



# Camp Mountain Chai

## COVID-19 Playbook

### Summer 2021

As of March 5, 2021





## INTRODUCTION

**The information surrounding COVID-19 is constantly changing and evolving, and this COVID-19 playbook is a living document that will evolve and change between now and summer 2021.**

Every summer we take pride in creating magical memories for our Camp Mountain Chai community. We know this summer will look and feel different from prior summers, and we also believe that that participating in a traditional, Jewish overnight camp experience is needed more than ever during this challenging period of time. Our success depends on each of us individually being committed to our community and Camp's success.

This playbook organizes COVID-19 best practices published by the [CDC](#) and [American Camp Association \(ACA\)](#), as well as learnings from other camps, schools and youth programs that have operated in the past year. We have learned the importance of a multilayered mitigation strategy (Swiss Cheese Model), which enabled camps to prevent any secondary spread of the COVID-19 virus through testing, strict cohorting (or pods), and creating a stable environment (or camp bubble). This playbook is meant to provide Camp Mountain Chai families and staff with information about how we are adapting our policies and procedures to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 during Camp. As information changes and evolves, so, too, will this playbook to reflect current information.

We recognize that regardless of the level of preparation we cannot guarantee that COVID-19 will not be present at Camp Mountain Chai, but we are confident in our ability to run Camp in a safe and meaningful way. In fact, we are operating as if the virus *will* enter Camp. We intend to run because we believe we can care for campers and staff if they do contract COVID-19, and that we can isolate and stop the virus from spreading if it does enter Camp.

This playbook will address and share how we plan to operate safely this summer. It will include a wide range of topics, including creating and maintaining a safe environment at Camp and an in-depth look at how we plan to operate this summer. We ask that all parents/guardians review this playbook with their campers. We strongly recommend reading our COVID-19 Playbook in its entirety, **and for your convenience you can jump to a specific section by using the Table of Contents:**



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## CORE ASSUMPTIONS

As we plan for the 2021 summer, we want to share our philosophy and approach for opening safely. We have two primary goals which we are working towards simultaneously:

1. Ensuring the health, safety, and security of our campers, staff and community
2. Providing a genuine Camp Mountain Chai experience, including:
  - Celebrating Shabbat
  - Creating and rekindling friendships
  - Being outdoors and disconnecting from technology
  - Building confidence and becoming more independent

The core assumptions listed below are the foundation upon which our COVID-19 playbook was created. As the situation regarding the pandemic and related guidance continue to evolve, **we reserve the right to adjust these assumptions and the components of our playbook accordingly.**

1. **We can operate safely.** We have learned from several sources (camps who operated in 2020, the CDC, and the ACA), giving us confidence in our ability to apply a comprehensive strategy of multilayered, nonpharmaceutical interventions in order to safely operate Camp this summer. If at any time we (Staff, Medical Committee, or Board of Directors) feel we cannot deliver on this most basic promise of keeping everyone safe, we will not hesitate to act accordingly.
2. **COVID-19 vaccines will not be widely available to our campers.** Based on consultation with medical experts, we do not expect a vaccine to be widely available (if at all) for children under the age of 16. We also do not anticipate the even distribution of vaccines across the geographic markets from which our campers and staff hail.
3. **COVID-19 will remain a public health concern well into the summer.** While cases, hospitalizations and deaths are declining, COVID-19 remains prevalent in society. National health authorities continue to estimate some return to pre-COVID normalcy in mid- to late-summer. We are operating under the assumption that COVID-19 will still be present in the communities we serve across the world AND that COVID-19 could potentially be present in our camp community.
4. **Testing will be adequately available to allow for early detection of the virus in our campers and staff.** We believe that testing (both rapid antigen and PCR), testing supplies, and PPE will be readily accessible. We have already seen rapid tests that are available to us, without equipment, for the summer and we expect over the next several months for the available supply of accurate rapid tests to increase.
5. **We will be allowed to operate.** Camp Mountain Chai is accredited by the American Camp Association and we also receive an annual operating license as an “Organized Camp” by the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health. We have close working relationships with these regulators, and we anticipate receiving the “green light” to operate this summer.
6. **It takes a village.** We rely on a deep partnership with our camp families each summer, but this summer that partnership will be more important than ever as we will be depending on our families to strictly follow all pre-camp requirements, including but not limited to a quarantine period, COVID-19 testing, daily symptom and temperature monitoring, and reporting of any and all physical and mental health concerns.



