



Public Health Environmental Health Services

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TO: San Bernardino County

Camp Owners/Operators

SUBJECT: Prevention of Illness Outbreaks at Camps

This past year, Environmental Health Services (EHS) received several reports of illness outbreaks at organized camps. Illness outbreaks are preventable with the proper precautions. This includes a mandatory health screening of campers and staff, proper handwashing, and other hygienic practices.

The mandatory "Health Screening" must be conducted by a qualified staff member for all campers under the age of 18 who are unaccompanied by a parent or guardian within 24 hours of arriving at camp, and for all staff prior to the arrival of campers. It is recommended that the mandatory health screening of campers and staff be done *prior* to their arrival at camp; *pre-screening* them, to prevent the spread of illness. Pre-screening of campers and staff is critical to prevent an illness outbreak from starting. The screening should include the following inquiries:

1. Has the camper/staff exhibited symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea within the last 24 hours?
2. Does the camper/staff have an elevated temperature, over 100°F?
3. Does the camper/staff display other transmissible conditions (i.e. lice, pink eye, etc.)?
4. Has the camper/staff been recently exposed (within the last 48 hours) to family members who have exhibited any symptoms or illness as described above? If so, monitor the camper/staff more closely.

A sample health screening form has been included with this letter. Please contact us if you would like the form electronically.

It is extremely important that campers and staff members be prevented from coming to camp when ill. When a relatively large group of people are in close proximity to each other, like at camp, it provides the perfect environment for the spread of illness. The spread of illness can be prevented through good hygienic practices. Staff and campers must thoroughly wash their hands as frequently as needed, particularly after using the restroom and before handling food.

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If an outbreak does occur, Title 17, California Code of Regulations Section 2500(b) and 30750(g) require that all occurrences of foodborne illness and/or any other reportable diseases be promptly reported to EHS. Reportable illnesses may include one or more of the following symptoms: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramps and fever. Reporting illnesses to EHS must occur when a higher than average number of campers exhibit these common symptoms. Furthermore, code requires that medical logs be maintained onsite by the Health Supervisor.

If an illness outbreak or suspected illness outbreak occurs at camp, follow these guidelines:

1. Campers/staff members displaying any symptoms of illness must be immediately isolated and put under the care of the appointed Health Supervisor or qualified staff.
2. The camp must contact EHS promptly to inform them of an illness outbreak and what steps have been taken to contain the outbreak.
3. Medical treatment must be recorded in the medical log by the Health Supervisor or qualified staff.
4. All pertinent documentation/records relating to the sick campers/staff must be maintained onsite and made available to EHS upon request. This includes copies of the medical log, contact information for the sick campers/staff and any other documentation that may be necessary to investigate the illness.
5. Meticulous cleaning and sanitizing procedures must commence in areas where illness symptoms occurred. Proper protection must be worn by staff performing these duties.
6. If necessary, the camp must voluntarily close to prevent further progression of the outbreak.

A handout on Norovirus is included as a reminder of the importance of preventing and reporting illnesses. EHS is here to assist you. Please contact our office at (800) 442-2283 with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



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Community Environmental Health