

# Northern Lights Council Summer Camps COVID-19 Update

Current as of 5.29.2020 – SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Your safety and the safety of all our members, volunteers, and employees is the Northern Lights Council top priority. In light of COVID-19, we are taking additional precautions at camp on top of our long-established health and safety measures.

Please note that the COVID-19 situation is still fluid, and changes are to be expected. We will be releasing additional information during the week of June 1-5.

Here is some information we can release now to help with your planning:

## Pre-Camp Preparations for Packs and Troops

1. To speed up the check-in process units are asked to collect copies of their unit's Medical Forms and mail to Camp Wilderness for Health Lodge staff review prior to your arrival. Instructions on this process can be found [here](#).
2. Review and become familiar with the [Pre-Event Medical Screen Checklist](#).
  - a. Families should monitor any family members going to camp for 14 days prior to the start of their session.
  - b. Pack and Troop leaders should go through the screening questions before leaving on the departure date for camp.
  - c. Please note, if someone is unable to pass the screening questions at camp that individual, **as well as all occupants in the vehicle they traveled in**, will be asked to leave camp.
3. Those who are considered high risk according to the CDC should consult with your health care provider before attending camp.
4. Campers this summer should pack additional supplies that make them more comfortable. These supplies could include hand sanitizer and face coverings.
5. We are still awaiting guidance on tenting requirements. If two people per tent are allowed, they will be expected to sleep head to foot. If possible, units could supplement their tents with campers' personal tents and consider having siblings or youth / parent tenting assignments.

## Check-in Day Processes

1. Units will be allowed to arrive earlier on check-in day. Exact times camp will open will be communicated later.
2. Units arriving to camp will be greeted at the Andrew Nelson Welcome Center on the main road into camp.
3. The Health Screening and check-in will take place at the Andrew Nelson Welcome Center. **Each person in the vehicle should have a copy of their health form physically on them**, even if the forms were mailed in prior to camp. This will greatly speed up the check in process.
4. The Waterfront will call campsites down one by one to complete the safety orientation and swim tests.

## What to Expect While at Camp

1. Upon entering or leaving a building or program area campers and staff will be asked to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer.
2. Shower facilities and bathrooms will be thoroughly disinfected twice a day.
3. Camp Staff will clean their areas, program equipment, and high use areas between each session.
4. **Visitors will not be allowed this summer other than scheduled delivery and sanitation services.**

5. Social distancing will be encouraged amongst all staff and campers. We will be limiting the number of people who can gather in one place and will limit indoor interactions. When we are required to be indoors, and social distancing is not possible, we will require the use of masks. Campers will not otherwise be required to wear a mask.
6. If severe weather is approaching, we will use the storm shelters. **Campers will be required to wear a mask while in the shelter.** Masks will be provided for those who do not bring one.
7. We are still finalizing our food service plans for the summer. We are evaluating multiple scenarios using CDC guidelines to limit group size and cross contamination of common use items (salad bar ladles, toasters, beverage dispensers, etc.). **We will still offer a hot meal service prepared in the Dining Hall at Camp Wilderness** and are determining the best method to serve the food. Those who want to prepare food Patrol Style will still be able to do so.

### **Program Changes**

1. We are taking a close look at our merit badges, activities, and programs to evaluate the effectiveness of social distancing and guidelines from the Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control, and American Camp Association. There will be changes to our schedule this summer that will be released June 5.
2. We expect to see requirements limiting group sizes. Currently, in MN, groups cannot exceed 10 participants. The small groups will be allowed to intermingle with select other groups on a limited basis. To visualize this, imagine patrols or dens at a troop or pack meeting. It is important to note that for 110 years the BSA program has been modeled on this very concept, the Patrol Method.
3. At Cub Adventure Camp groups will rotate through program areas as packs rather than dens. The new program schedule will be released June 5.
4. At the Scouts BSA Camp the groups will have an assigned rotation to visit each of the six program areas. Once there, the Scouts will have an opportunity to choose between 3-5 different merit badges or activities. This schedule will be released June 5.
5. Multiple Opening Campfires will be scheduled and **units will be assigned to a specific time to attend** to reduce the amount of people at the campfire ring any given time.
6. Daily Flag Ceremonies will take place in your campsite. **Daily updates and tidbits will be sent out through Remind text messages, on the council website, and through an AM radio station located at camp.**
7. All offsite programs for this summer will be canceled.
8. Working with our partners at Northern Tier we will coordinate with unit leadership of the Northern Tier crews on arrival and departure procedures for Northern Tier.

These precautions are important, but they do not remove the potential for exposure to COVID-19 or any other illness while at camp. Some people with COVID-19 show no signs or symptoms of illness but can still spread the virus, and people may be contagious before their symptoms occur. These factors mean that an infected person may pass the required health screenings and be allowed into camp.

We also know the very nature of camp makes social distancing difficult in many situations and impossible in others.

We know that each staff member, volunteer, and Scouting family has a unique set of circumstances to consider when deciding whether to attend camp. We hope this information will be helpful as you make those choices.

### **Upcoming Dates**

1. June 7<sup>th</sup> – Extended deadline for ordering the **2020 camp t-shirt**
2. June 15<sup>th</sup> – **Campership** deadline for applying for financial assistance
3. July 1<sup>st</sup> – Pay in full deadline for early bird pricing for Cub Adventure and Scouts BSA Camp

5/12/2020

Dear Contingent Leaders, Parents, and Scouts:

In our last communication at the end of April we indicated that we would be meeting to finalize our 2020 Summer schedule for Camp Wilderness. We met yesterday and based on information from the CDC, MN Department of Health, American Camp Association, and the National Council of the BSA we have decided that we must cancel our June sessions and reschedule the opening of camp for the week of July 5.

The new Scouts BSA Camping season will be 5 weeks starting July 5 and ending August 8.

- Session 1 July 5-11
- Session 2 July 12-18
- Session 3 July 19-25
- Session 4 July 26-August 1
- Session 5 August 2-August 8 **(New)**

Troops signed up for a June camp session should reach out to Emilie Frenzel at your earliest convenience via email at [emilie.frenzel@scouting.org](mailto:emilie.frenzel@scouting.org) or phone (701-293-5011) to select a different session of camp and update your group's estimated contingent size.

We understand that there has been a great deal of uncertainty the past 6 to 8 weeks which has made it more difficult for all of us to plan. We want you to know 2 things. First, we are 100% committed to having summer camp in July & August. Second, it will be Awesome.

Although our dates are now set, there is still some uncertainty in our location. In the outside chance that we will not be able to have camp at Wilderness in July & August, we may need to move our summer camp to Heart Butte Scout Reservation. This property is southwest of Bismarck, easily accessible from I94, and will allow us to offer most of the same programs that we deliver at Camp Wilderness. The biggest difference will be that we will likely have to change to some form of campsite dining such as Patrol Cooking or hot food delivered to your site. We plan to make and communicate a final decision on or before June 5<sup>th</sup> in advance of the Merit Badge sign up.

Thank you for choosing the Northern Lights Council for your Summer Adventure. Lord Baden Powell once wrote: *"...the only reason Boys should meet indoors, is to plan to go outside."* We are committed to helping you deliver on that promise this summer! Please let us know if you have any questions.