

CAMP & COVID

Camp O-AT-KA is dedicated to providing a fun and SAFE environment for your camper(s) to enjoy a great summer experience on Sebago Lake. Much has changed since last year and we know more about COVID, understand what is needed to open safely, and have guidance from national and local agencies; as well as a strong network of Maine camps working together to ensure that Maine continues to be a safe place for children of all ages to live, learn and grow.

Please note that the State of Maine gives overnight camps guidelines that we must follow, in order to open. These guidelines were updated on Thursday, May 29. The CDC makes recommendations but Maine rules are what we must adhere to. With the wonderful news that vaccinations are available for ages 12+ and a relaxing of masking rules, we are moving in the right direction!

We are asking our families to partner with us on this endeavor and thank you in advance!

External groups O-AT-KA is working with:

American Camping Association (ACA): A national field guide has been published to help camps throughout North America open safely. This guide covers all topics from transportation, communication, testing, eating, activities, waterfront, visitors, equipment usage, sanitation, etc. It is very thorough and will be the foundation of our planning. We encourage you to check out the ACA's parent resources as well:

<https://www.acacamps.org/campers-families/news-resources/covid-19-resources-parents>

Maine Summer Camps (MSC): Maine Summer Camps is a member-based umbrella organization for all Maine camps. Local directors and staff belong to this important group that serves as advocates for the camping industry in our state, provides education and resources, helps promote Maine camping as a whole, and is our most valuable network of leaders working together.

Maine Camp Experience (MCE): Maine Camp Experience started as a recruiting resource in CT to promote Maine camps to the Tri-state area. This group of leaders has evolved into a resource for camp administration and provides access to national and local resources, idea sharing and resource pooling, and experts to help all camps navigate the summer experience.

Maine CDC: We will continue to work with the Maine CDC to follow policies set forth at the state and federal levels. Maine CDC is very supportive of the Maine camps and understand the economic impact that our industry has on the state.

Internal planning:

O-AT-KA has hired two talented and experienced RN's to serve as our COVID coordinators for the summer. These two individuals have been working since February on the opening plan in coordination with the Executive Director.

The COVID coordinators will communicate with the Summer Leadership Team of Unit Heads, Summer Director, Program Directors, and Chaplain.

Special staff workshops will be incorporated into staff training week and a safety session for each Unit will take place on opening day of each session for our campers.

Please note, we are providing information as we develop/ confirm it. Some things may be subject to change before camp opens and we will reach out directly to parents with exactly what needs to be done pre-camp. We will continue to update you, expand the list of questions, and provide updates to the website.

UPDATED FAQs (6.1.21)

1. Will my camper need to have a vaccination to attend camp?

No – vaccinations are not required. We highly recommend that all eligible individuals (ages 12+) get vaccinated to keep individuals and our camp community as safe as possible. Those that are vaccinated do not need to test before or during camp; unless they are showing symptoms. We do need a copy of the vaccination record on file.

2. Will the staff at camp be vaccinated?

We are not requiring our staff to be vaccinated but now know that close to 100% have completed both doses.

3. Will my camper need to be tested prior to coming/during camp?

UNVACCINATED: Yes we will require testing. The policy for attending camp is:

- We will ask families to refrain from vacations, large gatherings, social outings, sports tournaments, etc. for 10 days before arrival. Some kids may still be in school and that is ok! If you stick to what you are normally doing to be precautious, that is what is best.
- ***Upon arrival at camp, you will need to provide a negative PCR test that has been reported within the last 72 hours.***
- Unvaccinated campers will then be given a PCR test 5 days into the session of camp. This test will be administered by our Infirmary staff and sent to a local contracted lab for results.
- On-site tests will be available for anyone that has symptoms throughout their stay at camp. PCR and rapid tests are both available.

VACCINATED: No, testing is not required. The policy for attending camp is:

- You must have completed your 2 week period after receiving the 2nd dose to be considered vaccinated. If you are not out of that 2 week window, you will need to follow unvaccinated rules.
- Send or bring a copy of your vaccination card to camp.
- You do not need to do any pre-camp testing, or do a PCR test of day 5.
- If your camper experiences symptoms at any time during their stay, we can do a COVID test onsite (PCR and rapid tests both available) and/or if they are considered a prolonged close contact of a positive case of COVID; we will also test onsite.

CHILD HAS HAD COVID IN LAST 90 DAYS

- If your child has had COVID within 90 days prior to arriving at camp, you do not need to test prior to arrival or on day 5.
- A doctors note is required that states the 10 day quarantine period is over; from when the child was diagnosed.

