

CDC announces interim COVID guidance for operating youth camps

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued updated guidance for the operation of youth camps, as of May 28, 2021. The State of Illinois has adopted the CDC guidance, which can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/summer-camps.html>.

This interim guidance is intended to help camp administrators operate camps

while slowing the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19 thereby protecting campers, their families, staff, and communities.

Key Points:
* COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective, and widely accessible in the United States.

* Everyone aged 12 years and older is recommended to be vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as possible to keep from getting and spreading CO-

VID-19.
* This guidance is intended for all types of youth day and overnight camps. The guidance outlines strategies that camp programs can use to help maintain healthy environments and operations, lower the risk of COVID-19 spread in their programs, prepare for when someone is sick with COVID-19, and support coping and resilience.
* For camps where everyone is fully vaccinated

prior to the start of camp, it is safe to return to full capacity, without masking, and without physical distancing in accordance with CDC's Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People; except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations.
* Although people who are fully vaccinated do not need to wear masks, camp programs should be sup-

portive of campers or staff who choose to wear a mask.
* Consistent and layered use of multiple prevention strategies can help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect people who are not fully vaccinated including campers, staff, and their families.
* This guidance describes physical distancing recommendations for youth camps. These recommendations align with current evidence for physical distanc-

ing in K-12 schools.
* Campers should be assigned to cohorts that will remain together for the entire camp session without mixing, to the largest extent possible.
* This CDC guidance is meant to supplement—not replace—any federal, state, local, territorial, or tribal health and safety laws, rules, and regulations with which camps must comply.

Ill. Department of Public Health releases Phase 5 All Sports Guidance

This guidance issued by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) pertains to all youth recreational sports, including, but not limited to, school-based sports (high school and elementary school), travel clubs, private leagues and clubs, recreational leagues and centers, and park district sports programs. This guidance does NOT pertain to professional sports leagues or college division level sports. This guidance supersedes all previously issued All Sports Guidance issued from DCEO, IDPH and/or ISBE.

Individuals who are fully vaccinated against the virus that causes COVID-19

may resume sports-related activities without wearing masks or maintaining physical distance for all sports, except where required by laws, rules, or regulations, including local business and workplace guidance. Schools and other sports organizers are permitted to require face coverings and physical distancing for all individuals, including those who are fully vaccinated, as they deem appropriate. Individuals are fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving the second dose in a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series (Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna) or two weeks after receiving a single-dose COVID-19 vaccine (Johnson & Johnson/Janssen).

Individuals who are not fully vaccinated should continue to wear a mask during

sports-related activities for sports played indoors, except when wearing a mask is against the recommendation of an individual's health care provider or poses an injury risk as described by the American Academy of Pediatrics (see "When should face masks be worn?"). Many sports organizers have heat policies in place to help ensure that participants do not experience heat-related illness and, if they do, organizers know how to properly respond. Participants who are not fully vaccinated should have extra masks available and sports organizers should have a supply of extra masks available to participants who are not fully vaccinated. Individuals should replace any mask that becomes wet with sweat or water.

Individuals who are not

fully vaccinated may resume sports-related activities without wearing masks for any sport played outdoors, except where required by laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance. While masks may be removed during training, competition, and other active exercise according to the provisions above, it is important that, whenever possible, individuals who are not fully vaccinated continue to wear a mask during contacts with other unvaccinated individuals that do not occur during gameplay, such as on the sideline or bench, in the locker room, during team meetings, in the weight room, on the team bus or carpooling, or during meals, especially when indoors.

At Phase 5 of the Restore Illinois guidelines, all sports

may resume sports-related activities without restrictions on travel or numbers of teams in competition or attendance. Before traveling for sports activities, teams should review the most recent data on county-level transmission from IDPH for counties in Illinois or the CDC for counties in other states. If playing outside of Illinois, teams should avoid travel to areas of higher risk as recommended in the IDPH Travel Guidance. For more information and guidance, review the Human Rights (HR) and Travel Policies below.

Because most youth participants have not yet had the time to become fully vaccinated, IDPH also continues to recommend regular weekly COVID-19 screening testing for youth participants

who are not fully vaccinated and playing sports that involve sustained close contacts with other participants who are not fully vaccinated (e.g., basketball, boxing, football, hockey, contact lacrosse, martial arts, rugby, wrestling). When possible, participants should receive a negative test for COVID-19 as close as possible to competition and no longer than 72 hours before play if receiving a molecular test (e.g., SHIELD Illinois) or 24 hours if receiving an antigen test (e.g., BinaxNOW). For more information on screening testing, review IDPH guidance on Testing for COVID-19 in Community Settings and Schools and the CDC operational guidance for K-12 schools.

Identity theft-related unemployment fraud, phishing schemes on the rise as federal unemployment programs approach expiration

Fraudulent Texts, Emails, Social Media Messages Among Correspondence to Unsuspecting Victims

The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) is urging Illinoisans to be on high alert for phishing schemes that may be leading to identity theft as international bad actors continue to attempt to exploit unemployment systems across the country. Fraudulent text messages, emails, and social media messages, posing as IDES and other state agencies and constitutional offices, are being sent to individuals in an attempt to phish for personally identifiable information (PII) and other data. This is a continued, organized attempt to defraud state unemployment insurance systems until the expiration of the federal

unemployment programs on September 4, 2021.

