



# REOPENING CONSIDERATIONS

A FRAMEWORK FOR **CAMPUS REC**

June 2020

By the NIRSA Reopening  
Framework Work Team

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## Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly altered the landscape of higher education. The education, programs, and services provided to and by nearly all campus communities has also changed. NIRSA has pivoted to help meet the evolving need of campus recreation professionals through virtual roundtables, pulse surveys, and the NIRSA Connect online discussion forum -and resource library,where members have been sharing questions, experiences, and perspectives. Because NIRSA members share knowledge so willingly, many resources and perspectives have been gathered through these connections, and enhanced by resources shared by partner associations, organizations, and companies.

In May, ten NIRSA members were appointed to a work team tasked with the purpose of gathering, reviewing and evaluating, and centralizing information and resources to form a Framework of Considerations for reopening campus recreation programs and facilities. The work team consists of associate and professional members and has representatives from every NIRSA region, from schools of small, medium, and large sizes, and from both public and private universities.

### How to Use This Framework

This framework is divided into five sections:

- Communications
- People
- Facilities
- Programming
- Financial

Each area contains prompting questions and considerations to help institutions develop or refine their respective reopening guidelines. The information in this resource has been gathered from numerous resources and member input. The references and resources section of this framework includes the source materials used to create it.

Many local guidelines outline a phased approach to reopening. These phases depend on many variables. Many of these variables are only addressed in the Facilities section, as facilities are considered the “key gatekeeper” for reopening campus recreation.

This Considerations Framework is intended to guide campus recreation departments on questions and options to explore as they develop/refine their own unique reopening guidelines. As each institution develops its guidelines, it is imperative that where appropriate professionals consult and incorporate:

- United States of America’s Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or Public Health Agency of Canada (PHA) Guidelines
- State, Provincial, and local guidelines (if they exist)
- Institutional guidelines (if they exist)

### **Advocating for Campus Recreation**

Campus recreation departments need to be proactive in advocating for their needs and the needs of the communities they serve.

In developing reopening guidelines you may experience:

- An institution’s focus may be on academic services and may overlook or delay the development of resources/information to help non-academic or auxiliary programs and services
- An institution may assume athletics guidelines will be the same for campus recreation

If your administration hasn’t reached out to campus recreation for options or thoughts, departments should contact administrators to provide your recommendations and make your voice heard. Things you can do to support administrative decisions:

- Be proactive in communicating changes and policies to collaborative partners who use your space (summer camps, athletics, academic programs)

- Coordinate with other appropriate university offices that could be impacted by your department's planning (student centers, counseling, environmental health & safety, student health, career services, disability support services, etc.)

### **Reopening Framework Work Team**

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### **References and Resources**

#### **Field Guide for Camps on Implementation of CDC Guidance**

Source: American Camp Association website

Author(s): Environmental Health & Engineering, Inc.

Publication Date: May 18, 2020

<https://acacamps.app.box.com/s/7gkh9buu3ntssx2v38gajg4z94631lag>

#### **COVID-19 Reopening and Return to Play Resources**

Source: American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) website

Author(s): American College of Sports Medicine

Publication Date:

<https://www.acsm.org/learn-develop-professionally/covid-19-reopening-return-to-play-resources>

### **Coronavirus & Youth Sports**

Source: The Aspen Institute: Project Play

Author(s): Project Play

Publication Date: June 10, 2020

<https://www.aspenprojectplay.org/coronavirus-and-youth-sports>

### **Considerations for Reopening Institutions of Higher Education in the COVID-19 Era**

Source: American College Health Association Guidelines

Author(s): Reopening Guidelines Committee, part of ACHA's COVID-19 Task Force

Publication Date: May 7, 2020

<https://acha-test.app.box.com/s/k202537ahi3w27b0w6cdhqxynr3vljif>

### **First Aid/CPR/AED Care During COVID-19**

Source: The American Red Cross website

Author(s): The American Red Cross

<https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/coronavirus-information/first-aid-cpr-aed-care-during-covid-19>

### **Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities**

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website

Author(s): National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Division of Viral Diseases

Publication Date: Last reviewed: May 27, 2020

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>

### **Considerations for Youth Sports**

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website

Author(s): National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Division of Viral Diseases

Publication Date: Last reviewed: May 29, 2020

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html>

### **Interim Guidance for Administrators of US Institutions of Higher Education**

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website

Author(s): National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Division of Viral Diseases

Publication Date: Last reviewed: March 18, 2020

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-ihe-response.html>

### **Parks and Recreational Facilities**

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website

Author(s): National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Division of Viral Diseases

Publication Date: Last reviewed: May 20, 2020

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/index.html>

### **Suggestions for Youth and Summer Camps**

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website

Author(s): National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Division of Viral Diseases

Publication Date: Last reviewed: June 9, 2020

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/summer-camps.html>

### **Youth Programs and Camps Decision Tool**

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website

Author(s): National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Division of Viral Diseases

Publication Date: Last reviewed: May 15, 2020

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-programs-decision-tool.html>

### **Reimagining Youth Sports in a Post-COVID-19 World**

Source: Changing the Game Project website

Author(s): John O'Sullivan

Publication Date: April 14, 2020

<https://changingthegameproject.com/reimagining-youth-sports-in-a-post-covid-19-world/>

### **COVID-19 Resources for Climbing Gyms**

Source: Climbing Wall Association website

Author(s): Climbing Wall Association

Publication Date: Last updated: June 9, 2020

<https://climbingwallindustry.org/page/Coronavirus>

### **Roadmap to Reopening**

Source: Climbing Wall Association (CWA) website

Author(s): The Climbing Wall Association

<https://www.reopen.climbingwallindustry.org/>

### **CREP: Returning to work to teach classes or train clients?**

Source: Coalition for the Registration of Exercise Professionals Reopening Guide

Author(s): Coalition for the Registration of Exercise Professionals

[http://www.usreps.org/Documents/CREP\\_ReturnToTeaching\\_.pdf](http://www.usreps.org/Documents/CREP_ReturnToTeaching_.pdf) CREP: Returning to work to teach classes or train clients?

