



## **Health Protocols and COVID-19 Response Plan Youth Programming Updated February 2023**

We have been working hard over the last three years to ensure that our programs meet the best possible health and safety practices in response to COVID-19 and other communicable diseases. Our Health Protocols are created and modified according to licensing regulations set by the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, the Door County Health Department, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, and the Centers for Disease Control. Due to the changing nature of COVID-19 and our knowledge about it, these policies are subject to change.

### **Goals for 2023**

- Keep all students and staff physically safe
- Care for the social-emotional needs of students and staff
- Modify our morning routines to adjust our program in response to COVID-19
- Modify our spaces and protocols as needed.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has recommended that all K-12 schools and camps in Wisconsin create plans based on the following assumptions:

### **The virus remains in circulation as schools and camps are serving a mixed population of both fully vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals.**

- The CDC and DHS continue to stress the importance of layered mitigation strategies in schools and camps.
- Children and staff with significant health conditions will continue to be especially vulnerable during this time
- Reinforcing prevention behaviors will be essential strategies in slowing the spread of this and other infectious diseases
- Frequent cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces and materials are needed
- Children and staff showing symptoms of contagious respiratory illness should stay home

### **Facemasks**

- **Facemasks are currently optional for children over the age of two when programming is outdoors and indoors.**

- **Children are required to come to school with 2 personal facemasks.** Their masks should be accessible to them, such as in an outside coat pocket. These masks must be accessible in the event that our students are exposed to illness, or if one of our students or teachers has tested positive for COVID 19 and has exposed our students.
- Facemasks will only remain optional while Door County's COVID threshold level remains low and medium\*. The current masking policy is subject to change if threshold levels change. Staff will continue to monitor the threshold levels and notify parents of any changes to masking policy.

\*For more information about the Door County COVID threshold visit: <https://www.co.door.wi.gov/909/Door-County-COVID-19-Situation-Update>. We will reference this regularly to ensure we are following the necessary protocols due to our community situation.

## **Modifications to our Program**

### **>Nature is our Primary Classroom**

We are implementing a **predominately outdoor model** for youth programs and will only go indoors if the wind chill temperature (according to the National Weather Service [NOAA]) unexpectedly goes below zero, or when there is lightning in the area. If thunderstorms, high winds, or extreme cold (wind chill below zero) are predicted, class will be cancelled by 7 AM via email notification. Our indoor classroom will be reserved for bathroom visits and as a place to shelter from unexpected severe weather.

### **>Morning Routine and Bathroom –**

Parents and caregivers should take their child to the bathroom right before leaving home.

- Children will come to class fully dressed in outdoor clothing and will begin the morning in the outdoor play area and will have Circle Time. We cannot guarantee that children will be 6 feet apart at any time during programming.

## Guidelines for Keeping Children Home

We are following all CDC guidelines for COVID 19 protocols. These guidelines are subject to change throughout the season, and if they do, we will notify families as soon as we receive the updates. As of 2.27.2023, the CDC guidelines for COVID 19 Isolation are as follows:



### When to Isolate

Regardless of vaccination status, **you should isolate from others when you have COVID-19.**

You should also isolate if **you are sick and suspect that you have COVID-19 but do not yet have [test](#) results.** If your results are positive, follow the full isolation recommendations below. If your results are negative, you can end your isolation.



IF YOU TEST

**Negative**

You can end your isolation



IF YOU TEST

**Positive**

Follow the full isolation recommendations below

When you have COVID-19, isolation is counted in days, as follows:

#### If you had no symptoms

- **Day 0 is the day you were tested** (not the day you received your positive test result)
- **Day 1 is the first full day** following the day you were tested
- If you develop [symptoms](#) within 10 days of when you were tested, the **clock restarts at day 0 on the day of symptom onset**

#### If you had symptoms

- **Day 0 of isolation is the day of symptom onset,** regardless of when you tested positive
- **Day 1 is the first full day** after the day your [symptoms](#) started



## Isolation

If you test positive for COVID-19, **stay home for at least 5 days and isolate from others in your home.**

You are **likely most infectious during these first 5 days.**

- **Wear a high-quality mask** if you must be around others at home and in public.
- Do not go places where you are unable to wear a mask. For travel guidance, see CDC's [Travel webpage](#).
- [Do not travel](#).
- Stay home and separate from others as much as possible.
- Use a separate bathroom, if possible.
- Take steps to [improve ventilation](#) at home, if possible.
- Don't share personal household items, like cups, towels, and utensils.
- Monitor your [symptoms](#). If you have an [emergency warning sign](#) (like trouble breathing), seek emergency medical care immediately.
- Learn more about [what to do if you have COVID-19](#).



## Ending Isolation

**End isolation based on how serious your COVID-19 symptoms were.** Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation.

### If you had no symptoms

You may end isolation after day 5.

### If you had symptoms and:

#### Your symptoms are improving

You **may end isolation after day 5** if:

- You are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication).

#### Your symptoms are not improving

**Continue to isolate until:**

- You are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication).
- Your symptoms are improving. <sup>1</sup>

If you had symptoms and had:

**Moderate illness (you experienced shortness of breath or had difficulty breathing)**

You need to **isolate through day 10**.

**Severe illness (you were hospitalized) or have a weakened immune system**

- You need to **isolate through day 10**.
- **Consult your doctor** before ending isolation.
- Ending isolation without a viral test may not be an option for you.

