



COVID Update for Summer 2022

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Dear Sci-Tech Families:

We are so excited to welcome our campers, staff, and faculty back to Byfield!

The health and wellbeing of your children and our Sci-Tech community have always been and will remain our highest priorities. We're grateful to be able to share further information regarding our COVID-19 preparation as developed by Amy Dolgin, Integrated Wellness Director, and the Medical Advisory Team guiding the URJ's COVID preparations. As we've shared, **requiring that all participants and staff in our camp communities are up to date with the COVID vaccine and boosters** is an essential public health component in our summer planning. The vaccine will support our dual goals—keeping your children healthy *and* preserving a more typical camp experience.

Even with a fully vaccinated population there are no guarantees. While the vaccines and boosters do reduce the severity of disease, hospitalizations, and the transmission of illness, they cannot ensure that we will encounter no COVID at camp. Because of the uncertainty and imperfection of this task, **we are relying again on a multi-layered approach to mitigating COVID this summer**. The layers will look slightly different than they did last summer, as the COVID landscape has evolved significantly over the past year. A vaccinated camp community is our strongest baseline layer of mitigation.

We have two goals for summer 2022 in relation to COVID:

1. Prevent COVID from entering camp
2. Prepare to minimize spread if/when COVID enters camp

While these two goals may seem contradictory, they acknowledge the reality of the world we live in: we are planning and preparing for summer camp amid a rapidly evolving pandemic and equally complex cultural shifts in response to the pandemic. We are navigating this liminal space with as much care as possible.

As we approach the summer season and gain more clarity on the current COVID landscape, we will share more detail about the mitigation layers we will employ this year, all of which will remain in alignment with CDC guidance and responsive to the local and current COVID conditions both on and off camp. You can expect to hear about adjusted versions of some mitigation layers we used last year, such as a pre-camp and arrival testing regimen, and a shift toward using masks as sparingly as possible and in response to any changing conditions.

There are two mitigation layers we are addressing below to ensure you can plan for a safe summer.

COVID Behavior *Brit* (Agreement)

The 2022 COVID Behavior *Brit* will include guidance on how to minimize your camper's COVID exposures in the week prior to coming to camp (for example, by masking in indoor public environments). It will *not* limit your camper's ability to attend school, travel or participate in other camps in the days preceding their Sci-Tech session.

Protocols for Positive COVID Cases at Camp

To protect the camp community from further spread, and to simultaneously ensure that any COVID+ community member receives appropriate care during their isolation period, we are requiring that all camp families plan for **retrieving their child or staff member from camp to isolate at home** (or elsewhere off campus) if they test positive for COVID at camp. Information about length of isolation period and the potential return to camp will be forthcoming and individualized by camp-specific variables, such as session length. We are grateful for your partnership in keeping our entire community safe.

What's Next

In the coming weeks you can also expect to hear about some new mitigation layers we will be adding this year. To provide more flexibility while simultaneously continuing to manage the risk of COVID spread, we will provide guidance around the routine testing of and guidelines for staff and faculty taking time off camp. We learned from last year that our staff's ability to take time off outside of the camp environment is of utmost importance to their individual wellbeing, and thereby to the camper experience and the sustainability of Sci-Tech.

Thank you

We know that the best practices surrounding COVID are continually changing. Our protocols and guidelines will always be subject to change based on the latest guidelines from health experts, state and local protocols, and other health authorities. The URJ follows the guidance of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the American Camping Association (ACA), and our URJ Medical Advisory Team. We will continue to communicate openly about these plans as they develop, and we are grateful for your partnership in this work.

We are counting down the days to welcoming our staff and campers – to seeing their smiles, hearing their laughter, and watching them grow in community, connection, *ruach* and playful Jewish discovery.

Thank you for being our partners in this work. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at scitech@urj.org or call 857-246-8677.

Can't wait to see you this summer!



Jayme Dale and Rabbi Dan
Directors, URJ 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy