

2024 respiratory illness protocols



Hello Campers!

We are so excited that we'll be gathering LIVE & IN-PERSON very soon at 'Camp' Camp 2024! This document outlines the respiratory illness protocols & policies that will be in place for our 2024 season, so that those attending can plan appropriately.

We know that in many ways it may feel like COVID is "over," but the COVID virus *is* indeed still present and still ever-evolving and contagious. As a diverse, international, multi-generational community, we must remain vigilant to allow all community members to feel safe and enjoy/share in our unique best-time-ever week in Maine. We've appreciated everyone's understanding and diligence the past two summers allowing us to experience Camp safely in a world where potentially severe respiratory illnesses – like COVID, RSV, and the flu – are a reality.

We'll continue to further relax our protocols a bit from what they were in 2023, keeping last summer's experience, current COVID case rates across the country, and current CDC recommendations in mind. We may adjust the protocols outlined below between now and the start of Camp as facts and recommendations from healthcare providers dictate and will keep you posted if we feel any significant adjustments are warranted.

Like all of Camp's other long-standing rules & regulations, **by registering to join us this summer, you are agreeing to abide by these respiratory illness guidelines & protocols**, whether or not you agree with them. We feel strongly they are necessary to be able to produce 'Camp' Camp in as safe a manner as possible.

- **We are continuing to require proof of vaccination from all Campers & Staff**, as well as our "subcontractors" (i.e., the band for Monday night's Barn Dance), so everyone on site will be fully vaccinated.
 - **We do encourage those of you who have not had the most recent COVID vaccine to arrange to receive that ASAP so your protection is at full efficacy by the time Camp rolls around.**
 - If your previous vaccination was before September 12, 2023 or the Novavax COVID-19 vaccine before October 3, 2023, it is recommended that you get an updated Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, or Novavax COVID-19 vaccine. It takes 2-3 weeks for the vaccine to build protection, so do your best to schedule this vaccination soon.
 - FYI: The summer surge for FLiRT variants is causing less severe illness in healthy individuals, but continues to severely impact those who are elderly, immune compromised, or have chronic respiratory conditions. You may even be positive but asymptomatic, only to learn too late you exposed someone you love.
 - Maine is generally an area of low vaccination rates with tourists from all over, so any additional protection benefits us all.

- **We strongly encourage everyone do their best to get all your shopping, errands, etc. for Camp done a week or so before you leave for Camp so that you are minimizing contact with others in the week prior to Camp.**
 - We don't expect you to completely isolate or stay home from work, etc., but please use wise, best-practices the week prior to your departure to help limit exposure and risk of infection: wear a mask when shopping or in other public indoor venues, wash your hands frequently, etc.
 - Remember: The healthier you are upon arrival at Camp, the lower your risk will be for any illnesses.
- **Please bring a supply of face masks and at least two (2) home COVID tests with you to Camp.**
 - **We respectfully request that everyone take a test prior to leaving home for 'Camp' Camp just to ensure you aren't asymptotically carrying the virus with you.**
 - While we'll have some rapid home tests available, it'll help us out greatly if you bring a few extra tests to Camp with you.
 - While the federal government discontinued their free COVID tests in 2023, most local pharmacies should carry them and some insurance plans will cover them.
 - **We distributed over 400 masks to Campers last summer. Since we are relaxing last summer's masking requirements as outlined below, we will have very limited quantities available and need everyone to bring their own supply** in case we have some positive COVID cases and decide a period of masking may be beneficial to further reduce transmission.
- **For those of you who are travelling to Maine by air, bus, or train, we strongly recommend that you wear a mask (preferably an [N-95 mask](#)) when travelling to 'Camp' Camp,** especially on your plane, bus, or train and in crowded airports, bus/train stations, hotel lobbies, etc. Wash your hands frequently. Wipe down frequently touched public areas with disinfectant wipes. Socially distance as much as possible.
- **For those driving to Camp, limit contact and exposure when stopping for gas and bathroom/food breaks during your drive:** mask indoors, socially distance as much as possible, get food to go and eat outdoors or in your car, wash your hands.
- Please remember that the first 24-48 hours after travelling is the period when your immune system is being assaulted by all of the pathogens that everyone around you is bringing with them from their travels.