4. Will my camper need to wear a mask while at camp?

Sometimes. For vaccinated and unvaccinated members of our community, we will ask all campers and staff to pack 10 masks to bring to camp with them. We want them to bring their own masks so we know they are comfortable wearing them. It's a good idea to have them wear them before they arrive so you know they are a good fit! We will be supplying a mask lanyard for them to wear around their neck.

All campers will not wear masks while in their cabin, during outdoor activities, or anywhere near the waterfront or boats. Campers may need to wear a mask if attending an indoor craft (woodworking, pottery, etc.) and when entering buildings such as the dining hall. They will be able to remove the mask once they sit down at their table. Campers will also need to be masked if they are in a camp vehicle. Reality is, camp is a GREAT place for open spaces, ventilation, and distancing so the campers won't be wearing their masks that often!

5. What will the visitor policy at camp be?

In order to get our campers to camp, we need to be strict in other areas. The Maine CDC has asked that we do not have visitors at camp, while camp is in session. This means we will not be hosting visiting days for those that are attending a full session or summer. For those that are with us for more than two weeks, we will have a virtual visiting "day" where you can schedule a time block to zoom/ video chat with your camper and check in!

6. Will drop-off/ pick-up be different from past years?

Yes. To minimize exposure of visitors on the O-AT-KA campus, we will have tents set up upon your arrival. We will ask that only one person exit the vehicle with the camper and is masked. Paperwork should all be completed before arrival and the Infirmary or office staff will be available the week prior to camp to discuss anything you need to. Your camper will start check-in with the Infirmary staff to get a temperature check and COVID questions covered. You will leave your camper's belongings with the staff and we will see that is gets safely to his cabin. Parents/ guardians will say goodbye at their vehicles.

We will have set times for drop off and pick up to ensure that not too many people are there at the same time. These will be sent closer to camp opening and we ask that you adhere to your set drop off time or communicate if a different time is needed.

7. What if my camper is arriving by plane at either Boston or Portland?

O-AT-KA will still offer pick-up and drop-off at Logan Airport in Boston or Portland Jetport. A disinfected van will pick up your camper and they will be spaced out and asked to wear a mask while in the vehicle. We will have hand sanitizer for when they arrive and when they depart the vehicle.

8. What if my child is exposed or tests positive for COVID-19?

An expert in the field recently shared that we must plan that someone will test positive during the summer and we will take every precaution to be ready for when that happens. This person also reminded us that "every camp may have a positive test but it will be very rare to have sick kids." Rest assure, we will be ready to handle any situation.

If a child tests positive or is awaiting a test result, the parent/guardian will be the first to know! We will walk you through what steps are being taken, care received, etc. O-AT-KA will have an awesome area

set up called “Shadow Camp.” The individual will join Shadow Camp until the quarantine period is over. As long as the camper is feeling well, we will have camp activities, meals, and fun for them so they don’t miss out. If not feeling well, there will be a quiet place to rest, eat and excellent medical care with our nurses – separate from our Camp Infirmary building.

9. My child is 12+ and has the option to get their first dose while still at home. Should I do it?

We are highly encouraging all community members to start their vaccination process! Everyone would like to see a high vaccination rate in the Fall for the start of school and O-AT-KA is committed to helping this nationwide. Maine will vaccinate non-residents with parental consent. Consent can be done in an email or phone call. If your child needs the second dose at camp and you would like that to happen, we will facilitate it with nearby clinics.

If your child would rather wait, please consult with your personal physician on timing.

10. What is O-AT-KA refund policy if we decide that this isn’t the right year for camp for us?

We understand that the past year (and continuing into 2021) has been very difficult. Camp is a place of joy and growth and should never cause additional anxiety. Our goal is to make camp comfortable and easy for each family. If you decide, AT ANY TIME, that you would rather not attend camp this summer; a full refund is available. O-AT-KA has been around since 1906 and we will continue to be there for you when the time is right!

11. What can our family do to help?

- If 12+, please consider vaccinating!
- Send or email (info@campoatka.org) a copy of your camper’s vaccination record – you can do that now! Or schedule a PCR test prior to camp.
- Practice low risk behaviors in the days leading up to camp. This is a smart thing to do for all illnesses; not just COVID!
- Make sure your forms are in – this makes drop off much more smooth
- Keep talking to your camper about all the fun we will have this summer!