

2022 COVID-19 Policies for All Scouts, Leaders, Staff and Parents

THIS INFORMATION IS DISTRIBUTED TO ALL UNIT LEADERS ATTENDING CAMP GEIGER. LEADERS MUST PROVIDE A COPY OF THIS POLICY TO ALL SCOUTS AND THEIR PARENTS.

Dear Scout Leaders, Scouts, Parents, Camp Staff, and Mic-O-Say Leadership,

Camp Geiger was one of the few Scout camps in the nation to operate in 2020. Our COVID mitigation program was successful and we were able to complete the abridged camping season without any known cases of COVID-19 at camp. In 2021, the pandemic had changed greatly and the Delta variant introduced a new COVID surge throughout the country. Still, with our plan, we were able to conduct all 6 sessions without interruption, though it did require some heroic efforts once Delta appeared. Vaccines were just becoming available before camp time and Leaders with comorbidities were required to have one. Even with our best efforts, COVID did make an "appearance" at Camp Geiger, but the cases were mainly limited to camp staff members. With constant testing, we were able to identify and isolate off camp such staff members quickly and to simultaneously quarantine close contacts. We were aware of only 6 post-camp COVID infections among campers through our contact tracing. Even then it was never certain that any of those cases were actually contracted at camp, since none of those Scouts' camp close contacts ever developed any symptoms. Much has happened since the summer of 2021. COVID is now reaching the stage some would call endemic: The virus has "settled in" to our populations much as cold and flu viruses have. Since coronavirus is a respiratory virus, it is not simply going to disappear. But what we now have are a number of ways to prevent it, or at least to mitigate against it.

One of the main differences between this summer and previous summers is **the COVID-19 vaccine is universally available to all adults and to all youth of Scout age**. Because of that opportunity, COVID mitigation standards will be quite different for the summer of 2022. Camp operation will resemble something much closer to what veteran Scouters would remember as normal.

Yours in Scouting,



Timothy P. Murphy, M.D. (Ret.)
Council Supervising Physician

PRE-CAMP POLICIES FOR 2022

All full session Scouts and Leaders must present a **current year** BSA Health and Medical form with parts A, B, and C complete with required signatures. Other program personnel who are in camp for periods less than 72 hours should have parts A and B on file.

No Scout or Leader with a current COVID-19 infection may attend camp. No Scout or Leader who has had a COVID-19 infection within the three weeks prior to camp may attend without documentation of a negative COVID-19 test within 5 days of the start of his or her camp session. Such documentation should be attached to the BSA Health and Medical form.

In August of 2021, the Pony Express Council Executive Board adopted a policy making the COVID-19 Vaccine mandatory as a condition for working on the 2022 Camp Geiger Staff or GSIT program. This decision was made on a pragmatic basis. In 2021, with the Delta outbreak near the end of the 4th session, so many staff members were off camp in isolation, our camp came dangerously close to having to have its program suspended. An insufficient number of staff members impacts program possibilities for all Scouts and units.

Vaccines are strongly recommended for all other Adult Leaders and Scouts. But there will be no vaccine mandate. Most leaders with comorbidities obtained a vaccine last year when it was mandated.

Although there is no vaccine mandate, individuals with known comorbidities who choose to come to camp *assume all of the medical liability personally in doing so*. The following medical states are statistically known to have the potential to make COVID-19 disease worse, or even fatal for those who have them:

- COPD and Other Respiratory Diseases
- Heart Disease (Structural or Functional)
- Blood Disorders
- Diabetes
- Kidney or Liver Disease
- Weakened Immune System or Immunodeficiencies
- Morbid Obesity (Adult BMI > 40, Youth BMI > 90%ile.)
- Age greater than 65.

IN-CAMP POLICIES FOR 2022

There will be no required same day screening at home, and no Sunday screening on arrival at camp. The daily morning in-campsite screening will no longer be required, but units are certainly welcome to carry out this practice if they wish.

It is understood that the Pony Express Council cannot guarantee that the summer

camp experience at Camp Geiger can be COVID free. **We are not representing that there is no risk of contracting COVID-19 at camp. But all Leaders, Scouts, and their parents understand they are assuming that risk by coming to camp.** This is one reason we strongly recommend the COVID-19 vaccine.

There is no mask requirement or mandate at Camp Geiger, but those who wish to have the added protection masks may afford are welcome to wear them at any camp venue. Individuals must provide their own supply of masks.

We do ask that Leaders and Scouts be very attentive to any symptoms that might represent a Coronavirus infection and report promptly to the Health Lodge for evaluation. Remember that younger people tend to have milder symptoms. Therefore, **please do not be careless about this**. Ignoring symptoms may put your Scout and all the other Scouts of his or her unit at risk.

We anticipate that a limited number of COVID-19 antigen tests may again be made available to us by the Andrew County Health Department, but there is no guarantee of that. In such cases, Scouts or Leaders may be sent to nearby medical facilities for appropriate evaluation and testing.

In many other ways, Camp Geiger will return to "normal order" in the summer of 2022, and I am sure that we all welcome that.

Specifically, this means:

- The **Wednesday Night Campfire** will again be a public event in which family members can visit with their Scout, have a meal with their troop, see the camp, and attend the evening festivities.
- The **Thursday night Mic-O-Say Tapping Ceremony** will once again be open to the public.
- Dining Hall operation will return to normal. Leaders, please note: Most of your first, second, and third year campers have no memory of what "normal" dining hall operation is. They have no idea what a "waiter" is. **Please review carefully the Table Waiter section of the 2022 Leader Guide** which will be available in a few weeks. Be prepared to make a Table Waiter Duty Roster for your troop.

We are retaining one change from the "COVID years." As you know, a Welcome Cabin was placed near the entrance of camp for medical screening.

It has long been a concern of the camp and the council that we must have a way to know who is actually in our camp at any time. The Welcome Cabin medical check actually served that purpose and served it well. Going forward, anyone who visits camp (exceptions being Wednesday and Thursday nights) must first stop at the gate cabin and will have his or her name recorded on a list. This is no longer a medical check point: This is now a permanent safety check point for the protection of all of our Scouts.



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

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