

STAY SAFE MN



# Stay Safe Guidance for Campgrounds

## Background

The purpose of this document is to provide direction and information about best practices for Minnesota developed campground operators as they operate facilities in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidelines in this document are minimum actions to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic. Operators are encouraged to develop and enact additional operational policies to address specific campground needs and operational constraints, as necessary. Operators must comply with the requirements of this guidance, in addition to the [Outdoor Recreation and Facilities Guidelines](#) and the requirements of [Executive Order 21-11](#), as amended by [Executive Order 21-21](#) (the EO).

## Recommendations to prevent the spread of COVID-19

COVID-19 is primarily spread through respiratory droplets, so the risk of COVID-19 transmission increases when people gather with other households. Several key strategies can reduce the risk of getting sick or transmitting COVID-19:

- Wear a well-fitting face covering. See [Frequently Asked Questions About the Requirement to Wear Face Coverings](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecoverfaq.html) ([www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecoverfaq.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecoverfaq.html)).
- Keep at least 6 feet of physical distance from other households and wash hands often.
- Get tested. See [COVID-19 Testing](#) for information about who should get tested and how to get a test.

- Stay home if you are sick or were exposed to COVID-19. See [If You Are Sick: COVID-19 and Quarantine Guidance for COVID-19](#).
- Get vaccinated. See the [MDH COVID-19 Vaccine](#) webpage.
- Work from home. Working from home is strongly recommended and businesses are strongly encouraged to allow employees to work from home when possible. Employers must provide reasonable accommodations as required under existing federal and state law. Employers are strongly encouraged to provide reasonable accommodations to employees with one or more members of their household who have underlying medical conditions and who are unable to be vaccinated.

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## GUIDELINES FOR CAMPGROUND OPERATORS

### Managing availability and safe operation of facilities

1. **Required Preparedness Plan.** Campground operators must develop and implement a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan to manage exposure to the virus. Refer to the [Stay Safe Guidance for All Business Entities](#) on [Stay Safe MN](#).
2. **Campground capacity.** Per existing MDH rules, campground maximum occupancy must be based on the number of bathrooms open and available. For more information on toilet and bathing requirements at recreational campgrounds see [MN Rules 4630.0900](#). Operators should also take into account accessibility compliance, which may be affected by bathroom availability.
3. **Common spaces, facilities, and services.** The requirements that apply to communal services and amenities, such as visitor centers, amphitheatres, large pavilions, group centers, communal fire rings, and other facilities that congregate people depend on the setting (i.e. indoors or outdoors) and the nature of the activity or service being provided.
  - Follow the requirements identified in the [Stay Safe Guidance for All Business Entities](#) and the [Outdoor Recreation and Facilities Guidelines](#), both of which have different requirements for indoor and outdoor settings.
  - Food and beverage operations are subject to the [Stay Safe Guidance for Restaurants and Bars](#).
  - Retail services are subject to the [Stay Safe Guidance for Retail Businesses](#).
  - Rental of outdoor recreational equipment is subject to the [Outdoor Recreation and Facilities Guidelines](#).
  - Entertainment activities or events may occur subject to the requirements for venues in the EO and the applicable [Stay Safe Guidance for Entertainment and Meeting Venues](#).



- The operation of public swimming pools is subject to the [COVID-19 Preparedness Plan Guidance for Public Swimming Pools](#).
  - Fitness centers and exercise rooms are subject to the [Stay Safe Guidance for Gyms, Studios and Fitness Centers](#).
  - Guided and instructional outdoor recreation services are subject to the relevant group size limit (50 people for any portion of the service delivered indoors; no limit outdoors) and other requirements found in the [Outdoor Recreation and Facilities Guidelines](#).
  - Youth programming, including overnight camps, is subject to the [child care and youth-serving programs section](#) of MDH's [Schools and Child Care: COVID-19](#) web page.
  - Private parties or celebrations held in a venue (e.g. visitor center or pavilion) are subject to the appropriate [Stay Safe Guidance for Entertainment and Meeting Venues](#).
  - All other indoor common spaces that are not addressed above must adhere to the social gathering limit of no more than 50 people indoors and follow the requirements for managing occupancy in the [COVID-19 Preparedness Plan Guidance: Requirements for Indoor Venues](#).
    - Social gatherings are groups of people who are not members of the same household, congregated together for a common or coordinated social, community, or leisure purpose.
4. **Cleaning of facilities.** Developed campground operators must develop cleaning protocols based on MDH and CDC guidelines.
- Establish a regular schedule and checklist for cleaning and disinfecting commonly touched surfaces (doorknobs, counters, handrails, etc.), shared items, and high traffic areas. Visibly post general information about cleaning protocols and hand washing so visitors know what to expect (e.g., restrooms will be open to the public and cleaned a certain number of times per day).
  - Follow CDC's [Guidance on Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#). Select and use effective and safe supplies to clean and disinfect. These [EPA-registered household disinfectants](#) are recommended by the CDC for cleaning.
5. **Lodging facilities.** Camper cabins, yurts, lodges and other overnight facilities may be open consistent with MDH and CDC guidelines. Operators will have to determine appropriate cleaning procedures based on the amenities, types of surfaces, and items within lodging units and document them in their COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. Please see the [COVID-19 Guidance for Hotel Managers and Owners](#) for additional recommendations.
6. **Staying informed.** Regularly consult MDH, CDC and [Stay Safe MN](#) guidance for businesses and organizations, as well as the DNR/MDH Outdoor Recreation Guidelines, for any updated information on requirements and best practices to minimize the risk of COVID-19 spread.



