughing etiquette is posted throughout the facility. This would include common areas, kitchen preparation area, washrooms, and diaper changing areas. Information on the above can be found on the [New Brunswick Coronavirus webpage](#).

Additional measures to help prevent and control COVID-19 spread

Vaccination

COVID-19 vaccines have been proven to protect individuals from severe illness and hospitalization. All persons in New Brunswick 12 years old and up are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Although not required, all staff (who are eligible) are encouraged to be vaccinated with two doses to help prevent spread of the virus to a population 12 and under who are unable to receive a vaccine. Vaccine appointments may be booked [through a local pharmacy or through the RHA](#)

Supplies

Operators of summer camps must ensure they have all the necessary supplies such as hot/cold potable running water, liquid soap, paper towel, toilet paper, cleaning and disinfecting supplies and personal protection equipment (community masks and disposable gloves) and food if supplying meals.

For personal protective equipment the facility should have a supply of [non-medical masks](#) for children or staff who may become ill while at the facility. Non-medical masks are only to be used when a child becomes ill at the facility. For summer camps, masks are not required to be worn by staff or campers.

It is important that a staff member be delegated responsibility to monitor supplies to ensure stock is maintained during operating hours.

Washrooms

Washrooms must be equipped with hot and cold running water under pressure, liquid soap, paper towel, toilet paper, and garbage containers. Handwash signs must be posted. Washrooms should be cleaned frequently.

Handwashing Stations

Handwashing stations must be equipped with hot and cold running water under pressure, liquid soap, and paper towel. Handwash signs must be posted.

Food

- For facilities that are licensed under the Food Premises Regulation, ensure the food premises are operated in accordance with the Regulation. Facilities that do not require a license can refer to the [ABCs of Food Safety](#) pamphlet for information on food safety. Additional resources on food safety are available on the [Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health \(Public Health\)](#) webpage.
- Have specific staff delegated to prepare and serve meals.
- A cafeteria line, where staff or children point to the food they want and a staff person portions it for them from behind a counter concept, is acceptable.
- Operators are encouraged to use only pre-packaged or pre-portioned snacks.
- Do not allow shared food containers, such as shared pitchers of water or juice in dining areas.
- Ensure food handlers follow good hand hygiene and exclude themselves from kitchen duties if they become ill.
- If the facility permits, children may bring their own lunch and snacks. Advise parents to use insulated lunch bags with cold packs to help keep food cold. Hot foods can be stored in a thermos.
- Dishwashers are acceptable for cleaning dishes.
- If manually dishwashing, follow the 3-step method (wash, rinse, sanitize). If using household bleach (5.25%) a concentration of 100 ppm is acceptable.
- Discourage any sharing of food between children or staff.

Laundry

If laundry facilities are provided, the following is required:

- Wash hands before and after doing the laundry.
- Wipe down controls and handles before and after use.
- Don't leave soiled clothing or baskets on top of machines or tables.
- Don't shake dirty laundry before putting it in the machine.
- Wash with soap and the warmest water possible. Do not overload the machine.
- Don't leave dryer door open when not in use.
- Dry items at highest temperature possible and dry them completely.
- Disinfect your hamper before filling with clean clothes.

Sleeping Arrangements for summer camps

- Shared accommodations should be arranged in such a fashion that beds are at least 2 metres/6 feet apart **and** head-to-toe where possible. If beds cannot be at least 2 metres/6 feet apart, use temporary barriers between beds, such as curtains or plexiglass, to prevent droplet spread while sleeping, and sleep head-to-toe. This applies to regular beds and bunkbeds.

NOTE: Operators may remove physical barriers between beds where campers have been assigned to specific groupings for the duration of the camp and exclusively share sleeping accommodations with their assigned group.