As of July 7, 2024, we will not be requiring masking the first 24 hours of Camp as we did in 2023. However, out of respect for immune-compromised Campers & Staff and erring on the side of caution when so many people will be traveling by air, etc. to get to Maine, **we strongly recommend the following with the one noted masking requirement:**

- **Masking in the Camp vans from transportation hubs will be required** in an effort to reduce the spread of all respiratory infections. The drive from Portland to our new location will be around 90 minutes long when many people are fresh off of flights, bus rides, etc., and this will help reduce any transmission from travel-related exposure.
- **We recommended that everyone who travels to Camp by air, bus, or train take a home COVID test at Camp on Monday, August 12 before dinner** (i.e., about 24 hours after your arrival to Camp).
- While it is prudent for everyone to do so, we're most concerned here with those who will have had the most exposure during their travels.
- Remember those extra COVID tests we suggested you toss in your suitcase in an earlier bullet point? They'll come in handy here!

- In the spirit of ‘Camp’ Camp’s amazing LGBTQ+ community — one built on love, respect, and inclusivity — **you are, of course, welcome to wear a mask throughout the week (except when sleeping, swimming, or in select activity areas where a mask may impede your safety) if/when/where you feel the need.** Your Camp community will unequivocally support you in your decision to take charge of your own health and comfort.
 - We will have no shaming or mocking of Campers who make the informed decision to mask as they feel necessary.
- **We will again be foregoing any Sightseeing or other off-site trips this summer (other than some possible off-site hikes) and strongly recommend all Campers remain on-site during the week. If you do find it necessary to go off-site while at Camp, we ask that you please wear a mask while interacting with the public.**
 - Drivers will still be doing errands regularly, so they will still be able to pick up those items you may have forgotten. Please, however, do your best to anticipate all your needs for your week at Camp prior to your arrival.

Hopefully, when everyone abides by the above protocols and acts out of an abundance of caution in the week leading up to Camp, we’ll have a week at ‘Camp’ Camp free of respiratory illnesses!

Should you not feel well and begin displaying respiratory symptoms while at Camp:

1. A member of our Risk Management staff (Risk Manager or Nurse) will administer a rapid COVID test.
2. You’ll be required to relocate to one of the Infirmary’s isolation rooms.
3. Since rapid tests can present a high instance of false negatives, we’ll also provide transportation to the local retail drug store for a more-reliable PCR test no matter the result of your home test. This PCR test is usually free or covered by your insurance, and results usually come back in 24 hours.
4. If your PCR results come back negative *and* you remain without fever after 24 hours in isolation, you’ll be allowed to return to your cabin to enjoy the rest of your week at Camp.
5. If the results of the PCR test confirm a positive result, you’ll need to leave Camp in an effort to reduce the chance of transmission to any other Campers.
6. You’ll be allowed to stay in an isolation room until you’ve secured off-site accommodations. We’ll help you get to where you need to go.
7. While actively ill (i.e. fever, congestion, general malaise, etc.), meals will be delivered to your isolation room as you may *not* enter any community space or participate in any Camp activities.
8. Once you feel better and are fever-free for 24 hours without medication, you can rejoin community spaces.

If you’re concerned about illness interrupting your week at ‘Camp’ Camp, we do recommend you secure travel insurance that includes coverage for COVID-related cancellations, quarantine accommodation coverage, etc. Though we have not verified or personally experienced any of the policies noted here, this link offers several options for securing COVID-related coverage: www.traveloffpath.com/covid-19-travel-insurance-everything-you-need-to-know/

If you have any questions or concerns about the above, please feel free to [e-mail us](mailto:info@traveloffpath.com). Otherwise, we look forward to seeing you in August!

Kerry Riffle
(he/him/his)
Owner/Director

Robin Benton, RN
(she/her/hers)
Risk Manager

Michelle Rediker
(she/her/hers)
Associate Director