



*COVID-19 Nature Center Toolkit -*

# What Does Being Open Look Like?

**anca**   
Association of Nature Center Administrators

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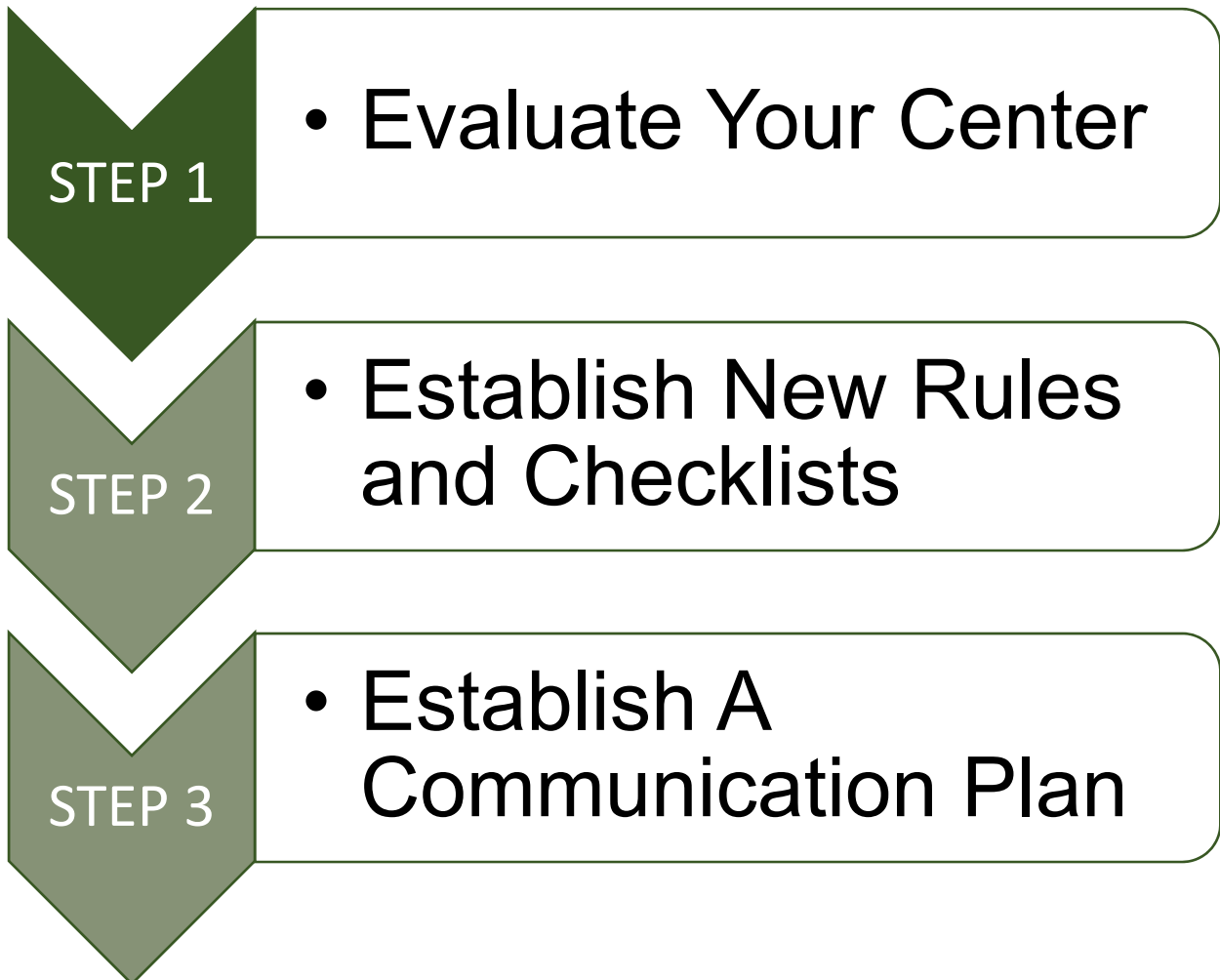
## *Risk Management Resources*

