

# Responding to COVID-19. Continuing Your Mission.

**Important Note:** The resources in this packet respond to an on-going crisis. It will be updated and added to on a regular basis to reflect our current guidance. (Last Updated 05.25.20)

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# We Are Here for You

## A message from our President and CEO

Dear friends,

We find ourselves in extraordinarily challenging times. All of us are having to navigate new ways to deliver on our mission, and many are making the difficult decision to pause programming or reduce staff.

We at Redwoods are trying to do everything we can to support you during this pandemic. We know, however, that it can be hard to keep up with all of the guidance and resources as they come out. That's why we created this information packet to keep everything in one place—hopefully this allows for a convenient resource that you can easily share with your teams. Obviously, things are moving fast. We will be updating this packet regularly—adding both new content, and adapting content that is now out of date—and we will mark the date on the cover so you can make sure you have the latest version.

As you will see, it's organized into three phases—corresponding with the three distinct phases we envision you'll be going through during this crisis. We understand that every organization, and every community, is different. So, some of this will be more relevant to some of you than it is for others. But my hope is that we are at least providing a framework to start navigating the challenges you face.

For now, I wanted to say thank you for all you're doing—for your organizations, for your communities and for your families. I've spoken with many of you and heard stories both of heroism and heartbreak. The burden of leadership can be daunting, so please be sure to take care of yourselves too, and reach out to me directly, or any of us at Redwoods, if there is any way we can help.

I am keeping you all in my prayers, and I am humbled and honored to be serving you during this time.



**Kevin A. Trapani,**

Co-Founder, President and CEO

# Phase I: Crisis Hits— Closure And Recalibration

As the COVID-19 pandemic spread around the world, many of our customers had to move rapidly from basic hygiene and containment measures to quickly making decisions about whether or not to shut down programming. Simultaneously, they were grappling with questions about staff layoffs or furloughs, safe closure of facilities and how to deal with the loss of revenue and donations.

The resources in this section tackle many of those topics, and will help you navigate the immediate questions you may face as the pandemic spreads into your community.

# Laying Off Employees During COVID-19

Many organizations are closing their doors and facing the difficult decision—and in many cases the necessary decision—of laying off staff. Even though these layoffs may be temporary, we do understand that this is a painful moment not just for employees, but for leadership too. The following guidance will help you manage this process in a transparent, fair, responsible and values-led manner. If you have specific questions or concerns, reach out to [your Redwoods contact](#).

## State Unemployment Benefits

These are uncertain and stressful times for all of us. For staff who are losing their paycheck, that stress will be compounded. Fortunately, many states and local governments are stepping up with temporary changes to their unemployment programs to provide easier access to temporary assistance, and minimize requirements for actively seeking work—with the assumption that many employers will rehire once the current crisis has passed. The following site will help you find details on unemployment insurance in your state, which we recommend sharing with laid off workers:

- [Unemployment Insurance Program details by state](#)

## Ensuring Fair and Ethical Treatment

If you are laying off workers, it is always critically important that this decision is made without discriminating against any specific class of individual. Given the speed at which decisions are sometimes being made during this crisis, we recommend that extra care is taken to follow all policies outlined in your policy handbook regarding layoffs. Making layoffs as broad as possible in terms of categories (e.g. all part-time staff) will help protect against potential discrimination lawsuits from any single employee.

Additionally, if an employee has an open Workers' Compensation claim, consult with your Workers' Compensation carrier before laying off the employee. When an employee is injured on the job and they face a layoff, payment can easily be delayed. By communicating with your Workers' Compensation carrier, the potential delays for benefits are easily avoided for the employee. There are instances where Workers' Compensation will cover the loss wages as a result of restricted duty and inability to work in full capacity during layoff scenarios.

## **What Can I Promise My People?**

We know that many of you will intend to rehire workers once your facilities are operating again and the current crisis has passed. It's important, however, that you are careful about what you communicate—and do not make promises about either a return to work, or that they will be able to get unemployment benefits. It is best to simply reaffirm your commitment to fairness and looking after your community, let them know that you will be there for them in any way you can, and be transparent about why this decision is necessary.

However, if you choose to consider a furlough as opposed to a layoff, then you are guaranteeing the employee their job back at some point. A furlough allows workers to return to their jobs after a certain time period. Some layoffs are temporary, and will recall workers to the job, but in cases where management decide the employees will not be recalled, the layoff becomes permanent. Both the furlough and layoff allow for unemployment benefits.

If possible, consider extending benefits like organization membership or access to classes for a period of time—this good will gesture will mean a lot in difficult times. And commit to communicating openly and transparently about next steps, including eventual reopening and rehiring as and when that time comes.

We know this is an extremely difficult time and all of us are facing considerable uncertainty. Please reach out to us if there is any way we can support you in your staffing decisions or processes during this crisis.

# COVID-19: Facility Closure

## Guidance

At Redwoods, we have closed our physical offices and are serving our customers from home. We know many of you have or are making similar decisions in an effort to slow the spread of this virus. That means your facilities may be closed for some time, and that your teams will be getting used to new ways of working. Generally speaking, it is recommended that organizations have an Emergency Action Plan that covers facilities closure—and this plan should be your primary point of reference.

However, here is a checklist of considerations you may want to keep in mind when closing facilities:

### Redwoods Contacts

While your facility is closed, you may need to reach out to us to report new claims, assess progress of existing claims, or discuss safety, operations or training issues with our team. We may also need to reach out to you too. Please [provide us with updated contact information](#) while your facilities are closed, and please also make note of the following contact information for Redwoods.

- [Online Incident Report Form](#)
- Redwoods Office Phone Number: 800-463-8546
- After-Hours Crisis Reporting: 877-590-4678
- [Redwoods Employee Directory](#)

### Contractors & Facility Service

Make a list of all contractors and services that have access to your facility. This may include: lawn care, cleaning services, municipal services such as trash collection, vendors such as personal training or IT contractors. With an indefinite closure, think about irregular services that may come up in the next 8 weeks, such as fire extinguisher services.

- Notify these vendors, as appropriate, that your facility is closed and that they may not have access to the building.
- Consider the impact if these services are no longer available.



## **Pools, Chemicals & Equipment**

What chemicals or equipment do you have on-hand that usually need to be secured for safety? How might a prolonged closure impact the security of these items or substances? Here are some things to keep in mind:

- Secure all equipment and vehicles in safe locations.
- Isolate or remove any chemicals that may act violently with one another or with water.
- Is your pool set up to be unattended for a significant period of time? Will water levels be checked regularly, and has the auto-fill function been disabled? What steps need to be taken to ensure its safety?
- Relocate valuable items, electronics and files by taking them off the floors of below-grade facilities or any area that is prone to flood.

## **Building Security & Maintenance**

While buildings are unoccupied, they may become vulnerable to theft or vandalism. Similarly, without regular occupancy, unexpected issues such as weather damage or flooding may go unnoticed. Try to stay on top of situations that might develop:

- Depending on local conditions and regulations, explore whether it is possible and safe to have staff check daily on facilities. Use a buddy system, with appropriate physical distancing, to avoid having a single staff member in buildings alone.
- Notify law enforcement that your building will be empty. Ask them to perform regular spot checks or re-route patrols to include your facilities and parking lots.
- Move all cash, checks and important company records to a secure location.
- Set thermostats to an appropriate energy saving temperature while preventing any issues with excessive temperature or humidity swings.
- Move all vehicles to a secure or well-lit location.
- If possible, find a way to flush toilets on a regular basis to keep water in pipes.

## Staff Communication & PR

Our society as a whole is facing an unprecedented situation, and cases of COVID-19 are becoming a lot more commonplace every day. Below are some communication/PR considerations to keep in mind:

- Plan your internal and, if necessary, external communications in the event that an employee is exposed or diagnosed, or it becomes apparent that a member or guest may have been ill while at your facility. Be sure to respect medical privacy and [non-discrimination protocols](#), even as you alert stakeholders to potential exposure.
- Designate one employee to be the media contact. Even if there is no exposure, the media may want a statement about why your facility is closed.

## Emotional, Mental & Financial Well-Being

This is a stressful time for everybody. That means it is important to take extra care in how we communicate with and look after each other as we navigate the challenge together. If facilities are closed, some hourly staff may lose income, while salaried staff may need to get used to working in different ways. Consider ways to minimize eventual disruption:

- What communication channels will you use to provide a transparent window into organizational decision making?
- If staff are being asked to go without income, how will you communicate this with them—and is there any support you can provide to lessen the blow?
- For staff that will continue to work from home, how can you make sure they have the tools they need to succeed?
- What additional communication channels might you need to maintain staff morale and connectedness? (Redwoods is increasing the frequency of our virtual meetings and check-ins—partially just to ensure engagement and provide social interaction.)
- What tasks or projects lend themselves to remote work? This might be an excellent time to ensure all salaried staff are up-to-date with their trainings for example.

## Documenting Property Damage While Closed

In the event that your facility is damaged while you are away, the following will help your insurance carrier process the claim faster:

- Take immediate action to mitigate and prevent any further damage, if needed.
- Notify your insurance carrier of the damage: Redwoods customers may report incidents online.
- Take photographs from different angles before moving broken equipment or damaged areas; include some with a wide enough view to provide context.
- If your facility is open or re-opens, keep any broken equipment or damaged areas out of use until it is inspected by your insurance company.
- Collect purchase order, installation, inspection and maintenance records for the equipment involved.
- Save any security camera footage that documents the incident and/or area involved.

## Mission & Service

By closing down facilities, organizations are making the choice to make difficult sacrifices in pursuit of public health and safety. This is entirely consistent with the values of our movements. However, there may also be other ways that we can step up for our communities in times of need. Please consider the following:

- Are you in touch with local and regional governments and/or non-profit partners? What needs might need to be met that your organization can help with? (See resources in the Phase II section of this packet for ways to provide service while keeping your organization safe.)
- Can you use your social media or other communication channels to support public health and/or community service messaging?
- Are there online volunteer opportunities for staff or volunteers who are now forced to stay at home?

# Non-Discrimination Practices During the COVID-19 Outbreak

Even as we respond to a crisis like COVID-19 in real time, it is important that we do so in a manner that is consistent with our values. This includes following protocols that guard against workplace discrimination or other prohibited practices. Because many of the provisions against workplace discrimination relate to employee health, a public health crisis like the current outbreak can pose particular challenges.

The following FAQ is designed to help you communicate effectively during a time of crisis. However, please contact us if you would like further guidance or to discuss any specific scenario at your organization.

## **If an employee calls in sick, what questions can I ask?**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prevents employers from asking health-related questions to their employees, unless the employee poses a “direct threat” to other staff or operations. The CDC’s definition of “direct threat” enters into a gray area during times of pandemic. To avoid uncertainties and discrimination, we recommend not asking questions about an employee’s symptoms.

We do recommend you ask all employees to notify one person in leadership (such as the HR director) if they or a family member has been exposed. This creates a means to self-report where employers do not have to ask questions. If the employee calls in sick, without a self-report of COVID-19, it should be treated as a normal sick day.

## **If an employee is in a high-risk category and may be advised to miss work, what questions can I ask?**

There are very few questions you are able to ask about an employee’s medical history. Directly asking an employee about their immune system is a question that likely will force the employee to disclose the existence of a disability and should not be asked to employees. Asking an employee to disclose a medical condition, a pregnancy or their age should also be avoided. This could be deemed as discrimination. It is acceptable to ask employees to self-identify if they fall into this category. Communication may look like this:

*“The Centers for Disease Control recommends that all people with a higher risk of illness associated with COVID-19 should avoid their risk of exposure as much as possible. This may include staying home from work or working remotely. The higher risk group includes older*

*adults (those aged 65 years and older) and people with chronic medical conditions (such as heart disease, diabetes or lung disease). If you are in this category and would like to discuss work options, please discuss with your HR director.”*

### **If an employee comes to work with flu-like symptoms, can I send them home?**

Yes. You are able to ask employees displaying symptoms of illness to leave the workplace. We recommend that you not ask additional medical questions of that employee, simply ask them to go home.

### **If an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19, who should know?**

A diagnosis of COVID-19 is considered private medical information that should not be shared widely. If an employee self-reports this information, it should be communicated to the leader designated (such as the HR director). This leader will not disclose information to the employee’s supervisor, the employee’s direct reports or any coworkers. It is acceptable to share that an anonymous employee within the office has been diagnosed.

