



June 11, 2020

**Interim Guidance for Pools and Recreational Aquatic Spray Grounds  
During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency**

**Background**

Amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) continues to monitor the public health situation to inform the State's response activities and reopening approach. In accordance with Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's *New York Forward* data-driven, phased strategy to safeguard the health and well-being of New Yorkers, NYSDOH provides this interim guidance for the public and private owners and operators of pools and recreational aquatic spray grounds, including but not limited to cities, villages, towns, campgrounds, children's camps, day cares, hotels, assisted living facilities, schools, colleges, universities, mobile home parks, homeowners' associations, and apartment complexes. This guidance does not apply to private homeowner's pools. For owners and operators that also provide other activities on premise (e.g. food service, retail, etc.), they must consult and adhere to guidance set forth on the *New York Forward* [website](#) as it applies to their operations.

**Guidance for Pools and Aquatic Spray Grounds**

All indoor and outdoor swimming pools and recreational aquatic spray grounds that are subject to the operating conditions defined in New York State Sanitary Code are permitted to operate for members of the public during the COVID-19 public health emergency so long as the owners/operators adhere to any applicable Executive Orders and the following NYSDOH restrictions:

- Ensure that all individuals maintain a distance of at least six feet from other individuals at all times, unless they are members of the same household or family unit, or safety or the core activity requires a shorter distance.
  - However, any time individuals are within six feet of individuals outside of their household or family unit and not in the water, they must wear an acceptable face covering that covers both the nose and mouth. Individuals must be prepared to don a face covering if another person unexpectedly comes within six feet.
- For health and safety concerns, ensure face coverings are not worn by individuals while they are in the water;
- Limit the maximum size of any single group of people on the premise or in the water to 10 or fewer individuals; however, there may be more than one group on premise or in water so long as they are able to be separated by at least six feet;
  - Occupancy of the premise and pool should be limited to the number of individuals and groups who can be safely and appropriately spaced such that each individual and group is at least six feet away from others.

- Ensure different groups of people are separated by at least six feet on the premise or in the water, to the extent possible;
  - However, if physical barriers are used to separate groups of individuals, they must not present a health or safety risk by obstructing supervision or impairing air flow, heating, cooling, or ventilation.
- Provide supplies for proper hand and respiratory hygiene, including soap, running water, and disposable paper towels; alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol for areas where handwashing facilities may not be available or practical; and tissues and trash receptacles;
- Enhance cleaning and disinfection protocols, in compliance with all cleaning and disinfections procedures from NYSDOH, particularly cleaning and disinfection of high-touch areas, including railings, lockers, and chairs, and maintaining logs on site that document date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection;
- Affix social distancing markers using tape or signs that denote six feet of spacing in commonly used and other applicable areas on the site (e.g. entrances, exits); and
- Post signage throughout the premise to remind individuals to:
  - stay home if they have [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, have tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 14 days, or were exposed through close contact to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days,
  - encourage proper hand and respiratory hygiene,
  - adhere to social distancing rules,
  - wear appropriate use of face coverings, and
  - abide by cleaning and disinfecting protocols.

### **Additional Resources**

#### [NYSDOH COVID-19 Website](#)

- [NYSDOH Interim Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities](#)

#### [New York Forward Website](#)

- [New York Forward Safety Plan Template](#)

#### [CDC COVID-19 Website](#)

- [CDC Considerations for Aquatic Venues](#)