

COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDANCE FOR DAY CAMPS

– ROADMAP EXIT STEP

Last revised: March 10, 2022

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) is currently at the Roadmap Exit Step of the province's Roadmap to Reopen. This document provides additional guidance to reduce the risk of introducing and spreading COVID-19 in day camps by following [Ontario Regulation 364/20: Rules for Areas at Step 3 and at the Roadmap Exit Step](#) (O. Reg. 364/20) under the [Reopening Ontario \(A Flexible Approach to COVID-19\) Act, 2020](#).

This guidance document should be used in conjunction with complete guidance provided in the Ministry of Health's [COVID-19 Safety Guidelines for Camps](#) (revised March 1, 2022) along with existing day camp procedures, guidance, resources and systems. This guidance does not apply to licensed child care centres or agencies licensed under the [Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 \(CCEYA\)](#).

DECIDING TO OFFER DAY CAMP PROGRAMS

Day camps provide short-term programs that provide care and learning opportunities for children of all ages. It is critical that we keep children in day camp programs safe and healthy. Plans and procedures must be in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19 to campers and staff. Each day camp setting is unique. As such, careful consideration must be given to your ability to develop or modify the day camp to meet the required [infection prevention and control measures](#).

As per the [CCEYA](#), camps are permitted to operate if the camp:

- is not operated for more than 13 weeks in a calendar year (subject to certain exceptions set out in regulations),
- is not operated on days on which instruction is typically provided for pupils enrolled in schools,
- is not operated at a person's home, and
- is only operated for children who are four years old or older or, if the camp is operated on or after September 1st, who will attain the age of four in that year.

PUBLIC HEALTH REQUIREMENTS FOR OPERATION

The province's [COVID-19 Safety Guidelines for Camps](#) (revised March 1, 2022) provides direction for day camp providers to reduce the risk of introducing and spreading COVID-19. All day camps that are permitted to operate must implement the public health measures as outlined in the [COVID-19 Safety Guidelines for Camps](#).

Additional resources from Public Health Ontario to support safe camp operation can be found [here](#).

Public health guidelines for day camps include, but are not limited to:

- Day camps have permitted cohort sizes based on age, as is outlined in the province's day camp [COVID-19 Safety Guidelines for Camps](#).
- All day camps permitted to operate must implement all public health measures as outlined in [COVID-19 Safety Guidelines for Camps](#).

MANAGEMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WHO DEVELOP SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

- Campers and staff who start to show COVID-19 [symptoms](#) while at camp must be promptly moved to a designated area away from others while awaiting pick-up and must be excluded from the camp. Camps must have protocols in place for immediate pick-up. Furthermore:
 - Anyone who is providing care to the ill camper must use appropriate droplet and contact precaution, including wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) (i.e., a medical mask, and gown), and where possible, maintain a distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet).
 - After the ill camper or staff member has gone home, the isolation space must be cleaned and disinfected with an appropriate disinfectant, followed by hand hygiene.
- Healthcare providers or delegates at the camp should be aware of documented seasonal allergies or pre-existing conditions that are not COVID-19 related (e.g., chronic runny nose, congestion, migraines) prior to determining subsequent assessment, isolation of the individual and/or testing for suspected COVID-19 cases.

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DRINKING WATER

- Day camps with private water supplies must ensure water samples are taken before the opening of the day camp operation with tests from a licensed laboratory demonstrating results to the satisfaction of the medical officer of health. Furthermore, water sampling should occur over the period of operation.
- Schools and childcare centres must follow all Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks requirements and procedures regarding water flushing in schools and child care centres.
- Encourage staff and campers to bring their own labelled water bottle. Water bottles will be required to be filled rather than campers and staff drinking directly from the mouthpiece of water fountains.
- Water filling stations should be cleaned and sanitized at least twice daily. Refer to PHO's [Environmental Cleaning Fact Sheet](#) and [SMDHU signage for water filling stations](#).

PSYCHOSOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHILDREN

- Reassure children about their personal safety and health and the many things they can do to stay healthy (e.g., hand washing, cough/sneeze etiquette, staying home when sick, keeping clean).
- Let children know they can ask questions and make sure that the information provided is suitable for their age level. Refer to the [COVID-19 Fact Sheet: Talking to Children About the Pandemic](#).

For more guidance, see the Ministry of Health's [COVID-19: Mental Health Resources for Camp Operators](#).

SUPPORTING EACH OTHER AND OUR COMMUNITY

We understand that this is a challenging time, but public health measures like this are needed to limit the spread of COVID-19. We thank you for the service that you provide to the community.

Please contact the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit's Health Connection line if you have any questions at 1-877-721-7520, Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

While the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit aims to provide relevant and timely information, no guarantee can be given as to the accuracy or completeness of any information provided. This guidance is not intended to, nor does it provide legal advice and should not be relied upon or treated as legal advice. Users seeking legal advice should consult with a qualified legal professional. No one should act, or refrain from acting, based solely upon the materials provided in this guidance, any hypertext links or other general information without first seeking appropriate legal or other professional advice. Please visit the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit website regularly for updates and additional guidance.