### **If an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19, what should we do?**

The CDC advises that COVID-19 is mainly spread from person-to-person contact. Experts believe that the virus can travel about six feet in distance. Therefore, anyone within six feet of the person diagnosed may have been exposed. Because you’re not able to identify who has been diagnosed, it becomes difficult to communicate who could potentially be exposed. When identifying and communicating potential exposures, we recommend following the same procedures for all staff within the facility where the exposure happened, instead of isolating certain groups of staff.

# Phase II: Continuing To Serve— Modified Programming During The Shutdown

We have been delighted, but not surprised, by the ways that our customers are stepping up to serve their communities during this crisis. From childcare centers for families of essential workers to shelter-based programming, and from transportation services for the homeless to using social media channels to engage children and spread important messages, you continue to be a vital pillar of the community in an unimaginably challenging time.

The resources in this section are designed to support you in providing that service, while making sure that we keep our values and our mission—including child safety and abuse prevention—at the heart of every decision we make.

# Utilizing Your Organization as a Child Care Center

If your organization is approached to be used as a feeding location, or if you are serving as a child care provider for healthcare and emergency workers, it is important to make sure that you continue to follow all safety guidelines to keep everybody safe.

First and foremost, continue to communicate with your local health department and stay up-to-date using reliable news sources. Situations may change hour-to-hour, and leadership will need to stay flexible and be prepared to communicate changes.

## Follow CDC Guidelines & State Mandates

Redwoods is recommending the following CDC guidelines should you choose to remain open for this purpose. Please refer to the following CDC guidelines and checklists as you prepare:

- [Guidance for School Settings](#)
- [Environmental and Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations](#)
- [Checklist for Teachers and Parents](#)

It's also important that you follow the recommendations and mandates of your health departments and State and Local government entities. If you are a licensed childcare program, and you would like to run a program in a facility that hasn't been approved by the state, consult with your local state childcare licensing agency.

## Implement Existing Policies

If you do stay open, even for limited use, review and implement all of your existing policies, including emergency action plans and health related policies. It's important to treat this program as you would any other program during normal operation. Emphasize the following:

### **Cleanliness & Sanitation**

- **Stay home when sick.** Staff and children should not return to work/programming until 48 hours fever-free without any medical intervention (including over-the-counter fever reducing medication). Adhere to your standard sick-child policy. *Please note that the [CDC does not require](#) you to screen youth.*

- **Frequently wash hands.** Stock and encourage staff and children to frequently use hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol per CDC recommendations.
- **Frequently clean and sanitize surfaces.** This includes toys, play surfaces, restrooms, diapering surfaces, etc.
- **Use additional Personal Protective Equipment.** This includes gloves and masks (if appropriate) with infants (diapering, runny nose, etc.).
- **Designate quarantine spaces.** Use this space when a child or staff feels ill.
- **Practice *social distancing*** (Source *American Academy of Pediatrics*). Even when children are present.
- **Follow proper cleaning protocols.** Consider the following:
  - Who is responsible for cleaning the organization? Will that be contracted out?
  - Have any cleaning crews been trained on the chemicals they are using?
  - Will your cleaning contractor be providing your organization with appropriate cleaning supplies to perform regular cleanings throughout the day?

## **Operations**

- **Clearly identify who you will serve.** Essential workers—some examples include, but not limited to, civic, public safety, first responders, hospitals and nursing home employees.
- **Limit the number you serve.** Follow any public health guidelines in your area regarding group size and maintain your standard best practices regarding ratios at a minimum. We recommend groups be limited to no more than 10 per space—2 staff and 8 children max (less children if the age group requires it to maintain ratio).
- **Follow all of your established policies regarding supervision of youth.** Reiterate and retrain as needed on those pertaining to abuse prevention strategies, age-appropriate programming, bathroom supervision policies, ratios and prohibiting 1:1 interaction.
- **Have a contract or Memorandum of Understanding in place.** This is done if you are operating in partnership or using a third-party facility. Be sure to get a Certificate of Insurance if possible. Have your written agreement reviewed by your local counsel, and Redwoods is happy to review (for risk/liability sharing purposes only).



- **Follow all standard employment practices.** Specifically concerning sick time.
- **Adhere to all standard food safety guidelines.** This is particularly important for organizations that may not regularly operate food service programs.
- **Follow your normal registration process.** Have all required forms and waivers completed including the needs of the child, important information staff should know and emergency contacts.
- **Vet new locations.** If you are serving in a new location, ask yourself if it's suitable and safely set up for age-appropriate programming. Be sure the space meets insurance and licensure standards.

### ***Communication***

- **Implement a comprehensive communication plan.** This will allow you to quickly and frequently communicate with parents/guardians and your staff.
- **Report positive COVID-19 cases.** All confirmed cases of COVID-19 of a child in programming must be reported to local health officials.
- **Communicate with the children.** Continue to [communicate with youth in your care about COVID-19](#) in age appropriate ways (*Source American Academy of Pediatrics*).

## **Additional Reputable Sources**

[Centers for Disease Control](#)

[World Health Organization](#)

[Infection Prevention and Control Canada](#)

# Guide to Shelter-Based Programming

For some, serving your community during the pandemic means exploring the possibility of offering shelter-based programming for community members experiencing homelessness. For others, it means serving first responders or essential workers who need a rally point or quarantine site. Such programming is vital, and it is profoundly good. But effectively and safely meeting the needs of these individuals requires very specific expertise, resources and planning. This is especially true during an infectious disease pandemic.

Below are just some of the considerations that will need to be discussed. If you are asked to provide such services, it is critically important that you discuss your plan with your Redwoods consultant to make sure that you are fully prepared and covered.

## Initial Considerations

- First, are you the organization that is best placed to provide these services? Are there alternatives your organization can offer such as shower and laundry facilities instead of shelter-based care?
- Second, we do not recommend running concurrent childcare for essential personnel and shelter-based care at the same location. The two operations require vastly different screening mechanisms and operational considerations. Any interaction between two separate programming participants could cause significant safety issues—especially during a time when social distancing is critical for health.

## Contract and Reimbursement

- What is the contract length, and have all contract terms been finalized in writing?
- How frequently will the contract be reviewed, and has the review frequency also been finalized in writing?
- Has a Certificate of Insurance been provided by the contracting organization?
- If you are anticipating FEMA reimbursement you cannot turn anyone away. This is important because there is no way to screen those coming into your facility for past crimes, including registered sex offenders.
- Be sure to outline the responsibilities of each party—including the resources each will provide—in the contract (e.g., security, staff, food, transportation, cleaning supplies, etc.).

## Intake Procedures

- Create inventory lists
- Give a health check to those entering the facility. This includes a physical and mental health check, and should absolutely include screening for symptoms of COVID-19
- Do you have staff or volunteer resources who can manage the health checks?
- How will you be sourcing donations (food, clothing, hygiene products)?

## Supervision

- If children are included in the shelter programming, will guardians be required to stay with children? Will they be separated from the adult population? Are robust measures in place to ensure child safety and abuse prevention? How will you ensure for their emotional and mental wellbeing?
- Will the contracting party be providing police, security or national guard?
- What is your capacity? Per current CDC guidelines, maintain the rule of only 10 people in one room at a time.
- Ensure that you have sufficient space, so that staff and residents can maintain six feet of distance at all times per current social distancing guidance.
- Determine if regular health screenings will be necessary (i.e., daily temperature checks).
- Set aside an isolation space for the sick until they can be transferred for medical care outside of the facility.
- Exclude all guests that are not medical personnel or case workers.
- Determine what areas of your facilities shelter guests will have access to.
  - Limit meeting spaces to 10 people only, encourage using outside spaces.
  - If at a camp, restrict access to waterfront, high ropes courses, or other potential high-risk equipment/areas.
  - If in a fitness facility, restrict access to pool, fitness floor, etc., unless you plan to staff and manage as per normal operations.
- How will you keep the facility clean?
  - Set a schedule to check locker rooms
  - Increase facility sweeps, as needed

*Note: Be prepared to address issues that are often seen in shelter environments such as, hygiene, sexual activity, violence and theft, and mental health issues due to stress, lack of medication or environmental factors.*

## **Transportation**

- Is there adequate public transportation around your site?
- Is transportation to/from the site outlined in the contract?
- If someone needs transportation, how will you provide this?

# Camps Being Called to Serve During COVID-19

Institutions like camps play a critical role in the health and stability of our communities. This is doubly true in a time of crisis. They also have many skills and resources at their disposal that may be highly sought after during a pandemic like this. However, as we weigh up our response to the crisis, it's important that we do so with the long-term health of our own organization, our own teams, and our own values and mission in mind too.

The following considerations may help you formulate your camp's response:

## Initial Considerations

- Whether your camp was operating up until a few weeks ago, or has been shut down since the fall, many facilities and staff are now being called upon to serve. Camps have what many services need at the moment—space, food facilities and beds.
- Use your mission as your guide. We all want to help, but does our desire to help fit the mission and purpose of our program and facilities? Doing something now to help may jeopardize your program and facilities a few months down the road. There is the risk of facility contamination or damage when you open your doors in new and different ways.
- Whether or not you are able to open up your physical space, make a list in advance of what your team can do while safeguarding your core mission. This helps ensure you are ready when you are asked to help. Options may include:
  - Provide meals to be sent out daily
  - Provide space for child care
  - Provide shower space
  - Provide virtual programming
  - Donate supplies to essential service providers (sealed/unsealed medical supplies from your Health Center, toilet paper you have in storage, etc.)

## New Ways to Serve

There has been a lot of talk of “social distancing.” We prefer to talk about “physical distancing with social connection.” [How can you share songs, traditions, memories from a distance?](#) How can they be part of your emergency response? Think [virtual food drives](#), sending notes to elderly, etc. Keeping campers engaged now helps provide them with a sense of normalcy and purpose, and will serve you well once normal operations are back on track:

- **TikTok & Social Media:** With the emerging world of TikTok, utilize staff to set up an account for your program. Share short videos of what you and/or camp staff are up to at camp. This is a great way to connect with your camp community.
- **Facebook Live & Other Live Stream Platforms:** We have already seen camps doing the following on these platforms:
  - Live stream an activity from camp—a nature program or a favorite camp activity/tradition. Engage campers at home so that they can follow along.
  - 20-30 minute read-aloud book time/story time. Having a staff person read stories or tell a camp story at a set time each night is a great way to connect with campers. It also allows parents/guardians to take a break.
- **Digital Equity:** Not all campers and families will be able to get online as easily as others. Consider sending out some snail mail to your community to connect. Include color your own camp maps, camp word searches or other fun activities to connect campers to your camp and create tangible activities for campers to do while they are home.
- **Email or Post Regular Activities for Kids:** Coloring pages, essay contests, word searches, math games or book clubs are all potential activities you could post. Encourage kids to share their projects.

When setting up these social media pages, make sure someone is monitoring them regularly. Additionally, make sure all mail is going to one central mailbox. These are both best practices for preventing abuse and making sure that staff are not having inappropriate contact with campers.

## Opening Facilities for Emergency Programming

If you do decide that it is feasible to offer your site for emergency programming of any kind, it is important to make sure that you are doing so in a manner that is safe and that follows your protocols. Considerations include, but are not limited to:

- **Follow normal protocols.** If you are re-opening up your camp (or parts of your camp) for the first time since last fall, it's important that you follow the protocols that you normally would. Re-opening camp is not a quick process and rushing through this now may create issues later on.
- **Communicate.** Let EMS/Fire/Law Enforcement/Health Department/Local hospitals know that you are changing your typical operations. Be sure to follow ACA Standards to communicate the nature and dates of your operations with local services.
- **Communicate with your insurance company.** Be sure to obtain proper Certificates of Insurance—along with detailed contracts and paperwork—from any contracting parties.
- **Shelter-based programming.** If you are considering opening your site as a shelter, [please review our guidance](#).
- **Emergency child care.** If you are considering opening your site for emergency child care, [please review our guidance](#).
- **Cleaning and sanitation.** This will be critical for all aspects of this work. [Follow the CDC guidelines](#) on cleaning and PPE for staff and volunteers.
- **Social distancing.** Think through how you can keep campers and employees physically separated while still maintaining meaningful interactions and programming.
- **Utilizing Volunteers.** If you are using volunteers for this work, [please review our guidance on proper policies and procedures](#).

