

YMCA of the North Wilderness Camp Summer 2021 FAQ's

Updated 2/16/21

We are optimistic that YMCA Wilderness Camps will be able to operate this summer and we are committed to providing safe and meaningful camp experiences for young people. Knowing that Camp cannot operate in the same manner as previous years, adjustments will be made to our programs and operations to lower the risk of COVID-19 entering our camp community and to limit its spread if it does. Our operations this summer will be informed by guidance provided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), American Camp Association (ACA), Minnesota Department of Health, and Camp medical advisors. This FAQ serves as a living document that we intend to update regularly as we gear up for an amazing summer. We are excited to welcome you at camp this summer!

Are the YMCA Camps, including Widjiwagan and Menogyn, open?

Our camps are currently open for limited programming. To check out offerings at a specific camp location and for more information regarding Book Your Own Getaways, please visit our website! <https://www.ymcanorth.org/camps>

Are Widjiwagan and Menogyn planning to run this summer?

Yes! We are planning to provide teens and young adults with a much-needed, enriching summer wilderness experience. Camp will look and feel different this summer. Our operations will be informed by guidance provided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), American Camp Association (ACA), Minnesota Department of Health, and Camp medical advisors. Camper families will receive communication as decisions are made and evolve through the spring.

How will camp be different this summer?

The Covid-19 pandemic will have an impact on our programming and operations. We may need to alter some traditions like group size, in-camp activities, family-style meals, session structure, trip length and travel destinations. Please note that the Canadian Border currently remains closed. We will update families and adjust our session pricing to reflect any significant programmatic changes that are necessary to align with national and state guidelines and other risk management considerations.

Are you planning to send trips to Canada?

We are monitoring the situation closely and looking at alternate areas for trips that traditionally travel to Canada. We plan to identify appropriate domestic routes rather than to cancel these trips. If your trip location is affected by border closures, you will be notified of these changes.

How will you be screening campers for COVID-19?

We will follow guidance received from health experts to help minimize the chance that COVID-19 enters our camp communities. Families will receive clear expectations and requirements well ahead of a camper's session. Our expectations and requirements will be similar to those that we have been living with for much of the pandemic, like following all current local and state mandates, isolation ahead of a camper's session, proof of a negative covid test, and health screening at the bus stop/drop off. At this point, it is too soon to know exactly what our screening and prearrival expectations will be, however, we will clearly communicate with families and update this FAQ as it is finalized.

What if my camper doesn't meet the screening criteria on the day that their session is scheduled to start?

Unfortunately, if a camper does not meet our prearrival screening criteria, they will not be permitted to join us at camp. Space permitting, they may be able to join us for a session later in the summer.

How will you be separating anybody suspected of having COVID-19?

We will continue to adhere to guidance from the American Camp Association, the CDC, Minnesota's Department of Health, and local officials if we suspect that a camper has COVID-19. Any camper or staff member that exhibits symptoms will activate our Covid Response Plan, which will include isolation from the camp population until a negative test is confirmed or removal from camp if COVID-19 or other communicable illness is confirmed.

Are staff prepared and trained to handle any outbreak of COVID-19?

Staff will be trained on their camp's COVID mitigation plan and Covid Response Plan prior to opening. Additional staff roles are being added to support the increased safety protocols involved in operating safely.

What happens if a camper or staff develops symptoms while on trail?

We are working to finalize our on-trail response plan for a suspected case of COVID-19. These policies and procedures are informed by the American Camping Association COVID Field Guide, the Minnesota Department of Health, the CDC, and leaders in the wilderness tripping industry. Campers and families will receive more information this spring related to a suspected/confirmed case of COVID-19 on trail.

Will masks be required at Camp?

Yes. Campers and staff members will be required to wear masks at camp this summer. Please refer to the packing list to ensure your camper brings the correct number and style of masks to camp.

What is camp doing to protect campers and team members while at camp?

We are making changes to our camp protocols which include screening campers prior to arrival, physical distancing, moving activities outside, wearing masks, and increasing our vigilance around building, cabin, and bathroom sanitation.

There will be more handwashing and hand sanitizer stations located throughout camp. Regular handwashing and good hygiene practices will be required. We will be deep cleaning our high traffic buildings with more frequency as well as deep cleaning of cabins between sessions. Food service will change to eliminate certain self-serve options, and large group gatherings are being adjusted to meet the current requirements of the CDC.

Will transportation to and from camp be adjusted for safety?

Modifications to ensure the health and safety of our staff and participants can be expected and may include reduced bus capacity, encouraging direct drop off at camp and requiring family members to remain in their vehicles at drop off.

Will camp be allowing visitors?

Visitors to camp will be very restricted this summer and require prior approval by Camp Administrative Team members. Please refer to your camps website for up-to-date information about end of session celebrations and other traditions that have historically included our larger communities.

What is your cancellation policy?

If our program offering this summer changes as a result of current circumstances, or your ability to attend camp changes, please know we will work with each of you. If we need to cancel a program, a refund will be generated (including deposit), and no action is necessary. If you would like to cancel your camp session, we will provide a few options:

1. Full refund: refund in full including deposit, according to the COVID-19 policy
2. Donate: instead of a refund, make a donation to support YMCA Camps
3. Refund and donate: do both, donate a percentage of your fees and refund the rest

Please contact our Customer Service Center at https://www.ymcanorth.org/contact_us to assist with any cancellation questions.

Is there financial support available to help pay for camp?

Yes. As always, we never want to turn anyone away because of their financial situation. Please consider reaching out for financial assistance, we want campers to be able to experience camp this summer: <https://www.ymcamn.org/scholarships>.

How can I help?

We are beyond grateful to the members of our community – our alumni, camper families, volunteers, and staff – who recognized the challenge a crisis like this can pose to a human services organization and have showed up to support us. For those who are able and interested, please [make a gift here](#). You can also see an updated Wish List located on the GIVE pages of our camp websites. THANK YOU for your support of children and families during these uncertain times.