### **CORONAVIRUS – How to clean and disinfect climbing walls, holds, flooring, ropes & TRUBLUE Auto Belays**

Source: Eldorado Climbing website

Author(s): Head Rush Technologies

Publication Date: Last updated: April 6, 2020

<https://eldowalls.com/coronavirus-climbing-gym-cleaning>

### **Recovery Plan Working Document**

Source: George Mason University  
Author(s): George Mason University Recreation  
Publication Date: May 31, 2020

### **18 Safety Considerations for Your Health Club Reopening Plan**

Source: International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association (IHRSA) website  
Author(s): Alexandra Black Larcom  
Publication Date: April 22, 2020  
<https://www.ihrsa.org/improve-your-club/safety-considerations-for-your-health-club-reopening-plan/>

### **Infectious Diseases**

Source: Mayo Clinic website  
Author(s): Mayo Clinic Staff  
Publication Date: July 17, 2019  
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/infectious-diseases/symptoms-causes/syc-20351173>

### **Coronavirus: How should US higher education plan for an uncertain future?**

Source: McKinsey & Company's McKinsey Insights  
Author(s): Frankki Bevins, Jake Bryant, Charag Krishnan, and Jonathan Law  
Publication Date: April 3, 2020  
<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-sector/our-insights/coronavirus-how-should-us-higher-education-plan-for-an-uncertain-future#>

### **Coronavirus Club Sports Information**

Source: Next College Student Athlete (NCSA) website  
Author(s): Next College Student Athlete  
<https://www.ncsasports.org/coronavirus-sports/club-sports-coronavirus>

### **Strategy Outline for Covid-19 Risk Mitigation in Climbing Gyms**

Source: Smart Climbing Gym website  
Author(s): Christian Popien, Matthias Polig, Christian Benk, Florian Schiffer, Ged MacDomhnaill, Christoph Gotschke, Peter Zeidelhack, Maria Hilber, Cody Roth  
Publication Date: May 7, 2020  
<https://gym.vertical-life.info/articles/strategy-outline-covid-19-risk-mitigation-climbing-gyms>

### **Can kids attend camp this summer? What newly released guidelines say**

Source: Today  
Author(s): Scott Stump  
Publication Date: May 18, 2020  
<https://www.today.com/parents/summer-camp-guidelines-released-amid-coronavirus-pandemic-t181786>



### **Reopening Plan DRAFT**

Source: University of Houston

Author(s): Department of Campus Recreation

Publication Date: May 15, 2020

### **Guidelines for Opening Up America Again**

Source: whitehouse.gov website

Author(s): The White House and the CDC

Publication Date: April 16, 2020

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica/>

### **Wisconsin Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19: Gyms and Fitness Facilities**

Source: Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation website

Author(s): Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, Wisconsin Department of Tourism, Badger Bounce Back, and Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection

Publication Date: May 7, 2020

<https://wedc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID-19-Gyms-and-Fitness-Facilities-Guidelines.pdf>

## **Disclaimer**

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly altered the landscape of higher education. The education, programs, and services provided to and by nearly all campus communities has also changed. Because NIRSA members share knowledge so willingly, many resources and perspectives have been gathered through these connections, and enhanced by resources shared by partner associations, organizations, and companies.

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The References and Resources cited in this document are for general information purposes only, and may not include the most current information available. Inclusion of any reference and resource content does not imply NIRSA's support for or endorsement of any of the sources of such content.



## Communications

A reopening communication plan is key to establishing trust and confidence across your campus community. Your communication plan should account for the basic questions of Who, What, When, Why, and How.

Clear, consistent, and timely messaging is critical to ensuring a well-informed campus during a reopening or during periods of intermittent access and will help to ensure that everyone has a positive and safe experience.

Below you will find key questions and related considerations for developing a communications plan to support your reopening after COVID-19 related closures.

### **Have you created a reopening communication plan?**

Considerations:

- Use clear, consistent, and on-brand communication regarding access guidelines and procedures to improve the safety of employees and customers
- Where are the best places to provide occupancy guidelines and new or different processes (e.g. activity space restrictions, advance booking systems, etc.)?
- Determine whether or not your staff has the right to refuse service to anyone exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 or not following guidelines
- How do you plan to communicate expectations of participants?
- Is it possible to designate a spokesperson for the department and include the individual's contact information on all marketing and messaging materials?

