

YOUTH SPORTS

At this time, the Department of Health Services (DHS) recommends that all youth sporting events planned for this spring and summer be postponed or canceled due to the spread of COVID-19. Until we meet the benchmarks established in the Badger Bounce Back plan, it is not safe to bring together groups of youth and coaches for practice or to host sporting events. You can track the state's progress on these benchmarks on the [DHS COVID-19 Response website](#).

DHS recommends that individuals avoid all public and private gatherings of any number of people that are not part of a single household or living unit. This applies to events like youth sporting events and team practice. We will re-evaluate this recommendation on in-person public events once Wisconsin has seen progress in the "gating criteria," including a sustained downward trend in COVID-19 cases, and the ability of hospitals and health systems to treat all patients. This is a rapidly changing and evolving situation, but it is unlikely that any large gatherings would be recommended throughout the summer.

Youth sporting events present unique challenges, as successful events typically bring in large numbers of teams and families from a wide geographic area, and many require regular interactions between team members and opposing teams. In addition, communal areas like vendor stalls, shelters, and bathrooms at such events makes it especially challenging to accommodate necessary physical distancing and sanitation recommendations during this time.

DHS understands that there are many positive benefits from participating in youth sports, and that children and families look forward to attending sporting events in the spring and summer. A child and their family can still acquire some of the same benefits of being physically active by going for a family walk, bike ride, or other physical activities that follow safe social distancing guidelines.

Actions to Take

- Stay informed about local COVID-19 information and updates. We recommend checking the website or social media of your local health department and [the Department of Health Services website](#) for the most updated information.
- Close all sporting facilities and fields, and limit services to only needed maintenance and upkeep. Post relevant signage indicating limitations on use.
- Coaches can:
 - Consider ways to provide practice virtually or guiding individual practice by providing at-home training instructions.

- Host virtual team calls or send out team emails to keep the team members connected, provide support and encouragement, and offer tips to stay in shape and practice skills.

Once it is safe to start holding youth sporting events again, you should coordinate with local public health departments, families, and other community members to ensure that any sporting event meets all expectations and requirements for social distancing or other public health protections.

Resources:

- [CDC Recreational Facility Guidance](#)
- [Return to Play: COVID-19 Risk Assessment Tool](#)
- [U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee \(USOPC\) guidance on Sports and Events](#)
- [Coronavirus & Youth Sports Project Play Resources](#)

SUMMER CAMPS

At this time, DHS recommends that congregate activities for children that are considered educational or enrichment programs, including residential summer camps, be postponed or canceled. COVID-19 continues to circulate throughout Wisconsin, and the state has not yet met the [criteria for safely conducting these programs](#). Physical distancing and proper hygiene by children in these settings is extremely difficult to enforce. Summer camps and enrichment programs should follow applicable state, local, and tribal health recommendations. We urge programs to work with their local public health departments, who can help assess the [community mitigation strategies](#) needed based on the level of COVID-19 transmission in your area, the capacities of your local public health department and health care systems, and other relevant factors. This guidance does not apply to day cares for the children of essential workers.

This is a rapidly evolving situation, so please continue to monitor DHS guidelines, as they may change based upon new scientific information and epidemiological data.

With schools across the state closed and summer quickly approaching, many parents and guardians rely on summer programs for the care of their children. This guidance is intended to assist camp directors and administrators in making the safest decisions possible regarding child care programs and summer day camps during the COVID-19 pandemic. It outlines best practices and considerations for resuming operations when it is considered safe to do so. These recommendations are based on what is currently known and understood regarding COVID-19.

Until we reduce the transmission of COVID-19 and meet the Wisconsin [gating criteria and core responsibilities in the Badger Bounce Back plan](#), DHS recommends that summer

camps and youth programs that are considered educational or for enrichment be postponed or canceled. Resuming educational and enrichment programs for youth will need to be a gradual process, starting once the state experiences a sustained downward trend in COVID-19 cases. We will need to continue efforts to prevent future outbreaks, monitor for resurgence of the virus, and take appropriate steps if we see increases in virus transmission.

Overview of the Three Phases of the Badger Bounce Back Plan

Action	Safer at Home	Phase One: When all Gating Criteria and Core Responsibilities are Met	Phase Two: Based on Re-Evaluation of Criteria and Core Responsibilities	Phase Three: Based on Re-Evaluation of Criteria and Core Responsibilities
Open K-12 Summer Educational and Enrichment Programs	No	Yes*	Yes*	Yes
Open Day Cares	Yes, but limits on capacity	Yes*	Yes*	Yes

*People over age 60, including employees, and those who are medically vulnerable should continue to shelter in place. Online education and remote work encouraged wherever possible.

This guidance does not apply to day cares for the children of essential workers. As such, day camps and youth programs that are licensed by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or attached to a licensed program, should continue to operate their programs following other applicable guidelines issued by the state.

Decisions to open camps for education and enrichment depend on our ability to quickly track, test, and trace cases of COVID-19 in our communities, in order to limit its spread. All decisions about opening summer camps should be made in collaboration with state and local and/or tribal health authorities, who can help assess the [community mitigation strategies](#) needed based on the level of COVID-19 transmission in your area, the capacities of your local public health department and health care systems, and other relevant factors.

Should you consider opening summer camp?
Recommendations for planning and preparedness

Recommendations for physical distancing

Training of staff

Recommendations for preventing spread

Recommendations for screening

Recommendations for campers, program participants, visitors, or staff who become sick

Recommendations for cleaning and disinfecting

Recommendations for food service

Closing camp and youth programs