

## **Aquatic facility COVID 19 safety plan guidelines**

While there is currently no evidence that COVID-19 can survive in properly disinfected swimming pool water; the virus can be spread in and around a swimming pool environment through person-to-person contact and contact with contaminated surfaces. CDC advisories related to social distancing, staying home while sick, routine disinfection of frequently touched surfaces, frequent handwashing and/or hand sanitizer use, and other personal protection guidance must be operational considerations for your facility moving forward.

All pool operators must submit a COVID 19 safety plan to Columbia/Boone County Public Health and Human Services prior to a pre-opening inspection. No opening inspections will be conducted until the plan has been approved by PHHS. This document is to be used as a guide to create a COVID 19 safety plan specific to each facility.

Pools that are monitored with an attendant/lifeguard/monitor will be allowed to open with no capacity limits as long as social distancing is maintained by all patrons at all times

Pools where there is no monitor or attendant will be allowed to open with a **maximum of 10 people per pool at any given time.**

- social distancing must be maintained at all locations inside the pool area. This includes grills and picnic areas.
- If the size of a pool does not allow for social distancing requirements to be maintained at all times, the pool will not be allowed to open.

Hot tubs and spray playgrounds will not be allowed to open during Phase One.

### **Signage**

All pools shall have signage listing COVID-19 symptoms. Signage shall include:

- No person shall be permitted entry if any of the following signs or symptoms were present within the last 72 hours:
  - Temperature is or has been greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 Celsius)
  - Coughing
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Chills
  - Repeated shaking with chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Close contact with person with any of the above symptoms or known COVID-19

### **Responsible party**

All pools must identify a responsible party for implementation, ongoing operations and any corrective actions of the aquatic facility COVID 19 safety plan.

### **Handwashing/Hand Sanitizer**

- Encourage all patrons and employees to wash their hands immediately upon entry into the facility if a restroom is available.
- An alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not available

### **Sanitation Guidelines**

A regular cleaning and disinfecting process shall be established.

There are many points in aquatic facilities where infectious pathogens could potentially be transferred. The list below highlights areas that should be disinfected as part of a daily deep cleaning and routinely throughout any business operations or training. In addition to an established process, EPA approved disinfectant spray or wipes should be made available for both staff and patrons to disinfect as needed throughout the day.

This list should by no means be considered complete, however it is intended to assist any operation considering their specific environment and interactions that occur between staff and patrons.

#### **Entry Areas**

Ticket/admission counters  
Personal items/bag check  
kiosks/patron input devices  
Entry gates

#### **Common Areas**

Restrooms  
Lockers  
Dining Areas  
Seating Areas

#### **Attractions**

Queues and Dispatch Areas  
Operational Controls  
Ride Vehicles  
Dry Features or Play Areas

#### **Common Contact Points**

Handrails  
Door Handles  
Trash Cans  
Water Fountains  
Light Switches

#### **First Aid**

#### **Food Service**

Cashiers/Points of Sale  
Dispensers & Condiment Stations  
Foods  
Containers  
Fryers and Ovens  
Dishwashing  
Utensils

#### **Other Operational Areas**

Time Clock  
Break Rooms  
Storage Rooms  
Mechanical and Pump Rooms  
Rescue Equipment  
Swim Lesson Equipment  
Lifejackets  
Lifeguard Chairs

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has a list of registered disinfectants that are for use against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19:

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

When utilizing certain products, the surface may need to be left wet in order to kill the germs.

If the disinfectants above are not available a diluted bleach solution may be used.

- To make a bleach solution, mix: 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water OR 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water. These solutions should be left on the surface for at least 1 minute
- Alcohol-based solutions with at least 70% alcohol may also be used

All solutions and containers must be properly labeled. If a container's contents are unknown, properly dispose of it and rinse the container with water.

Disposable gloves must be worn during all times of disinfection. Hands should be properly washed immediately after using any chemicals or disinfectants.

The CDC provides the following guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility-H.pdf>

### **Water Quality**

Proper water quality maintenance and filtration must be adhered to as per normal City of Columbia pool code and industry standards. Each facility must ensure that all pool filtration equipment is in good working order and is monitored throughout the day.

Based upon the available guidance and information from CDC, facilities do not need to change existing pool filtration procedures. It is recommended that water quality tests be conducted at least every two hours for free chlorine or bromine and pH. The results must be recorded in a log, kept on site and must be done at a minimum of 1 time per day in accordance with the City of Columbia pool code.

### **Operational capacity - Monitored facilities**

Pools that are monitored with an attendant/lifeguard/monitor will be allowed to open with no capacity limits as long as social distancing is maintained by all patrons at all times.

Hot tubs and spray playgrounds will not be allowed to open during Phase One

The implementation and enforcement of physical distancing within aquatic facilities will be one of the more challenging guidelines to enact for many. The current guidance for proper distancing is six feet (two meters) between parties.