## **Which campus partners can assist or should be informed of your department's communication plan?**

Considerations:

- Has your typical approval process to vet and receive approval to distribute information on your campus changed?
- Have you included or involved pertinent campus partners and stakeholders in the development of your communication plan?
- When appropriate, coordinate message content and timeline with campus partners, such as:
  - Athletics
  - Disability Support Services
  - Environmental Health & Safety
  - Security Services
  - Staff Association
  - Student Counseling
  - Student Health/Wellness
  - Student Union
  - University Communication

## **When will you deliver your message?**

Considerations:

- The majority of COVID-19-related messages will need to be sent proactively, and in some cases may need to be sent reactively
- Messages regarding access guidelines and procedures can be deliberately planned and released
- Create urgent messages (e.g. active COVID-19 cases) in advance so that they can be reviewed by campus partners
- Timing of the message is important and affects how much or how little visibility a message can achieve

## **Who is your target audience/stakeholders for each message/communication plan?**

Considerations:

- Alumni
- Clubs
- Contractors

- Faculty and staff
- Parents
- Professional and student staff
- Public members
- Rental groups
- Students
- Visitors

### **What is the key message or purpose of your communication?**

#### Considerations:

- Consider writing with representatives from your target audiences to help you tailor the message for each community.
- Define the desired outcome of each message and limit to not more than five key points
- Ensure the tone (e.g calmness, confidence, empathy) of your message aligns with the key points
- Communicate to your community what you are doing (e.g. cleaning and disinfection, health screening, etc) and what you are no longer doing (e.g. equipment rentals, towel service, etc) in an effort to minimize the spread of COVID-19
- Some of the ownership for physical distancing and safety must be placed upon facility users. This can be facilitated by strong marketing, messaging, and communication. This includes advice such as regular hand sanitizer use , including before and after exercise, and reminders not to touch your face while working out. If facility users do touch their faces, they should sanitize hands before continuing facility or equipment use.
- Shared equipment should be sanitized with a disinfectant before and after use, this includes free weights, mats, kettlebells, medicine balls, stability balls, bars, etc.
- How do you plan to communicate changes to occupancy guidelines and processes (e.g. activity space restrictions, advance booking systems, etc)?

- Consider communications to members about times when gym attendance may not be a good option (e.g. when they are taking care of someone who is COVID-19 positive, exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, or if they fall into a high-risk category, etc.).
- Have a plan for communicating that the recreation center has the right to refuse service to anyone exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 or not following related guidelines.
- If you plan to host summer camps, plan for more interactions with parents who may have additional safety concerns.
- Continue to include information on the benefits of being active in COVID-19 related communications.
- Is posting answers to FAQs online an option to help you limit inquiries to popular questions?
- Provide contact information and designate a spokesperson to respond to feedback in a timely and consistent manner

### **How will your message be sent/communicated?**

#### Considerations:

Depending upon the target audience, urgency of the message, frequency of communication, and accessibility, consider using some or all of these mediums:

- Direct email
- Digital (website, social media, apps, text message alerts, video, etc.)
- In-person
- Signage
- Press releases
- Dedicated website FAQ and comment/question page
- Can you employ staff to periodically announce physical distance guidelines and cleaning protocol reminders using the public address system?
- Is a prerecorded message about physical distance guidelines and cleaning protocol to use on the public address system?
- Facility signage and patron notices
  - 6' reminders
  - Areas open for use
  - Clean and Needs to be Cleaned

- Cleaning before and after use
- Cleaning measures
- Closed/Not available for use
- COVID screening
- Expected distancing behaviors
- Hand sanitizer stations
- Hand washing
- Occupancy numbers
- Personal belongings
- Traffic flow markings
- Where to stand



## People

The safety of your student employees, full-time staff, student and non-student patrons, and guests is the number one priority. Safety should be the primary focus when it comes to reopening a facility.

### **How will you transition full-time staff and graduate assistants back to work?**

Considerations:

- Recognize that you will have staff who do not feel comfortable returning to work on campus—you need to consider how to work with those individuals and how they will affect reopening
- Identify potential concerns your staff may have about returning to work on campus and in regards to reopening facilities
- Identify methods to procure feedback from staff regarding reopening facilities
- Discuss whether professional staff who are a part of more vulnerable populations will be allowed to work from home
- There may be a period of transition for staff who are returning to work so consider allowing telework days or virtual attendance at meetings
- Stagger telework days with on-campus days for your staff to lower the number of staff in the office at a given time; this could help ease the transition from teleworking to once again working on-campus
- Continue holding virtual meetings when possible
- Use meeting spaces as offices for employees who currently share office space



- Detail a process for granting admission to a work site (temperature check, questionnaire, etc.)
- Implement a rotating schedule with staff
- Determine procedures for quarantining staff if an employee tests positive for COVID-19; for example, this could involve using one set of staff for one week and then another set the following week

### **What new student staff policies, procedures, and safety measures will be implemented?**

#### Considerations:

- Both staff and patrons are likely to get frustrated with social distancing and its implications so it is essential that your staff knows how to effectively communicate your policies consistently with patrons; all staff members should have the same mindset and be on the same page with regards to messaging
- A soft opening with staff will allow you to assess the success of new policies and procedures
- There is likely to be uncertainty regarding how many experienced student staff will return to campus and continue working with campus recreation due to financial hardship or other challenges
- Consider online or blended staff training; the CDC recommends that in-person meetings consist of no more than ten people. Consider how social distancing can be enforced and new policies and procedures communicated to patrons; for example, learn how to explain new cleaning methods
- Use a training checklist with student staff
- Retention of staff may become an issue—especially lifeguards—so is it possible to get lifeguards in early to do in-services?
- When possible, administer trainings virtually. When in person training is required, do so with social distancing in mind
- Staff re-training and refreshers will be critical to ensure student staff are still trained and know what they are expected to do with particular attention to new precautions and procedures
- All staff whose roles involve a lot of physical interaction (with equipment room monitors, custodial staff, cleaning fitness equipment, towels, member services) should wear gloves and possibly even masks