# ***Table of Contents***

PAGE 3	<b>3 Step Process</b>
PAGE 4	<b>Following Regulations at your Center</b>
PAGE 5	<b>Regulation Compliance Worksheet</b>
PAGE 6	<b>Navigating County Public Health</b>
PAGE 7	<b>Physical/Social Distancing</b>
PAGE 8	<b>Ideas for Evaluating Modification of Operations</b>
PAGE 9	<b>Cleaning &amp; Disinfecting Links</b>
PAGE 10	<b>Step 1: Evaluate Your Center</b>
	<b>Evaluation Forms</b>
PAGE 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• General Evaluation Form</li></ul>
PAGE 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summer Camp &amp; Nature School Drop-off Evaluation Form</li></ul>
PAGE 14	<b>Step 2: Use the Evaluation Forms to Create New Procedures, Rules &amp; Waivers</b>
PAGE 15	<b>Step 3: Establish a Communication Plan that Includes: New Rules, Meeting Member/Program Participant Needs During COVID-19 and Using Communication Methods</b>
PAGE 16	<b>Sample Welcome Packet</b>
PAGE 17	<b>Links to Toolkit and Resources</b>
PAGE 18	<b>Index of Resources</b>
PAGE 19	<b>Nature Center COVID-19 Toolkit Panel</b>

## **COVID-19 Nature Center Toolkit – What Does Being Open Look Like?**

### **3 Step Process:**



## Following Regulations at your Center

Your nature center is subject to Federal, State and local guidelines for operation of your business during the COVID-19 emergency and re-opening period.



The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website has extensive guidance and statistics including up-to date updates and regulations: [CDC Coronavirus Main Page](#)

Other Federal Web Pages Include:

- <https://www.coronavirus.gov>
- <https://www.usa.gov/coronavirus>

You Can Find Links to Your State and Local Health Departments Here:

<https://www.livescience.com/coronavirus-resources-state-local-health-departments.html>

**TIP:** Nature Center Association Forums with other Nature Organization leaders can be very helpful to gather strategies to cope with the ever changing COVID-19 situation but remember that you must comply with the current requirements for your state and county including specific requirements for camps, childcares, museums, events, etc.

# ***Regulation Compliance Worksheet***

Nature Center Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you read and reviewed CDC, National, State, Local and Nature Center Essential Services Regulations and what date was this done?**

**Is there a regulatory update that needs to be applied and what date was this issued?**

**What regulations apply to:**

- Physical/Social Distancing
  
- Group Gatherings
  
- Opening or Closing Common Areas
  
- Cleaning
  
- Employee Policies
  
- Member/Program Attendee Policies
  
- Member/Program Participant Communications
  
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Navigating County Public Health***

**Consult your County's Public Health website first for answers to commonly asked questions.** County Public Health Departments can provide information on how you can evaluate the health of staff, vendors and people entering the Center. Document their direction in writing and include this in your written operations plan, staff training and facility and program rules.

County Public Health will investigate cases of COVID-19 so, if someone at your center is diagnosed, the County Public Health will likely be the party investigating that person's contact with staff and others at your Center.

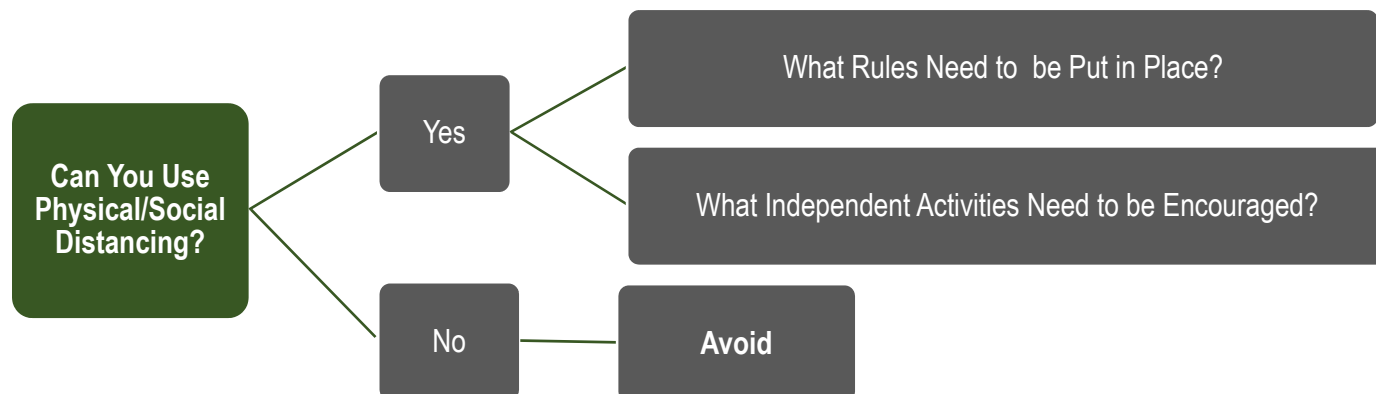
### ***Questions that can be answered by County Public Health:***