# Emotional and Mental Health During COVID-19

*“I do believe we find light in those times. Even now people are realizing they can connect through technology. They are not as remote as they thought. They are realizing they can use their phones for long conversations. They’re appreciating walks. I believe we will continue to find meaning now and when this is over.”*

The quote above comes from a recent article on [grief during COVID-19](#) in the Harvard Business Review. It is a powerful reminder that we can and must take care of our inner lives during this crisis.

This is especially true for organizations like yours that have a culture and a mission that is rooted in service. Many of you are suspending operations and laying off staff. Others are finding new ways to serve—either virtually, or by taking care of the most vulnerable, or families of essential workers. Often, it’s a combination of all of the above, while also trying to figure out how to work remotely and stay connected with family.

These things take their toll.

We wanted to take a moment to share some ideas and resources, and to start a conversation, about emotional and mental well-being during these challenging times:

## **Take Time to Connect**

With so many of us working remotely and communicating via video, it can be easy to jump straight to business. But checking in on your fellow humans is part of business. While there has been much talk of ‘social distancing’ recently, we have found ourselves talking about ‘physical distancing with social connection’ instead.

For example, we are intentionally taking extra time at the beginning of our meetings to socialize, chat and check-in with each other about how we are feeling. Looking directly into the camera and addressing people by name can also help to make such meetings feel real.



## **Set Routines, Including Time Off**

When working from home, one day can blend into another. Be sure to set schedules and stick to them. We highly recommend that this includes ample time off—whether it’s for a walk in the woods, playing with the kids or video-socializing with a friend. Ideally, this time will include plenty of rest, physical exercise and opportunities to nourish your body too.

## **Acknowledge and Honor Your Feelings**

In the article about grief that we linked to above, the author suggests that we are the first generation to have feelings about our feelings: *“I feel sad, but I shouldn’t feel that; other people have it worse.”* Rather than denying or interrogating how we feel, however, he recommends accepting it as a natural response to the events we are experiencing. Only by acknowledging our emotions can we move through them.

## **If You Can’t Go Outside, Try Going Within**

The human connection and resulting happiness we achieve through our daily lives builds healthy gray matter in our brains. A [Harvard study](#) has revealed that meditation and mindfulness also builds that same healthy gray matter that we may not be getting in other ways. Now might be a good time to explore meditation:

- Lots of apps like Calm, Headspace and Insight Timer have free trials. You can also try searching social media for free meditation videos or livestreams.
- Try even 3-5 minutes a day. Regularity is more beneficial than length of time.

## **Do Not Be Afraid to Seek Help**

There are many things we can do to boost our own well-being, but sometimes we all need outside help. In addition to informal support networks, professional therapists or counselors can be a fantastic resource, whether or not you have used them in the past. Many insurance companies are temporarily changing their policies to allow a wider range of services through telehealth—so consider reaching out if you need somebody to talk to. Services like dietitians or personal trainers may also be available through digital platforms to help you take care of your well-being.

# Working from Home During COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has organizations either shutting down entirely, or operating very differently to how they normally would. This creates significant challenges when it comes to workplace safety. Below are just some of the considerations you may need to keep in mind. Nobody needs an unnecessary hospital visit right now.

## Maintenance & Facility Work

As youth-serving organizations are shutting down due to COVID-19, many find themselves with more time and opportunities to do maintenance work. For some, it may also mean that an all-hands-on-deck approach now has people performing maintenance tasks that they would not normally be responsible for. It is important to remember that proper safety measures are just as important now as they are during your normal mode of operation. Injuries can still happen, so continue to follow your organization's practices and protocols when it comes to maintenance, including:

- Proper use of PPE—including an alternative plan for if items such as masks and gloves are in short supply.
- Ladder and elevation safety—including how to maintain 'spotting' practices while also ensuring social distancing practices
- Chemical storage and handling—how is safe storage and use of chemicals impacted if your facilities are empty for prolonged periods?

## Online Fitness

Many youth-serving organizations are being innovative and finding new opportunities to still provide fitness instruction. Make sure that your fitness instructors have a safe place to provide their instruction. Consider recommending the following to your employees:

- Do you have stationary equipment?
- If a chair is needed in the fitness routine, does it have wheels or is it grounded on the floor?
- Are your floors clear and free of hazards?
- Are they still warming up, stretching and cooling down?

## **Working at Home**

While you as an employer can't be responsible for your employees work spaces at home, you can provide them tips to help manage their spaces. Consider recommending the following to your employees:

### ***General***

- Are you following a similar routine every day that allows you to get in to “work mode”?
- Do you have a designated work area that is quiet and free of distractions?
- Are you able to “turn off” this work area and walk away after work hours?
- Do you have adequate lighting in your work area?
- Are you taking adequate visual breaks away from electronics?

### ***Fire Safety***

- Are your walkways and doorways unobstructed?
- Are your floors clear and free of hazards?
- Do you have working smoke detectors in your work area?
- Do you have a charged and easily accessible fire extinguisher in your work area?
- Do you have more than one exit from your work area?
- If your work area kept free of trash, clutter and flammable liquids?

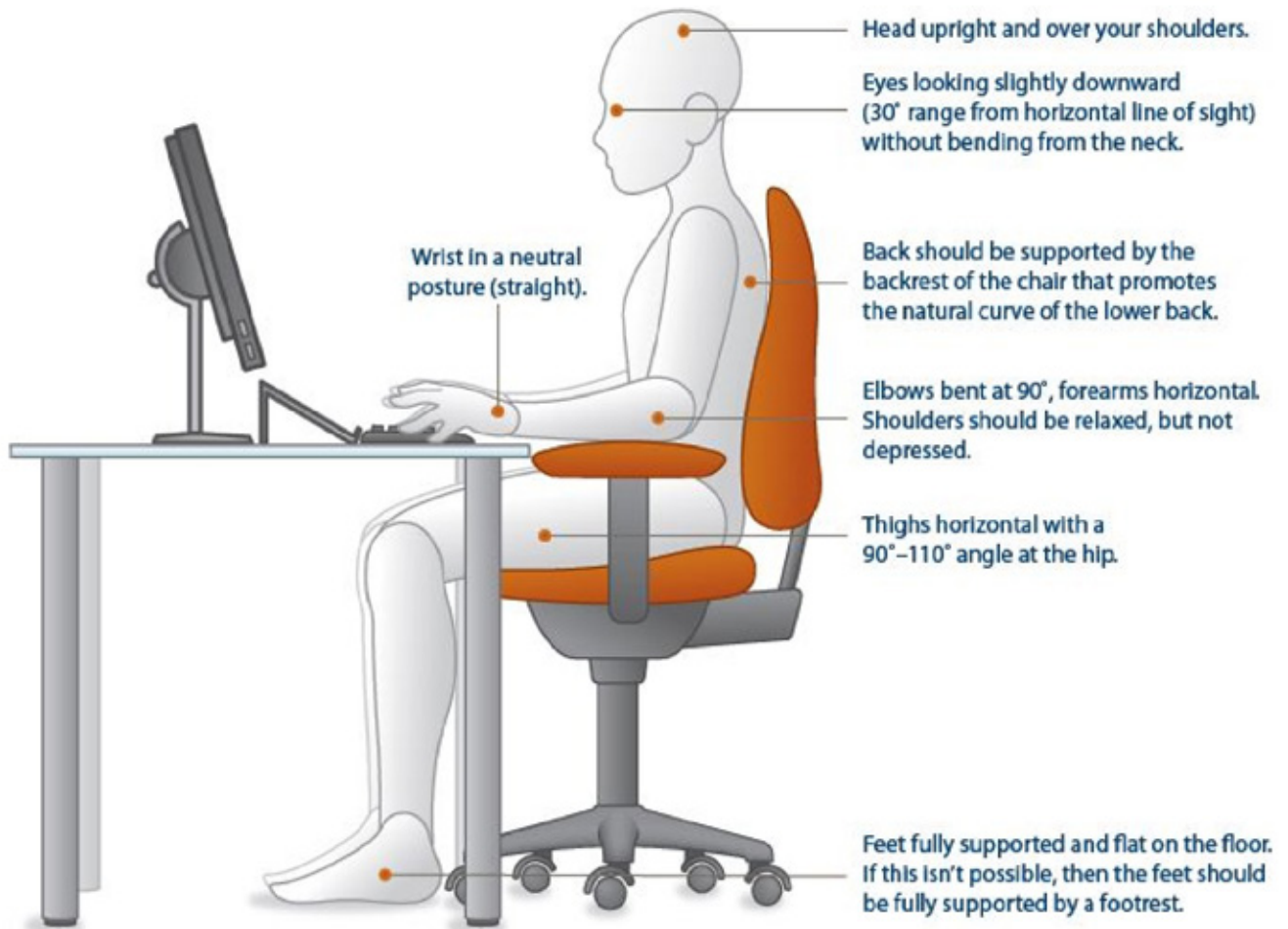
### ***Electrical Safety***

- Is your computer equipment connected to a surge protector?
- Are all electrical plugs, cords, outlets and panels in good condition? Is there any exposed or damaged wiring?
- Are electrical cords run in non-traffic areas? Are there any electrical cords run under rugs?
- Are all electrical cords secured under a desk on the along wall and away from all heat sources?
- Is equipment turned off when not in use?
- Are electrical outlets grounded with three-pronged plugs?

### **Workstation Ergonomics**

- Are office furniture and equipment ergonomically correct?
- Is your desk 29 inches high?
- Is your chair sturdy and adjustable?
- When using a keyboard, are your forearms close to parallel with the floor?
- Is your monitor 20-24 inches from your eyes? Is the top of your monitor slightly below eye level?
- Do your feet reach the floor when seated or are they fully supported by a footrest?
- Is your back adequately supported by a backrest?
- Is your computer screen free from noticeable glare?

The National Institutes of Health created this helpful graphic to demonstrate proper workplace ergonomics:



# Zoom Security Measures

With the increased use of Zoom as a platform for teleconferencing, webinars and virtual meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic, concerns have arisen about “Zoom Bombing”. This is the term used for individuals or groups who gain access to Zoom meetings to which they were not invited, often for the purpose of harassing attendees or disrupting proceedings.

Given the emotionally stressful times we are living in, it is especially important to protect the safety and well-being of our community—even in a virtual setting. The following are some security measures which may help guard against uninvited participation in your meetings or events.

- 1.** Avoid using your [Personal Meeting ID](#) for meetings. Instead, use an ID that is exclusive to a single meeting. Zoom’s support page offers a video [walk-through on how to generate a random meeting ID](#).
- 2.** Use the “Waiting Room” to see who is waiting to join before allowing access. Zoom offers [a support article](#) on how to use this feature.
- 3.** Disable other options, including the ability for others to **Join Before Host** and **remote control** (it should be disabled by default, but check to be sure—see below) using the Settings icon on the upper right side of the page.
- 4.** Disable screen-sharing for non-hosts via the host controls at the bottom of your screen, Click on the arrow next to **Share Screen**, then click **Advanced Sharing Options**. Go to Who can share? and click on **Only Host**.
- 5.** Once the meeting begins and everyone is in, lock the meeting to outsiders (see our tips below) and assign at least two meeting co-hosts. The co-hosts will be able to help control the situation in case anyone bypasses your efforts and gets into the meeting. To deputize your co-hosts, go to the **Settings** icon, then to the **Meetings** tab. Scroll down to **Co-host** and make sure it is enabled. If Zoom asks you for verification, click **Turn On**.

## What to do if someone “Zoom Bombs” your Zoom Video

The measures above will greatly reduce the likelihood of unwelcome guests. However, they are not foolproof. Before ending the meeting entirely, try the following to eject disruptive participants:

1. Go to the **Participants List** in the navigation sidebar, and scroll down to **More**. Click **Lock Meeting** to stop further participants from entering the meeting and remove specific participants.
2. Mute them by going to the **Participants List**, scrolling down to the bottom, and clicking **Mute All Controls**. This makes it so the unwelcome participant can't use their microphone.

Additional tips can be found here:

- [The New York Times](#)

# Virtual Fitness Classes

As facilities have had to close due to COVID-19 in the past month, organizations are looking for ways to keep members engaged and fulfill their missions. Many have turned to virtual fitness classes through online platforms such as Facebook Live, Zoom, or YouTube. These classes are a great way to serve the community at a time when people are craving both social connections and physical exercise. However, it's important to make sure that virtual classes are conducted safely and responsibly. And please remember, while the instructors are working from home, you will need to pay staff for their time to host these classes.