- Have select staff assigned duties as “health assistants” who help maintain set distancing guidelines and equipment cleaning
- Conduct COVID-19 self-assessments (both verbal and written)
- Conduct temperature checks
- Who will supply PPE (personal protective equipment) like masks and face shields? And what PPE is required and recommended?
- Clean shared equipment between shift changes (computer stations, rescue tubes, shared keys, etc.)
- Lower staffing numbers to the minimum necessary to manage a space, activity, or event
- Hold your staff and members accountable and set clear expectations for maintaining strict cleaning standards
- How will recruiting student staff be affected by anxiety and safety concerns?
- Take inventory of which student employees are interested and available to return in Fall 2020
- Every supervisor should keep a regularly updated roster of all student employees who will be ready and available to work when the facility reopens
- Knowing student staff availability will help determine what the hours of operation will be for a facility
- Each area of a facility should be communicating with their staff to assess their needs and the expected number of returnees, and each area should plan for larger than normal rates of turnover
- Staff retention needs to be examined on an overall departmental level
- There may be certain positions where opportunities will be limited due to the need for restrictions; redeploying student staff can keep employees actively engaged with the department
- Intramural sports, sport clubs and outdoor adventures will likely have reduced programming so you need to be creative in exploring opportunities for student staff in those areas. Without engaging opportunities, you will likely lose these individuals to other employment options and will then have limited to no experienced staff remaining when those program areas return to standard operations

- Anticipate greater than normal rates of turnover among student staff due to a greater number of incumbent staff not returning because of complications from COVID-19. This will likely result in a greater emphasis on training since there will potentially be a reduction in employee experience.
- Implement specific COVID-19 precautionary training to address operational adjustments that will be made when facilities reopen
- Determine whether a pandemic response or return to work training is offered or required by your institution

### **How will staff respond to incidents and emergencies?**

#### Considerations:

- Retrain staff on patron confrontations:
  - How do you want staff to approach and discuss an issue with a policy?
  - How do you have a congenial discussion while social distancing?
- Have “go” bags ready with a N95 mask, gloves, liquid resistant gown, and face shield; “go” bags should either be non-porous or disposed of in a biohazard bin after use
- Place a “go” bag at each occupied desk or activity area
- For non-life-threatening emergencies:
  - Prior to providing care, consider having your staff ask the following questions:
    - Do you have a fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, sore throat, muscle pain, or loss of taste or smell?
    - Do you have COVID-19 or have you been exposed to anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19?
    - If the answer to any of the above is “yes,” the staff member should put on the PPE and enable your institution’s emergency protocol
    - If the answer is no, the staff member should put on the standard PPE and provide care as they are able to
- For life-threatening emergencies:
  - Initiate your institution's normal emergency protocol
- Treat unresponsive victims as COVID-19 positive and put on provided “go” bag PPE
- Consider training all first responders in CPR for the Professional Rescuer

- During cardiac events, when possible, have first responders who are trained in CPR for the Professional Rescuer (including BVM use) provide care and utilize an AED as quickly as possible

### **What is your expectation of patrons?**

#### Considerations:

- Safety is a shared responsibility between staff and patrons; engaging patrons is essential to the safe operation of the facility
- Execute verbal COVID-19 screenings as patrons enter the facility
- Use temperature checks
- Develop a process to document emerging trends related to student issues
- Implement a survey to gauge participant attitudes, interests, and expectations prior to the fall semester or term
- Utilize a reservation or ticketing system
- Develop check-in and checkout procedures
- Create a procedure for members and staff to report concerns related to policy violations and safety concerns related to COVID-19; this could be an online form

### **Should community and family memberships along with guest passes be reduced or suspended?**

#### Considerations:

- With lower or limited capacity numbers, you may want to consider limiting or eliminating guest/day passes
- Execute verbal COVID-19 screenings as patrons enter the facility
- Implement temperature checks
- When possible, execute touchless and/or cashless transactions

### **What adjustments will need to be made with custodial staff?**

#### Considerations:

- Make sure staff are trained to execute any new cleaning procedures
- Will PPE be mandatory or recommended, and will it be provided by the institution?

- Have staff work independently
- Assign and label housekeeping carts, radios, etc. to reduce the sharing of supplies and equipment

### **How will you approach camps and day care?**

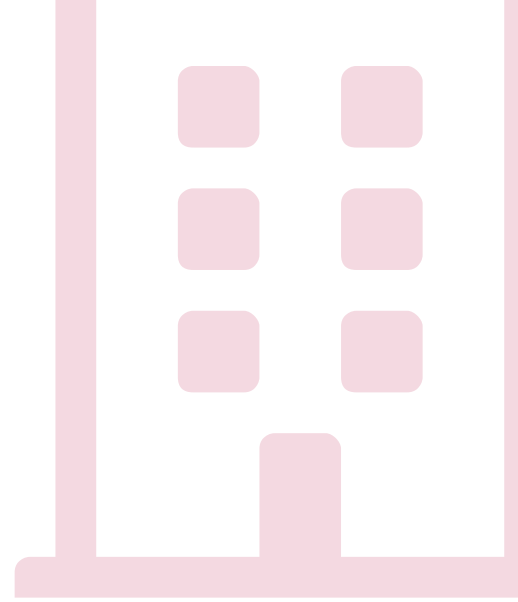
#### Considerations:

- Promote healthy hygiene practices; teaching these practices could be a part of the camp day
- Create a drop-off/pick-up system; have parents drop off children with their counselor and go through the standard COVID-19 screening prior to attending camp each day
- The same counselor should release each child to their authorized pickup person at the end of each day
- Ensure the safe and correct application of disinfectants
- Keep cleaning products away from children
- Ensure social distancing; keep in mind the size of groups, use the buddy system and have kids paired with the same buddy throughout the duration of camp, use spacing squares, etc.
- Space seating and desks so they are at least six feet apart
- Have participants provide their own snack and lunch as usual
- Meals should be eaten in a classroom, in an activity space, or outdoors if possible
- Limit equipment sharing. Clean equipment after it is used
- Provide children with individual spaces to keep their daily belongings

### **How should you handle construction and contractors?**

#### Considerations:

- Follow university guidelines as they relate to interaction with contractors



## Facilities

A detailed operating plan that serves as an essential guide for managing a progressive return to operations. The operating plan should be a living document informed by the best available guidance and consider social distancing guidelines to establish operational hours, areas of operation, amended capacities, revised cleaning and sanitizing protocols.

The phases of your facility reopening will be determined by your local government and advanced through institutional recommendations. Individual institutions may have more or less than three phases and each institution's phased reopening may look different than another.

### Phase 1

This is the initial opening phase and designed as the most restrictive phase. The framework within this phase will remain flexible to permit any necessary accommodations or addendums in response to state and local health guidelines along with industry best practices for facility management.

## Phase 2

This phase of facility reopening would see some ease of restrictions on capacity and program availability while still maintaining appropriate state and local guidelines for physical distancing and best practices for facility cleaning and sanitation. Moving into Phase 2 is not a time-based change. Entering into subsequent phases must rely on guidance from the CDC, your local government leadership, and local health officials. Moving to the next phase should also be based on your facility and the institution's confidence in your ability to implement COVID-19 prevention measures, containment, cleaning, staff, and operations management.

## Phase 3

This phase would see a return to normal operation in both scope and scale while still maintaining best practices for facility cleaning and sanitation.

### **What facilities or facility spaces WILL be available for use and which ones WILL NOT be available?**

Considerations:

- Start reopening communications with what areas ARE available before sharing what is not
- Will there be changes to lockers or cubical storage
- Are you limiting what a patron can bring into the facility?
- What changes affect showers and changing facilities?
- Communicate area closures where activity does not allow for physical distancing
- Will you be closing unsupervised areas of a facility?

### **How will members access the facility?**

Considerations:

- Remove or deactivate hand scanners
- Can you have patrons scan their own ID to access the facility?
- Use entry or exit stations or another type of physical barrier to facilitate appropriate traffic flow

- If you have more than one door, designate one as the entrance and one as the exit
- Consider limiting access points to only one entrance and one exit
- Can you modify the entry to use toe openers or install automatic door openers to reduce hand contact with doors?
- Place a physical barrier such as a six-foot table in front of the reception desks in facilities to maintain distancing between staff and patrons
- Determine whether patrons will be permitted to bring in bags or other personal belongings
- Examine the possibility of designating specific times for at-risk or vulnerable populations to use the facility

### **How will facility and room capacities be enforced?**

#### Considerations:

- Utilize a reservation system and accommodate first-come walk-up access up to capacity
- Create 60 to 90 minute work out time periods. At the end of each time period, all patrons must exit for staff to perform a 15-minute facility cleaning prior to the next time block.
- Use separate ingress and egress access points for distinct facility rooms
- If possible, and not in violation of fire code, prop doors open to improve air flow circulation
- Utilize touchless card swiping with barcode scanners
- Implement time limits on cardio equipment
- Allow individual workouts only, supersets or exercises that require a spotter or should not be permitted

### **What equipment cannot or should not be shared?**

#### Considerations:

- Strength and cardio equipment may need to be reconfigured, taped-off, or be temporarily removed or relocated to follow recommended distancing guidelines
- Changing the direction of how a patron enters and exits equipment



- Special consideration should be given to equipment where a patron may come into contact with the piece with their head or hands (e.g., head pads or hand grips)
- Personal training staff should clean equipment before and after use by clients
- Only having equipment such as boxing gloves and shadow mittens available for purchase and not a check out item
- Remove porous, shared equipment from the floor (i.e., bands, mats, physioballs, bar pads, ropes)
- Replace porous equipment grips with non-porous grip material
- Handles made of soft or absorbent material, including those found in certain cable attachments, suspension equipment, and functional training tools, should not be used
- Sports equipment check-out should be suspended or limited
- Yoga participants should bring their own mats
- Remove vanity items in bathrooms until it is safe to share common items
- Determine if policies and procedures for “Lost and Found” need to be adjusted

### **For the various exercise spaces, what are the revised capacities of the facility to maintain physical distancing guidelines?**

#### Considerations:

- Follow your local government and institutional guidelines
- Use your construction documents to determine updated capacity numbers for each space in your facility
- The number of patrons allowed in each facility will be based on the number of patrons per sq/foot to follow physical distancing guidelines
- Closing unsupervised fitness spaces and or facilities (i.e., residence hall fitness centers, multi-purpose courts, outdoor fields, outdoor fitness spaces)

## **What changes to policies or procedures will be implemented to prevent people from congregating in certain areas?**

### Considerations:

- Create spacing markers for people waiting to enter and check-in
- Create defined markings to indicate individual user spaces in group fitness studios or wherever group fitness classes are held
- Suspend informal recreation use on multi-purpose sport courts
- Redraw floor plans for physical distancing
- Determine physically distant pathways for entry and exit through main facility access points, hallways, and activity areas to ensure demarcation.
- Determine an appropriate location in each building for isolating a participant or group; ideally this space would not be available for any other use
- Lifeguards should not be tasked with enforcing physical distancing rules
- Remove portable bleachers to prevent people from congregating