- How is my business permitted to evaluate staff, vendors and members/program participants for COVID-19?
- Can and should I screen for COVID-19 symptoms and take temperatures of staff, vendors or members/program attendees entering the premises?
- Can and should I restrict entrance to staff, vendors or members/program attendees if they have COVID-19 symptoms or a temperature? Have COVID-19 diagnosis? Have been directed to Quarantine for COVID-19 due to exposure to the virus?
- Can and should I require an attendee and his or her party to leave the Center if they are diagnosed with COVID-19?
- If there is a COVID-19 diagnosis at the Center what notifications am I required to make, if any?
- What is the best way to contact you if we need your help?

Don't reinvent the wheel. If you have received or can document written direction from the County Public Health Department on the above questions download this for your records and create your policies with that guidance.

**Further Guidance:** [www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/hipaa-covid19/index.html](http://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/hipaa-covid19/index.html)

## Physical/Social Distancing



### Physical/Social Distancing, Group Size and Stay at Home Requirements to Monitor

- Regulations for your location may limit group size or prohibit gatherings of any size.
- You may also be regulated to have everyone, or specific groups stay inside.
- State and local requirements may ban certain activities for Nature Centers.

### Questions to Ask for Physical/Social Distancing:

- How can I clean and disinfect commonly touched items each time they are touched or very frequently with documentation?
- Do I have the staff to do this?
- Can people realistically be kept 6 feet apart or physical/social distance? How can we communicate that?
- If people can be kept 6 feet apart how will we communicate that?

### Close or Discontinue Common Areas and Group Gatherings.

When your city, state or region requires physical/social distancing it may be necessary to close popular areas at your Nature Center out of an abundance of caution and for the safety of all involved.

### Commonly Recommended to Modify, Close or Discontinue when Physical/Social Distancing and Small Group Restrictions or Stay at Home Order Apply Include:

In-Service Restaurants, Playgrounds, Team Sports Fields and Courts, Boat Rentals, Picnic Areas, Outdoor Exercise Equipment, Canoe & Kayak Launch Areas, Gift Shop, Nature Store, Recreation Halls, Group Gatherings, and Public Bathrooms.

## ***Ideas for Evaluating Modification of Operations***

In addition to the physical/social distancing questions, be sure to evaluate:

- What can I change or eliminate to increase physical/social distancing?
- Have I prominently posted flyer communicating to members and program participants what the rules are and urging them to do their part?
- Have I provided hand sanitizer or wipes for people near commonly touched items so they can disinfect their hands?
- Can I eliminate furniture and bench groupings in common areas to discourage group congregation?
- Should I operate on a reduced schedule to allow for the staffing requirements?
- What Cleaning and Disinfecting procedure will I put in place? How often? Where will I post it? How will I train staff?
- Can I limit the number of people in the exhibit area, gift shop or program room?
- Can customers purchase entry tickets over the phone, online or through an app?
- Can and should I make trails one way to promote physical/social distancing?

***Develop procedures for Staff and rules for members/program participants in writing! Post in one place and post updates there as well. Communicate rules and procedures once developed and for each update. Identify features that are frequently touched and cannot be easily cleaned. Eliminate or commit to a cleaning schedule.***



## Cleaning & Disinfecting Links



### For facilities that house people overnight:

- Follow CDC's guidance for [colleges and universities](#). Work with state and local health officials to determine the best way to isolate people who are sick and if temporary housing is needed.
- For guidance on cleaning and disinfecting a sick person's bedroom/bathroom, review CDC's guidance on [disinfecting your home if someone is sick](#).