The following are risk management guidelines to consider before hosting virtual classes:

- Start every class with a reminder about personal safety. Encourage participants to check the floor and surrounding area for any tripping hazards, and to make sure they are wearing appropriate footwear and clothing.
- Begin wherever possible with gentle warm up/stretching exercises, and spend time at the end to wind down gently too.
- Remember that it can be hard to monitor specific participants' activity in an online environment, so refrain from offering one-to-one guidance or instruction.
- If necessary, modify your routines to eliminate any exercises that may be more likely to cause injury or harm.
- Just as with an in-person class, it is important to make sure that participants understand the risks they are taking on, and have electronically signed a waiver acknowledging they do so willingly. Your standard waiver language is preferable, but sample disclaimer language specifically-designed for virtual classes can also be downloaded [here](#).

This list of considerations is by no means exhaustive, but it should provide a framework for how to offer virtual classes as safely as possible while acknowledging that you have less control over the specific environment in which participants are located.

# Payroll Reporting for Work-From-Home Employees

With so many organizations working on modified programming or closed down entirely, there are many staff who are either working from home, or are being paid a full or partial salary but not actively working. In either case, how you report these salaries may impact your premium audit—which in turn may impact your Workers' Compensation insurance premiums.

With this in mind, we have prepared the following guidance to ensure accurate reporting and minimal disruption to your operations:

- It is important to track all payroll whether the employee is working from home, or is receiving pay but not working.
- Most payroll systems will have the ability to categorize types of pay. (e.g. salary, hourly, overtime, bonus.) Check if unused categories are available that can be used to distinguish between working from home payroll, and receiving pay but not working.
- If your payroll system allows you to input the four digit WC class code, using the code for working from home (8810) will help you when it comes time to do your premium audit. (Paid but not working will be excluded from the audit, but NCCI has assigned the class code 0012 for this payroll.)
- Alternatively, if a letter-based code is needed, use Covid WH and Covid NW for working from home and paid but not working respectively.
- If you are unable to use a payroll system to track this information, then keep a manual log for each employee.
- In some instances, work-from-home employees may still be engaging in activities that are similar to their on-site duties (e.g. virtual fitness classes.) In these instances, it is best to code the employee using their typical code/category—as opposed to work-from-home which is designated as clerical work.
- It will be important to revert all employees back to normal when and if they return to regular duties.

We know that managing payroll codes and categories can be complicated, even in normal times. Hopefully the information above helps to clarify how best to proceed during this pandemic.

As always, please do not hesitate to reach out to our Workers' Compensation team should you have any questions about how to manage your payroll.



# Guidelines for Virtual Youth Programs

The world of virtual camp is exploding exponentially due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Much of this is through messages, videos or activity sheets posted through a camp's social media platforms. Some of the programs are "live" in which staff & volunteers can interact through virtual platforms with their camper families. Below is a set of guidelines to consider when offering any virtual program.

**Reminder:** *Your organization already has quality policies, protocols and procedures in place. Virtual programs provide the opportunity to build and expand on these, but it is important to continue to follow your current protocols and practices to keep campers safe.*

## Hiring and Screening

Your organization's hiring and screening policies still apply when operating virtual programming. Staff (paid or volunteers) approved to work at virtual camp should meet the camp's personnel policies, which should include:

- Completed/signed application on file
- References checked and documented, including one personal family reference
- Completed criminal background and National Sex Offender Public Website checks
- Completed Voluntary Disclosure Statement (per ACA Accreditation Standards)

## Staff Training

Although staff training is going to look different, all virtual staff will still need to complete training, and that training will need to be documented for each attendee. The policies and principles of program design, as well as many of the ACA Accreditation Standards, continue to apply—even in a virtual setting. It will be important to consider, however, whether in-person training needs to be adapted for a virtual setting. The following are sample staff training topics to cover for programs providing virtual/online activities:

- Your organizations' Code of Conduct and Zero Tolerance Policy
- Supervision ratios—a minimum of 1 staff should be present in all breakout rooms or chats.

- Staff should never have 1-on-1 interactions—communication should always be in the open where everyone can be involved
- Program Rules and Guidelines—make sure that they are clear, discussed and posted, and that any failure to follow rules is flagged up and addressed
- How to talk to youth regarding boundaries with staff and who they should tell if the rules are broken or if they need help
- How programming will be supervised—there should be multiple layers of staff, including managers, to ensure high quality and safety
- How staff can report rule breaking and “red flag behaviors”—be sure to cover this, not only in onboarding, but also in regular refreshers
- How to keep campers engaged
- How to keep an eye out for ‘wallflowers’ and children with different learning styles and abilities
- How to include and value all campers and get in front of social alienation or bullying
- Specific instruction on how staff should handle the following:
  - What do staff do when a camper asks to DM them or for their social media handles?
  - What do staff do when a camper sends an email that indicates they are in potential danger at home?
  - How will the staff know if something is going on among the campers?

## **Child Abuse Prevention**

During virtual programming, your abuse prevention practices and policies should not change. Below are some things to consider:

- Remind staff that they are mandated reporters
- Update your organization’s reporting guidelines and ensure that all staff know who to report to, when to report and the method for reporting
- As mentioned previously, make sure that child abuse prevention is a part of training for staff prior to working with youth online

## Platform Security

Whether using Zoom or other platforms, utilize the following security features:

- Have a registration process to account for who is in the room
- Utilize waiting room options
- Turn off private chat features to avoid inappropriate messaging between participants
- Record sessions if possible (with parent/guardian consent to record) and save per your organizations records retention policy
- Become familiar with the security features of the platform being used.
- For specific guidance when using Zoom, we have [created a resource](#) that reviews different security measures your organization can take.

## Code of Conduct & Social Media Policies

Before operating virtual programming, update/add to your current [Code of Conduct](#) and [Social Media Policies](#) to include steps specific to virtual programming. Some possible elements to include are:

- Staff will wear a camp uniform/staff shirt during all virtual programming
- A minimum of two staff will be present in all virtual programming spaces or “rooms”
- Staff will abide by all camp policies, including refraining from smoking, vaping, drinking alcoholic beverages, etc. during virtual program hours
- Staff will consider the background from which they broadcast from and gain director approval of background prior to going live
- No virtual programming will occur without the written consent of the director
- All virtual programming will occur through the camp/organization’s professional accounts and not through staff personal accounts

## Program Oversight

During virtual programming, staff supervision practices will still be necessary in order to ensure consistency and safety. Some things to consider are:

- Supervisory staff and the camp leadership team should drop-in on virtual programs to ensure all outlined practices are being followed
- If it is not possible for leadership to drop-in on virtual programming, supervisors should periodically review recordings

## Parent/Guardian Involvement

While your camp may be offering programming activities, camps cannot “take supervision” of children in a virtual setting. Therefore, it is important to communicate the following with parents/guardians:

- Share supervision expectations and require parents/guardians to sign off that they understand these expectations
- Share room/space expectations
- Inform parents/guardians of the settings/materials needed to conduct virtual camp activities
- Encourage parent/guardians to be aware of their child’s online activities

## Consent and Waivers

All campers will need to sign a [participation waiver](#) to participate in camp virtual programming. If recording a session, camps need to collect a signed Consent to Record for minor participants. This statement can be as simple as: “I hereby give permission for [insert organization] to record all virtual programming sessions”.

## Program Activities

Due to the fact that programming is now being done virtually, some activities will not work in that setting. Consider the following:

- Virtual lifeguarding is not safe or even possible. Do not encourage campers to swim or get into the bathtub, pool or any body of water during virtual program time.
- Inform parent/guardians about the nature of the activities as part of the parent/guardian communication.
- If doing physical activities, it's important to ask parents/guardians to evaluate the space being used in the home to make sure it is free from hazards.

## Program Supplies

If your organization is providing supplies to participants for activities at home (such as “Camp in a Box”) inform parent/guardians of contents, age restrictions/recommendations and potential allergy triggers. Some practices your organization may follow are:

- Consider providing an option for parent/guardians to “opt-in” to receive supplies from camp, informing them of the contents beforehand
- If sending food, disclose and label common allergy triggers, such as nuts or gluten
- Label contents according to appropriate age guidelines, if applicable
- Prohibit lending or loaning equipment or supplies

## Additional Resources

- [American Camp Association Virtual Program Resources—COVID-19](#)
- [Darkness to Light Digital Safety Tips](#)
- [Praesidium: Electronic Communications and Organization's Duty to Protect](#)

# Phase III: We Will Get Through This— Planning For The New Normal

In the midst of a crisis, it can be hard to imagine how things will return to normal. And yet we know they eventually will. However—elements of that ‘normal’ may be different. From simply retaining and retraining staff who have been home for weeks, to making up for lost revenue or accommodating new regulations, we will likely have a lot of new challenges to contend with and plan for.

We will also have to work hard to ensure that even as we focus on the recovery of our community, we also keep the urgent priorities we were working on before the pandemic at the front of our minds. Whether it’s aquatic safety or abuse prevention, the work has not gone away.

The resources in this section will be designed to support you as you plan for reopening. Given the immediate needs of navigating the pandemic, it may take some time before a full set of resources are available here. But we are working on it.

As you begin to start planning for what’s ahead, please also keep us informed—and let us know if there are specific challenges or questions we can help you with.

# Reopening Camp After COVID-19

At the time of writing, it is unclear of exactly when states will lift their shelter-in-place orders or other social distancing ordinances. The guidance below was developed under the assumption that some form of camp programming will be possible at some point during the coming summer. This may or may not be the case in your location. Please consult with local authorities and health experts to determine your plans and decide when and if it is safe to reopen.

- **Hiring for Summer:** While our summer may not look like past years, we hope to have the opportunity to deliver programs. If you are planning on reopening this summer, consider **consulting with your legal counsel** to include some sort of statement in your summer employment contracts along the lines of the following, prominently and in bold:

***[Camp/organization] reserves the right to terminate contracts with one week's written notice should circumstances dictate a need to reduce services or close camp.***

- **Communication Plans with Parents/Guardians:** This summer, more than ever, parents & guardians are going to want to know what your health screening and health management protocols are. Be sure all staff are able to share the following with parents/guardians:
  - How campers and staff are screened during their initial arrival at camp—and by whom
  - Your sick camper policy and how that is handled. (Will campers be kept at camp? Sent home? This will vary from camp to camp, depending on your camper population.)
  - What and when families will receive communication regarding a camper's health at camp
  - Continued health management while at camp—especially for camps that are more than two weeks, how often is there a scheduled check-in with the camp's health care team?
  - Who makes up your camp health care team

## Update Policies & Procedures Now—Plan How to Train Staff on Updates

- **Communicable Disease Plan:** Work with your healthcare team to update your Communicable Disease Plan. The Association of Camp Nursing has great [resources on best practices and how to implement this](#) at your camp.
- **Handwashing:** This is a great time to evaluate how well your handwashing plans at camp are really working. This may be the year to up your game on how staff are trained, whether or not you have enough handwashing facilities and whether or not you have adequate supplies. ACA developed a [great resource on how to make handwashing really effective](#).
- **Health Screening:** Do any updates need to be made to your health screening process, based on what we have learned about COVID-19? Many camps are adding temperature checks as a part of the check in process, and not something that is checked later within the first 24-hours. Take time to consider how campers will be screened, and what your response will be in the event of fever or other signs of illness upon check-in.
- **Sick Camper/Staff Policy:** Working with your healthcare team, revisit your sick camper and sick staff policy. Do you need to update your quarantine space? Will you send campers home? Keep them at camp? How will you manage this? What about if the camper is on a wilderness trip?



# Safe Reopening: Some Initial Considerations

The nature of the COVID-19 pandemic is such that both infection rates, and localized responses to those rates, are going to vary from state to state, and from region to region. There may even be considerable variation between specific jurisdictions or between urban and more rural areas.

This makes the task of providing blanket guidance or protocols challenging, if not impossible. However, it is important to start planning for the likelihood of a full or partial reopening, which will most likely happen before the virus is eliminated or a vaccine is developed. We are actively working on guidance for organizations looking to reopen—and we will be updating and releasing a new version of this resource packet to include that guidance soon.

