



RESTARTING MAINE'S ECONOMY

COVID-19 Guide to Safely Reopening Maine Whitewater Rafting Activities

June 25, 2020

The State of Maine has adopted a staged approach, supported by science, public health expertise and industry collaboration, to allow Maine businesses to safely open when the time is right. The plan is available at www.maine.gov/covid19/restartingmaine.

This is one of many industry guidance plans that the State is providing for businesses so they can reopen safely. Please make sure you pair this document with the general guidance document that applies to all industries, which is available on www.maine.gov/DECD.

The purpose of this plan is to allow commercial whitewater outfitters to operate while keeping whitewater guides, guests and other staff members safe and healthy. Please use common sense and keep the goal in mind.

Pre-Trip Considerations

- **Reservations:** All reservations must be made in advance by phone or online and payment should be made in advance over the phone if possible. Encourage electronic registration and signing of paperwork ahead of time to the degree possible, to reduce interpersonal contact.
- **Operational safety measures:** At the time of reservation for a whitewater trip, the trip representative will be informed and or provided a copy of the outfitter's operational safety measures for COVID-19.
- **Out-of-state:** Visitors from outside Maine must follow the [Keep Maine Healthy](#) plan. Effective June 26, people who are not Maine, New Hampshire or Vermont residents, must have received a negative COVID-19 test result that meets the [Keep Maine Healthy](#) requirements or they must have already completed their 14 day quarantine in Maine.
- **PPE:** Guests will be requested to bring their own cloth or disposable face coverings. Guests that do not have their own will be provided one by the outfitter. Guests must use a cloth or disposable coverings when social distancing cannot be maintained.
- **Self-screening:** Outfitters should encourage all guests to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms with the following questions:
 - Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19?
 - Are you experiencing a cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing?
 - Have you had repeated shaking or chills in the past 48 hours?
 - Have you had a fever in the past 48 hours?
 - Have you had new loss of taste or smell?
 - Have you had vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours?



Guests who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms or answered yes to any of the above questions, will not be allowed on the trip and should seek medical care and or COVID-19 testing per CDC guidelines.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>.

- **First Aid Protocol:** Ensure your First Aid protocols address how to manage guests or employees with COVID-19 symptoms. If an individual becomes ill at your venue have a plan for a room or space where the person can be isolated until transferred to home or health care facility and provide a face covering or mask, if available and tolerated.
 - For contact tracing purposes, to the extent practicable, establishments should maintain a record including contact information for employees and guests who have direct prolonged interaction.
 - Based on current knowledge, a close contact is someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the patient is isolated. Close contacts should stay home, maintain social distancing, and self-monitor until 14 days from the last date of exposure.
 - Establishments should promptly notify the Maine DHHS, CDC or any local health official if a they learn an employee or other worker has tested positive for COVID-19 and assist all such officials as reasonably requested to trace likely contacts and advise contacts to isolate and self-quarantine.
- **Temperature checks:** Outfitters should encourage guests to take their temperature prior to arriving.
- **Physical Distancing:** Guests that are not from the same household, must be able to comply with the Governor's Executive Order for proper social distancing.
- **Guests:** should provide their own water bottles, sunscreen, and insect repellent while on a whitewater trip.

Transportation of Guests

- **Buses / Shuttles:** Buses/ Shuttles must be cleaned and sanitized prior to each use. Groups shall be loaded and unloaded without the driver on board. Groups shall enter the bus / shuttle from the front entrance and fill back to front of the bus, maintaining proper social distancing between individuals who are not from the same household. Everyone on the bus / shuttle must wear face coverings, and the windows shall be down when possible. Transportation guidelines are as follows: <https://www.maine.gov/decd/node/233>.

Operational Guidance

- **General operational guidelines:** Outfitters shall follow operational guidelines outlined in Phase 3 Outdoor-Amusement <https://www.maine.gov/decd/checklists/outdoor-amusement>.
- **Check-in and check-out service:** Outfitters will require proper social distancing by groups during check-in, check-out and payment processing. Guests will be provided access to hand washing and sanitizer during this process.
- **Entry:** Guests will be allowed access into the facilities as outlined under the State of Maine reopening plan for [retail businesses](#).
- **Building Traffic:** Modify building/venue traffic flow to minimize contact between employees, vendors, and guests. Use floor decals and/or signage to establish travel patterns.
 - Consider one-way entrances and exits, if possible.
 - Consider establishing one-way travel patterns through the venue.