#### CDC Detailed Disinfection Guidance:

- [Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities](#)
- [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility: Everyday Steps](#)
- [Plan Prepare & Respond: Cleaning & Disinfecting](#)
- [Making Your Plan to Clean & Disinfect](#)

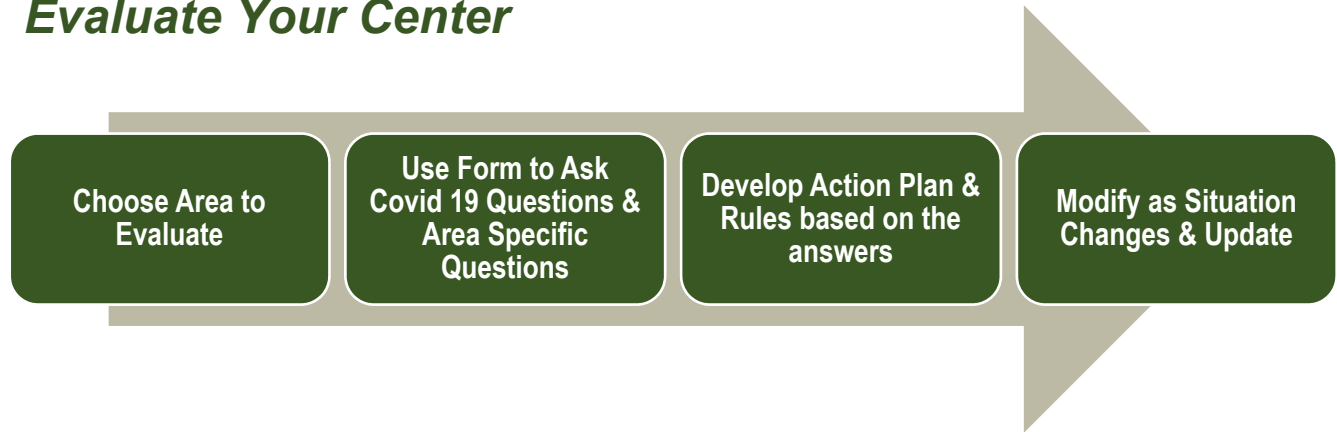
EPA List of Recommended Disinfecting Cleaners for COVID-19

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

**TIP:** Use COVID-19 approved disinfectants and follow the CDC Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools and Homes:

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/pdf/Reopening\\_America\\_Guidance.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/pdf/Reopening_America_Guidance.pdf)

## Step 1: Evaluate Your Center



Choose which Areas to Evaluate for your Nature Center:

### Facilities & Grounds

- |                                            |                                       |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibits          | <input type="checkbox"/> Offices      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gift Shops        | <input type="checkbox"/> Bathrooms    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classrooms        | <input type="checkbox"/> Event Spaces |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking Trails     | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lakes/Waterfront  | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nature Playground | <input type="checkbox"/>              |

### Nature Center Programs & Events

- |                                                            |                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kayaking/Canoeing                 | <input type="checkbox"/> General Public Programming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nature Preschool                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Festivals                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day Camp                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Galas                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overnight Camp                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Charity Runs               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overnight Environmental Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Events           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> On-site School Groups             | <input type="checkbox"/> Facility Rentals           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offsite School Groups             | <input type="checkbox"/> Birthday Parties           |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                   | <input type="checkbox"/>                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                   | <input type="checkbox"/>                            |

### Procedures

- |                                                             |                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member & Program Participant Rules | <input type="checkbox"/> Automated Payments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Updated Waivers                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Paperwork/Forms    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication Plan                 |                                             |

### People, Personnel, Vendors and Members/Participants

# GENERAL EVALUATION FORM

(use this form for each feature on the list that applies to your Nature Center)

Nature Center Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Date : \_\_\_\_\_ Staff Person Completing Form: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject to Evaluate: \_\_\_\_\_

Complying with Federal, State, Local and Essential Service Requirements for your Center.

- [CDC Guidance](#)
- [State and Local Health Departments](#)
- <https://www.coronavirus.gov>
- <https://www.usa.gov/coronavirus>

Can I comply with current regulations?

Can this be done with proper Physical/Social Distancing?  Yes  No

How can I clean and disinfect commonly touched items each time they are touched or very frequently with documentation?

Do I have the staff to do this?  Yes  No \_\_\_\_\_

Can people realistically be kept 6 feet apart?  Yes  No

If people can be kept 6 feet apart how will we communicate that this is expected?

