Marin County Office of Education Walker Creek Ranch Outdoor School

2023-24 COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

Updated September 10, 2023

# OVERVIEW

Walker Creek Ranch (WCR) follows all federal, state, and local public health guidelines related to COVID-19. All schools attending the outdoor school program at WCR are expected to follow COVID-19 health guidelines and protocols from their home schools, districts and counties, in addition to current Public Health guidelines in Marin County as described in the [Marin County SMARTER Schools Plan](https://www.marinschools.org/cms/lib/CA01001323/Centricity/Domain/154/Marin%20County%20Schools%20SMARTER%20Plan%202023.03.02%20with%20ESP%20-%20FINAL.pdf). WCR will follow more stringent guidelines if there are any differences. Because the Outdoor School program at WCR is a multi-day residential program, with students, cabin leaders and teachers sleeping in dormitories and shared lodging, additional mitigation strategies are in place beyond those in effect in typical school settings to help support the health and safety of all participants.

# BEFORE COMING TO OUTDOOR SCHOOL

## Vaccinations

All WCR staff are fully vaccinated. As noted in the  [Marin County SMARTER Schools Plan](https://www.marinschools.org/cms/lib/CA01001323/Centricity/Domain/154/Marin%20County%20Schools%20SMARTER%20Plan%202023.03.02%20with%20ESP%20-%20FINAL.pdf) all participating school staff, cabin leaders and students should be fully vaccinated and boosted (if eligible) before coming to WCR.

## COVID 19 Screening Requirements

Schools must verify (*via the COVID 19 Screening Verification Form attached)* that all participants (students, teachers, and cabin leaders) are free of COVID-19 Symptoms\* before attending Walker Creek Ranch.

For any participant ***who has tested positive*** for COVID-19 within 30 days (prior to the last day of their scheduled visit to WCR):

* 5 days have passed since the start of symptoms or date of the first positive COVID-19 test.
* They have since tested negative for COVID-19
* Symptoms\* must be improving and the participant must be fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines.

Any participant, regardless of vaccination status, who is unable to meet criteria above should not be allowed to board transportation to WCR.

*\* Symptoms of COVID-19 include: Fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea*

# AT OUTDOOR SCHOOL

### COVID-19 Safety Training

Students will participate in a COVID-19 safety training on arrival day, wherein they will be introduced to the WCR COVID-19 safety, meal, healthcare, and cleaning procedures outlined below.

### Participant Sleeping Arrangements

Students are assigned to a cabin group of approximately 10-12 students. Students will share a bunk, and will alternate sleeping directions on top and bottom bunks to ensure the most distance possible between students while sleeping. One or two cabin leaders will be assigned to each cabin group and will be assigned their own bed. Classroom teachers are assigned to a room in the Teacher’s Lodge (additional lodging space available if needed).

### Meal Procedures

Immediately prior to meals, students will be reminded to wash their hands with soap and water. Hand sanitizer is available at the dining hall entrance and at each table, and extra hand washing stations are located at the bathhouse and dining hall patio. Meals are led and monitored by WCR staff members. Classroom teachers help supervise student meals. Students are encouraged to use hand sanitizer upon exiting the dining hall and are reminded to wash their hands upon return to their cabins. Kitchen staff will provide to-go meals to serve to students in isolation during mealtime.

### Health Center Procedures

Students who need to visit the Health Center for any reason will be initially assessed outside, under an awning roof. If the issue is routine and/or minor and does not involve a COVID-19 related symptom (i.e., receiving daily medication or minor scrape), classroom teachers will either treat the student outside, or invite the student to the patient receiving area. If the visit involves COVID-19 related symptoms, the student will be asked to wear a mask and treated per the protocol outlined below in the “COVID-19 Symptoms” section.

### Cleaning Procedures

All staff will adhere to proper and appropriate cleaning and disinfecting procedures, including the use of PPE. All disinfectants used at WCR are FDA approved and appropriate for a school setting.

### Shared Spaces

WCR staff will follow a cleaning schedule to regularly clean and disinfect shared restrooms, other shared spaces, and frequently-touched surfaces (i.e., door knobs/push bars, light switches, etc.) around the site each day.

### Cabins

Students will participate in daily cabin cleaning in their own cabin. They will pick up and put away their belongings and sweep the floor. If a student departs early, their bunk bed will be disinfected by staff when students are not present. Every cabin, including cabin bathrooms and bunk beds, will be cleaned and disinfected thoroughly before the next group arrives.

### Dining Hall and Kitchen

The dining hall is cleaned and sanitized after each meal service, including tables and seating. Kitchen workspaces are frequently and regularly cleaned and sanitized (including before food prep, after food prep, before meal service, and after meal service).

### Health Center

WCR staff will clean and disinfect the health office on a daily basis. Classroom Teachers will be provided proper PPE and disinfecting products to clean and disinfect the Health Center regularly and frequently, and as needed after student visits.

### Student Isolation Space

After the departure of a student who has been isolated due to suspected or confirmed COVID-19, the assigned WCR staff member will clean and disinfect the furniture, surfaces, and restroom used by the student placed in isolation.

### Ventilation

Most Instructional activities at WCR occur outdoors. In cabins and buildings windows will be opened to promote air exchange as much as possible, depending upon weather conditions. During short, scheduled, daytime visits to the cabin, doors will remain open, as well. Doors are closed at night for safety. All sleeping cabins, meeting rooms, and the dining hall are equipped with HEPA air purifiers.

