

## New Birth Of Freedom Council, BSA

### 2021 Summer Camp COVID-19 Mitigation and Response Plan

There is always a potential risk of an outbreak or transmission of infectious disease when attending any event, including COVID-19. The efforts of the New Birth of Freedom Council detailed in this document are in place to help mitigate that risk at Camp Tuckahoe and Hidden Valley Scout Reservation.

As we all have seen throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, public health officials have frequently updated guidelines and mitigation efforts designed to reduce the spread of the virus. As of May 31, 2021, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania discontinued all previous limits on capacity limits for indoor and outdoor gatherings.

Additionally, the [Pennsylvania Department of Health](#) has announced that fully vaccinated individuals are no longer required to wear a mask or physically distance (except where required by law, rule, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance). As of June 28 (or when 70% of adults are fully vaccinated), Pennsylvania's mask-wearing order will be lifted for everyone, regardless of vaccination status.

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) has recently updated its guidelines for summer camps, and we have integrated this new information into our Council's plans for summer programs, as well as our guidance for unit activities. We also rely on information from the [National Council of the Boy Scouts of America](#) in formulating our guidelines. We actively follow guidance coming from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the CDC so that we can respond quickly to any changes in their recommendations.

### **Why Have Any Guidelines at All for Scouting?**

If public health authorities have already removed mandates or have signaled those other mandates still in place (mask-wearing) will be ending soon, doesn't that mean a total return to normal, pre-pandemic Scouting life?

Not entirely. Please keep in mind the following:

- **Vaccines are still not widely available for Scouting youth of all ages. This fact is significant to keep in mind. Children younger than age 12 cannot receive vaccinations, so many of our youth members are not immunized.**
- Within Scouting, there is a diversity of beliefs and concerns about how best to conduct Scouting activities during the pandemic. In general terms, we follow the guidance coming

from the PA Department of Health while listening carefully and considering the concerns of those who feel additional measures should be taken. We want everyone to feel safe and comfortable.

- Community spread of COVID-19 and daily new positive cases continue while the prevalence of youth contracting the virus has grown. While fewer children have been sick with COVID-19 than adults, children can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, spread the virus to others, and have severe outcomes. Children who have COVID-19 but have no symptoms can still spread the virus to others.

## Safety Precautions Are Essential, But Can't Eliminate All Risk

Precautions and mitigation strategies are essential, but they cannot eradicate the potential for exposure to COVID-19 at camp. People with COVID-19 may show no signs or symptoms of illness, but they can spread the virus. Some people may be contagious before their symptoms occur. The fact is, someone with COVID-19 may pass required health screenings and be allowed into our camps.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that older adults and people of any age with underlying serious medical conditions are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Any individual in these higher-risk groups must ensure they have approval from their health care provider before participating in summer camp programs.

Every Scout, volunteer, family member, and staff member must evaluate their unique circumstances and make an informed decision before participation.

These guidelines will be followed and have aided in our preparations for summer, although in some cases, we will enforce stricter policies with safety in mind.

## COVID-19 Pre-Camp Precautions

### Vaccinations

Vaccines are strongly encouraged for all who are currently eligible (anyone age 12 or over). Individuals are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving the final required dose. There are no plans by the BSA or the New Birth of Freedom Council to require a COVID-19 vaccination in 2021 to attend summer camp. We recommend that each person planning to attend summer camp consult their health care provider for vaccination guidance.

**Persons who have received a COVID-19 vaccination should note this on their BSA Annual Health and Medical Form (Immunizations Section B2) on the "Other" line. We ask that vaccinated persons attach a copy of their COVID-19 vaccination card to their camp medical form.**

## Reduce Exposure Pre-Camp

We request that campers, leaders, and their families follow the CDC's guidance for travelers 14 days before camp arrival to reduce exposure to COVID-19. Unvaccinated campers and leaders are encouraged to engage in a two-week pre-arrival behavioral quarantine that includes physical distancing, mask-wearing when not at home, avoiding unnecessary travel, and refraining from indoor social gatherings with people outside of their household.