It is imperative that claimants and the public at large remain vigilant to detect fraudulent correspondence. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has provided steps individuals should follow to recognize and avoid phishing schemes. Individuals should also take steps to strengthen and protect online account information. IDES claimants should maintain strong, unique passwords to their accounts, and never share personal account information with untrustworthy sources.

Since March 2020, IDES has shut down more than 1.7 million claims filed with the

Department in the names of identity theft victims. Throughout the pandemic, these organized and sophisticated crime syndicates have continued to adapt and evolve their attempts to access the unemployment insurance system. IDES has worked tirelessly to enhance internal analytic tools, fraud detection and prevention methods, and identity verification measures to increase protections around fraudsters accessing the system and filing fraudulent claims. Last week alone, the State of Illinois and IDES networks blocked nearly 450 million nefarious attempts to access the Department's benefit system, either to file a fraud-

ulent unemployment insurance claim or to compromise an existing claimant account to redirect payment.

Illinois is among the states who have committed to administering the federal unemployment insurance programs until their expiration in September to ensure those who are struggling receive the benefits they eligible for under federal law. These programs include Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC), and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC). As expected, fraudsters are increasing their attempts to access the

unemployment insurance systems in states who have not opted out of administering these programs early. This is being done through continued data mining via phishing schemes to attempt to file claims in the names of identity theft victims or steal benefits from existing claimants.

Identity theft-related unemployment insurance fraud has been rampant nationwide since the onset of the pandemic as a result of the wide-scale availability of PII and the creation and extensions of the federal unemployment insurance programs – PUA, FPUC, and PEUC. Large corporate data breaches and cyber hacks

(e.g. Equifax data breach in 2017 which compromised the PII of nearly 150 million; Yahoo data breach in 2014 which compromised the PII of nearly 3 billion; Target data breach in 2013 which compromised the PII of nearly 110 million) have exposed and compromised the PII of millions of victims, resulting in organized fraudsters taking advantage of this information and using it to capitalize monetarily during a time of crisis.

If you have been the victim of identity theft-related unemployment insurance fraud, visit the IDES fraud webpage for information about how to report the claim.

IFB District 12 Director's Douglas County Agriculture June update

By Larry W. Dallas

Parts of Douglas County have turned a little dry in June. Some areas have had plenty of rain, even too much. Other parts could use a nice shower. The old adage was that a dry June made the crops root down in search of moisture. This made them more drought-tolerant later in the season when precipitation was scarce. The timing may be a little off since we plant a month earlier than the corn went in a generation ago.

So far, our ponds all have crops growing in them this year. Last year we planted some places three times hoping to get a stand good enough to at least keep the weeds down. Some of those places just grew weeds and that is evident this year. Even with herbicide, the weeds are very thick in some of those spots. We are not out of the woods yet. Standing water can kill any size of corn.

Overall, our crops look good at this point in the growing season. I have not been farther than Champaign and Effingham this month, so I do not have that much to compare with. The corn has the deep green color and fast growth we want to see at this point in the year. The narrow row soybeans have covered the ground, fur-

nishing the shade that is important to compete with weeds. The 30-inch rows are not far behind.

Some problems are apparent. You may see random yellow leaves in cornfields. This can be nutrient deficiency or just a rapidly growing plant. A larger area of stunted or yellow plants in an end or corner is often compaction. Even in a somewhat dry year, it is possible to put compaction layers into a high traffic area of a field. Regular rainfall will mask compaction because the plants do not have to fight to get moisture. In dry weather, the plants suffer.

There have been a few cases of herbicide damage in soybeans around the county. This varies from parts of an end to major portions of fields. The nonselective herbicides

we use are unforgiving. If the crop being sprayed does not have the right genetic trait, it seldom turns out well. Even with good records, mistakes happen. That can be thinking the seed we planted was a certain trait or a misunderstanding when mixing herbicide. It is early enough that the dead soybeans can be replanted with some yield loss. One of the Tuesday morning Marketing group members said you probably should not clean your planter up until after July 4. There is always the chance you will have to get it back out.

The agriculture press has several stories about a federal court striking down a provision of a U.S. Department of Agriculture agreement to allow faster line speeds in hog slaughter plants. This might not

seem to have much to do with Douglas County since this is mainly a corn and soybeans area. Livestock feed is still the main use of our crops, however. The line speed reduction is forecast to cut processing capacity by 2.5 percent. That could mean finished hogs with no packing plant to go to, and ultimately fewer hogs being produced.

Iowa State University thinks this might reduce income for hog producers

by \$80 million. It could also make pork more expensive in the store. Fewer hogs to feed will cut demand for the feed grains we grow. The line speeds that were disallowed have been in use for over 20 years. This decision seems ill-advised at best.

A bright spot for pork producers continues to be exports. In 2020 the United States exported 11 percent more pork than in 2019. China took 9% of our total pork production in 2020

but Japan and Mexico are major customers too. China has not yet recovered from the massive African Swine Flu outbreak that took an estimated one-half of their hog herd. Each time they think they are past the disease it shows back up. As noted before, information out of China is opaque at best.

The end use of most soybeans is being crushed to yield soy oil and soy

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