In the meantime, below is a partial list of some of the questions that will need to be considered:

## Controlling the Spread

- What factors need to be in place in order for your organization to reopen?
- Are you following government mandates, or additional standards to determine safe reopening?
- Do you service particularly vulnerable populations that need additional protection? Is there certain programming that needs to be postponed or modified?
- Should you modify guidance on how many people can be in any one program or location to ensure adequate distancing?
- How can you increase prevention measures such as hand washing and sanitizing, deep cleaning, to reduce the risk of infection?
- How are you monitoring ongoing the number of cases in the population you serve and what criteria need to be met for reinstating a partial or complete closure in the event of a second wave of infection?
- What risks may have arisen at your facilities as the result of a prolonged shut-down—for example chemical storage, maintenance, vandalism, theft? How are you assessing and mitigating these?

## **Communication, Rehiring & Training/Re-Training**

- How will you communicate your policies to staff, membership and volunteers?
- How are you ensuring adequate training, and safe hiring/re-hiring protocols at a time when resources may be stretched?
- What additional training might be necessary—and how much can be done virtually before reopening occurs?
- How are you ensuring fair and non-discriminatory rehiring, especially if it is only partial?

## **Continuation of Mission**

- What new needs may have arisen in the community as a result of this crisis?
- How are you addressing trauma, loss or financial stress that may have arisen as a result of this crisis, both among your members and your staff?
- What strategies are in place for ensuring financial sustainability in the event of a prolonged recession or depression?

The above is only a partial list of questions, many of which we will seek to address with our upcoming guidance—which will be included in an updated version of this packet. In the meantime, please reach out to us if you have additional questions or concerns you do not see included here.

**Thank you for all you do and please stay safe.**

# When to Reopen Your Facilities: Considerations, Concerns and Waivers

As you know, there is much debate about when to re-open different parts of the economy while keeping COVID-19 infections to a minimum. In making these decisions, it will be important for any business to follow the science, not the politics.

And the science suggests that, at the time of writing (04.23), [we have not yet seen a sustained and definite peak in cases on a national level](#). In fact, if you take New York out of the statistics—where a prolonged lock-down is showing positive results—cases elsewhere are continuing to rise.

## Minimum Criteria for Reopening

With this in mind, we expect our customers to take a deliberate and cautious approach to re-opening. The following are our **recommended minimum criteria** to watch for in your state before re-opening facilities to anything other than emergency/COVID-19-specific programming:

1. Two weeks of documented declining deaths in your state or metropolitan area
2. Adequate capacity for the local healthcare system to treat all those projected to need care at the peak
3. Testing available for all who have symptoms or are at risk
4. Substantially improved capacity to monitor all active cases and to track contacts

When the decision is made to re-open, even when the above criteria are met, it will be important to continue to follow the best, most authoritative guidance on health and safety practices. Those will include physical distancing, modified programming and enhanced sanitation procedures—but the standards that constitute our best practices today are likely inadequate for programs operated at scale. The current programs for essential child care generally have few kids in a large space with lots of staff, so it's possible to maintain rigorous, exhaustive health and safety standards. That's far less likely to be the case when programs are opened to many more kids—or when basketball courts, gaga pits and fitness centers are opened in time.

## **Clear Communication of Risk**

It will also be crucial to communicate to members and visitors alike that the crisis is ongoing, and that they and their kids are participating in activities *at their own risk*. That means taking extra care to ensure that all participants sign a comprehensive waiver that covers risks such as COVID-19. (Sample language for adult waivers, minor waivers and volunteer waivers are available on our website, and also in the appendix of this packet.) If your organization is among the few that have not in the past employed a system of comprehensive waivers, it's essential that you begin this practice now.

## **Prominent Warning Signs**

Additionally, to ensure that your members, program participants and parents are conscious of their assumption of risk in this uncertain time, we strongly recommend posting numerous, visible warning signs specifically relating to COVID-19. They should be at the entrances of your facilities and in high-risk locations such as fitness centers, gyms, bathrooms and locker rooms. We have developed this COVID-19 warning sign (also included in the appendix) specifically for use at youth-serving organizations like yours.

As always, the enforceability of waivers and other communications in a legal setting will depend on your specific circumstances and jurisdiction. We strongly recommend consulting with local legal counsel about any liability issues unique to your jurisdiction.

# Controlling the Risk of Infection: Cameras, Cleaning and Other Layers of Protection

As the discussions continue around when and if to resume ‘normal’ operations, you can read the [recommended minimum criteria for re-opening](#) that we are sharing with customers. Yet even as we urge caution, we recognize—and celebrate—that there will be a time when organizations re-open. And barring a medical miracle, that time will come before the threat of COVID-19 is fully eradicated. It is important, therefore, to start thinking about how we can minimize the risk of contagion. Clearly, we are going to need multiple layers of protection:

## ‘Smart Cameras’ and Monitoring Body Temperatures

Monitoring staff, volunteers and guests is one way that we can identify potentially infected individuals and help prevent them from infecting others. In addition to hand-held non-invasive thermometers, there are now a number of ‘smart camera’ systems on the market which are able to monitor body temperature. Please review our [guide to the pros and cons of smart cameras](#). Please know that the virus can spread from individuals who are entirely asymptomatic—so cameras are not a silver bullet solution.

## Encourage Staff and Members to Self-Quarantine

We will need to encourage anyone who is sick—or who has been exposed to the virus—to stay home and self-isolate. That means communicating clearly with staff, volunteers and members and letting them know your expectations. It also means educating them on how the virus can spread and what factors might mean they should stay away. We also encourage [prominent signage](#) warning members of the risk they are taking if they choose to use your facilities.

## Aggressive Cleaning Measures

The novel coronavirus can survive and be passed on from surfaces that are touched by an infected individual—whether or not they are presenting symptoms. According to the CDC, it is important to significantly increase cleaning and disinfecting routines with particular focus on frequently touched surfaces like guardrails, door knobs and exercise equipment. Among other things, this will mean rotating equipment to maintain spacing and for cleaning and disinfecting. As you know, please also use isopropyl alcohol for cleaning instead of more traditional cleaners.

## **Promote Good Hygiene**

Wearing masks and washing hands frequently can limit the spread of the virus. Make hand sanitizer available at stations around your facility and post prominent signage encouraging its use. Depending on availability, it's a good idea to make masks available to all staff who want them—and to encourage masks among members and guests, too.

## **Increased Distancing**

The novel coronavirus spreads from person-to-person contact, but does not require physical contact. This risk may be increased if individuals are exercising. In all likelihood, you will not be able to re-open with the same number of people using your facilities as you had before this pandemic hit. In general, the current guidance is to encourage 6ft of distance between individuals—so plan your capacity for programming and space your equipment accordingly. It may be a good idea to provide markings on the floor or other signage that helps people to visualize appropriate distance.

## **Waivers and Signage**

None of these measures will be sufficient by themselves. Even when all measures are in place, anybody who is out in public is—by definition—increasing their risk of infection. That is why we continue to expect that our customers will stay closed until our minimum criteria for re-opening have been met. It is also why all program participants and volunteers should sign robust waivers that cover the risk of infection ([download template language here.](#))

Ultimately, there is no silver bullet solution to the COVID-19 pandemic, but that is something that we are all familiar with. From child sexual abuse prevention to aquatic safety, your efforts to protect the community have almost always required multiple layers of interwoven protection. This crisis is no different. We need cautious decision making about when and how to re-open. And we need to develop a robust strategy of communication, testing and monitoring, hygiene and spacing for when that time comes. With these layers of protection in place, we are confident that we can not only weather this crisis together—but we can re-emerge stronger, more connected and more impactful than we ever have been before.

Thank you for all you do.

# COVID-19 Response: Smart Cameras and Fever Detection

A general review of new and adapted camera technology to prevent the spread of COVID-19

Even before the current global pandemic, startups and established companies were experimenting with real-time monitoring of facilities. As the strategies for long-term virus control come into focus, the applications for AI and smart cameras are becoming more clear. Some companies are well-established in building and operations management and leverage smart cameras; however, now they have pivoted to apply their technology in their COVID response efforts. Other startups are responding to this opportunistic market, as nearly all establishments will need to implement some level of crowd monitoring.

## Pros and Cons of AI and Smart Cameras

This technology actively scans people and crowds to determine density, crowd size, and given the recent outbreak of COVID-19, identify individuals with a fever. Fever-detection, or thermal imaging, is the feature gaining the most attention. However, experts have cautioned that this technology based approach is not a panacea. There are potential drawbacks, as well as benefits, to deployment. A study out of Iceland showed that 50 percent of those testing positive were asymptomatic. Moreover, temperature detection efficacy is questioned since thermal cameras are only reading surface temperatures and not internal body temperature.

Organizations should carefully consider the pros and cons before investing valuable resources in this type of technology. We have done preliminary research on some of the companies that have begun offering thermal imaging cameras in the marketplace. It is not an exhaustive list, but we hope it will provide some context to any news and PR seen elsewhere.

**DISCLAIMER: This resource is for informational purposes only and is not an endorsement of any technology or company's products/services.**

Company	Location	Availability	Product Description	Cost
<p><a href="#">Athena Security:</a> Adapting current platforms</p> <p><a href="#">Article</a></p>	Austin, Texas	Pending after March announcement to roll out new cameras	<p>Develops smart cameras to identify weapons, workplace accidents, and more. Specialized in gunshot detection. Not FDA approved for body temperature scanning.</p> <p>COVID: Plans to roll out a fever detection system using thermal infrared cameras and an algorithm to detect a person's temperature on a point near the eye known as the inner canthus, the hottest part of the face. If a temperature is detected, the camera sends an immediate alert to the business owner or individual monitoring the space. According to the company, the system is accurate at reading a person's body temperature up to a half degree Celsius.</p>	\$9,000 per camera
<p><a href="#">EAIGLE:</a> Adapting current platforms</p> <p><a href="#">Demo</a></p>	Toronto - Waterloo	Market-ready	<p>Offering an Intelligent Video Analytics Platform based on AI for indoor/outdoor real-time occupancy monitoring for smart facility applications.</p> <p>COVID: technology can perform crowd monitoring, people counting, and realtime body temperature monitoring. The system uses AI to monitor numerous cameras at once, seamlessly counts people and monitors body temperature in real time and automatically sends an alert to security personnel if it detects someone with a fever.</p>	\$15-20k per entrance
<p><a href="#">Feevr (X.Labs):</a> developed for thermal detection</p>	California	Market-ready, but has been under scrutiny for accuracy issues.	<p>Feevr is a quick and effective artificial intelligence (AI) based system for screening and detecting individuals with elevated temperature in a crowd. The solution enables the user to identify individuals with a fever efficiently and effectively. A fever is an indicating symptom of an infectious disease like COVID19 (Coronavirus). Feevr is non contact based which prevents the chances of cross infection.</p>	\$1,250 per kit
<p><a href="#">FLIR</a></p>	Oregon	Market-deployed	<p>Well-established thermal imaging company with FDA approval. FLIR has manufactured and sold thermal body scanners since 2002 and has products for contactless scanning.</p>	\$600-\$2000 per camera/scanner



Company	Location	Availability	Product Description	Cost
<a href="#">InVid Tech</a>	Long Island, NY	Market-deployed	On-board temperature detection algorithm; One IP address two channels, Accuracy within 0.54°F (0.3°C), Body detection, up to 16 Targets, Response Time 30ms, 17 color controls. Careful to note that this product is not a medical device and cannot be used to diagnose COVID cases.	\$13,000 per device.  <i>SEC-BODYTE-MPCAM1 (Model)</i>
<a href="#">KanKan AI</a> (Remark Holdings)  <a href="#">PR Article</a>	Las Vegas & China	Face recognition ready. Thermal detection readiness is unclear.	KanKan reported a recent upgrade to its thermal detection AI products on March 3, 2020 though the capability is not on their website.  COVID: Allows for non-contact fever screening, which is more efficient and faster than manual methods and which reduces the risk of cross contamination from human contact. Facial recognition includes mask detection can be used to enforce compliance with health and regulatory laws on a real-time basis. Allows for traffic monitoring, crowd monitoring, intrusion detection and other monitoring and detective functions.	NA
<a href="#">Kogniz</a> adapted current platforms  <a href="#">Article</a>	California	Market-deployed. Currently deployed with 12 customers	Offering a suite of products that use computer vision and AI to enhance security, safety and efficiency in any physical environment. Kogniz processes video in real-time to recognize people, objects and activities using facial and object recognition technologies.  COVID: Scans crowds in real-time and identifies anyone with an elevated temperature; the solution then alerts company personnel in real-time so that any individual with a fever can be isolated as needed.	\$10k per device
<a href="#">SenseTime</a> adapting current platforms  <a href="#">Article</a>	China	Market-ready	Uses computer vision and AI company to companies in education, healthcare, smart city, automotive, airports, communications, retail and entertainment.  COVID: Thermal cameras can be deployed at airports, and train and subway stations, as well as office buildings, to help detect people whose body temperature exceeds 37.3 C among the crowd. It also developed an intelligent medical imaging evaluation system to help doctors diagnose pneumonia.	\$10k per device

