

YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities Camp FAQ's

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we determine how best to safely offer incredible camp experiences while following guidelines from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), American Camp Association (ACA), and state departments of health.

Are YMCA Camps open?

Out of an abundance of caution, our YMCA camps have been closed to the public since early March. The YMCA has been providing crisis response service (local meal deliveries, intervention services, and emergency daycare for essential workers). We have cancelled all camp programs until at least May 4, 2020 at our Minnesota Camps and through May 26 at our Wisconsin Camps due to Shelter in Place orders in the respective states. Anyone registered for a camp program within that timeframe should have received an email (to the address on the reservation).

We will be monitoring circumstances and adhering to guidance from the CDC, state governments, health officials and other experts to determine whether programs need to be cancelled beyond May. The health and safety of our community is our number one priority, and we are making choices with that in mind. If you were planning to attend a summer camp open house or parent info night, they will be taking place virtually. Please visit and follow our camp Facebook pages for more information.

Do YMCA Camps have any virtual opportunities to keep my kids engaged?

Yes! We are making sure all children and families who are home right now have plenty of opportunities for engaging in educational and recreational experiences. Each of our overnight camps and day camps have daily offerings on their camp Facebook and Instagram pages, so please follow us!

Are YMCA Camps planning to run this summer?

We are planning to provide children with what will surely be a much-needed, fun-filled summer camp experience; however, we recognize that if it is not safe to hold camp this summer, we may need to cancel or adjust the program in order to continue to prioritize the health of our campers and team members. We work with our state's Department of Health, our accrediting agency, the American Camp Association (ACA), and the CDC to ensure we are fully prepared to offer the same values-based, mission-driven summer camp experience that we have been providing for many years. We are hopeful to have decisions made about what summer may look like by early May once the ACA and CDC have released their recommendations.

How will you be screening campers and staff for COVID-19?

We follow all protocols and guidance we receive from health experts and know that it is possible that all campers and staff will be asked to maintain self-observation before coming to camp. We anticipate, like other protocols designed for safety, that we will ask participants about any recent travel both to and through places, their current health, and will do temperature checks before getting on the bus or upon arrival at camp, as well as checking for symptoms.

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

We will continue to adhere to guidance from the CDC, our state department of health and local officials. Any camper or staff that exhibits symptoms would immediately be separated from our camp population and isolated in a safe, dedicated space until we are able to have a caregiver pick them up from camp.

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

Prior to operating we will ensure that not only will we have protocols in place for our campers and team members, we recognize that additional training will be provided. Not only will we train on the health aspects of campers but we'll also train on cleaning and disinfection protocols, program changes to minimize spread, and outbreak response plans. These trainings will take place before any campers arrive and will be ongoing as health officials manage and provide new information regarding COVID-19.

How are you staying informed and up-to-date?

We are remaining informed by receiving timely updates from the American Camp Association, YUSA, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health Services, and industry experts.

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

We are making changes to our camp protocols which includes how campers and staff will be screened before coming to camp; all of our hygiene procedures; and extra vigilance around building, bunk and bathroom sanitation. There will be more handwashing and hand sanitizer stations located throughout camp and all will be required to do regular handwashing and good hygiene practices. Deep cleaning in our dining hall and other high traffic buildings at a higher frequency as well as deep cleaning of cabins between sessions. Food service will change to eliminating certain self-serve options, and large group gatherings are being adjusted to meet the current requirements of the CDC.

What is camp doing about any planned international trips during the season?

We are closely monitoring the guidelines given by the CDC, and the countries in which we operate. In case we need to cancel or postpone any trips for our campers, we will be in touch with our families well in advance with our plans.

What about out-of-camp trips? How will these change? We are actively managing travel restrictions in the areas we operate. If we are unable to run a trip based on a travel restriction, we will be in touch with our families in advance with our plans.

Will camps have international staff this summer?

In light of the current circumstances and guidance from government and health officials, the YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities is not hiring international camp staff for the summer of 2020. Our international camp staff add so much value to the culture of camp and it is our goal to move forward with these relationships in the future once it is safe to do so per government and health officials.

Teen Wilderness Specific FAQ's –Camp Menogyn and Camp Widjiwagan**What is camp doing about any planned out-of-state or international wilderness trips during the season?**

We are currently assessing the accessibility of all our out-of-state overnight trips, including park/wilderness area closures, impact on local emergency response services, CDC and state/provincial travel recommendations. In the event that we need to cancel or postpone any trips for our campers, we will be in touch with those families.

What will you do to prevent the spread of infection on a wilderness trip?

We recognize the inherent challenge of physical distancing while on a wilderness trip with a small group of people. We will be taking direction from the CDC on appropriate Covid-19 mitigation strategies in addition to our hygiene and sanitation practices.

What happens if a camper/trail guide in a group begins showing signs or symptoms of COVID-19?

In addition to our in-camp protocols around potential COVID-19 cases, we are developing procedures for the trail setting in consultation with the CDC, American Camp Association, and Minnesota Department of Health.

What is your cancellation policy?

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

- Donate: Instead of a refund, you could make it a donation to support the continued work of YMCA Camps.
- Deposit: Turn your refund into a credit on your Y account for a future program.
- Refund and donate: Do both. Consider taking a partial refund and making a partial donation.
- Full refund: We're glad to follow our COVID-19 refund policy, where you can get the full refund (including deposit).

Please contact our Customer Service Center at customerservice@ymcamn.org to assist with any cancellation questions.

Is there financial support available to help me pay for camp?

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

How is the YMCA responding to serve community needs during this crisis?

We have positioned our YMCA as a Community Response Hub offering life-saving programs and services. For more information, visit: <https://www.ymcamn.org/impact-summary>

How can I help?

We are beyond grateful to the members of our community – our alumni, guests, camper families, volunteers, and staff – who have recognized the challenges crises like this can pose to a human services organization regardless of their own hardships that they may be facing and have already supported us. For those that are able and interested, please [make a gift here](#). You can also see an updated Wish List located on GIVE pages of our camp websites. THANK YOU for your support of children and families during these uncertain times.