-Minimize traffic in enclosed spaces, such as stairwells and other spaces that do not allow for appropriate physical distancing. Consider limiting the number of individuals in an elevator at one time and designating one directional stairwells.

- **Signage:** Outfitters will post signage on health guidelines established by the CDC for best practices to stop the spread of COVID-19 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs-11x17-en.pdf>.
- **Hand cleaning and sanitizer during trip:** Guests will be provided access to disinfecting hand wipes or sanitizer during transportation to and from the river, as well as in each raft.
- **Equipment:** All equipment including, but not limited to rafts, paddles, and personal floatation devices shall be cleaned and sanitized prior to each use <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html>.
- **Put-in and takeout:** Outfitters must coordinate to stagger the loading and unloading of rafts and launching and takeout of rafts to maintain proper social distancing. Guests must remain on the buses and or rafts until their group loads or unloads.
- **Medical kits:** Medical kits required for each whitewater trip, shall have extra PPE, disinfecting wipes or hand sanitizer for an emergency response on the river.
- **Specific Guidance for Rafting on Whitewater and Calm Water:** Extra caution must be taken when close contact occurs while on the water. Maintain physical distancing between guests and the guide as much as possible. While face coverings are recommended to reduce the risk of viral transmission between individuals in public areas, face coverings are not compatible with rafting in whitewater conditions and could inhibit respiration while paddling or falling from the raft. Face coverings are not currently recommended for whitewater rafting in whitewater conditions and should only be worn when safe to do so as directed by the guide. Face coverings shall be used, during the launching and takeout process as well as non-whitewater sections of the river when social distancing cannot be accomplished. Note that a “buff” or neck gaiter constitutes a face covering.
- **Guests Exhibiting Symptoms:** Should a guest exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 on a whitewater trip, consult with EMS or a healthcare facility for immediate guidance.
- **Meals on the river or within a restaurant at the facility:** Please follow the [Phase 2 Restaurant Guidance](#). Many of the provisions within the restaurant guidelines may not apply in a remote setting, please apply those that fit your specific operation.
- **Lodging:** Please follow guidance on [lodging](#) if guests will be staying in facilities.
- **Campgrounds:** For those Whitewater Outfitters who also operate campgrounds please follow [campground guidelines](#).

Cleaning and Sanitation

- Outfitters should implement cleaning and disinfecting practices, to include, but not limited to common surfaces at each facility, equipment, bus seats and handles <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html>.



EMPLOYEE SAFETY

- **Self-screening:** Screen all employees reporting to work daily for COVID-19 symptoms with the following questions:
 - Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19?
 - Are you experiencing a cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing?
 - Have you had repeated shaking or chills in past 48 hours?
 - Have you had a fever in past 48 hours?
 - Have you had new loss of taste or smell?
 - Have you had vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours?Guests who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms or answered yes to any of the above questions, will not be allowed on the trip and should seek medical care and or COVID-19 testing per CDC guidelines. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>.
- **Temperature checks:** Encourage employees to take their temperature prior to arriving for work each day.
- **Sick employee:** Direct an employee who exhibits symptoms or answers yes to any of the self-screening questions, to leave the premises immediately, and seek medical care and or COVID-19 testing, per CDC guidelines.
- **Physical Distancing:** Employees must comply with the Governor’s Executive order for proper social distancing practices. Employees should be encouraged to minimize contact with guests when possible.
- **PPE:** Employees must wear proper personal protective equipment when proper social distancing cannot be maintained. Guides in a whitewater craft must wear a face covering. Note that a “buff” or neck gaiter constitutes a face covering.
- **Training:** Train employees on the importance and expectations with good hygiene, frequent handwashing, use of hand sanitizer and avoid touching hands to face.
- **Prepare employees:** for the effects of COVID-19 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/guidance-small-business.pdf>.
- **Sanitization:** Disinfecting wipes, soap and hand sanitizer should be made available to all employees at facilities, on buses and rafts.