

COVID-19 and BSA Summer Camps Consideration Guide

UPDATED 4/2/20

The Boy Scouts of America continues to carefully monitor the rapidly evolving situation with coronavirus COVID-19.

Please know that the safety of our youth members, volunteers, and employees is our top priority, and all current and future organizational decisions concerning COVID-19 must continue to be made with that commitment in mind.

As is our practice in Scouting, our efforts are focused on preparation and responsiveness informed by the guidance of official health organizations, including your local health department, [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), [World Health Organization](#) so we can minimize the impact of the coronavirus in our communities.

The decision to host summer camp programs is a local council operational decision. This information is provided as a **guide** to assist local council leadership. Councils should continue to work in conjunction with their camp leadership, local health officials and council executive board.

For additional resources, visit [BSA Outdoor Programs](#).



Summer Camp & COVID-19 Considerations



The National Camp Accreditation Program (NCAP) Standards serve as a resource to help guide you in determining the feasibility of operating safe, quality, BSA accredited camping programs. While all standards must be followed, the following standards are key to initial discussions.



*Click the Pennant above to
Download the 2020 Standards*

AO-801

Permits and Compliance

HS – 500 Series

Health and Safety

AO – 806

**Camp Budgeting,
Analysis, and
Financial Controls**

AO-805

**Emergency
Procedures**

SQ – 400 Series

**Staff
Qualifications**

FS – 600 Series

FA- 700 Series

Summer Camp & COVID-19 Considerations

Updated 4/2/2020



The Legal Decision

AO - 801 Permits and Compliance

- Review current recommendations of the World Health Organization.
- Review current CDC guidelines.
- Review State guidelines.
- Review local Health Department regulations.
- Are there additional actions or restrictions that your local health department will require prior to opening and can you meet them?
- Per NCAP AO-801 – You have all necessary federal, state, and local permits, certificates, licenses, and agreements to lawfully operate a camp property/ camp(s).

After the discussion about the points above, ask the Question “Can we legally operate our camp?” if Yes – move on to Decision #2, If No – contact your staff, campers and other affected parties. Begin working to help customers attend another camp if possible.

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Updated 4/2/2020



The Safety and Financial Decision

Health & Safety – HS 500 Series

- How are you communicating with parents on keeping camp healthy?
- Have you engaged your Council Health Supervisor?
- Have you engaged your Enterprise Risk Management committee?
- Review communicable Disease Guidelines / Screening HS-504 / 506
- How will you keep illness "Outside the Gate" and what do you need to do that?
- Does your screening include visitors and contractors?
- What additional resources will be needed to address camp cleanliness per CDC recommendations?
- Annual Health and Medical Records (solutions for exams) HS-503
- Wilderness First Aid Training met?
- First Aid Certifications updated?
- Do you have adequate medical supplies?

Budget AO—806

- What percentage of our council budget is camping related?
- What is our refund policy? If we are open? If we must close?
- What is the feasibility for campers to pay for camp? On time?
 - Do we expand the scope of applicability and timing of the early-bird fees?
 - How do we help a unit fundraise?
 - Is there a reduced rate for a reduced program day (online day camp for example?)
 - How will new Scouts who just transitioned from Webelos afford summer camp with a reduced ability to participate in a spring fundraiser?
- What is the impact of fewer weeks of camp?
- Could we offer more or shorter sessions over fewer weeks of camp? Would that create additional capacity/revenue?
- How do camp deposits and payments affect the council cash flow over the next 90 days?
- What are your current, year-round fixed costs? Can you lower any of those?
- What are your current payment terms with key vendors? Can those be adjusted? What is drop dead date for orders that are critical for the start of camp?
- Have any of your vendors stopped doing business or are closed?
- What is the impact of fewer weeks of camp?
- What is your capacity to move campers to another week? Add last minute campers?
- What is the impact of NCS travel for a school that is further away?
- Are costs going to be the same this years as past years, or more expensive now? Will we incur any additional expenses due to COVID-19?

After the discussion about the points above, ask the Question "Can we safely and financially operate our camp?" if Yes – move on to Decision #3, If No – contact your staff, campers and other affected parties. Begin working to help customers attend another camp if possible.

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Updated 4/2/2020



The Program and Operations Decision

Emergency Procedures AO - 805

- Have you reviewed your council emergency plans?
- Do you have a plan for communicable diseases? Will there be required adjustments and new procedures that will take additional planning and/or financial resources?
 - Are there updated isolation procedures that will be required?
 - Will there be additional reporting that will be required?
- Has your council health supervisor updated your council's "standing orders" to address COVID-19?
- Do you need to update your procedures for other emergencies at camp?
- Are there additional screenings that need to be implemented prior to arrival at camp?

