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IMPORTANT: COVID-19 UPDATE FOR OUR CAMP CLIENTS AND FRIENDS

April 2020

For over 100 years we have been committed to providing support and service to help camps be successful. Your success is our success.

We have watched management change between generations of families countless times. We have been there to speak at orientation, shared closing ceremonies at the end of color war, and enjoyed countless camp tours in the days in between.

The commitment of all our camp clients to provide a place - a summer home, where children know they are safe and gain valuable life skills has always been awe inspiring. And we have been blessed to have had a front row seat.

Over the past weeks, we have spoken to countless camps and listened to their concerns of being pulled between opening camp and the limitations & challenges presented by COVID-19. We are in unprecedented times and we are all navigating tirelessly through paths that do not yet yield definitive answers of what is to become of the 2020 season.

With that in mind we would like to offer a few items for your consideration. We do not suggest that all of these are appropriate for every camp and program, as you know your families best, but they may be helpful to many.

1. We have been working behind the scenes for many weeks now to have our camp insurer partners agree to premium relief if camps do not open or open a partial season in a reduced capacity. We are happy to report that our efforts have been successful! As soon as you know what you expect for 2020 in terms of camper days, facility rental receipts, payroll, vehicle and bus usage, let us know and we will get premium credits that reflect reduced exposures.
2. Don't just focus on campers. You must consider your staff and some recent government requirements and developments that apply just to them.

The Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA), has already been deeply involved in dealing with this virus and now considers COVID-19 a 'recordable illness.' That imposes certain duties on you as the employer. Our great friends at Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker, a top tier international law firm, wrote a comprehensive article on the subject (by Ian A. Stewart & Jana S. Farmer, dated 4/13/20), which we have attached here. In addition to outlining general employer duties to ensure workplace safety, they outline the elements of an infectious disease and response plan for employees.

3. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commissions (EEOC), has also weighed in on the virus. While Equal Employment Opportunity Laws still apply, they do not interfere with guidelines made by the CDC or state and local health authorities regarding the pandemic. Can you ask employees if they have symptoms of COVID? Take their temperature? Require them to leave if they develop symptoms? Ask for a doctors' note before allowing them to return? The answers to these and many other employment related questions can keep you from exposing yourself to litigation from employees, which is the last thing you want in the middle of everything else. The answer to these and other important employment related questions can be found on the U.S. EEOC website at https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/wysk/wysk_ada_rehabilitaion_act_coronavirus.cfm?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=
4. Emotions are running high everywhere you turn. You are dealing with a range of issues and the path forward is not yet clear. Therefore, while this might still be just a bit early, you may wish to consider this: how can you prepare now to open camp if you don't know how your families feel about actually sending you campers even if you do open? You are busy hiring staff, preparing your facility, ordering food and other supplies, and considering capital improvements. Forget for a moment what the government and regulators may or may not do, but isn't it important for you to know what your parents are really thinking? Perhaps a very frank letter that states your position that 'we are all in if you are all in.' If so, please send in your tuition balance. But if you are not willing to participate in camp this summer please let us know now so that we do not waste precious time and resources and can properly prepare for our expected enrollment. Offer to speak to any parents individually about their concerns.
5. ACA has prepared a pre-camp agreement, among other documents, at <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/coronavirus/health-wellness-resources> You may wish to also ask your parents to agree in writing that they will be certain their campers have not had fevers, coughs, respiratory issues or other symptoms of COVID-19 for weeks before camp starts. Also ask if they have been under 'lockdown,' and/or practiced social distancing, and confirm that they have not been exposed to COVID-19 by siblings or other family members who may have contracted the virus. Include that you reserve the right not to admit anyone that poses a communicable disease risk to others. Your staff should sign this as well. The future of testing for the virus and a person's immunity to it may help shape your approach to this pre-camp agreement.

We are confident that the camp community, like the rest of the country, will weather this storm and come out the other side perhaps bruised but better & smarter than before. We are here for you and will get through this together.