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## 2021 COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

### Smirkus Camp and Big Top Tour inTENTsive

Dear Smirkus families and staff,

We are looking forward to a wonderful summer filled with lots of Smirkus joy ... we can't wait to see the magic we'll create together! As case numbers continue to decline and vaccinations continue to increase across the country, we all have reason to feel confident in our summer plans and anticipate a safe and successful summer season.

However, we must remember that because not everyone in our programs will be fully vaccinated (especially at Smirkus Camp), and because we live close together at Camp and the Barn, programs like ours can be uniquely vulnerable to COVID-19 outbreaks. That means we need to have a higher standard of safety; even as other places go "back to normal."

In order to ensure the safest possible operation of Smirkus Camp and the Big Top Tour inTENTsive, we have developed these comprehensive COVID-19 protocols. They are consistent with the State of Vermont guidance for overnight camps, reflect additional guidance from Vermont Camp Association and the CDC, and are adapted from the protocols we followed last summer at our five week COVID-free camp.

Staying safe and healthy is a shared responsibility. As a circus community, the commitment to keeping each other out of harm's way is second nature to us all. Please review these protocols very carefully... and stay tuned for information on upcoming "town hall" meetings via Zoom to review these policies and answer any questions you may have.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

#### NOTES:

*For everyone's safety, these protocols apply to all participants and staff, regardless of vaccination status. They will remain in place throughout the summer regardless of whether general public guidelines are relaxed. If COVID cases rise, and public health guidelines become more restrictive, we may be forced to tighten our protocols as well. We will provide as much notice as possible should that happen.*

*Circus Smirkus retains the absolute right to deny admittance to anyone we deem to pose a health risk to themselves or other campers because of possible COVID symptoms or exposure.*

**If you have additional questions, please contact:**

For Smirkus Camp: [camp@smirkus.org](mailto:camp@smirkus.org)

For the Big Top Tour inTENTsive: [tour@smirkus.org](mailto:tour@smirkus.org)



## **BEFORE YOU ARRIVE...**

Pre-arrival behavior restrictions and testing are two of the most essential elements in keeping everyone at Circus Smirkus programs safe this summer. What you do before you arrive in Greensboro matters - a lot. The best way to ensure plenty of Smirkus joy is to limit your exposure to germs of all sorts.

Beginning ten days before arriving at Circus Smirkus, participants and staff (vaccinated or not) should restrict behaviors to low-risk activities only. This means: no social gatherings, no events, no other camps, no play-dates, and no get-togethers with other families during the 10 days before you arrive. If you do have to come in contact with anyone outside your household, wear a mask and practice social distancing.

Participants and staff who travel to Circus Smirkus via public transportation (bus, airplane, train) will need to travel and then follow these guidelines for 10 days within driving distance of Greensboro, VT (after they travel via public transit).

This chart can help you identify ways to limit your exposure:

<b>OK</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Activities with no close contact with anyone outside your household</li><li>- Playing outside</li><li>- Going on a hike with your household only</li></ul>
<b>ONLY IF NEEDED</b>	<p><b>MUST WEAR A MASK AND SOCIAL DISTANCE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Mandatory school and work requirements</li><li>- Medical appointments</li><li>- Attending day care where masks/distancing are required</li></ul>
<b>NO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Gatherings with anyone outside your household, including visits with family, especially indoors</li><li>- Funerals, wedding, graduations, concerts, parties, or other events indoors or outdoors</li><li>- Participating in or attending in-person team sports</li><li>- Indoor public spaces such as malls, gyms, restaurants, theaters</li><li>- Using public transportation</li></ul>



We want to make sure participants will not have COVID-like symptoms while at Smirkus, as this will disrupt their experience and the experience of others. Please do your best to limit your contacts and avoid risky situations and behaviors. If possible, have your whole household avoid places where germs spread easily. Even if COVID is not prevalent in your area, other germs may be. For this reason, even vaccinated campers must follow the pre-camp behavior restrictions.

Health screening will be required for the 10 days prior to arrival at Smirkus. We will provide a symptom log for parents/guardians, and for staff. It must be completed, signed, and turned in before each participant/staff member is allowed to move in. This symptom log will include:

- Temperature checks every day for 10 days (participants/staff who run a fever at any point during the 72 hours immediately preceding Camp/inTENTsive will be asked to stay home)
- Screening for the presence of symptoms recognized by the CDC for pediatric COVID patients (adult symptoms will be outlined on the log):
  - Fever of 100.4 or higher
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath
  - Diarrhea
  - Fatigue
  - Headache
  - Muscle aches
  - Nausea
  - Loss of taste or smell
  - Sore throat
  - Vomiting
- Should participants or staff experience any of these symptoms, they will be required to report them immediately to their program director, who will work with health professionals to determine whether the participant/staff member can be cleared to come to Smirkus Camp or the inTENTsive.
- Families are required to disclose their participant's exposure to anyone known to have COVID-19, whether that exposure is discovered before arriving in Greensboro or after the participant's arrival. Staff are required to do so, as well.



## **Pre-Arrival Testing**

All staff and participants must take a PCR COVID-19 test (not an antigen or rapid test) within the three days prior to arrival (and as close to arrival as possible). Before entering the property, participants and staff must present an electronic or hard copy proof of negative test results taken within 3 days prior to arrival.

## **Pre-existing Conditions**

While Circus Smirkus will not discriminate against any participant or staff member on the basis of a pre-existing condition, some conditions place an individual at higher risk of experiencing severe health complications if COVID-19 is contracted. Participants and staff with significant pre-existing conditions will be required to submit documentation that they have discussed the risks of attending with their primary care provider.