## Additional Articles and Resources

- CDC Guidelines for Temperature Checks for “Critical Infrastructure” which is a good reference for public-serving organizations.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/critical-workers/implementing-safety-practices.html>
- Gale, Jason. “Coronavirus Cases Without Symptoms Spur Call for Wider Tests.” Bloomberg.com. March 22, 2020. Accessed April 23, 2020.  
<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-03-22/one-third-of-coronavirus-cases-may-show-no-symptom-scmp-reports>
- Glaser, April. “Fever detection cameras to fight coronavirus? Experts say they don’t work.” NBCNews.com. March 27, 2020. Accessed April 22, 2020.  
<https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/security/fever-detection-cameras-fight-coronavirus-experts-say-they-don-t-n1170791>
- Ministry of Health—Canada. “COVID-19 Guidance for Industry Operators.” March 29, 2020. Accessed April 23, 2020.  
[http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019\\_operators\\_guidance.pdf](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_operators_guidance.pdf)
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prime Minister’s Office, Ministry of Health—Iceland. “Large scale testing of general population in Iceland underway.” March 21, 2020.  
<https://www.government.is/news/article/2020/03/15/Large-scale-testing-of-general-population-in-Iceland-underway/>
- Niles, Stephen. “As fever checks become the norm in coronavirus era, demand for thermal cameras soars.” Reuters.com. April 9, 2020. Accessed April 23, 2020.  
<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-thermal-cameras-fo/as-fever-checks-become-the-norm-in-coronavirus-era-demand-for-thermal-cameras-soars-idUSKCN21R2SF>

# Developing New Employer Policies Regarding COVID-19

It seems highly likely that many workplaces will open up before COVID-19 has been fully contained as a threat. That means that employers will need new policies and standards of conduct for employees in the workplace that can help mitigate the threat of infection, and protect those most vulnerable to this virus. Specifically, employers will need to set forth clear rules, processes and expectations for employee behavior which may include:

- 1. Standards of conduct** including handwashing, hand sanitizing, sharing of equipment, dissemination of hard-copy documents, donning and doffing of PPE, social distancing and workstation cleaning and disinfecting.
- 2. Details and consequences regarding prohibited conduct** and failure to comply with the standards of conduct such as coming to work with COVID-19 symptoms, failure to socially distance in the workplace, failure to wear and utilize PPE and failure to disinfect/clean working areas and equipment.
- 3. Rules regarding entering and exiting the building** to ensure social distancing—for example only two people in an elevator at one time and/or the requirement to wash one’s hands before entering the office or workspace.
- 4. New procedures and policies regarding calling in sick**, incentives to remain home when sick rather than come into the office (even if the employee feels they can work), and what circumstances or symptoms require (or mandate) employees to remain home.
- 5. As schools remain closed, employees will continue to face the challenges of balancing child-care and work.** When employers begin to recall employees, employees will find themselves facing childcare challenges and may request permission to bring children to the workplace. This will create a significant challenge to social distancing requirements and hinder the employer’s efforts to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in the workplace.

Once new policies have been developed, it is important that they are not only distributed to employees, but also explained and that employees have an opportunity to ask questions or seek clarification. It’s important to also make sure that employees sign an acknowledgement that includes the obligation to read and comply with the policies, as well as understanding the consequences for failure to comply.

These are difficult and uncertain times. And new circumstances will require new ways of interacting with each other. The more that employers can set clear, transparent expectations—and design processes and tools that help employees meet those expectations—the easier it will be to re-open the economy while minimizing the threat of infection

# Protecting Against COVID-19 in Offices and Administrative Spaces

As states around the country begin considering ways to open up their economies, youth-serving community organizations are naturally focusing much of their attention on when and if to re-open programming, and how to do so safely once that time does come. It will be important, however, to also consider ways to keep our offices and admin staff safe. Below are some considerations to keep in mind for reorganizing and managing our admin spaces and offices to limit the threat of COVID-19.

## Engineering Controls

- Keep desks/cubicles at least six feet apart from each other
- Limit group sizes to those permitted per current regulations from the CDC and local governments at maximum—smaller if at all possible
- Determine the maximum capacity of the office according to those same guidelines, and limit work days/shifts to ensure that capacity is not exceeded
- Consider travel patterns within the office—are there areas where a one-way flow is required? Do you need to rethink entry and exits?
- Install physical barriers where necessary to encourage appropriate flow throughout the office
- Consider making common spaces (break rooms, kitchens) off-limits, or institute very frequent cleaning and more stringent controls on capacity
- Schedule to change air filters more frequently to minimize airborne transmission, and review the National Air Filtration Association's [guidance on which filters to use](#)
- Consider bathroom usage and capacity

## Administrative Controls

If possible, continue to support remote work and encourage anyone who might have concerns about their health to stay home

- Encourage remote meetings, including if individuals are in the same building
- Make necessary tools available to employees based on their needs—including temporary adjusted work assignments if feasible

- Recognize that there may be fear or anxiety associated with a return to work—provide access to emotional and psychological support where possible
- Encourage anyone who might be sick to stay home (per OSHA and CDC guidelines), and communicate [the latest CDC guidance on potential symptoms](#)
- Consider daily temperature checks of all employees, but remember that asymptomatic individuals can also spread the virus
- What does social distancing look like at the office? What protocols or etiquette will need to be discussed to make sure it's followed?
- Limit non-essential business travel
- Update SDS sheets to include any new chemicals or cleaning products, and make sure those chemicals are on the CDC List of Approved Chemicals and that are effective against COVID. Review updated sheets with anyone handling the new chemicals
- Review what is and is not acceptable to ask employees under the ADA. You cannot, for example, ask about underlying medical conditions

## Safe Work Practices

- Provide access to hand sanitizer and bleach wipes throughout the office, as well as keeping soap well stocked in the bathrooms and kitchen. Also make sure that you have designated eye wash stations that are clean, well stocked and ready to be used.
- Post signs in the bathroom to encourage frequent hand washing. Consider including educational content about why soap is so effective at killing the virus.
- Encourage employees to wipe down work stations (include keyboard, mouse, phone and any writing utensils) to minimize transmission, and to wash their hands after they do so.
- Ensure thorough cleaning every day according to CDC protocols, using [EPA approved chemicals for COVID-19](#). Clean high touch areas such as door knobs, handles, handrails, faucets, keypads and touch screens more frequently.

## Personal Protective Equipment

- Follow all [CDC](#), [OSHA](#) and local jurisdictional guidance on face coverings
- Review [Redwoods' recommendations](#) on providing masks to employees

# The Redwoods Group Position on Reopening: Safety & Community Come First

With the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to spread, some states are beginning to re-open their economies and youth-serving community organizations are beginning to reopen too. We want to make sure that our position is clear:

**We believe it is too soon to resume anything except your carefully managed childcare operations and other social programming.** Here's why:

- 1.** No state has yet met the Federal government's criteria for even Phase 1 reopening. Those criteria are based in science and medicine, not economics and politics, which makes them especially important as indicators of relative health and safety
- 2.** While most research on COVID-19 is preliminary and not yet peer reviewed, there is mounting evidence that virus aerosolization—especially indoors, and especially through activities that involve heavy respiration—is a particularly significant threat
- 3.** CDC guidance is currently unclear, inadequate, and being filtered by political and economic considerations, making it difficult to obtain accurate guidance for safe operations
- 4.** Organizations do not have the data they need, nor the protocols in place, to prevent potential outbreaks during the course of normal operations

However, we know that leadership may feel pulled to reopen by their board and/or membership. Even as we urge youth serving organizations to reconsider and delay re-opening plans, we also want to offer some perspective on how—when the time comes—organizations can reopen responsibly. Given how the virus spreads, we recommend a staged reopening that looks like this:

- **Stage One:** Childcare and outdoor group exercise, with physical distancing, enhanced hygiene and no use of locker rooms
- **Stage Two:** Outdoor pools, with physical distancing, enhanced hygiene and no use of locker rooms

- **Stage Three:** Indoor pools, with physical distancing and enhanced hygiene and no use of locker rooms
- **Stage Four:** Indoor group exercise, in large spaces, with high efficiency air filtration or significant natural ventilation, with physical distancing, enhanced hygiene and no use of locker rooms
- **Stage Five:** Only once the outbreak is under control and clear protocols are in place for preventing transmission, should indoor gyms and other exercise rooms be considered for reopening Make necessary tools available to employees based on their needs—including temporary adjusted work assignments if feasible

As movements, we are in the business of building community and creating fellowship. As such, it pains all of us to remain physically apart. As we navigate this crisis, however, there are opportunities to reposition ourselves and lean into our mission. While gyms and cardio floors are valued by our members, they are not the areas of programming that really build community— especially if treadmills are 12 feet apart. So let's focus first on the areas that our society has been missing: Fellowship, community and shared recreational opportunities—while making sure we avoid exacerbating the crisis that is keeping us apart in the first place.



# Prioritizing Child Sexual Abuse Prevention During Re-opening

According to research, times of societal crisis can lead to significantly increased rates of domestic violence—including child sexual abuse. From increased financial and emotional stresses on potential abusers, to less opportunities for discovery or reporting, the reasons for such increases are complex and interwoven. What's important to understand is that this phenomenon is real—and that our youth-serving organizations will need to be more alert, responsive and proactive on this topic than we have ever been before. And we will need to do so at a time when all of us are under significant additional pressure ourselves.

Here are just some of the things we will need to keep in mind.

## Identifying Signs of Child Sexual Abuse

Abuse doesn't just happen in a childcare setting. As we begin to re-open our programming, it will be important to train all staff on potential signs of abuse so they can identify victims who may have been abused at home or elsewhere during lockdown. Some signs to watch out for are as follows:

- Changes in behavior, physical aggression, non-compliance, rebellion
- Anxiety, depression, fear, withdrawal, suicidal thoughts
- “Too perfect” or over compliant behavior
- Nightmares, bed-wetting, bullying and cruelty to animals
- Lack of interest in friends, sports and other activities that they once cared for

## Disclosure: Responding to Children Who Report Abuse

If a youth discloses that they have been abused, how you respond is extremely important both for the well-being and healing of that youth, and also for the process of making sure the child feels safe to tell you the truth. If someone discloses abuse to you, it's extremely important to:

- Listen calmly and openly
- Don't fill in any gaps or ask leading questions about the details
- Tell them you believe them and that it isn't their fault

- Don't promise that the information they say will be kept confidential
- Report the abuse to the police or CPS (See steps below for "Reporting Abuse to the Authorities")

## Reporting Abuse to the Authorities

It is important to note that we shouldn't be waiting for evidence before we report an incident. If there are reasonable suspicions of abuse taking place, then it is your moral and [often legal duty to report](#) such suspicions to law enforcement. In many states, you can also report abuse anonymously. When reporting a disclosure, or reasonable suspicions of abuse, you will typically follow your state's mandated questions. However, some information they may ask for is:

- Provide the child's name and where the child lives
- Where you are, where the child is and where the alleged offender is
- What the youth said to you (if you have spoken to them)
- What interactions you saw between the alleged offender and youth
- What behaviors, if any, you have observed in the alleged offender
- What signs you have seen in the youth
- What access the offender has to the youth

## Preventing Abuse in Your Programming

In addition to increasing our vigilance regarding abuse that may have happened outside of your program or facility, we also need to recognize that staff, volunteers and children alike are under significant stress at this time. Someone who is likely to sexually abuse children will be looking for an opportunity when things are different. Things that may be different are new program spaces, new staff or new distractions that are put in place that causes staff to shift their focus. Therefore, it will be important to intentionally recreate an environment where training, communication, supervision and accountability are prioritized within an overall culture of safety.

