

URJ SUMMER CAMP 2022 COVID FAQs

IS THERE A VACCINE AND BOOSTER MANDATE?

Yes, all URJ program participants and staff must be fully up-to-date with their vaccinations, including those for COVID. Being fully “up to date” with all age eligible COVID vaccinations is required, including (when eligible) a booster. You are “up to date” with your COVID vaccines when you have followed the current CDC recommendations: [Stay Up to Date with Your Vaccines | CDC](#). The required vaccination schedule will be different depending on your age, your health status, and when you began your vaccination series.

Parents send their children to URJ camps and programs and expect that their children will enjoy themselves, have positive social interactions, learn from the rich Jewish environment and most of all be safe and healthy. All the fun, friendship building, Jewish identity affirmation and character development can only happen if we are confident that individual safety and public health remain at the center of every decision made throughout the URJ camps and programs. Reducing the risk of vaccine-preventable illnesses from entering any of our camps or programs is the single most effective strategy to protect public health. This goal can be accomplished only through the appropriate vaccination of all members of our camp and programs. Please refer to our [2022 Vaccination Statement](#) for more detail.

WHAT IF MY CHILD BECOMES ELIGIBLE FOR THE NEXT DOSE IN THE COVID VACCINATION SERIES IN THE 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO THEIR CAMP SESSION OR DURING CAMP?

The URJ Vaccination Statement requires that all participants and staff are up to date as of 2 weeks prior to their program or camp session. If your child becomes eligible for the next dose in their vaccination series during the 2 weeks prior to their session or *during* the session, they are still considered up to date without that additional dose. The two-week time frame is in place to minimize potential vaccine-induced symptoms and any added stress in the immediate pre-camp period. Additionally, if you are up to date by 2 weeks prior to your session, there will be no requirement to obtain subsequent doses during a camp session. Please reach out to your Camp Director with any individual questions about this situation.

WHAT IF MY CHILD CANNOT RECEIVE ALL OR PART OF THE COVID VACCINATION SERIES DUE TO A MEDICAL CONDITION?

Yes, there are exceptions to the URJ vaccination policy, and they are rare. In the rare circumstances that may require exemption, current documentation from a licensed Physician (MD or DO), or a Pediatric/Family Practice Advanced Practice Nurse (ARNP or PNP) not related to the individual describing the reason for exemption from immunization must be furnished to URJ Camps or Israel Programs. URJ Leadership and medical advisors will review and decide on each request on a case-by-case basis.

Please direct all Vaccination Exemption Requests to [this form](#) to begin the process:
<https://urjyouth.wufoo.com/forms/xj1y0u60aqvvyv8/>

After completing the form, The URJ Integrated Wellness Director will communicate directly with individuals to gather the appropriate documentation and follow-up information needed to process and determine next steps for each request. We rely on the expertise and guidance of our URJ Medical Advisory Team in this process.

HOW DOES URJ MAKE DECISIONS RELATED TO HEALTH AND SAFETY AND COVID?

An experienced team of URJ staff is overseeing the development of COVID guidance for URJ programs. They work with our URJ Medical Advisory Team, who have expertise and specialization in public health and infectious disease and also rely on the guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) for best practices. These teams are working closely with URJ program staff to develop guidelines and protocols that preserve the camp experience, protect our camp communities, and use evidence-based best practices.

WILL THERE BE PRE-CAMP BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES (COVID BRIT) THIS YEAR?

The pre-camp strategies we used last year were very effective and we will use similar methods this year (though likely less stringent based on current conditions) to prevent COVID from entering camp (pre-camp testing regimen, pre-camp COVID behavior *Brit*). The 2022 COVID *Brit* will include guidance on how to minimize your camper's COVID exposures in the week prior to coming to camp (for example, by masking in indoor public environments). It will *not* limit your camper's ability to attend school, travel or participate in other camps in the days preceding their camp session.

WILL MASKS BE REQUIRED AT CAMP?

We know that by increasing some layers of COVID mitigation, we may decrease others. By requiring that our camp communities are fully up-to-date with COVID vaccinations, we are hopeful that we can create a camp environment that feels more typical to a pre-pandemic summer season, including a shift toward using masks as sparingly as possible and in response to any changing conditions.

Please send your child to camp with 1 high filtration mask (N95/94 or KN95/94) per day for the length of their camp session. These masks are to be used only if elevated mitigation becomes necessary due to changing conditions. Camps will also have a supply of masks for this purpose. If your campers' masks are not used at camp, they will bring them home at the end of the session. Outside of having to elevate our mitigation in camp, masks will be optional – so if your camper plans to wear a mask when it is not required, please send more masks than outlined above to accommodate their individual preferences.

WILL UNITS AND BUNKS BE COHORTED LIKE THEY WERE IN SUMMER 2021?