Staffing SQ - 400 series

- Do you have staff who are currently certified in all NCS mandatory areas?
- Do you have staff who have proper credentials for alternative qualifications that would meet NCAP standards?
 - Have you submitted a waiver request for these staff members to serve in this role?
 - Are the third-party trainings available in your area (Red Cross, NRA, Wilderness First Aid etc.)
- Are there Blended learning courses available?
- Do you need to reduce staff for reduced program offerings?
- Can your staff attend required NCS training?
- Does your staff letter of agreement have a clause for reduced camp weeks or camp schedule changes?
- How does the school schedule affect your ability to hire staff or have staff arrive at camp in time to open?
- Can your council partner with another council to offer programs and share staff based on length of camps?
- Do you have staff or volunteers who can help get camp prepared to open?
- If you host international staff, what is their availability?

After the discussion about the points above, ask the Question "Can we manage emergencies correctly? Can we staff our camp, and do we have appropriate procedures in place to operate our camp?" if Yes – Move to decision #4. If No – contact your staff, campers and other affected parties. Begin working to help customers attend another camp if possible.

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Updated 4/2/2020



The Facilities Decision

Food Service FS – 600 Series

- Do you use a food service company?
 - Is there a contract clause about reduced operation?
 - Is there a contract clause about cancellation?
- Do you have proper supervision in your kitchen with food handlers and serve safe training?
- Are these courses available?
- What are the cleaning procedures?
- Who is allowed in your kitchen other than the cook?
- What camp policies or procedures need to be addressed to improve safety?
- Are there restrictions on type of food service that will be allowed by your local health department (Cafeteria style, family style, buffet style)?
- How do we provide social distancing in serving food?
- Review updated CDC guidelines regarding food service and COVID-19.

Facilities FA – 700 Series

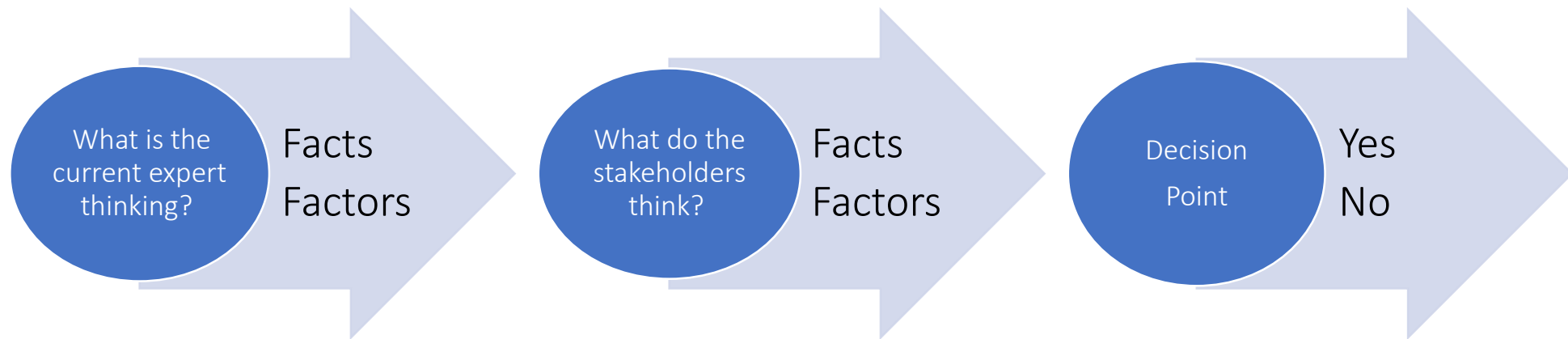
- When can the pre-camp visitation take place based on camp access and potential shelter in place orders?
- Have the annual inspections taken place such as fire suppression systems, electromechanical equipment (boilers, pressure tanks, water heaters etc.? If not, when can that take place prior to camp opening?
- Have the COPE course and artificial climbing structures been inspected by a qualified professional inspector as required annually? If not, when can that take place prior to camp opening?

After the discussion about the points above, ask the Question “Do we have appropriate food service procedures and facilities in place to operate our camp?” If Yes – Make plans to open camp. If No – contact your staff, campers and other affected parties. Begin working to help customers attend another camp if possible.

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Building a decision timeline.



What's Next?

- Communicate your decisions. Necessary notifications could include key stakeholders, local regulatory officials, NCAP assessment team and others as appropriate.
- Schedule consistent communication to your stakeholders, including your decision-making timeline.
- Plan for the future! 2020 summer, fall, and winter programs and 2021 to keep your Scouting community engaged.
- Promote the value and critical need to continue Scouting's outdoor adventures!



If you have further questions,
please contact
outdoorprograms@scouting.org.

For additional resources:

- For additional outdoor program or property resources, visit [BSA Outdoor Programs](#).
- BSA's COVID-19 [resource page](#)
- [National Camping School Information](#)
- [National Camp Accreditation Program \(NCAP\) Standards](#)
- Follow Outdoor Programs on Scouting Workplace (must have Scouting.org email address)