This should include ensuring that all staff and volunteers are trained on child sexual abuse prevention (online trainings are available via [The Redwoods Institute](#)), and it will mean reinforcing a culture of zero tolerance for rule breaking. This includes a focus on our Four Rules for Child Safety:

- 1.** No Inappropriate Touch or Language: Use only appropriate language and appropriate touch. In addition to verbal encouragement, this can include high fives, side-hugs and handshakes.
- 2.** No Alone Time: Make sure all conversations are observable and interruptible.
- 3.** No Favoritism: Treat every single child with the respect and attention they deserve.
- 4.** No Outside Contact Between Children and Staff: Keep all interactions professional and transparent. Use official channels for communication

Please consider downloading and displaying our [Four Rules poster](#) to help communicate the importance of this topic to staff, volunteers and community members alike. At a time when many of us are distracted and under stress, we need to make sure that we do not lose the momentum on eradicating child sexual abuse from our organizations.

# Top 5 Aquatics Questions during COVID-19

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*This content was written by Gareth Hedges, Founder and CEO of H2O Safety Consulting. As former President of Redwoods, Gareth continues to collaborate with us to provide cutting edge guidance and insights on aquatic safety for youth-serving community organizations.*

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Over the past few weeks, we have received tons of detailed technical questions about how to reopen our facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the patchwork of local reopenings, and the unprecedented impact this pandemic has on our industry, there is little in the way of one-size-fits-all guidance.

However, we have seen some themes. Here are the top 5:

## **Question 1: Are we ready to reopen?**

Just because you can reopen, does not mean that you should. While there is certainly a strong desire to return to normal, all facilities still need to be prepared to do so safely. Before reopening, you need to be sure that you have enough staff to safely operate, that they are trained and ready to do their jobs, that you can comply with the new guidelines for distancing and sanitation and that you can safely manage your facility with the equipment and operational changes you need. It is also important to look beyond your state or local orders to decide whether it is safe for you to open. For example, Redwoods recommends the following minimum criteria be met prior to opening:

- 1.** Two weeks of documented declining deaths in your state or metropolitan area
- 2.** Adequate capacity for the local healthcare system to treat all those projected to need care at the peak
- 3.** Testing available for all who have symptoms or are at risk
- 4.** Substantially improved capacity to monitor all active cases and to track contacts

## **Question 2: How do we maintain social distancing guidelines for the safety of our staff and guests?**

When we reopen, and for the foreseeable future, our staff and guests will have to behave differently in order to maintain social distancing. This will look different depending on whether you are an indoor or outdoor facility, what type of locker rooms, bathrooms, and entrances you have, and what type of programming you run. But there will be a few common conditions. First, social distancing guidance requires that people remain 6-feet apart from one another. This can likely be maintained in lap swimming by limiting the number of swimmers and assigning or reserving lanes. Lifeguards will need to enforce distancing rules by reminding swimmers not to congregate at the wall, for example. Programs that require 1-1 contact such as swim lessons may need to be suspended during social distancing, or modified to eliminate close contact. Masks should be worn by guests and staff whenever distancing cannot be maintained, however we know that masks are not effective or practical in the water. Best practice will be to modify guest flow to reduce close contact, for example by using broader entries than the locker room, limiting the number of people that can come in or out at a time and creating staging areas or rearranging deck furniture to promote distancing.

## **Question 3: How can we continue to train our staff and maintain distancing?**

To maintain a safe facility, your lifeguard staff still must be continuously trained and tested, just like before the pandemic, however with modifications. Training classes and in-service should be done with no more than 10 people in a group. Refer to your certifying agency for new in-person training guidelines and always in conjunction with your local health agencies. Guards should have their own non-shared PPE and equipment whenever possible, and this equipment should be sanitized frequently and before and after use. While this is a big change from the recommendation of realistic training using real people for victims, during this time more use of training and CPR mannequins and other non-body methods will be important. This is also a good time to reinforce skills that are often overlooked, such as active scanning and rotation procedures. Ellis and Associates has published an excellent [comprehensive resource](#) that can serve as a guide for training and care modifications.

#### **Question 4: Am I exposed to new liability if I open?**

An aquatic facility operator is always open to liability for injuries to its users, which is why maintaining a safe operation in compliance with all state and local codes, and meeting or exceeding the standard of care in the industry is important. In regard to liability for common aquatic injuries such as slip and fall and drowning injuries, the liability remains the same—there is no loosening of the standard of care simply because of the additional burden of social distancing. Even with modifications, it will be important to evaluate and document that you are maintaining the same or a similar level of safety in your facility. A tougher question is whether or not you could be liable for a user that contracts the virus and claims that it was due to your negligence at your facility. We expect to see an increase in these cases in all types of facilities, and will monitor how they progress. At this time, the best protection you can have when you reopen is to follow all state and local guidelines, maintain and document your disinfecting and social distancing policies, and make necessary changes as new information is disseminated to keep your staff and guests safe.

#### **Question 5: What does the new normal look like?**

This is really the biggest question facing aquatic leaders right now. We have the guidance on how to reopen, and have solid criteria to use in determining when to reopen, but the question each leader should ask is: should we reopen, and why? What is our mission, who are we trying to serve, and how do we do it better than we did before? In my experience consulting with aquatics leaders, they often felt unable to make changes to some of the most difficult and dangerous parts of their operations, because to make the change would be too big a disruption. Now we have had the disruption anyway, and it's our opportunity to never run unsafe or inefficient programs again. For example, many YMCAs prior to the shutdown commonly ran single-guard facilities with only small numbers of swimmers, often during the mid-morning and mid-afternoon hours. We now have the opportunity to schedule swim times to be more efficient using scheduling software, and closing the pool during low-usage times. We can insist on requiring life-jackets for non-swimmers. And we can eliminate programs that were not sustainable for our organizations or serving the needs of our community. During this time of evaluation and planning, it's important not to simply jump to "how", but to start with "why" we run our programs and to create the new normal we want to see.

# Top 5 Camp Aquatics Questions during COVID-19

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*This content was written by Gareth Hedges, Founder and CEO of H2O Safety Consulting. As former President of Redwoods, Gareth continues to collaborate with us to provide cutting edge guidance and insights on aquatic safety for youth-serving community organizations.*

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Over the past few weeks, we have received tons of detailed technical questions about how to reopen swimming areas at camps during the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the patchwork of local reopenings, and the unprecedented impact this pandemic has on our industry, there is little in the way of one-size-fits-all guidance.

However, we have seen some themes. Here are the top 5:

## **Question 1: Are we ready to reopen?**

Just because you can reopen, does not mean that you should. While there is certainly a strong desire to return to normal, all facilities still need to be prepared to do so safely. Before reopening, you need to be sure that you have enough staff to safely operate, that they are trained and ready to do their jobs, that you can comply with the new guidelines for distancing and sanitation and that you can safely run your pool or waterfront with the equipment and operational changes you need. It is also important to look beyond your state or local orders to decide whether it is safe for you to open. For example, Redwoods recommends the following minimum criteria be met prior to opening:

- 1.** Two weeks of documented declining deaths in your state or metropolitan area
- 2.** Adequate capacity for the local healthcare system to treat all those projected to need care at the peak
- 3.** Testing available for all who have symptoms or are at risk
- 4.** Substantially improved capacity to monitor all active cases and to track contacts

## **Question 2: How do we maintain social distancing guidelines for the safety of our staff and campers?**

When we reopen, and for the foreseeable future, our staff and campers will have to behave differently in order to maintain social distancing. This will look different depending on the layout of your pools and waterfronts. But there will be a few common conditions. First, social distancing guidance requires that people remain 6-feet apart from one another or be in groups of 10 or fewer. This will certainly be difficult in traditional camp swim programming, so some changes will be needed. Lifeguards and counselors will need to enforce distancing rules by reminding campers not to group, and by paying particular attention to transition and changing times. Programs that require 1-1 contact such as swim lessons may need to be suspended during social distancing, or modified to eliminate close contact.

## **Question 3: How can we continue to train our staff and maintain distancing?**

To maintain a safe facility, your lifeguard staff still must be continuously trained and tested, just like before the pandemic, however with modifications. Training classes and in-service should be done with no more than 10 people in a group. Refer to your certifying agency for new in-person training guidelines and always in conjunction with your local health agencies. Guards should have their own non-shared PPE and equipment whenever possible, and this equipment should be sanitized frequently and before and after use. While this is a big change from the recommendation of realistic training using real people for victims, during this time more use of training and CPR mannequins and other non-body methods will be important. This is also a good time to reinforce skills that are often overlooked, such as active scanning and rotation procedures. Ellis and Associates has published an excellent [comprehensive resource](#) that can serve as a guide for training and care modifications

## **Question 4: Am I exposed to new liability if I open?**

A camp operator is always open to liability for injuries to its campers, which is why maintaining a safe operation in compliance with all state and local codes, and meeting or exceeding the standard of care in the camp industry is important. In regard to liability for common aquatic injuries such as slip and fall and drowning injuries, the liability remains the same—there is no loosening of the standard of care simply because of the additional burden of social distancing. Even with modifications, it will be important to evaluate and document that you are maintaining the same or a similar level of safety in your facility. A tougher question is whether or not you could be liable for a user that contracts the virus and claims that it was due to your negligence at your facility. We expect to see an increase in these cases in all types of facilities, and will monitor how they progress. At this time, the best protection you can have when you reopen is to follow all state and local guidelines, maintain and document your disinfecting and social distancing policies, and make necessary changes as new information is disseminated to keep your staff and guests safe.



### **Question 5: What does the new normal look like?**

This is really the biggest question facing aquatics and camp leaders right now. We have the guidance on how to reopen, and have solid criteria to use in determining when to reopen, but the question each leader should ask is: should we reopen, and why? What is our mission, who are we trying to serve, and how do we do it better than we did before? In my experience consulting with aquatics and camp leaders, they often felt unable to make changes to some of the most difficult and dangerous parts of their operations, because to make the change would be too big a disruption. Now we have had the disruption anyway, and it's our opportunity to never run unsafe or inefficient programs again. We now have the opportunity to schedule swim times to be more efficient using scheduling software, and we can insist on requiring life-jackets for non-swimmers. And we can eliminate programs that were not sustainable for our organizations or serving the needs of our community. During this time of evaluation and planning, it's important not to simply jump to "how", but to start with "why" we run our programs and to create the new normal we want to see.

# Appendix

The following section contains documents and signage that can be used or adapted for use at your facilities. As always, please consult local legal counsel familiar with your specific jurisdiction to ensure applicability of any waivers or signage.

Downloadable versions of individual files are linked to in this packet and available on our website.

## **Downloadable Versions**

[Adult Waiver \(Microsoft Word\)](#)

[Child Waiver \(Microsoft Word\)](#)

[Volunteer Waiver \(Microsoft Word\)](#)

[COVID-19 Signage \(8.5" x 11", PDF\)](#)

[COVID-19 Signage \(11" x 17', PDF\)](#)

[Staff Return to Work Questionnaire \(PDF\)](#)

[Sample Recall Notice \(Microsoft Word\)](#)

# Adult Participant Release & Waiver of Liability and Indemnity Agreement

**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY. THIS DOCUMENT EFFECTS YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS AND IS LEGALLY BINDING. BY SIGNING THIS AGREEMENT YOU ARE RELEASING [ORGANIZATION] FROM ALL LIABILITY AND FOREVER GIVING UP ANY CLAIMS THEREFORE**

## Assumption of Risk

I acknowledge and agree that any use of [Organization] facilities, services, equipment and premises ("Facilities") and any participation in [Organization] programs and activities ("Programs") comes with inherent risks including, but in no way limited to: (1) moderate and severe personal injury, (2) property damage, (3) disability, (4) death, and (5) sickness or disease. I voluntarily accept and assume full responsibility for these risks as well as any and all other risks of the use of Facilities and participation in Programs. I agree that I have full knowledge of the nature and extent of all such risks and am not relying on all such risks being described in this document.

## Waiver, Release, Indemnification & Covenant Not to Sue

In consideration of the use of Facilities and participation in Programs I, the undersigned, agree that [Organization], it's officers, directors, agents, employees, volunteers, insurers and representatives ("Releasees") will not be liable for any personal injury, property damage, disability, death, sickness or disease incurred by myself, my family members, dependents, or guests, including minors, however occurring including, but not limited to the negligence of Releasees. I understand that I will be solely responsible for any loss or damage, including personal injury, property damage, disability, death, sickness or disease sustained from the use of Facilities and participation in Programs.