## Managing interactions among visitors and staff

### Requirements

1. **COVID-19 screening.** Establish and implement health screening for staff and volunteers upon or prior to arrival at a work location. See MDH's [Visitor and Employee Health Screening Checklist](#). Staff and volunteers whose responses to the health screening indicates they are potentially infectious must stay or be sent home and follow the information on the State of Minnesota's [Get Tested](#) web site and MDH's guidelines for COVID-19: When to Return to Work on [Businesses and Employers: COVID-19](#). Also establish and implement procedures for addressing visitors who may be potentially infectious. See the applicable [Stay Safe Guidance for All Business Entities](#) for more information about health screening.
2. **Personal protective equipment.** Provide staff and volunteers with personal protective equipment such as gloves, goggles, face shields, and face coverings as appropriate for the activity being performed.
3. **Follow face covering requirements.** As of July 25, 2020, people over age 5 in Minnesota are required to wear a face covering in all indoor businesses and public indoor spaces in accordance with [Executive Order 20-81](#). Additionally, workers (including both staff and volunteers) are required to wear a face covering when working outdoors in situations where social distancing cannot be maintained.
  - Executive Order 20-81 includes exemptions for people who are unable to wear or tolerate a face covering due to a medical or mental health condition or other reasons. There are also situations in which a face covering may be temporarily removed or where face coverings are not required. For example, a person may temporarily remove their face covering when presenting, eating, or communicating with an individual who is deaf or hearing impaired.
  - Face coverings are strongly encouraged for people participating in outdoor recreational activities when social distancing between households is not possible or is difficult to maintain.
  - Industry guidance also establishes sector-specific face covering requirements, and individuals must follow these requirements when in those settings. For example, face coverings are required outdoors at all times for patrons of entertainment venues with more than 500 people in attendance. See the [Stay Safe Guidance for Entertainment and Meeting Venues](#).

- Face coverings are **NOT a replacement for social distancing**.
  - For more information see [Face Covering Requirements and Recommendations under Executive Order 20-81](#) and [MDH Facemasks and Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#).
4. **Staff and volunteer training.** Train staff and volunteers, such as campground hosts, on indoor social distancing, face covering and cleaning requirements, as well as any procedural changes for routine operations, emergency situations, or weather emergency alerts. Ensure that emergency action plans are updated to reflect any facility closures, operational changes, and revised emergency weather procedures.

## Recommendations

1. **Visitor transactions.** Consider providing the option of online payments or on-site pay stations for handling campsite reservations, fees, and permits.
2. **Consistent information.** Develop and deploy clear and consistent messaging for visitors on social distancing, face coverings, hand washing/sanitizing, facility closures, building and site capacity limits, and expectations for visitor behavior. Some helpful resources include the following:
  - [MDH Materials and Resources](#)
  - [CDC Communication Resources](#)

## Guidelines for Visitors

Consistent messaging will help visitors effectively plan and prepare for their visit. Information distribution methods may include social media, news releases, e-mails sent to campers, and on-site postings, among other methods.

Campground visitors should:

1. **Stay home if sick.** Anyone with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (including fever, cough, or difficulty breathing) should stay home and follow the information on the State of Minnesota's [Get Tested](#) web site and [CDC's What to Do If You Are Sick](#).
2. **Plan ahead.** When you are able, make reservations and purchase permits, firewood, ice and other items online or by phone before you arrive on site. Cash-less and minimal-contact transactions are becoming a common operating procedure in many establishments to avoid lines and person-to-person interactions.
3. **Be self-sufficient.** For example, arrive prepared for the weather you may encounter, and bring your own soap, surface disinfectant supplies, hand sanitizer, face covering, paper towels/hand towels and toilet paper just to be sure.
4. **Practice social distancing.** Consistently maintain six feet of social distancing from members of different households in indoor public settings. Social distancing is also recommended in outdoor public settings as a means of reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission. To ensure that six feet of



social distancing can be maintained, it is best to set up your campsite—sleeping, campfire and eating areas—to maximize distance from adjacent campsites that host people from different households. Social distancing is also important at bathrooms, pay stations, campfires, trails and any other areas where you may encounter people from different households.

