

URJ SUMMER CAMP 2022 COVID FAQs



A URJ CAMP
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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 [Beth](#) or [Solly](#) 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/xj1y0u60aqvvy8/>

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.

WHAT IF MY CHILD HAD A RECENT COVID INFECTION – DO THEY STILL NEED TO GET THE BOOSTER?

CDC recently made a nuanced update about the timing of COVID vaccination doses following a recent COVID infection. This does not change our vaccination policy, but does introduce a 3 month grace period to the vaccination sequence between infection and subsequent dose. As [the CDC states](#), “people who recently had

COVID-19 may consider delaying their next booster by 3 months from when their symptoms started or, if they had no symptoms, when they first received a positive test.”

If families would like to take advantage of this 3-month delay in booster timeline, they will need to show clinical verification and documentation of the recent infection, by way of:

- Lab-administered RA or PCR COVID test
- Dr.’s note verifying infection and including date of positive test

WILL YOU ACCEPT PROOF OF ANTIBODIES IN PLACE OF COVID VACCINATION?

No, we will require proof of vaccination. The FDA and CDC have stated that antibody tests should not be used to evaluate a person’s level of immunity or protection from COVID at any time, and most other major authorities agree. Antibody tests are not sufficiently standardized, and the level and type of antibodies sufficient to provide protection is unclear. Vaccination remains the safest strategy for averting future COVID infections.

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 plan to send your child to camp with a supply of high filtration masks (N95/94 or KN95/94). We will require these masks to be used if elevated mitigation becomes necessary due to changing conditions on camp. You know your kids, and their preferences, best. You might consider one mask per day they are at camp – or less if that makes sense based on your camper and session length. Please send no less than seven masks with your camper. Camp will also have a supply of masks for this purpose. 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.

WHY REQUIRE HIGH FILTRATION MASKS INSTEAD OF SURGICAL/3-PLY MASKS?

At camp this summer, we will use masks as sparingly as possible, and only in response to any elevated COVID risk. If we need to employ using masks, we will use the most effective masks available to us, to get the most benefit out of this important layer of COVID mitigation. As shown on the infographic below, high filtration masks are well evidenced to be superior in mitigating against COVID spread in comparison with other mask types.

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.

WHY USE RAPID ANTIGEN (RA) TESTS AS OPPOSED TO PCR TESTS?

RA and PCR COVID tests each have pros and cons. The RA test will be employed this summer for the following reasons:

- RA testing offers quick and accessible results, whereas PCR testing can have a longer time delay between testing and results
- RA testing is reflective of active, transmissible infection, whereas PCR testing is more sensitive, often garnering positive results in the absence of transmissible infection. For example, some recent resolved infections will continue to test positive by PCR test for weeks to months post-infection. With so many recent infections, this would be operationally problematic.

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. Beth or Solly will discuss this isolation plan individually with each affected family when/if necessary. Information about the potential return to camp will be individualized by camp-specific variables, such as session length.

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

WILL I RECEIVE SOME TUITION CREDIT IF MY CHILD MUST LEAVE CAMP FOR A PORTION OF THE SESSION DUE TO COVID?

Under ordinary circumstances, we are unable to provide refunds/credits for campers missing partial days of the summer. URJ camps/immersive staff work year-round to plan for a joyful, meaningful, and safe summer season and fees cover expenses for staff, programming, facilities, operations, and more. However, we acknowledge the challenges COVID poses to summer 2022. In recognition of this and as a thank you for your partnership, trust, and commitment, we will provide \$50.00/day as a credit for future programs in the event your child misses a portion of the summer due to them testing positive for COVID while at camp. We also encourage you to explore travelers' insurance and/or other types of insurance to provide extra protection.

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.