## CULTURE OF COMPLIANCE

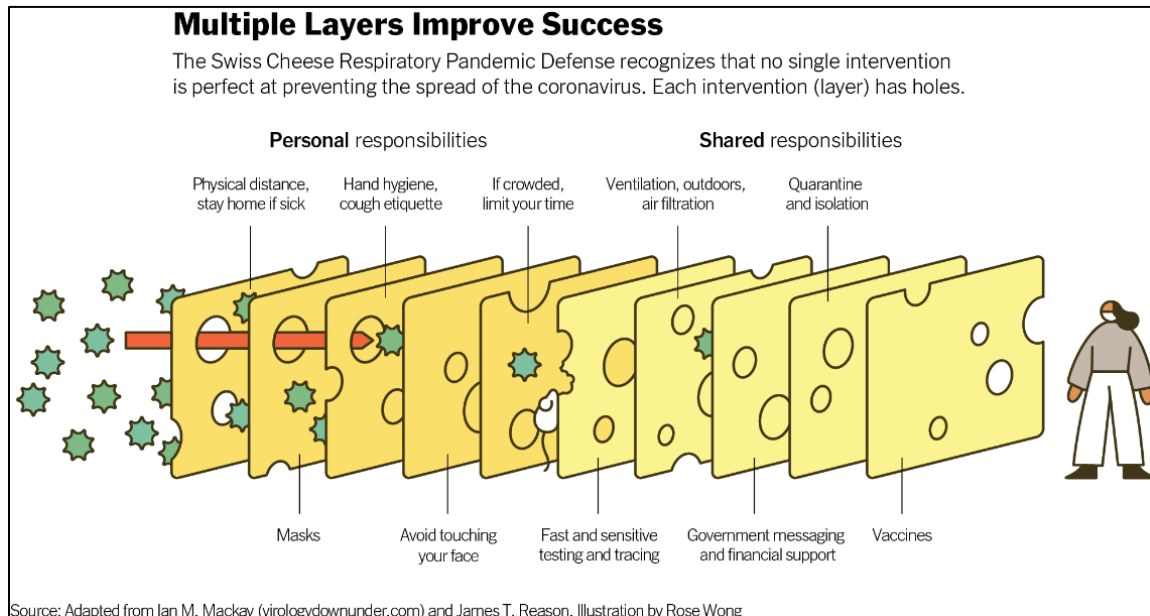
We are prepared to mitigate the risk of COVID-19, and we are prepared to respond should it impact our community. Using the American Camp Association (ACA) published chart of Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs), we will mitigate the risk of COVID-19 both entering Camp and spreading through Camp. Throughout this playbook, we will reference these NPIs and share with you how they impact our plans and protocols for Summer 2021. We expect our staff and campers to comply with Camp Mountain Chai's policies. Non-compliance could result in removal from Camp.



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## SWISS CHEESE METHOD

There is no single action that can guarantee that a person will not become infected with COVID-19. Combining multiple preventative measures creates more layers and lessens the chance of exposure to the virus. Adapted from the New York Times article "[The Swiss Cheese Model of Pandemic Defense](#)," CMC is taking a multi-layer approach to combatting COVID-19 this summer.



In every slice of swiss cheese, there are holes. Since there is no singular way to stop the spread of COVID-19, each prevention measure has its own strengths and weaknesses (or, its own set of strengths and swiss cheese holes). By layering multiple prevention measures on top of each other --- hand sanitizing AND wearing a mask AND social distancing AND limiting time indoors AND quarantining AND getting tested before arriving at camp – there will be fewer pathways (or a thicker block of swiss cheese) for the virus to enter and spread throughout camp. We are designing our activities and all aspects of camp to adhere to these prevention measures.



## PRE-CAMP FAMILY EXPECTATIONS

### Self-Quarantine

All campers and staff should self-quarantine beginning 10 days prior to their arrival at Camp. During the quarantine, campers, staff, and members of their household should:

- Limit physical contact with anyone outside of their household, unless absolutely necessary.
- Avoid attending group celebrations, other camps, family events, parties, etc.
- Wear a mask when interacting with individuals outside of your household
- Stay 6 feet away from other people
- Utilize curbside store/restaurant services
- Wash hands with soap and water frequently
- Limit non-essential travel

Staff will arrive at camp at least 10 days prior to the arrival of campers, allowing for an additional period of quarantine to be completed in advance of campers' arrival.