Families or small groups that are attending the facility together and have not had to distance themselves from each other prior to arriving, can continue that practice within the facility.

- OPERATIONAL CAPACITY CONSIDERATIONS
  - Every facility should determine patron capacity limits which can be implemented within their respective facility.
  - Controlling the overall volume of patrons will be one of the more effective ways to create an environment where all persons can properly distance themselves as needed.
  - Considerations
    - Calculate activity and programming capacities while maintaining proper distancing
    - Calculate common area capacities while maintaining proper distancing
    - Consider using facility square footage to determine capacity capabilities
  
- SIGNAGE
  - Facilities must implement signage and physical markings as necessary to educate patrons about proper distancing guidelines. Signage should include any information about activity or programming modifications.
  
- COMMON AREAS AND FURNISHINGS
  - Common areas such as deck seating, dining areas, and restrooms present the most likely areas for the lack of proper distancing. Facilities should either remove or rearrange furnishings as one of the best ways to promote proper distancing once patrons are inside. Keep groupings small and at least 6 feet from others. Some facilities may find it reasonable to have a reservation or check-out station where patrons can request chairs for their family. Another option for some will be removing chairs entirely.
  
- ENFORCEMENT
  - On-deck support staff and management are the best enforcement methods to help enforce distancing if necessary. Proper distancing will need to be monitored throughout the day to ensure compliance as patrons may rearrange furnishings during normal operations.
  - On-duty lifeguards can assist but shall not be expected to be the primary person to enforce distancing protocols. Enforcement of proper distancing by lifeguards on stand shall not occur.
  
- DISTANCING IN WATER
  - While properly treated swimming pool water inactivates the virus, facilities must still implement activities and capacity controls in pools to prevent overcrowding or distancing concerns. Examples could be limiting swimmers per lane, limiting swimmers in a pool based on surface square footage, or limiting patrons on attractions depending upon volume capabilities.

- PHASED OPENINGS OR OPERATIONAL SECTIONS
  - Opening a facility for limited time periods throughout a day may be a good best practice for some that will allow the maximum number of patrons while managing proper distancing. It will also allow for facility cleaning and disinfection as necessary between groups of patrons.
  
- QUEUE LINES
  - Distancing markers at intervals (6ft – 2m) should be placed to provide guidance to the patrons for maintaining proper spacing for any aquatic attraction.
  - Considerations
    - Have a hand sanitizing station at each attraction.
    - Additional shade in the queue lines may be necessary if traditional queueing space is elongated. Patrons may ignore distancing requirements if their area of the line is not shaded.
    - Slide towers with multiple attractions that feed from the same set of stairs may create challenges to keep patrons properly distanced. Consider adapting the queueing method on these types of slide towers, where an attendant is staged at the base and dispatches groups at appropriate intervals and spacing.
  
- CONTINUOUS FACE TO FACE INTERACTION POINTS
  - Lifeguards or facility staff that have continuous face to face interactions, may need to create physical barriers between them and the guests as physical distancing might not be feasible. These points of contact could be admission gates and check in/registration desks. Consider placing plexiglass barriers at these locations.

### **Operational capacity - unmonitored facilities**

Pools where there is no monitor or attendant will be allowed to open with a **maximum of 10 people per pool at any given time.**

- social distancing must be maintained at all locations inside the pool area. This includes grills and picnic areas.
- If the size of a pool does not allow for social distancing requirements to be maintained at all times, the pool will not be allowed to open.
- The facility plan must include how the maximum of 10 people per pool will be monitored, a reservation system may be necessary to ensure the maximum of 10 people at any given time is not exceeded. The plan must identify who will be responsible for ensuring the limit is enforced.
- Hot tubs and spray playgrounds will not be allowed to open during Phase One

The implementation and enforcement of physical distancing within aquatic facilities will be one of the more challenging guidelines to enact for many. The current guidance for proper distancing is six feet (two meters) between parties.

- SIGNAGE
  - Facilities must implement signage and physical markings as necessary to educate patrons about proper distancing guidelines.
  
- COMMON AREAS AND FURNISHINGS
  - Common areas such as deck seating, dining areas, and restrooms present the most likely areas for the lack of proper distancing. Facilities should either remove or rearrange furnishings as one of the best ways to promote proper distancing once patrons are inside. Another option for some will be removing chairs entirely.
  
- PHASED OPENINGS OR OPERATIONAL SECTIONS
  - Opening a facility for limited time periods throughout a day may be a good best practice for some that will allow the maximum number of patrons while managing proper distancing. It will also allow for facility cleaning and disinfection as necessary between groups of patrons.

**Permit Suspension**

Repeated failure to follow the plan approved by PHHS as part of your pre-opening inspection and terms of your operating permit may result in revocation of your operating permit