### Masks and PPE

Masking recommendations at WCR follow the [Marin County SMARTER Schools Plan](https://www.marinschools.org/cms/lib/CA01001323/Centricity/Domain/154/Marin%20County%20Schools%20SMARTER%20Plan%202023.03.02%20with%20ESP%20-%20FINAL.pdf). Specifically participants are recommended to wear a mask if they are symptomatic, for 10-days after testing positive for COVID -19, or after close contact to someone with COVID-19.

Any student, cabin leader or teacher may choose to wear a mask at any time, and should bring at least two clean face coverings per day for a total of 8 masks. Extra masks are also always available at WCR for students, cabin leaders, teachers and staff. When a student or staff member experiences symptoms of COVID 19, they will be asked to wear a mask provided by WCR.

### Hand Washing and Hand Sanitizer

Hand sanitizer is available at the entrance to every building and cabin, and staff and students are encouraged to use it upon entering and exiting the building. WCR program staff carry hand sanitizer in their backpacks during hikes for students to use as needed. Students are instructed in the proper hand-washing techniques at the orientation meeting on Monday. Students are reminded to wash their hands each time they return to the cabin after an activity and before meals. Adults are encouraged to wash their hands frequently. In addition to the sinks located in the bathroom facility, several portable handwashing stations are located outside the dining hall and central bathhouse.

### Ongoing Symptom Screening

Each day of attendance, WCR staff, teachers and cabin leaders will monitor themselves and students for visible symptoms of COVID-19. Anyone with symptoms will be isolated and tested (if appropriate), and follow [COVID 19 Guidance](https://docs.google.com/document/d/124Iv_tFJje04VrgZG8c39GdojPYsd8_zhH9E3kLLRe4/edit) and home school / district protocols. Staff members living in shared housing on site will be offered space for isolation and recovery.

### COVID-19 Testing During the Week

WCR staff are trained in the proper administration and supervision of self-swab, rapid antigen COVID-19 nasal swab tests. Students may participate in rapid testing to rule out COVID-19 in the presence of pre-existing conditions such as known allergies.

Testing is available to all WCR staff as needed. Outdoor Education staff are required to test if symptomatic. If a staff member tests positive for COVID-19, isolation and quarantine protocols will be followed.

All test results taken at Walker Creek Ranch will be reported to the student parent/guardian, school, and Public Health.

# COVID-19 SYMPTOMS: STUDENT ISOLATION, EXPOSURE, NOTIFICATION

### Student Isolation

When a student exhibits symptoms or is complaining of illness (including but not limited to COVID-19 related symptoms) a WCR staff member or classroom teacher will assess the student. A rapid antigen COVID-19 test may be administered (if the parent/guardian signed approval on the Student Health Form or gives verbal permission over the phone).

If a student has a documented pre-existing, chronic condition (noted by the parent/guardian on that child’s Student Registration and Health Form) such as migraines, asthma, allergies, the student may be given a COVID-19 test, with appropriate permissions, before being treated for their chronic condition.

Unless the symptoms are the result of a documented, pre-existing condition, the Classroom teacher or WCR Administrator will contact the student’s parent/guardian to notify them of their student’s symptoms and results of the COVID-19 test (if given) and may ask the parent/guardian to pick up their child as soon as possible.

A student who has symptoms of COVID-19 and/or has tested positive for COVID-19 will be moved to a comfortable isolation area to await pick-up by a parent or guardian. The isolation area may be indoors or outdoors (depending on conditions), with access to a restroom.

A WCR staff member or classroom teacher will supervise the student until the student’s parent/guardian picks them up, and the student will be provided with self-guided activities. The supervising adult will be provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), limit interactions to less than five minutes, and maintain more than six (6) feet of space between themselves and the student.

After the student has been picked up, WCR staff will disinfect the isolation area and restroom. Upon returning home, the student should follow [COVID -19 Guidance](https://docs.google.com/document/d/124Iv_tFJje04VrgZG8c39GdojPYsd8_zhH9E3kLLRe4/edit). The parent/guardian should contact their child’s school to determine when the child can return to regular school.

### Potential Exposure Notices for Participants

If a positive case is identified on campus and students have participated in one or more meals in the dining hall, all participants will be considered exposed. WCR will inform the participating school administrators so that they can share an exposure notification to all families as soon as practicable. WCR will also work with Marin County Public Health to follow the recommended exposure response and reporting guidelines.

# RESOURCES AND GENERAL INFORMATION

* [Marin County Office of Education Resources and Information for the 2023-24 School year](https://www.marinschools.org/Page/8394)
* [Marin County Schools SMARTER Plan 2023.03.01 with ESP](https://www.marinschools.org/cms/lib/CA01001323/Centricity/Domain/154/Marin%20County%20Schools%20SMARTER%20Plan%202023.03.02%20with%20ESP%20-%20FINAL.pdf)
* [Marin HHS Covid-19 Guidance for TK-12 Schools and Child Care](https://docs.google.com/document/d/124Iv_tFJje04VrgZG8c39GdojPYsd8_zhH9E3kLLRe4/edit)
* [CDPH: Guidance for Local Health Jurisdictions on Isolation and Quarantine of General Public](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Guidance-on-Isolation-and-Quarantine-for-COVID-19-Contact-Tracing.aspx)
* [CDPH: COVID-19 Testing- What You need to Know](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/What-to-Know-for-COVID-19-Testing.pdf)
* [CDC: Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools and Early Care and Education Programs to Support Safe In-Person Learning](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-childcare-guidance.html)