### COVID-19 Test

All campers and staff must obtain a PCR COVID-19 test and share the results with us prior to their arrival. Tests must be completed no earlier than 5 days and no later than 3 days prior to arrival to Camp. Additionally, campers and staff will receive a rapid antigen test on arrival day. **Only campers and staff with negative test results from both tests will be permitted to enter Camp – NO EXCEPTIONS.**

### Temperature and Symptom Monitoring

During the quarantine period, all campers and staff should self-monitor for symptoms related to COVID-19 and check their temperature daily. There will be a Temperature, Symptom Monitoring and Contact Tracing form to submit prior to camp that will be reviewed by our camp medical professionals to certify compliance with this policy. **All campers and staff will be required to be completely symptom-free – without the use of any medication - for at least 72 hours prior to their arrival.**

## TESTING STRATEGY

Being able to determine whether the virus is present at Camp is a critical component to keeping our environment stable and free of COVID-19. In addition to the two tests prior to arrival, plans are in place to administer a PCR COVID-19 test camp-wide after the first week of each session.

Should anyone in our community present with symptoms of COVID-19, we will perform rapid antigen tests. At Camp, it is common for campers and staff to present with headaches, sore throats, and other complaints and automatically testing everyone when a symptom is present is not a sustainable plan. We will work alongside our medical team and use best practices to determine when to administer these tests. Anyone for whom it is determined that a COVID-19 test should be administered will be quarantined until the results are known. Their cabin/pod will continue camp programming; however, it will be isolated away from other cabins/pods.

Camp reserves the right to request that any member of our Camp community who presents with a symptom of COVID-19 be tested to rule out presence of the virus. Best practices indicate that if there are two or more symptoms present, where one symptom is a fever, a COVID-19 test is to be administered.



## VACCINES

Our medical staff will be vaccinated prior to the opening of camp. Our other adult staff, as part of the Education and Childcare industry, are now eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine in San Diego County and many areas throughout the United States, and we have encouraged them to become vaccinated as soon as they can. The vaccine will be regarded as an additional level of PPE for all adults, and we expect that those who are vaccinated to comply with all of Camp's COVID-19 policies.

## DAILY HEALTH SCREENINGS

Our medical staff will train camp staff how to conduct daily COVID-19 screenings, and each pod will undergo a daily screening. Anyone reporting a symptom of COVID-19 will be sent to the Health Center for further evaluation.

## NONPHARMACEUTICAL INTERVENTIONS AT CAMP

### Cleaning And Sanitization Procedures And Enhanced Hygiene

Door knobs, handles and other commonly touched areas will be disinfected regularly. Public bathrooms and shared spaces (e.g. dining hall) will be cleaned and sanitized multiple times per day, per CDC recommendations and guidelines. Every space and program area that we are using around Camp will also have its own spray bottle of disinfectant and towels. Camp Mountain Chai uses disinfectants that are on the CDC and EPA lists of approved products to be effective against COVID-19.

All attendees will receive instruction on hygiene measures such as cough and sneeze etiquette and hand hygiene, with the requirement to clean hands with soap and water or approved hand sanitizer containing a minimum of 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol before and after all activity periods, meals, and other high-touch interactions. The number of hand sanitizing stations throughout Camp will be increased to accommodate enhanced protocols.

All cabin groups/pods will carry a sanitation bag for use throughout the day. These bags will contain supplies for the disinfecting of equipment before/after use, and to clean as the group desires. These bags will be checked and refilled daily. Staff will have additional training on enhanced hygiene and sanitization procedures.

### Creating a Bubble

Best practices for safely operating during this pandemic include creating a stable of an environment, which means limiting who comes in and out of Camp to the best of our ability. This summer, Camp Mountain Chai will operate as a closed campus, creating its own bubble, meaning once our campers and staff arrive, they will not be allowed to leave, with the following exceptions:

- Maintenance, food service and cleaning staff who live offsite and do not physically interact with other camp staff
- Vendors providing essential items to camp, including propane, food, septic services and repair companies as needed
- Healthcare professionals

All such essential vendors will be subject to a health screening and temperature check prior to entering Camp and they will be required to wear a face mask for the duration of their time on premises.



Visitors will not be permitted nor will we be running any camp tours for any prospective families.

We are also mindful that for any number of reasons, campers and/or staff members may need to leave Camp; e.g. to seek out additional medical care. We will carefully welcome those members back into the community, as long as a proper face covering was worn, physical distance was kept, and exposure risk was at a minimum.