If you are unsure if your symptoms are moderate or severe or if you have a weakened immune system, talk to a healthcare provider for further guidance.

Regardless of when you end isolation

Until at least day 11:

- Avoid being around people who are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19.
- Remember to wear a high-quality mask when indoors around others at home and in public.
- Do not go places where you are unable to wear a mask until you are able to discontinue masking (see below).
- For travel guidance, see CDC's [Travel webpage](#).



## Removing Your Mask

**After you have ended isolation, when you are feeling better** (no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and symptoms improving),

- Wear your mask through day 10.

**OR**

- If you have access to antigen tests, you should consider using them. With two sequential negative tests 48 hours apart, you may remove your mask sooner than day 10.

Note: If your antigen test results<sup>1</sup> are positive, you may still be infectious. You should continue wearing a mask and wait at least 48 hours before taking another test. Continue taking antigen tests at least 48 hours apart until you have two sequential negative results. This may mean you need to continue wearing a mask and testing beyond day 10.

**After you have ended isolation, if your COVID-19 symptoms recur or worsen**, restart your isolation at day 0. Talk to a healthcare provider if you have questions about your symptoms or when to end isolation.

<sup>[1]</sup> As noted in the Food and Drug Administration labeling for authorized over-the-counter antigen tests, negative test results do not rule out SARS-CoV-2 infection and should not be used as the sole basis for treatment or patient management decisions, including infection control decisions.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Your child **MUST BE** fever-free, vomit free, and diarrhea free for 72 hours after isolation before returning to school and should receive a negative COVID-19 test if showing signs of COVID 19.

**You should keep your child at home if:**

**Showing Symptoms of Illness and/or COVID-19:**

- Your child has a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea. Fever reducing medication may not be used when determining a child's health. Your child should be fever-free, vomit free, and diarrhea free for 72 hours before returning and should receive a negative COVID-19 test.
- Your child is experiencing recognizable symptoms of COVID-19, including:
  - Any ONE of the following symptoms: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, diarrhea or vomiting, loss of taste or smell, atypical headache, muscle pain or body aches, sore throat, unusual fatigue, nausea, or congestion/ runny nose. This does not apply to individuals with a doctor's note stating that the child does not have COVID-19. \*

**\* Please let us know of any chronic illnesses or conditions your child has on their enrollment form prior to the start of class, including allergies. If your child has ANY symptoms of illness that we were not previously made aware of, they will be sent home for the safety of others.**

**Exposure:**

- If your child is directly exposed to COVID-19, they will not be required to isolate as recommended by the CDC unless they develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19. However, your child is required to wear a mask for 10 days and take a COVID-19 test 5 days after exposure.
  - An exposed person is anyone who has been within 6 feet of someone who tested positive for COVID-19 for a cumulative time of fifteen minutes or more with or without a mask.
  - The date of your exposure is considered day 0. Day 1 is the first full day after your last contact with a person who has had COVID-19.
  - Read the current CDC Guidelines on exposure here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/if-you-were-exposed.html>

**Additionally:**

- Your child should remain home if you are awaiting results of a COVID-19 test
- **We also request that you keep your child at home if they are experiencing any symptoms of a contagious illness.** Our goal is to avoid spreading illness of any kind to the children and adults in our program, which means keeping sick children and adults at home. This includes but is not limited to symptoms of a cold, stomach illness, or flu-like illnesses.
- The Wisconsin Department of Health Services recommends that anyone travelling domestically outside of the state of Wisconsin wears a mask in crowded, public spaces such as airports and airplanes, monitor for COVID-19 symptoms, and tests before and after travel, regardless of vaccination status. We recommend anyone participating in our programming who has travelled in the last 5 days follow these guidelines.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/masks-public-transportation.html>  
<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/travel.htm>

Our staff will follow these same guidelines in the case of illness and/or exposure. If a teacher becomes ill and we are unable to secure a substitute, programming will be canceled, and you will be notified by 7AM.

**Actions Taken if a Child Develop Symptoms of COVID-19 at The Ridges**

We will follow our regular protocols but will take the additional step of informing the Door County Health Department.

- Remove the child from their group and relocate them to an isolated area with a member of staff; child and staff will wear facemasks
- Call the parent/guardian to pick up the child
- Report the event to the Executive Director
- Notify all families in that class of the event, without identifying the individual by name.

## **In Case Someone in the Program Tests Positive**

- If anyone in our program tests positive for COVID-19, we will notify all the families in the program. We will not identify the individual by name.
- We will follow the guidance of the Door County Health Department and the CDC, which currently advises:
- Teachers and students in the class, as well as anyone else exposed in the program, are required to wear a mask for 10 days and take a COVID-19 test 5 days after exposure.
- Close contacts must follow the masking protocols outlined previously in this document under “Guidelines for Keeping Your Child Home”.
- If a person in our program tests positive, but shows no symptoms, they may return once they have completed the 5 days at home isolation, have received a negative COVID-19 test result, and do not show any symptoms of illness. The person must continue to wear a mask for 5 additional days.
- If a person in our program tests positive and *is symptomatic*, the person must remain home until they are symptom free for a **full 24 hours** post isolation without the use of symptom reducing medications, and 72 hours fever, diarrhea, and vomit free without the use of symptom reducing medications.

**We understand that no one gets sick on purpose. We ask for patience and understanding should anyone in our program test positive to COVID-19, just as we would any illness.**