Can I eliminate furniture and bench groupings in common areas to discourage group congregation?  Yes  No

Should I have one-way traffic to reduce congestion?  Yes  No

Should I install sneeze guards, 6-foot markers, group size limits?  Yes  No

Can I increase air circulation?  Yes  No

Have you prominently posted a flyer communicating to members and participants what the rules are and urging them to do their part?  Yes  No

Have you provided hand sanitizer or wipes for people near commonly touched items so they can disinfect their hands?  Yes  No

Should you require that masks are worn here?  Yes  No

Should I operate on a reduced schedule to allow for the staffing requirements? What can you change or eliminate to increase physical/social distancing?

What cleaning and disinfecting requirements apply, and what written cleaning and disinfecting procedures will you put in place?

Do you have supplies and staff to clean and disinfect?  Yes  No

How often will you clean and disinfect? \_\_\_\_\_

How will you document and post this? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have adequate staffing to safely operate this portion of my operation?  Yes  No

Do you have the equipment/supplies to safely conduct this portion of the operation?  Yes  No

Will you continue this feature?  Yes  No

Note staff training and member/program participant rule changes needed to continue under COVID-19 restrictions:

How will I communicate about this in my written staff procedures and written rules for the Nature Center?

**Document all procedures & compliance with regulations with this form for your records.**

# SUPPLEMENTAL CENTER EVALUATION FORM: SUMMER CAMP & NATURE SCHOOL DROP-OFF

ATTACH TO THE GENERAL EVALUATION FORM FOR THIS FEATURE

Nature Center Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Staff Person Completing Form: \_\_\_\_\_

- Update the rules.
- Stagger arrival times and locations to reduce interaction.
- Post signs.
- Reference CDC rules and reference state and local regulations. Build in ways to have updates such as live links to State pages on what is allowed or email blasts on rule changes.
- Include that campers, students and parents/guardians must do their part. Let them know that as COVID-19 spreads, as a community you understand that someone in the Center will likely get it. People under quarantine or in high risk groups are expected to remain at home.
- Let people know how to greet each other. *At XYZ Nature Center we stay 6 feet part, we smile, and we hold our hands up to greet. SMILING RAISES YOUR ENERGY!*
- Automate paperwork, payments and communications as much as possible.

Note all staff training and member/program participant rule changes needed to continue under COVID-19 restrictions:

How will I communicate about this in my written staff procedures and written rules to the Nature Center community?

**Document all procedures & compliance with regulations with this form for your records.**

## **STEP 2:**

### **Use the Evaluation Forms to Create New Procedures, Rules and Waivers**

- Use summaries from the bottom of the evaluation forms
- Create written procedures and rules, and follow them consistently
- Attach rules to general rules and waiver
- Update Waiver with new rules. Note on Waiver: "New rules are attached, and any updates will be posted in XYZ central site."
- Email your in-state attorney to review the waiver and rules attachments and communication plan to update. Only legal counsel can provide you legal advice - but you can manage risks and organize information before you contact your attorney.
- Update all rules in one place and provide clear direction to members/program participants where to find the update.
- Plan how to communicate the rules to members/participants and parents/guardians as they change
- Contact your in-state attorney for guidance on how to update waiver and hold harmless agreements to properly include new rules

Be sure to post your new rules. *Example:*

## **(Your Nature Center Name) Has New Rules During COVID-19**

Out of an abundance of caution **(Your Nature Center Name)** has updated our Rules for COVID-19:

1. *(List New Rules here)*
2. *(List New Rules here)*
3. *(List New Rules here)*

Compliance with National, State and Local COVID-19 Regulations required by management.

Any National, State or Local regulation issued that supersedes these Center rules for COVID-19 will automatically be in effect. *For example; if the county requires that everyone stays inside, even for exercise, the trails are automatically closed.*

**Anyone who does not comply with the Center rules or COVID-19 regulatory requirements by National, State or Local Authorities is subject to immediate ejection.**

## **STEP 3:**

### ***Establish a Communication Plan that includes New Rules, Meeting Member/Program Participant Needs During COVID-19, and Using Communication Methods***

Now more than ever the population has connected to the healing power of nature. Your community needs your leadership to help them interpret nature and the center in new ways that can be incorporated into their current and long-term lifestyle. Communication; Use of Technology and Creativity will be key for your center to take advantage of this situation and turn it into an opportunity for greater good.

Find ways to utilize technology to connect with your members/program participants, answer questions or communicate changes. If you have social media accounts, they're always a great place to continue sharing your updates, and any videos or helpful tips you can find for your visitors as a reminder to do their part in keeping themselves and the Center safe.