Campers or staff needing to leave for reasons other than additional medical care will likely not be allowed back into the Camp bubble. All circumstances surrounding what takes place while they are gone from Camp will be assessed and an objective determination will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Camp Director, Senior Leadership Team and/or Medical Professionals.

*A note about vaccines and transmission:* Early indications from medical research are that COVID-19 vaccines not only protect those vaccinated but also reduce asymptomatic transmission. Should the CDC or California Department of Public Health add guidance specifically for vaccinated individuals (e.g. camp staff), we will update our policies accordingly.

## COMMUNITY STRUCTURE

Based on best-practices from local, state, and federal health officials, the experience of camps that operated safely in 2020, and the camping industry, we have developed a community structure designed to mitigate the risk of and manage the potential spread of COVID-19.

### Pods

Each cabin will become its own pod. A pod is like the immediate family; members do not need to wear a mask when around one another. Pods, will generally have 10-14 campers and 3-4 staff. These pod sizes are based on California Department of Public Health's guideline and the size of the cabins, allowing for comfortable conditions, while maximizing safety and maintaining appropriate supervision. Within cabins, campers will be required to sleep in opposite directions (i.e. the head of the camper in the top bunk will be opposite the position of the camper in the bottom bunk.)

Non-cabin staff will also be in their own pods based on their position and with whom they live. Essential staff who support the overall operation of Camp, (Leadership Team, Camper Care Staff, etc.) will only interact with pods outside or in well-ventilated interior settings throughout Camp. All essential staff will ensure physical distancing with members of each pod and will wear a face mask at all times when outside of their living quarters. Campers and staff may not enter the living quarters of any other pod, with the exception of maintenance and housekeeping staff who will only enter in case of emergency or while vacant.

### Outside, Masked & Distanced (2 of 3)

The most important philosophy that we have adopted to mitigate the potential spread of COVID-19 at camp is to be **Two-Out-of-Three: Outside, Masked and/or Distanced**. For any cross-pod interactions, campers and staff will observe at least two of the three following rules: wear a mask, be outdoors, and/or be physically distanced (at least 6 feet apart). Our staff will be trained to implement and enforce these guidelines with their campers.

Being outdoors is the most important of the 2 out of 3 philosophy. We will do our best and are planning as much programming outdoors as possible.





## Mask Wearing Policy

The general rule at Camp is “if you mix, you mask:” anytime a camper might mix with anyone outside their pod, they must be masked. All campers and staff will be required to wear masks inside all buildings except for when they are actively eating or when they are inside their cabin with their pod. Additionally, masks will not be required when campers are swimming or if they are the only pod at an activity area that is being facilitated by their staff. Masks must meet [CDC recommendations](#), covering both the nose and mouth. **Gaiter masks and face shields are not acceptable replacements.**

Sending extra masks and a mask-lanyard holder for the camper to wear around their neck when/if they remove their mask is strongly recommended. All masks must be legibly labeled with first and last name. Each camper should bring a small mesh bag (e.g. lingerie bag) to Camp that is legibly labeled for their masks to be washed. We will wash masks regularly by pod.

## Restrooms

Campers and staff will use the bathrooms within their cabin to shower, get ready for the day, and get ready for bed. We are building additional time into the schedule so that campers and staff can use the restroom within their cabin between activity periods. Campers and staff can use any public restroom (e.g. dining hall) to go to the bathroom while wearing a mask, however they will be encouraged to use the bathrooms in their cabin before or after meals and activities instead. They must sanitize in, wash their hands after using the bathroom, and sanitize out.

## TRANSPORTATION

### To Camp

**For summer 2021, Camp Mountain Chai will not provide any transportation TO camp.** Providing group transportation to Camp prior to intake screening/testing and the establishment of our pods, while also maintaining appropriate physical distancing, is not feasible. **All families will need arrange for their camper’s arrival to Camp.**

**Campers should not travel to Camp with individuals who are not members of their household. Exceptions can be made in the case of campers carpooling to camp with other campers who will be in their camp cabin/pod.** To maintain a safe, enclosed environment at Camp, we will only be allowing campers staying at Camp to leave the car. We ask that all others stay in their cars at all times, including to say goodbye to the camper(s). Our staff will be available to help unload any bags or equipment that is accompanying your camper and we will make sure all luggage gets to your camper’s cabin.

The specific details and logistics around drop-off will be shared with our families closer to the start of Camp. You can expect a careful and responsible check-in/out process that supports the stable environment inside of Camp that we are creating.