## Parents and Visitors in Camp

To limit potential exposures in camp, parents who are not registered to attend camp as leaders will be limited to the camp parking lots. They may not go beyond the camp gate on arrival or departure. The closing night barbecue dinner and campfire show will be limited to the regular camp participants (no visitors).

Parents picking up campers during the week must come to the camp office to meet their unit leader and Scout(s). Parents exchanging places with other parents during the camp session should check in at the camp office with their BSA medical forms and identification. They must also have completed BSA youth protection training and provide proof of all PA child abuse history clearances.

Visitors to the camp will be permitted only on a limited basis.

## Arrival Day Symptom Checks

Unit leaders are to check every participant's temperature before traveling to camp. Camp staff will check everyone's temperature during a medical recheck at camp upon your arrival. Anyone with a temperature of 100.5 or higher will not be allowed to attend or stay in camp.

## Daily Symptom Checks

**Leaders are to bring a touchless thermometer to camp to do daily temperature checks for their unit in their campsite.** Before leaving for breakfast, leaders will recheck for COVID-19 symptoms using the questions found on the BSA's medical screening checklist. Any individual with symptoms will be medically isolated and taken to the Health Lodge for further screening.

## COVID-19 In-Camp Precautions

Early arrivals will not be permitted to allow staff to clean and prepare camp for the next camp session.

Once in camp, all Scouts and leaders in a campsite are considered part of the same "household" or cohort. If multiple units share the same campsite, they are considered part of the same "household" or cohort.

In some programs, campers will need to participate with a buddy or as a group from the same "household."

## Physical Distancing

Practice physical distancing whenever possible by keeping six feet or more distance between individuals. We ask **Scouts and leaders to bring a portable folding chair with them to camp to make it easier for everyone to maintain physical distancing in their campsites, merit badge sessions, and other similar activities where campers will be sitting.**

## Face Coverings

The risk of COVID-19 transmission is significantly decreased when outdoors. We have adjusted our programs to keep participants outdoors and socially distanced as much as possible.

- Fully vaccinated individuals are not required to wear face coverings or practice social distancing as per guidance from the PA Department of Health and the CDC.
- All unvaccinated individuals must continue wearing face coverings and practicing social distancing (six feet between individuals) during indoor activities. Unvaccinated individuals need to bring at least one clean mask for each day in camp.
- Given the evidence of limited transmission of COVID-19 outdoors, CDC has updated their guidance for outdoor mask use among people who are not fully vaccinated. In general, people do not need to wear masks when outdoors. However, people who are not fully vaccinated are encouraged to wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve close contact with other people who are not fully vaccinated. If unvaccinated Scouts and others cannot continuously maintain physical distance during an activity, masks should be worn.
- Our camp staff will inform unvaccinated campers when masks must be worn for certain activities, such as circumstances when it will not be possible to maintain physical distancing of six feet or more between individuals or when participating in strenuous activities (such as playing basketball or GaGa ball).
- Campers can remove face masks when eating, showering, and sleeping indoors.
- Campers will not be required to wear a facemask when swimming, boating, shooting, climbing, running, hiking, and biking.
- Individuals may choose to continue wearing face coverings even when not mandatory
- The requirement for unvaccinated persons to wear face coverings indoors is subject to change during the summer.

## Transportation

Encourage each family group to travel separately. If not possible, limit the number of passengers per vehicle and travel with windows open or air system set to un-recirculated air. Unvaccinated passengers and drivers should wear masks while in the vehicle. When traveling to and from camp, avoid stops that are not necessary.

## Practice Good Hand Hygiene

Perform regular and vigilant hand hygiene. Wash your hands often. When washing your hands, scrub with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer when washing is not an option. Hand sanitizer will be readily available throughout camp, including in each campsite, program area, and dining hall.