Outdoor Play Areas

- During play time, staff must be vigilant in reminding children to not touch their face.
- After each playtime, staff must be vigilant in ensuring children wash their hands.
- Facilities are permitted to use play sets (slides, swings, monkey bars, etc.). This includes municipal play sets that have been reopened by the municipality. Staff must ensure children are following good personal hygiene while on the equipment and that children wash their hands before and after playing on the equipment.
- Shared toys are permitted such as bikes, balls and bats. As with other toys, toys should be cleaned at least twice daily and when soiled.
- Toys that have been put in a child's mouth must be cleaned and disinfected, and then rinsed with potable water before being used by another child.

Field Trips

- Overnight or otherwise fieldtrips to backcountry camps or private properties can be offered so long as it's safe to do so, sleeping arrangements comply with stated guidance and is captured in the Operational Plan. Field trips to other outdoor settings such as provincial and national parks would be acceptable but should be coordinated with that specific park ahead of time.
- Field trips to public spaces (e.g. museums, parks, play centres) are permitted with an operational plan.

Special Events

- Holidays, special events, or celebrations and other activities such as birthdays that bring together parents and groups are permitted as long as they follow the Mandatory Order.

Safeguards for Access to the Facility by Others

- Visitors who would be considered as an essential service to the summer camp are permitted to enter the facility during operating hours. This would include professionals that are essential to the facility such as public health inspectors, persons providing autism interventions, etc.
- Visitors must follow the screening protocol to be admitted in the facility. They must wear a mask, wash their hands upon entry at the nearest handwash station and must maintain physical distancing as much as possible.
- Non-essential visitors such as salespersons, librarians, and entertainers are permitted to enter the facility during operating hours but must wear a mask while indoors. If the activity is held outdoors and visitors are able to maintain a 2m distance, then masks are not necessary.

- Records (date, time, name, department/business) of all visitors should be maintained by the operator and stored for the duration of the operation of the camp. All records should be available for Public Health, if requested.

Control measures as guided by Public Health if an outbreak is detected

What is the definition of a COVID-19 outbreak in a facility?

One confirmed case of COVID-19 (Individual who tests positive for the virus causing COVID-19); **Note:** Children or staff who have been identified by their primary care provider as having seasonal allergies or who suffer from chronic runny nose/nasal congestion would not be considered a suspected symptomatic case.

How to report cases to Public Health?

If the facility has one confirmed case of COVID-19, or has a suspected cluster of symptomatic cases, the facility is to advise Public Health by contacting the Regional Health Authority Public Health Nurse or the after-hour emergency number (for after hours).

Testing is usually not recommended to clear an individual. Public Health will inform the individual or parent (when a child is involved) when isolation may be lifted. The camp does not require a notice from Public Health to confirm a negative COVID-19 result. If a child or staff has a positive result, Public Health will notify the facility.

If an outbreak is declared, the camp must close. Regional Public Health will be involved to manage the outbreak and ensure contacts are identified, public health measures are in place and will lead any communication that is required.

Outbreak Preventive Measures

Summer camps should have a management of illness plan detailing information on COVID-19 and the control measures to follow when dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19. This plan must also include contact information for the Regional Health Authority Public Health Nurse and the after-hour emergency number. Summer camp operators can obtain this information by contacting their Health Protection Services regional office (See **Appendix A: Health Protection Services Regional Offices**).

Control measures on suspected cases of COVID-19 include:

- When a camp must close because of an outbreak, Public Health will give the directive to the camp operator. If exclusion/isolation is required, ensure that measures are in place to inform parents/guardians and staff of the situation and of how important this control measure is. Proper exclusion/isolation is one of the most important and effective measures in controlling the spread of disease to others. Parental and staff cooperation is critical. The facility must have an area that can be designated to isolate a staff or child that becomes symptomatic during the day while waiting to be picked-up. Pick-up is to occur within an hour of notification. Parents must be aware that this is an expectation.