We also recommend you offer activities, contests or creative ways for members and program participants to feel connected and involved with you.

#### **The Importance of Nature to Human Wellbeing and Joy**

Create ways for people to engage with nature. This may mean finding ways to safely adapt existing programs, like summer camp. Or, it may mean that your center creates new outreach opportunities to the community to help them become a part of your nature organization.

- Hiking Trails – can you walk these trails? log # miles, ID plants, lose pounds.
- Garden Club on site – place orders for containers and plants, have a contest.
- Art contests.

#### **Why is this important?**

Now more than ever people are spending time in nature and realizing that it's fun and healthy. More people seeking that connection to nature is one of the great things to come out of COVID-19. Helping others belong, engage with, and build a new post-COVID-19 Nature Center will be great for everyone.

## ***NATURE CENTER WELCOME PACKAGE (Suggested Template)***

Welcome to our Nature Center! We are glad to see that you safely arrived. We have updated our Center and our rules so that we all have a way to make the best of the Nature Center during the COVID-19 Outbreak. You will see that we are asking all members and program participants to do your part, so we all stay well.

**What to Expect at the Nature Center** – *clearly identify what is closed, what is open, where they can go in the center and how the new normal works. Let them know how their needs can be met.*

- 
- 
- 

**How We Communicate** – *share all the ways they can communicate with you*

- Phone, video chat (*consider having face-to-face check-ins on Facetime, Google Duo, Facebook Messenger or Skype*)
- Website, Facebook, Google
- Zoom Meetings or Conference calls for community groups
- 

**How to Interact with our Nature Center** – *list times and ways to communicate.*

- 
- 
- 

**Resources** – *list additional information helpful to all members, visitors or program participants*

- 
- 
-





## ***Index of Links to Resources***

- [ANCA COVID-19 Resources](#)
- [American Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education](#)
- **American Camp Association Resources:**
  - [ACA and YMCA Camp Handbook 2020](#)
  - [ACA COVID-19 Camp Guide](#)
- [CDC Website](#)
  - [Information for Businesses and Workplaces](#)
  - [Information for Childcare, Schools and Youth Programs](#)
  - [Information for Gatherings and Community Events](#)
  - [Information for Parks and Recreational Facilities](#)
- [Checklist: Post-Coronavirus Workplace Preparedness](#)
- [Checklist: Responding to a Positive COVID-19 Test](#)
- [Disinfection of Exhibits – Tips from Taylor Studios](#)
- [Guide to Creating a Return to Work Action Plan](#)
- [HR Toolkit: The Employer’s Guide to COVID-19](#)
- [Marshall & Sterling Nature Center Resources & Posters](#)
- [Marshall & Sterling Claims Support - Carrier Information, & 24/7 Contact Information](#)
- [Welcome Back to Work \(Employee Packet\)](#)
- [WHO Website](#)

### **Helpful Information for Employees:**

- [Allergies, Cold or COVID-19?](#)
- [Dealing with COVID-19 Stress & Anxiety](#)
- [How to Wear a Face Covering \(Poster\)](#)
- [What to Do If You're Sick With COVID-19](#)

# THANK YOU!

## ***Nature Center COVID-19 Toolkit Panel***

- Loren Smith, National Audubon Society
- Jeanne Gural, The Wilderness Center, Wilmont, OH
- Katherine (Katie) Bruell, Pajarito Environmental Education Center, Los Alamos, NM
- Meg Boyd, Howard County Conservancy, Woodstock, MD
- Bo Glover, Environmental Nature Center, Newport Beach, CA
- Jen Levy, Association of Nature Center Administrators, UT
- Bob Pilla, Marshall & Sterling Insurance – Nature Center Practice, Rockland County, NY
- Irene Jones, Marshall & Sterling Insurance – Nature Center Practice, rural PA/NY border
- Vera Roberts, Warner Park Nature Center, Nashville, TN
- Kitty Pochman, Linda Loring Nature Foundation, Nantucket, MA
- Suzanne Tuttle, ret. Fort Worth Nature Center, Ft Worth, TX
- Chad Truxall, Marine Discovery Center, New Smyrna Beach, FL
- Graphic Design: Megan McKann, Marshall & Sterling Insurance

Find more resources at

[www.naturecenterinsure.com](http://www.naturecenterinsure.com)