

## Marin Issues Summer Camp Opening Guidelines

*Child care locations and camps allowed to proceed with restrictions*

**San Rafael, CA** – Kids can't wait for summer playtime. Parents are eager for child care and a break from sheltering in place. Now, summer camp operators and child care businesses in Marin County have the [guidelines](#) they need to proceed with their reopening plans to children of non-essential workers and prepare for a combination of fun and public safety, starting June 1.

[Marin County Public Health](#) has shared best practices with child care establishments and summer camp operators that include mandated steps to prevent the spread of the [COVID-19 coronavirus](#). Those steps include protocols on social distancing, handwashing, face covering, surface cleaning and disinfecting, and other precautionary practices. The best practices were signed off by Dr. Matt Willis, Marin County Public Health Officer, on May 22 and are effective June 1.

In addition to general public health hygiene guidelines, the requirements for child care facilities and summer camps include limiting group sizes to 12 children or fewer and keeping the same groups together for a minimum of three weeks. Arrival times are to be staggered, and parents should avoid carpooling to such facilities. Most activities are to be conducted outdoors, where the risk of contracting COVID-19 is much lower. Shared equipment, such as sporting goods and toys, must remain within the same group of 12.

"Social distancing is not natural for kids," said Torrey Kelly, Associate Executive Director of the Marin YMCA, who helped create the new guidelines. "If we have stable groups and small numbers, we can limit risk while letting kids be kids and have fun together."

Kelly is a group lead for the summer camps and youth activities effort of [Marin Recovers](#), a collaboration that's helping industries gradually reopen under the guidance of Marin County Public Health. The County of Marin is working with local industry advisory groups, comprised of subject matter experts from various fields, to provide recommendations about how an industry – from retail to recreation to office complexes – can reopen in compliance with COVID-19 public health orders. [MarinRecovers.com](#) connects Marin residents, business owners, community leaders, and public health professionals to collaborate on reopening the economy and community in a safe manner.

Kelly and other subject matter experts examined the guidelines designed for pop-up child care centers that opened in March for essential workers during the pandemic. Sections about hygiene were adopted and enhanced in the new guidelines for summer camps and child care operations.

"The larger conversations we had were about the duration of the sessions and the number of enrollments that would be allowed," Kelly said. "Naturally there are concerns about the sustainability of these practices while we're still experiencing a public health emergency. All the organizations that came together to help create the guiding documents were eager to understand what precautions to follow to safely reopen. There were a lot of mixed emotions, but the highlight for me has been the level of collaboration we saw as we brought people together. It's been such an uplifting experience during a dark time."

The [Reopening section](#) of [MarinRecovers.com](#) includes a progressive outline shared that promotes timely coordination, real-time data monitoring, and a common path forward.

The Marin County Department of Health and Human Services' [coronavirus website](#) will still remain the authority for local COVID-19 case data and medical information.

[Watch the introductory video](#) about [MarinRecovers.com](#).