

Frequently Asked Questions on Keewaydin Covid-19 Preparedness Plans

1. *Is Keewaydin planning to open in the summer of 2021?*

Yes! We believe that we can operate our camps safely with the appropriate procedures and systems in place.

2. *What are the appropriate procedures and systems to keep camp safe?*

While no one can promise a 100% COVID-free environment, the key to preventing and mitigating spread in the camp environment is being diligent in multi-layered public health interventions. These interventions include low-risk pre-camp behaviors, testing, proper indoor ventilation and being outside as much as possible, organizing ourselves into small groups or cohorts, wearing masks when necessary, physically distancing and hand/cough hygiene.

3. *What will your testing policy and system be?*

The technology of Covid-19 testing continues to evolve, so it remains to be seen the exact form that our testing will take. Nevertheless, we assume that we will be asking our families and staff to change their pre-camp behaviors for some period of time before coming to camp and to get tested shortly before arriving at camp. Only staff and campers with a negative result on a diagnostic test will be allowed to come to camp. There will likely be testing throughout the summer at camp, but the exact nature of that remains to be determined.

4. *What does a cohort system mean and why does this help?*

A cohort system means breaking the camp into smaller sections (a.k.a. cohorts)—roughly sections of 16-20—and having those cohort groups live, eat and, initially, do their activities together, physically distanced from other cohort groups. This becomes simplified when our sections head out on their canoe trips. The advantage of operating in cohorts is that if someone does test positive during the summer, it facilitates effective contact tracing and quarantining. As the summer progresses and the camp remains healthy, gradually cohort groups can merge until, eventually, we can operate as a “whole” camp.

5. *Is mask wearing necessary at camp?*

Yes. While campers are operating just within their cohort—in their tent or cabin, or in activities, such as packing for trip, or learning camping skills, with just their cohort—they will not have to wear masks. A cohort will be considered like a family. But there will be many situations where the intermingling of cohorts will be inevitable (or possible) that will require mask wearing and physical distancing (e.g. using the bathrooms, meetings with the entire age group).

6. *What physical changes are you planning to make camp safer?*

The good fortune of our program is that we will not need to make major changes to our facilities to keep campers and staff safe. We will be making a few changes to enhance hygiene and air flow.

- We will construct additional handwashing stations near the Keewaydin dining hall.
- We will be adding portable handwashing bags to each sections equipment.
- We will be adding screen doors to more cabins for increased air flow.

7. What resources are you using to develop your Covid-19 preparedness plans?

- We have hired Dr. Laura Blaisdell as a consultant. Dr. Blaisdell MD/MPH, FAAP is a pediatrician with a public health degree focused on infectious disease. As an expert author of *The Field Guide for Summer Camps*, she is one of the lead consulting physicians for the American Camp Association (ACA). For nearly 20 years she has been the Medical Director for Camp Winnebago in Maine.
- We have hired Tom Appleyard, a management consultant from Toronto, who specializes in crisis/risk management and pandemic planning. Tom has been working with the OCA Covid-19 Task Force, and will be supporting Keewaydin in helping create a plan for operating and advocating our position as a camp.
- We consult regularly with peer leaders from the OCA, the VCA (Vermont Camp Association) and a group of Lake Temagami camp directors.
- Finally, we consult with a Keewaydin network of people with expertise in testing, pediatrics, and infectious disease.

8. Is your Covid-19 preparedness plan 100% complete?

No. While there is much that we know and much that we have already planned for, we also know that we are going to learn more over the next few months that will help us finalize our plans. We expect that we will have our plans fully in place by the spring.