## Items to Bring to Camp

- **Folding Chair (tagged with the name and unit number)**
- Covid-19 vaccination card (attach a COPY to BSA medical form)
- Touchless thermometer
- Personal tents
- Face masks (one or more per day)
- Adults - bring a photo ID (drivers license showing the state of residence)
- Additional campsite cleaning supplies

## COVID-19 Sleeping Precautions

### Tenting and Hammocks

Current CDC guidelines recommend that when sharing a tent that occupants sleep in a head-to-toe manner. When the weather allows, roll up the walls of the tents for better ventilation. **Units are welcome to bring personal tents.** The camp will provide at least one tent for every two Scouts or two leaders.

Sleeping in a hammock on a summer night is a great way to enjoy the night sky and stay physically distanced from others. Most of our sites provide sufficient trees for many Scouts and leaders to utilize hammocks for this purpose. Please make sure to protect our trees with the use of tree straps. No stacking of hammocks is permitted.

## COVID-19 Dining Precautions

### Dining Hall Meals

Our staff will serve all meals cafeteria-style. Units will be preassigned tables, arrival times, and specific serving lines to use when entering the dining hall. A maximum of six campers will be

permitted per table. Unvaccinated persons must wear masks until seated. We will also create separate lines for dining hall restrooms.

Additional seating will be available outdoors, and we encourage campers to use these areas.

For everyone's safety, we will not have post-meal songs this summer. Scouts and leaders will be given a water bottle for use in the Dining Hall. Stations to refill water bottles will be available throughout the camp.

## Dining Hall Meals Clean up

Units will not be required to provide waiters this summer. Each camper will be responsible for clearing their dishes and wiping down their table before leaving.

## COVID-19 Program Precautions

### Open Program Changes

Avoiding large groups of campers helps limit the chances of COVID transmission while at camp.

During traditional "open program" times during the days, we have new procedures in place this summer to avoid large crowds and to assist in contact tracing if necessary. These new measures may include:

- Program Area Reservations – make a unit reservation with the Area Director.
- Program Area Sign In – campers need to sign in & out in open program areas.
- Program area appointment sign-ups or assigned in advance – such as Polar Bear swims.

We will provide more information on these practices at camp.

### Camp-wide Events and Activities

- Camp-wide events may be round-robin events with an individual unit appointment.
- Some activities may be held in a campsite with staff members traveling to the campsite to judge completions or lead an activity.

### No Walk-In Participation for Merit Badges

All merit badge programs and training will be by sign-up only to assist in potential contact tracing. Scouts will be able to sign-up for additional merit badges at camp if space is available.

## Buddy System

Units should ensure that all participants are participating in programs with a buddy or in a group. Doing so will make sure Scouts have a buddy from their "household" whenever doing activities that require a buddy (example - Lifesaving Merit Badge).

## Bring A Camp Chair

To make it easier to keep Scouts physically distanced in classes, please make sure that every Scout and leader brings a portable folding camp chair with them to camp.

## COVID-19 Communications

### What happens if someone is symptomatic?

If a Scout, adult leader, or staff member develops symptoms of COVID-19 while at camp, they will be medically isolated and taken to the Health Lodge for further screening.

Our Camp Health Officer will decide (with an abundance of caution) if that individual should be sent home. If an individual is sent home and tests positive for COVID, we will conduct contact tracing. Any unvaccinated individual deemed to have had close contact with the removed symptomatic individual may also be removed from camp. "Close contact" is defined as someone who spends 15 minutes or more within six feet of a person with COVID-19 over 24 hours.

Typical "close contacts" would include tentmates or those persons riding to camp with them. By following masking and physical distancing, policies will reduce the number of "close contacts."

### What Happen if Someone Tests COVID-19 Positive after Summer Camp?

While we make every effort to reduce possible exposures, it is possible that an individual who attends camp may test positive for COVID-19 after they leave camp. If that happens, once the camp is informed, we will contact all unit leaders who were in camp with that individual to inform them of the positive test result. We are not able to inform others of the individual's name.