I further agree, on behalf of myself and any and all legal successors and proxies, to release and **HEREBY DO RELEASE, WAIVE AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE** Releasees from any causes of action, claims, suits, liabilities or demands of any nature whatsoever including, but in no way limited to, claims of negligence, which I and any and all legal successors and proxies may have, now or in the future, against Releasees on account of personal injury, property damage, disability, death, sickness, diseases or accident of any kind, arising out of or in any way related to the use of Facilities or participation in Programs, whether that participation is supervised or unsupervised, however the injury or damage occurs, including, but not limited to the negligence of Releasees.

In further consideration of the use of Facilities and participation in Programs, I agree to **INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS** Releasees from any and all causes of action, claims, demands, losses, suits, liabilities or costs of any nature whatsoever, including claims of negligence, arising out of or in any way related to the use of Facilities and participation in Programs by myself, my family members, dependents or guests, including any minors.

Participant Signature

Participant Name (Print Clearly)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Minor Participant Waiver, Release, Indemnification of All Claims & Covenant Not to Sue

**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY. THIS DOCUMENT EFFECTS YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS AND IS LEGALLY BINDING. BY SIGNING THIS AGREEMENT YOU ARE RELEASING [ORGANIZATION] FROM ALL LIABILITY AND FOREVER GIVING UP ANY CLAIMS THEREFORE**

## Assumption of Risk

I, in my legal capacity as the parent/guardian of the minor named below ("Minor"), acknowledge and agree that any use of [Organization] facilities, services, equipment and premises ("Facilities") and any participation in [Organization] programs and activities ("Programs") comes with inherent risks including, but in no way limited to: (1) moderate and severe personal injury, (2) property damage, (3) disability, (4) death, and (5) sickness or disease. I voluntarily, for myself and Minor, accept and assume full responsibility for these risks as well as any and all other risks of the use of Facilities and participation in Programs. I agree that I have full knowledge of the nature and extent of all such risks and am not relying on all such risks being described in this document.

## Waiver, Release, Indemnification & Covenant Not to Sue

In consideration of Minor's use of Facilities and participation in Programs I, in my legal capacity as parent/guardian of Minor, agree on behalf of myself and Minor that [Organization], its officers, directors, agents, employees, volunteers, insurers and representatives ("Releasees") will not be liable for any personal injury, property damage, disability, death, sickness or disease incurred by Minor, however occurring including, but not limited to, the negligence of Releasees. I understand that Minor and I will be solely responsible for any loss or damage, including personal injury, property damage, disability, death, sickness or death sustained from the use of Facilities and participation in Programs.

I further agree, in my legal capacity as the parent/guardian of Minor, on behalf of Minor, myself, and any and all legal successors and proxies, to release and HEREBY DO RELEASE, WAIVE AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE Releasees from any causes of action, claims, suits, liabilities or demands of any nature whatsoever including, but in no way limited to, claims of negligence, which Minor, myself, and any and all legal successors and proxies may have, now or in the future, against Releasees on account of personal injury, property damage, disability, death, sickness, disease or accident of any kind, arising out of or in any way related to the use of Facilities or participation in Programs, whether that participation is supervised or unsupervised, however the injury or damage occurs, including, but not limited to, the negligence of Releasees.

In further consideration of the use of Facilities and participation in Programs, I, in my legal capacity as parent/guardian of Minor, agree on behalf of myself and Minor to INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS Releasees from any and all causes of action, claims, demands, losses, suits, liabilities or costs of any nature whatsoever, including claims of negligence, arising out of or in any way related to the use of Facilities and participation in Programs.

Minor Name (Print Clearly)

Date

---

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Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Name (Print Clearly)

---

---

# [Insert Organization]

## Volunteer Waiver and Release from Liability

### Volunteer Status Acknowledgement

I understand that, as a volunteer, I am in no way, shape or form an employee of [insert organization]. I understand and agree that I will not receive any compensation or benefit for my participation in volunteer activities, nor will I be eligible for any coverage under the Workers' Compensation laws of [insert state].

### Acknowledgment of Risk

I hereby acknowledge and agree that participation in volunteer activities comes with inherent risks. I have full knowledge and understanding of the inherent risks associated with volunteer activity participation, including but in no way limited to: (1) slips, trips, and falls, (2) lifting injuries, (3) athletic injuries, and (4) illness, including exposure to or infection with viruses or bacteria. I further acknowledge that the preceding list is not inclusive of all possible risks associated with volunteer participation and that said list in no way limits the operation of this Agreement.

### Coronavirus / COVID-19 Warning & Disclaimer

Coronavirus, COVID-19 is an **extremely contagious** virus that spreads easily through person-to-person contact. Federal and state authorities recommend social distancing as a mean to prevent the spread of the virus. **COVID-19 can lead to severe illness, personal injury, permanent disability, and death. Participating in [insert organization] programs or accessing [insert organization] facilities could increase the risk of contracting COVID-19.** [Insert organization] in no way warrants that COVID-19 infection will not occur through participation in [insert organization] programs of accessing [insert organization] facilities.

Initial

### Waiver, Release, Indemnification & Covenant Not to Sue

In consideration of my participation as a volunteer with [insert organization], I, \_\_\_\_\_, the undersigned participant, agree to release and on behalf of myself, my heirs, representatives, executors, administrators, and assigns, **HEREBY DO RELEASE** [insert organization], its officers, directors, employees, volunteers, agents, representatives and insurers ("Releasees") from any causes of action, claims, or demands of any nature whatsoever including, but in no way limited to, claims of negligence, which I, my heirs, representatives, executors, administrators and assigns may have, now or in the future, against [insert organization] on account of personal injury, property damage, death or accident of any kind, arising out of or in any way related to the use of [insert organization] facilities/equipment or participation in [insert organization] programs whether that participation is supervised or unsupervised, however the injury or damage occurs, including, but not limited to the negligence of Releasees

In consideration of my participation in volunteer activities, I, the undersigned participant, agree to INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS Releasees from any and all causes of action, claims, demands, losses, or costs of any nature whatsoever arising out of or in any way related to my participation in volunteer activities.

I hereby certify that I have full knowledge of the nature and extent of the risks inherent in participation in volunteer activities and that I am voluntarily assuming said risks. I understand that I will be solely responsible for any loss or damage, including personal injury, property damage, or death, I sustain while participating in volunteer activities and that by signing this agreement I HEREBY RELEASE Releasees of all liability for such loss, damage, or death. I further certify that I am in good health and that I have no conditions or impairments which would preclude my safe participation in volunteer activities.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

# **Warning/Disclaimer:** **COVID-19 Pandemic** **is Ongoing**

The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, is an **extremely contagious** virus that spreads easily through person-to-person contact.

Federal and state authorities recommend social distancing as a means to prevent the spread of the virus.

**COVID-19 can lead to severe illness, personal injury, permanent disability, and death.**

**Participating in this organization's programs or accessing our facilities could increase the risk of contracting COVID-19.**

This organization in no way warrants that COVID-19 infection will not occur through participation in our programs or accessing our facilities.

# Staff Return to Work Questionnaire

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

Use this form **ONLY** for employees/workers coming on-site, **NOT** to be used for remote employees/workers.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLNESS CHECKLIST					
Are you experiencing any of the following symptoms or combinations of symptoms?	Yes	No	N/A	How long have you experienced these symptoms?	Comments
<b>CDC - COVID-19 SYMPTOMS</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Cough	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Shortness of breath	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Or at least two of these symptoms?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Fever (100.4 or higher)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Chills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Repeated shaking with chills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Muscle pain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Headache	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Sore throat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
New loss of taste/smell	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Are you currently waiting for COVID-19 test results?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

SOCIAL DISTANCING & EMPLOYEE EXPOSURE					
Have you had any of these experiences?	Yes	No	N/A	Comments	
<b>Have you self-quarantined? If so, how many days and why?</b> (Remaining in your home and outdoor activities without coming closer than 6 feet from others)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
<b>Have you been exposed to <i>anyone</i> currently waiting for COVID-19 test results?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
<b>Have you been exposed to <i>anyone</i> who has tested positive for COVID-19?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	



## SOCIAL DISTANCING & EMPLOYEE EXPOSURE, CONTINUED

Have you been exposed to <i>anyone</i> with any of the following symptoms or combinations of symptoms?	Yes	No	N/A	How long have they experienced these symptoms?	Comments
<b>CDC - COVID-19 SYMPTOMS</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Cough	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Shortness of breath	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Or at least two of these symptoms?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Fever (100.4 or higher)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Chills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Repeated shaking with chills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Muscle pain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Headache	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Sore throat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
New loss of taste/smell	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Have you traveled outside your state or regional area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Do you have any additional information that is pertinent to you returning to the facility?</b>					
_____					
_____					

## HUMAN RESOURCES USE ONLY

**Notes:**

# Sample Recall Notice

## Recall Process

Please contact your state unemployment office for specific guidance in your state including requirements for employer to notify terminations to the state agency. There are jurisdictional requirements for recalling employees including specific language to be included; what constitutes adequate notification, proof of mailings, etc.

There are also federal and state unemployment tax implications for employers and possible unemployment take backs for the employee.

## Questions to Ask

- What are the guidelines and requirements for recalling furloughed employees?
- What constitutes adequate notice of recall?
- What are Employer requirements for documenting this process (proof of mailing, declinations to return to work, etc.)
- What is the Employer's responsibility to report terminations/failure to return to work?
- What are the federal unemployment tax act implications (FUTA)?
- What are the state unemployment tax act implications (SUTA)?

**DISCLAIMER:** *This Sample Recall Notice is provided as an example only and is not legal advice. You should consult with local counsel and state/county officials to ensure compliance with all laws and regulations.*

## Recall Notice

Date:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

We hope this notice finds you safe and well. As you know, due to the COVID-19 pandemic we were faced with very difficult decisions to reduce staff, including your furlough on [date furloughed]. We are pleased to notify you that [organization name] has work available and is recalling you from furlough, offering you back the position of [previous position/following position], with this letter as your Official Notice of Recall.

The mission of [organization name] has remained unchanged throughout this pandemic, and we are excited about the work and opportunities ahead. We would like you to resume work on [date] and report to [supervisor/manager name].

This letter supersedes any previous offer letter or terms of employment. Should you accept this offer of recall, the terms of your employment will be as follows:

Job Title:

Supervisor:

Responsibilities to include but not be limited to: [attach job description]

Salary or Hourly Wage: \$

Employment Classification: [full-time/part-time] and [exempt or non/exempt]

Employment is at will, meaning you are not guaranteed employment for any period of time and either the [organization name] or you can end the relationship at any time, with or without notice, and with or without cause.

Your seniority will not be affected by this brief furlough period, and your benefits will be restored without condition. Your previously accrued but unused paid time off and sick leave, if applicable, will also be available to you upon your return.

We're committed to doing everything we can to maintain a safe and healthy workplace. We will be orienting all returning staff on the new safety protocols that have been put in place. We are relying heavily on the CDC, OSHA, local health department information and The Redwoods Group in establishing safe working conditions and will continue our best efforts to keep the workplace safe.

To accept the position offered above and be recalled to work, please return a signed/e-signed and dated copy of this letter by [due date]. If this letter is not signed (or e-signed) and returned by that due date, we will assume you are turning down this offer to return to work and your employment with the [organization name] will be terminated.

You may contact me if you have any questions or concerns about our current safety procedures or your personal safety or if you need any type of assistance to be able to work.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Title

**Check one box below:**

- I accept the terms of this recall letter and will return to work.
- I decline recall and request termination of my employment (if signing electronically, type your name followed by e-signed".)

**Note:** The [unemployment agency] may expect you or [organization name] to report employment terminations. Please read and understand the rules so that you do not jeopardize your unemployment benefits. [See the attached Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) Employee Rights—Paid Sick leave and Expanded Family and Medical Leave Under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.]

Signature:

Name (print):

Date:

**Corporate office:**

2801 Slater Road, Suite 220  
Morrisville, NC 27560

Direct phone: 919.462.9730  
Toll-free: 800.463.8546  
Fax: 919.462.9727

[redwoodsgroup.com](http://redwoodsgroup.com)