## **How will social distancing guidelines be maintained pre-class, during class transitions, during class, and post-class?**

### Considerations:

- Rearrange Pilates reformers, chairs, barrels, and other equipment to allow clients to safely practice Pilates
- Some equipment may have to be removed from your space to meet the guidelines
- Asking patrons participating in Pilates and yoga to remove their street shoes outside the studio
- Rearrange or remove stationary bikes
- Utilize a reservation or ticketing system to manage access
- Mark a grid pattern on the floor to show exercise spacing
- Use a separate entrance and exit point
- Use multi-purpose courts as a larger space to promote distancing for classes

## How will current maintenance and cleaning procedures need to be modified?

### Considerations:

- Determine if it is required or recommended for staff to wear PPE while cleaning (i.e., mask, face shield, gloves)
- Policies regarding cleaning and sanitation of equipment should be created for each area of the facility with clear instructions regarding how equipment will be cleaned, which products should be used and a clear delineation of staff and participant responsibilities
- Cleaning stations and appropriate signage may help with compliance
- Equipment should be cleaned by staff on a regular schedule
- Be familiar with all warranties for fitness equipment and ensure that use of particular products for cleaning do not violate conditions of the warranties unless absolutely unavoidable
- Encourage patrons to use provided cleaning materials before and after equipment use
- Cleaning supplies and hand sanitizer should be readily available for staff and customers in multiple locations around the facility, especially in high-use areas
- Determine process for assessing usage rate of supplies and determining frequency of re-ordering
- Consider closing the facility at least one hour earlier than normal in the evening to permit staff adequate time to clean the facility
- Use EPA-approved disinfectants for cleaning
- Explore electrostatic cleaning machines or ultraviolet lighting systems
- Increase the frequency of emptying the trash in each facility
- Suspend use of air circulation fans
- Work with your facilities department to control temperature and humidity via the HVAC system
- Determine protocols for laundry in consultation with appropriate institutional departments such as Student Health or Environmental Health & Safety



## Programs

The reintroduction of programming activities will be largely dependent upon State or local government guidelines and will be done in conjunction with institutional planning.

Regardless of when distinct programs are reintroduced, a consistent plan for program areas will be essential to the overall success of the reopening plan.

The following considerations have been organized by program area.

### Intramural Sports

Considerations:

- Have you conducted a risk assessment for each sport?
- Consult national governing bodies recommendations for each sport
- Considerations for team sports
  - Modify group size
  - Reduce participant numbers and or /spaces
  - Update equipment cleaning procedures
  - Modify equipment-sharing practices
  - Adapt cleaning practices to sanitize equipment pre and post competition
- Individual sports
  - Update equipment cleaning policies and procedures
  - Enhanced individual dual
  - Utilize adaptive programming games and competitions
- Extend or expand opportunities for individual sport competitions

## Club Sports

### Considerations:

- There are different considerations for team sports vs. individual sports.
- Assess recreation and sports programs for their potential for COVID-19 transmission (e.g., individual vs. team sports; high intensity workouts with possible enhanced risk for aerosolization)
- Implement a phased return of sports and recreation programs based upon potential risk of transmission in a given activity
- Consider appropriate restrictions for national competitions-travel
- What modifications might need to be introduced to participant health history screening
- Are squad size limitations necessary
- What is the screening requirement for coaches
- Work-out room capacity modifications - small groups of 10 individuals or fewer, 50 individuals for outdoor spaces etc.
- Encourage social distancing
- Take precautions with shared equipment
- Develop opportunities to compete locally (within a given State) to limit travel
- Modify the role, responsibility, and protocols of Athletic Training services
- Adhere to respective governing body guidelines as it relates to competition, practice, and travel
- Consider that institutional travel guidelines or bans may supersede governing bodies
- Consider clubs on a case-by-case basis (i.e. martial arts).
- Redefine roles and responsibilities of Safety Officers in Club Sports and determine training requirements and communication expectations between and among campus recreation staff and Athletic Training services
- Eliminate or minimize spectators at club sports competitions
- Stagger entry and exit of participants into the facility
- If multiple entry/exit points exist in your facilities, designate one for entry and one for exits in each facility.

- Consider utilizing signage to direct entry and exit traffic into and out of your facility
- Review and modify Emergency Action Plans (EAPs)
- Adjust public signage as well as staff EAPs based on facility operations through the phases of reopening
- For tennis related to sport clubs, follow state and local recreation guidelines as well as USTA guidelines for sport safety and facility and programming recommendations
- Ensure your facility has capacity to isolate suspected cases
- Determine where an individual or group of people can be quarantined, in case of a large number of athletes or event staff being exposed
- Consider alternative sports or engagement opportunities that limit personal contact in particular
- Consider developing an esport model
- Coordinate with intercollegiate athletics
- Consider the limitations of club sports that may not permit reactivating sport competitions

### **Group Fitness**

#### Considerations:

- Consider virtual classes and blend remote and in-person programs
- Alter class schedules to maximize programming
- Consider starting to return slowly to your normal schedule and re-open fitness offerings in phases, starting with private personal training and gradually increasing the number of people (ensure room can accommodate a generously spaced-out configuration that keeps participants at least 10 feet apart) in a live class
- Class duration and capacity will be impacted by spacing considerations
- Online offerings should be maintained at current levels or enhanced when campus recreation returns to normal operations
- Examine the best way to initiate programming in a virtual manner
- Personal and small group fitness training may also be done through a virtual platform
- Provide participants with a space of at least 100 square feet