- Symptomatic children must be immediately separated from others in a supervised area until they can go home. Where possible, anyone providing care to an ill child should maintain 2-metres.
- It is important that the group of combined children/staff the symptomatic child was in, not mix with the rest of the facility population until the 'suspect case' is assessed.
- If a 2-metre distance cannot be maintained from an ill child, if circumstances allow, the child should wear a mask while waiting for parents to pick up the child.
- **Note: Masks are not required for healthy children at summer camp settings.**
- Ill staff must immediately isolate from others and wear a mask until they are able to leave the facility.
- Hygiene and respiratory etiquette must be practiced while the ill child/staff is waiting to be picked up.
- Environmental cleaning and disinfection of the isolation area must be conducted once the ill child/staff has left the facility.
- If an outbreak is confirmed, post appropriate notices for parents/guardians at all entrances to the facility to ensure that disease information is available for staff and parents/guardians if needed or requested.

Appendix A: Provincial Health Protection Services Regional Offices

For Summer Camp inquiries, please contact HPS

Department of Public Safety – Health Protection Services (HPS) Regional Offices:

<p>Central Region Fredericton Phone number: (506) 453-2830</p>	<p>South Region Saint John Phone number: (506) 658-3022</p>	<p>East Region Moncton Phone number: (506) 856-2814</p>	<p>North Region Bathurst Phone number: (506) 549-5550</p> <p>Edmundston Phone number: (506) 737-4400</p> <p>Campbellton Phone number: (506) 789-2549</p>
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Appendix B: Summer Camp – Sample Daily Group Log

Name of Group: _____

Date Group Established: _____

Group Log Confirmed By: _____

Date: _____

No	Child Name	Staff Name
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14		
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Appendix C: Cleaning Guide for Re-opening a Summer Camp after a COVID-19 Outbreak

Refer to the table below for a list of areas and items that require cleaning prior to re-opening a Summer Camp after an outbreak (For information on cleaning and disinfection products and procedures refer to the “Cleaning and Disinfection Procedures” section in this document).

Areas/Items	Cleaning Method
Non-porous toys and play equipment	Clean and disinfect
Toy shelves and boxes	Clean and disinfect
Soft washable toys	Launder*
Dress-up clothes	Launder*
Mouthed toys	Clean, disinfect and then rinse with potable water
Bibs	Clean and disinfect
High chair table	Clean, disinfect and then rinse with potable water
Cribs/cots	Clean, disinfect
Soothers/pacifiers	Clean, disinfect, and then rinse with potable water
Used play dough-commercial	Discard
Used play dough-homemade	Discard
Water play table	Not permitted during COVID-19 pandemic
Sand boxes	Not permitted during COVID-19 pandemic
Foam play mats	Clean and disinfect
Sheets and blankets	Launder*
Nap mats/cots	Clean and disinfect
Food contact surfaces	Clean, disinfect, and then rinse with potable water
Doorknobs, light switches, railings, floors, sinks, non-food contact surfaces, chairs	Clean and disinfect
Upholstered furniture	Vacuum** and steam clean
Small area rugs	Vacuum** and steam clean
Carpets	Vacuum** and steam clean
Floors	Clean and disinfect
Garbage containers	Empty, then clean and disinfect
Change table/pad Including the entire surface of the change area and the sides of the change surface	Clean, disinfect, and then rinse the surface with potable water
Toilets/urinals	Clean and disinfect
Stall walls/partitions	Clean and disinfect
Stall walls/partitions-fabric	Launder*
Potty chairs/seats	Clean and disinfect
Sinks	Clean and disinfect

*Refer to the “Laundry” section in this document for recommendations on laundry procedures.

** Only use vacuum cleaners equipped with exhaust filters, preferably HEPA filters, for carpeted areas. If your vacuum does not have an exhaust filter, do NOT vacuum the room.

Appendix D: Parental Confirmation and Acknowledgment of Screening Responsibility

I, _____, hereby acknowledge that I understand my
(name of parent/guardian)

responsibilities for the screening of my child/children for COVID-19 symptoms prior to bringing

my child/children to _____ every day.
(name of camp)

I understand that bringing my child/children to the above-named camp signifies that I take full responsibility and attest that all questions in the screening questionnaire were answered with a "no".

(parent signature)

(witness)

Date: _____