Upon arrival at Camp, we will be performing a health screening for everyone in the car. Please do not bring family members or friends outside of your household. This includes temperature checks and a questionnaire around COVID-19 symptoms experienced in the past 72 hours and any known exposures to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 14 days. Any camper or staff member who has experienced any COVID-related symptom(s) will be directed to our medical staff to determine whether their arrival at Camp needs to be delayed.



## From Camp

As a result of our mitigation measures, including mid-session COVID-19 tests, our expectation is that we will be able to use buses and/or vans to transfer campers from camp. **In order to keep cabin groups together and reduce mixing, we plan to provide bus transportation to sites in Redlands and San Diego only. Parent pickup is also an option.** More information will be available in the coming months.

## CAMP PROGRAM

We are prepared and eager to provide a full complement of engaging camp activities similar to Camp Mountain Chai summers of the past, while creating opportunities for social interaction denied to us by the pandemic. We know how important and meaningful your camper's experience will be this summer after over a year of constant change in routines, physical distancing, and interaction limited to sitting in front of screens.

To accomplish this, we will need to make some adjustments in how we deliver our programs, as detailed in this playbook. In addition, we will remain flexible in our programming this summer and will be prepared to quickly pivot based on the needs and interests of our Camp community. We are examining how each activity may need to be modified to ensure the health and safety of our camp community. Each activity area will have adjusted plans that follow all ACA, CDC, and our medical committee recommendations.

## Daily Schedule

Campers and staff will continue to have a mix of cabin activities and chugim (electives) each day. The number of activity periods will shift from 5 periods to 4 periods per day, with increased time in each area. This will reduce the number of transitions in a day and increase the time between periods to allow for enhanced hygiene and sanitization practices.

## Chugim (Electives)

Chugim are designed for campers to build skills and have some ownership over their camp experience. Chugim that have cross-pod interaction will be outdoors, masked and/or distanced (satisfying our 2 of 3 plan).

## Evening Programs

Evening programs are creative and fun activities that take place after dinner. Most commonly, evening programs are done by cabin or unit. This summer, programs may continue to be delivered to multiple cabins (e.g. unit) where each pod is able to participate in parallel activities while maintaining proper social distancing.

## Shabbat

Shabbat links us as a Jewish community. Gathering on Friday night, in our Shabbat whites, as we welcome in Shabbat is a highlight for us each week. This summer won't be any different. We're exploring a number of options that will allow us to accomplish this in a way that allows us to deliver on our Shabbat traditions, in a safe and responsible way. This could include multiple Shabbat services, allowing everyone at Camp to enjoy our sacred *Teatron* space, or a single service in a larger location (e.g. sports field). We will share with our families more information about what our Shabbat experience will look like closer to the start of our summer.



## All-Camp Programming

All-camp programs create some of the most unforgettable memories. We are still planning to offer our signature all-camp programs, like Chai'dol, Maccabiah, Embassy, and Olympics this summer. While they will look different, they'll be just as memorable. Between now and the start of Camp, our programming team will be hard at work to maintain the unique spirit of these experiences while at the same time balancing the required best practices in health and safety.

## Inclement Weather

We intend to spend as much time outside as possible this summer. In light rain, regular activities will continue in their normal locations. If weather becomes unsafe or severe, programming will shift to cabin-based indoor activities. In the event of an emergency weather situation, safety procedures will override Covid-19 protocols when necessary.

## Trips

We may offer low-risk trips to areas near Camp where physical distancing from the public is possible. For example, we plan to continue offering overnights and Atid trips using nearby, exclusive-use group campsites, hiking trails, etc. Campers will continue to follow Camp protocol on these trips including masking if/when interacting with people outside of their pod, social distancing, and enhanced hygiene.

## ADDITIONAL SECTIONS

Over the next few weeks, we plan to release additional sections of our COVID-19 Playbook, including:

- Health Center Operations
- Communication with Parents
- Mail & Packages
- Staff Time-Off

## CONCLUSION

Thank you for sharing the new policies and procedures with your campers and making sure they understand them. We will be regularly updating our policies to reflect any changes made to best practice recommendations to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Lastly, we wanted to say thank you in advance for partnering with us to deliver the best possible experience for our campers and staff. The past year has presented our community with challenges that we have been able to overcome by sticking together (at a distance) and protecting each other.

We cannot wait to see your camper up the tall green mountain this summer. Until then, stay safe and healthy!