- Provide markers on the floor to designate the center of a participant's space
- Stagger rows so there is 12 ft between one marker and the marker in front or behind
- Staggering rows ensures 100 square feet per person
- Stagger entry and exit from room/space where classes are conducted. If there are multiple doors/gates into the space use one for entry and one for exit
- Have staff clean (including floor) and setup equipment in the room prior to a workout
- Provide cleaning supplies in case participants would like to re-clean their equipment
- Have members leave their equipment in place after the workout.
- Have staff clean the equipment, following all protocols and CDC guidelines
- Provide a 15 to 30 minute buffer in between classes to allow for cleaning and sanitation
- Omit fitness classes with high inhalation/exhalation exchange (spin, etc.) until they can be safely incorporated back into class offerings
- For cycling classes, move some of the studio bikes to the back of the studio with seats removed or to another space to ensure proper social distancing in studio cycling classes

## **Personal Training**

### Considerations:

- Personal training and small group training could likely continue, with increased awareness and education for the personal training staff and clients on personal space, no spotting permitted, cleaning equipment, etc.
- Personal training recommendations:
  - Ten (10) feet will be maintained for personal training between trainer and client. Every effort will be made to schedule sessions when rooms are not heavily occupied or held in specifically designated areas (if available). Trainer will disinfect all equipment prior to and after each class.

- Personal training staff should clean equipment before and after use by their clients. Equipment such as boxing gloves and shadow mittens should only be available for purchase and not loaned by staff. Handles made of soft or absorbent material should not be used. This would include certain cable attachments, suspension equipment, and certain functional training tools.
- Fitness programs should also explore the idea of taking some services to where the students are, such as within residence halls, and other venues where public health and safety standards can be maintained

## **Outdoor Adventure**

### Considerations:

- Trip leaders should meet participants at location and group transportation to outdoor adventure sites should be curtailed
- Bike share should be limited to reduce daily shares; consider extended duration rentals
- If you plan to offer equipment sharing services, make sure to update your cleaning process upon equipment return; .
- Wash returned equipment as soon as possible
- Consider setting up a space to quarantine outdoor gear until it can be cleaned
- Develop a progression plan for activity implementation
- Masks and PPE should be worn by equipment rental employees; eliminate in-person rentals — phone reservations and payment only
- Online workshops and Lunch and Learns: no large-scale training; utilize online meetings and training when possible
- Outdoor trips should be limited to places that only require local travel and involve fewer than ten people, including staff and only with activities that provide for social distancing
- Video chat options during office hours with equipment rental staff and trip leaders
- Begin temperature checks a day before departure and each day of multi-day trips
- Keep partners paired throughout the trip — i.e. canoe pairs in the same canoe for the duration of trip



- Create food policy – i.e. no sharing food, prepackaged meal requirements, etc.
- Offer virtual hikes during trips for those who can't attend in-person
- Adjust pricing, since transportation will not be provided
- Front country first aid protocol required (treat and call 911 in case of an emergency)
- All equipment will be properly sanitized and cleaned between use
- Staff will need to be trained on cleaning protocols, physical distancing protocols, what to do with participants who don't want to wear PPE

### **Climbing Walls**

#### Considerations:

- Participant limits should be based on best practices and government guidelines
- Consideration should be given to creating an 'extended loan' for shoe rentals to reduce sharing
- Implement cleaning procedures following equipment use
- Determine cleaning procedures for climbing holds
- Training and orientation sessions must adhere to social distancing guidelines
- Create "zones" within climbing spaces to ensure appropriate distancing between participants
- Determine set directional flow of spaces and provide wayfinding support
- Consider implementing a reservation system to control occupancy
- Increase frequency of route setting as a cleaning strategy
- Develop a virtual training program for climbers when the facility or space is not available.

### **General Fitness**

#### Considerations:

- Calculate participant-per-area and adjust space as required
- Equipment redistribution or closure to ensure social distancing
- Specific recommendations for strength training - no spotting
- Implement "traffic flow" to ensure social distancing

## Special Events

### Considerations:

- Examine opportunities to collaborate with Student Health Services, Student Support & Advocacy, Counseling, Disability Support Services, Wellbeing and other relevant units
- Offer educational programming around health, safety, and vitality while living among the COVID-19 environment
- Modify programs to a virtual format