5. **Follow face covering requirements.** As of July 25, 2020, people over age 5 in Minnesota are required to wear a face covering in all indoor businesses and public indoor spaces in accordance with [Executive Order 20-81](#). Additionally, workers are required to wear a face covering when working outdoors in situations where social distancing cannot be maintained.
  - Executive Order 20-81 includes exemptions for people who are unable to wear or tolerate a face covering due to a medical or mental health condition or other reasons. There are also situations in which a face covering may be temporarily removed or where face coverings are not required. For example, a person may temporarily remove their face covering when presenting, eating, or communicating with an individual who is deaf or hearing impaired.
  - Face coverings are strongly encouraged, but not required, for people participating in outdoor recreational activities when social distancing between households is not possible or is difficult to maintain.
  - Industry guidance also establishes sector-specific face covering requirements, and individuals must follow these requirements when in those settings. For example, face coverings are required outdoors at all times for patrons of entertainment venues in the [Stay Safe Guidance for Entertainment and Meeting Venues](#).
  - Face coverings are **NOT a replacement for social distancing**.
  - For more information see [Face Covering Requirements and Recommendations under Executive Order 20-81](#) and [MDH Facemasks and Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#).
  
6. **Know before you go.** Plan ahead for your visit. Ensure that you have maps of the area downloaded or printed before you leave home, in case they are not available on site. Check online resources for updated information about rules, facility closures and program availability so you know what to expect when you arrive.
  
7. **Follow the rules.** Follow all campground rules and instructions, whether given in writing or verbally, that protect your safety and the safety of others. These rules and instructions will likely include facility-specific direction about things such as:
  - Wearing face coverings in indoor public settings, such as within bathrooms, visitor centers and ranger stations.
  - Observing cleaning protocols for self-service facilities and amenities before and after using them.



- Maintaining social distancing among members of different households and observing gathering-size limitations in indoor public settings.
- Following directional signage – e.g., wait your turn and capacity limits – designed to allow for social distancing in buildings.

**8. Be well informed.**

- Visit Minnesota’s [COVID-19 response](#) web site, [Stay Safe MN](#) and [MDH guidelines](#) for information and tips to help keep yourself, your family, and the community healthy.
- Visit the [Outdoor Recreation and Facilities Guidelines](#) for up-to-date Outdoor Recreation Guidelines.

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## Resources

EPA-approved Cleaning and Disinfecting Supplies– [Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools and Homes | Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) | US EPA](#)

Face Covering Requirements and Recommendations under Executive Order 20-81 – [health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecover.html](http://health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecover.html)

COVID-19 Guidance for Hotel Managers and Owners – [health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/lodgingcleaning.pdf](http://health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/lodgingcleaning.pdf)

MDH Facemasks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – [health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html#masks](http://health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html#masks)

Minnesota Administrative Rules for Toilet, Bathing and Laundry Facilities – [revisor.mn.gov/rules/4630.0900/](http://revisor.mn.gov/rules/4630.0900/)

Minnesota Department of Health – [health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html](http://health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html)

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry Updates, Templates and Instructions – [dli.mn.gov/updates](http://dli.mn.gov/updates)

National Park Service Coronavirus Updates – [nps.gov/aboutus/news/public-health-update.htm](http://nps.gov/aboutus/news/public-health-update.htm)

State of Minnesota Executive Orders – [mn.gov/governor/news/executiveorders.jsp](http://mn.gov/governor/news/executiveorders.jsp)

State of Minnesota Get Tested web site – <https://mn.gov/covid19/get-tested/index.jsp>

State of Minnesota Outdoor Recreation Guidelines – [dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/covid-19-outdoor-recreation-guidelines.html](http://dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/covid-19-outdoor-recreation-guidelines.html)

Stay Safe MN – <https://staysafe.mn.gov/>

Information for Individuals and Families – <https://staysafe.mn.gov/individuals-families/index.jsp>

Information for Businesses and Organizations – <https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/index.jsp>

U.S. Forest Service Coronavirus Updates – [fs.usda.gov/about-agency/covid19-updates](http://fs.usda.gov/about-agency/covid19-updates)



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05/7/2021