We know that by increasing some layers of COVID mitigation, we may decrease others. By requiring that our camp communities are fully up to date with COVID vaccinations, we are hopeful that we can create a camp environment that feels more typical to a pre-pandemic summer season, including a less stringent focus on cohorting in camp, while remaining agile and ready to pivot with any changing conditions.

WILL THERE BE ONGOING SURVEILLANCE TESTING AT CAMP?

Similar to last summer, there will be a COVID testing regimen at the start of each camp session. We plan to complete this arrival testing regimen by the end of the first week of each session. There will be ongoing surveillance testing for the adults and staff on camp, who are allowed to take time off outside of campus (pending COVID conditions). Additionally, we will test any community member exhibiting symptoms of COVID infection. Our testing regimens will be responsive to any changing COVID conditions.

WHAT IS THE PLAN FOR IF YOU ENCOUNTER COVID SYMPTOMS AND POSITIVE TESTS AT CAMP?

To protect URJ camp communities from further spread, and to simultaneously ensure that any COVID+ community member receives appropriate care during their isolation period, we are requiring that all camp families plan for retrieving their family member(s) from camp to isolate at home (or elsewhere off campus) if they test positive for COVID at camp (we can discuss any specific challenges around this individually). We are requiring families to retrieve their family members to isolate off campus, because housing and caring for COVID+ community members is operationally incompatible with our camps' capacities (facilities and staff).

COVID+ community members can return when they test negative for COVID by rapid antigen test, on 2 consecutive days. They can begin testing daily after 5 days of isolation and can return to camp once 2 consecutive days produce negative RA test results. The COVID Leader at each camp will discuss this isolation plan individually with each affected family. Information about the potential return to camp will be individualized by camp-specific variables, such as session length.

Additionally, all URJ camps will follow leveled protocols for COVID decision-making, and agility based on changing conditions both on and off campus. If we encounter COVID on campus at any of our URJ camps, Directors will follow these protocols for elevating our mitigation efforts to reduce any COVID spread on camp.

WHY DO WE EVEN HAVE TO ISOLATE CONFIRMED COVID CASES IF THE ENTIRE CAMP COMMUNITY IS UP TO DATE WITH COVID VACCINATIONS?

As long as the CDC continues to treat COVID as a pandemic to contain, including isolation of positive cases, we will follow that guidance. In addition to following the guidance of the CDC and our Medical Advisory Team, we are leaning on our organizational values: taking care of ourselves, our camp communities, and the broader community. We are requiring families to retrieve their campers and staff to isolate off campus, in large part because taking care of COVID+ community members (especially in the unlikely case of widespread infection) is operationally incompatible with our camps' capacities (facilities and staff). Knowing that a small percentage of our community will be unable to leave campus for isolation (international community members primarily), we are planning for this possibility.

WHAT IS THE PLAN FOR IF COVID CONDITIONS CHANGE SIGNIFICANTLY DURING THE CAMP SEASON?

If the COVID conditions *outside* of camp change during the summer season (for example, a new COVID variant or surge takes place during the camp season), we will follow our protocols for elevating our mitigation efforts. These changes in mitigation levels will be determined by the URJ team of staff and medical advisors and the guidance of the CDC and AAP for best practices. For campers, we do not anticipate any programmatic changes unless we encounter COVID *inside* camp.

WILL THERE BE VISITORS ALLOWED AT CAMP THIS SUMMER?

We know that by increasing some layers of COVID mitigation, we may decrease others. By requiring that our camp communities are fully up-to-date with COVID vaccinations, we are hopeful that we can create a camp environment that feels more typical to a pre-pandemic summer season, including welcoming visitors to camp in a limited way. What we do know for sure, is that if conditions allow us to safely welcome visitors to our camps this summer, we will use the available layers of mitigation around these visits as appropriate and based on current COVID conditions (physical distance from campers, masking, rapid tests on arrival, shortened visits, and more).

WILL STAFF BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE CAMP FOR TIME OFF?

Last summer, our camps were "bubbled" – this means that no staff came or went from campus during the entire summer season. In this way, we were able to keep COVID out of camp, using a stringent and layered mitigation approach. While that was appropriate last year and played a significant role in our success in keeping COVID out of our URJ camps, it was burdensome to our camp staff. This year, staff will be allowed to leave campus for time off. We will put multiple layers of mitigation around this practice to minimize the risk of COVID entering camp. Our protocols will utilize the [CDC Community Risk Level Tool](#) to guide staff on how to safely spend time off camp, and we will be ready and agile to make adjustments to this plan based on changing COVID conditions.

WILL CAMPERS GO ON TRIPS OUTSIDE OF CAMP THIS SUMMER?

We will be taking only trips that meaningfully contribute to the camp experience AND present exceedingly low COVID risk, and using added layers of mitigation when appropriate.