## Challenge Courses

### Considerations:

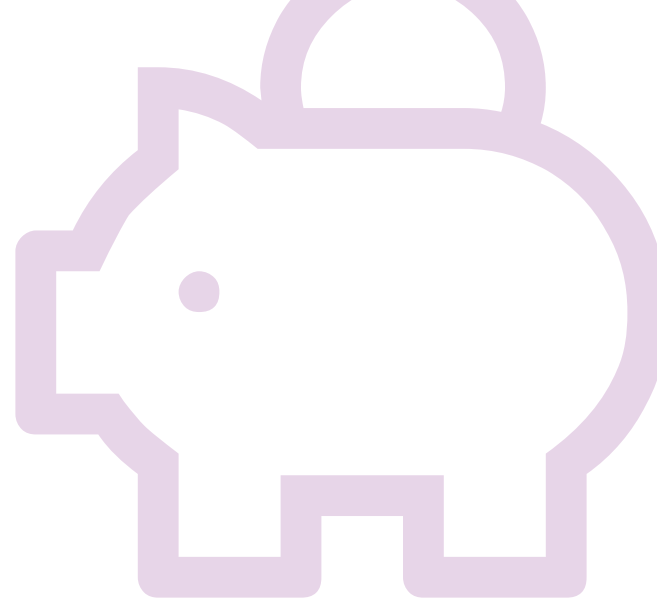
- After a dormant period, thoroughly check and inspect your challenge course and perform necessary maintenance
- Develop and conduct virtual programs if possible
- Do activities that do not require props, or commonly touched materials (like blindfolds), or trust falls or lifting activities
- Reduce the time of offerings to two or three-hour programs
- Manage larger groups by using shifts (e.g. one group arrives at 9:30 and leaves at 12:30 pm and the next arrives at 1:00 and goes until 4:00 pm)
- Arrange for cleaning of equipment, restrooms, and other common spaces between groups
- Hold staff training about how to implement all these requirements, and how to engage dialogues about wearing masks and gloves
- Provide video chats for vulnerable populations
- Minimize use of shared props

## Summer Camps

### Considerations:

- Consider adjustment to acceptable ratios of camper to counselors to ensure guidelines procedures are being followed
- Adapt programming to encourage social distancing and limit shared equipment
- Determining when and if masks are appropriate
- Process for temperature checks and symptom monitoring

- Re-evaluate protocols for when a participant gets sick at camp
- Revise your communication plan with parents to address concerns surrounding COVID-19
- Increase cleaning frequency and ensure supplies are EPA-approved to eliminate COVID-19
- Post additional signage regarding hygiene
- Provide additional hygiene stations and supplies
- Update drop off and pick up protocols
- Increase ventilation for indoor spaces when possible
- Provide thorough staff training on all new protocols
- Consider eliminating activities that require transportation
- Adjust camper 'groups' to create 'households' to limit exposure



## Financial

A global pandemic like COVID-19 is going to have a financial impact on institutions. There is no one source for best practices regarding financial response in this scenario, so the Association has compiled a list of various questions about finances for consideration by recreation program administrators.

### **How will you prepare for potential budget cuts as a result of a reduction in funding and revenues?**

Considerations:

- Consult with your next level of leadership to determine possible budget scenarios.
- Develop strategies to reduce expenses based upon percentage of reduction to funding and revenues
- Determine if positive budget amounts can be carried forward to the next fiscal year
- Develop a communication plan for informing your department on current and future budget scenarios

### **Is your institution considering job sharing, realignments, or furloughs?**

Considerations:

- How will these impact your operations when the new normal begins?

### **How will you administer membership and program refunds and or holds if you are required to close as a result of a second wave of COVID-19 transmission?**

Considerations:

- Review, revise, and communicate updated membership and program cancellation policies to staff and patrons
- Do you have the capacity to process refunds?
- Will you provide refunds in the form of a credit on account?

### **How will you limit exposure to COVID-19 during face-to-face transactions at your customer service locations?**

Considerations:

- Consult with your recreation software provider, finance department, and IT department to determine if you can provide contactless, cashless, and receiptless transactions

### **How will you reduce financial risk to the institution in the case of COVID-19 transmission in your recreation facilities as a result of participating in your programs and services?**

Considerations:

- Review and revise waivers, informed consent statements, etc. to account for the risk of COVID-19 transmission

### **How will alternative course delivery (e.g. virtual) impact funding from recreation fees?**

Considerations:

- Determine if enrollment projections are up or down
- Will full-time students still be required to pay a recreation fee if classes are online but the recreation centre is open?
- What are the potential impacts to your operations and programming if there is a fee reduction or if the fee is waived?

## **Will you adjust public membership rates upon reopening?**

Considerations:

- If you are open with major restrictions in place, will you adjust your public membership rates?
- Will you provide the option for public members to “hold” their membership until you return to full operations?
- How will membership holds impact future budget years if membership end dates are extended?

## **Will you adjust the price of your programs and services upon reopening?**

Considerations:

- Review program pricing structures to ensure break-even or profit-generating margins if registration is reduced as a result of physical distancing and grouping guidelines

## **Have you considered new revenue generating opportunities?**

Considerations:

- Form an action team to audit existing revenue sources and recommend new revenue generating opportunities

## **How will you reduce expenses during your reopening phases?**

Considerations:

- Determine required operation and program staffing levels
- Research state, provincial, and/or national student employment grant opportunities
- In consultation with your human resource department, develop a temporary resource realignment plan that adjusts roles and responsibilities to maximize efficiencies during your reopening phases

### **How will you control purchasing and spending?**

Considerations:

- Implement internal processes and procedures to reduce spending to only essential purchases and wage expenses
- If necessary, incorporate additional layer(s) of approval to ensure the department is operating in the most fiscally efficient manner possible

### **How are you tracking revenue and expense reductions associated with COVID-19 closure?**

Considerations:

- Track all expenses related directly to COVID-19 in the event there might be relief for these unplanned expenses from either the institution or from federal sources
- If possible, create a specific budget code to track COVID-19 costs more easily

### **Have you considered a bulk purchase of cleaning and PPE supplies?**

Considerations:

- Consult with your next level of leadership to coordinate a bulk order of cleaning and PPE supplies for your campus
- Contact vendors to see if there are discounts if you purchase larger quantities

Find the web version of  
this resource guide as well  
as reopening examples at  
[www.nirsa.org/reopening](http://www.nirsa.org/reopening)