## **GETTING HERE...**

Travel to Greensboro should be as direct as possible—ideally a single day trip with contactless behaviors along the way. If you are making a two-day trip to Smirkus in a private vehicle and must spend a night along the way, please do so in a low-contact way (ideally in a hotel, wearing your mask and socially distancing when outside your room).

If public transport is the only option, please wear a mask and practice social distancing to minimize contact with others.

Staff or participants using public transportation (bus, airplane, train) to Circus Smirkus must quarantine for 10 days within a single day trip distance of Greensboro, VT (after they travel via public transit).

## **LOW-CONTACT DROP-OFF PROCESSES**

- Families will be given timeframes for arrival, with arrivals to be staggered.
- Families are asked to bring only participants and parents/guardians to drop-off.
- A staff member will do a health check with participants and families upon arrival and collect pre-arrival health screening forms and COVID test results:
  - Has the participant had a fever at any point over the last seven days?
  - Has the participant had a fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other respiratory symptoms in the past week?
  - Has the participant spent time with or been exposed to anyone who has been sick with COVID-19 or any other infectious illness?
  - If the answer to any question is yes, the participant and family will meet with the Camp Health Professional for further evaluation.
- Families will be asked to remain in their vehicles. One outdoor restroom will be available if needed.
- Staff members will help each participant unload their belongings.
- Families must wear masks during drop-off.



## **AT SMIRKUS:**

### **Pods + Testing**

- The first week of each session (including the Big Top Tour inTENTsive) will be a strictly monitored period with participants and staff assigned to cohorts.
- These cohorts, or "pods" will be the living and eating groups and will be treated the same as "single-family living units."
- When not in a cohort's living unit or designated eating locations, participants and staff will wear masks, practice social distancing, stay outside as much as possible for activities, and follow other proper hygiene practices.
- All participants and staff will be tested on Day 5 of each session (regardless of vaccination status).
- Parents/guardians will be required to sign a permission form for this testing.
- Upon receiving negative results for everyone at Smirkus Camp or the Big Top Tour inTENTsive, the pods will be relaxed
- Should anyone test positive, the pods will remain, and the local health authorities will guide us in isolating any positive cases and coordinating necessary treatment.

### **Masks**

- All participants and staff will wear masks when outside of their pod
- Thin fabric and gaiter style masks are not effective; surgical masks are best at reducing spread. If participants do not have their own acceptable mask, Smirkus will provide them with one.
- Upon confirmation of 100% negative test results after day 5, masks will not be required for staff and participants.

### **Meal Service**

- Participants and staff must wash their hands before getting in the food line.
- Pods will eat together, with a minimum of 6 feet between pods.
- Meals will be outdoors whenever the weather allows.



## **Visitor Policy**

One of the most important things we can do to reduce the chance of exposure to the virus is to strictly limit the number of people allowed onsite at Smirkus Camp and The Circus Barn this summer. Exceptions to this policy should not be requested; it is one of the most important ways we can protect our participants and staff from unnecessary exposure.

Visitors will not be allowed at Smirkus Camp or Headquarters this summer. This includes:

- Camper or Trouper families, unless a participant is sick or injured and needs to be picked up.
- Friends of Smirkus staff or participants.
- Former staff members or those not currently employed at Smirkus
- Camp or Tour alumni
- Members of the public, unless they are pre-approved and expected delivery people

Approved staff may be allowed to move between sites, masked, following social distancing guidelines, and using contact tracing logs.

## **Housing**

- Rooms will be assigned by pods.
- Only the individuals assigned to a room may enter that room, with the exception of a staff member entering a room for safety or logistical purposes.
- Beds will be arranged toe-to-toe or head-to-toe wherever possible, to maintain as much space as possible between faces.
- Common rooms will be designated by pod.
- Participants and staff will use only the bathroom(s) designated for their pod.
- Toiletries may not be stored in the bathroom.
- Weather permitting, room windows will be kept open as much as possible to promote air circulation.
- Participants are encouraged to bring portable fans with them for the same purpose.

## **Ongoing Symptom Checks**

Circus Smirkus will be vigilant in maintaining the health of participants and staff members, and work to identify possible symptoms on a daily basis.

- Participants' and staff's temperature will be checked and recorded daily.
- Counselors will ask each participant daily if they are experiencing any of the common symptoms of COVID: fever (feeling unusually warm), cough, shortness of breath, impaired taste and smell, etc.
- Staff will be responsible for reporting their own symptoms immediately.



## **VACCINATION**

We encourage all participants and staff to be fully vaccinated, if possible, prior to arrival. If a participant or staff member has a second vaccination scheduled for after arrival, we may be able to coordinate with our local public health facilities to arrange that second vaccination. Please reach out to your program director for more information. Parents will not be allowed to pick up their participant and take them offsite for vaccination.

For families whose campers are attending a two week session, we strongly suggest that you schedule any follow up for after that session.

*Please note: Being vaccinated does not mean you do not have to follow these protocols. Because not everyone in our programs will be fully vaccinated (especially at Smirkus Camp), and because we live close together at Camp and the Barn, programs like ours can be uniquely vulnerable to COVID-19 outbreaks. That means we need to have a higher standard of safety; even as other places go “back to normal.”*

## **LOW-CONTACT PICK-UP PROCESSES**

Pick-up protocols will be largely the same as those for drop-off, in reverse:

- Closing shows will be filmed before the end of each session and will be made available for families at the end of the summer.
- Families will be given timeframes for pick-up in the same manner as drop-off, with staggered times to allow for distancing.
- Staff members will help participants pack up and prepare their belongings.
- Families will not be allowed to get out of their vehicle, other than to use one designated outdoor restroom if needed.
- Families must wear masks during pick-up.

Please note: trouper families will receive a separate communication describing low-contact pickup at the Barn.

**Again, thank you for your careful review of, and adherence to, these protocols.**

**Together, we can make this safe and wonderful summer!**