



COVID-19 Risk Statement & Mitigation Efforts

“Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change.” —Stephen Hawking

We are empathetic toward everyone’s unique experiences and the changes both individuals and society are being tasked with making in response to the novel coronavirus. Change is hard. What is easy is our commitment to providing fun outdoor adventures while being mindful of risk. Preventing mishaps has always been important to us — we are simply adapting to this new health hazard by taking steps to mitigate transmission and protect the health of our staff and customers as best we can.

Thankfully, outdoor activities, like kayaking and hiking, allow you to avoid the “thee C’s” — (en)closed spaces, crowds, and close-contact activities. Outdoor activities are also considered beneficial to your physical, social, and mental well-being. Let’s go play outside!

By visiting Woods & Waters and/or participating in an activity or rental, you and your party knowingly and voluntarily assume all risks related to exposure to COVID-19.

- According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), COVID-19 is a highly infectious disease spread most commonly through respiratory droplets and particles produced when an infected person exhales, talks, vocalizes, sneezes, or coughs and can lead to severe illness and death, especially for senior citizens and those with underlying medical conditions. The highly transmissible disease can be spread by people who have no symptoms or do not know they are infected. Particles containing the virus can travel more than 6 feet, especially indoors. There is an inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 in any public or private place where people are present.
- *It is impossible to completely eliminate the risk of contracting COVID-19 or any other communicable diseases.*
- *Preventing the transmission of the coronavirus might be out of our control.*

Woods & Waters retains the following rights:

- To cancel, modify, or delay a tour or rental as a result of public health advisories, quarantine requirements, or health threats stemming from public health issues.
- To take temperatures using a contact-free thermometer and/or have individuals answer basic health screening questions.
- To deny anyone who is exhibiting signs of illness or does not appear physically able from participating.
- We reserve the right to enact additional precautions.

Let's together try to keep each other healthy. We have developed the following risk mitigations based upon recommendations and requirements from the (CDC), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the State of Michigan.

- We will regard customers and participants as asymptomatic COVID-19 positive — *regardless of vaccination status*.
- Your activity may include participants outside your group — please let us know if you, or a member of your party, have a health condition that might be of concern if part of a mixed social cohort.
- Kindly notify us if you, or any member of your party, become ill within 14 days of participating in an activity.

Health Screenings

- We will be on alert for the CDC-identified symptoms of exposure to the novel coronavirus: cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing; fever (above 100.4 °F); chills, muscle or body aches; fatigue; vomiting or diarrhea; headache; congestion or runny nose; sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell.
- Individuals experiencing any known symptoms of COVID-19 and/or known or suspected coronavirus exposure will not be allowed to join a tour or that day's planned activity. Participants can review our cancellation policies at www.woodsandwaters.eco/faqs.
- Woods & Waters reserves the right to screen for a fever and/or request answering a basic health and exposure questionnaire. On multi-day trips and/or where no Internet is available, individuals will be provided daily with a printed basic health questionnaire.
- On-duty staff will be assessed either through the MI Symptoms portal or a printed daily questionnaire *even if vaccinated* for the coronavirus to meet state documentation requirements. Unvaccinated staff who report or present symptoms will be required to remain off premises and/or self-quarantine until cleared for return (*see below*).
- Suspected COVID-19 cases and/or confirmed coronavirus exposures will be referred to relevant officials, encouraged to seek testing, and/or self-quarantine for the currently recommended number of days. If guides on multi-day trips develop any suspected COVID-19 symptoms, they will begin sleeping in different locations, possibly outside, so that the vaccinated guide can continue working. A replacement guide may be assigned and/or sent to the trip's location.

Personal Sanitation & Personal Protection Equipment

- Frequent hand washing is encouraged.
 - *Hand washing for 20 seconds, combined with avoiding touching our faces and coughing or sneezing into our elbow, remain best practices for removing dirt, bacteria, viruses and not transmitting illnesses.*
 - *Hand washing will be encouraged for everyone before eating; after using the bathroom; after nose blowing, coughing, or sneezing; after interacting with someone who is visibly ill; after touching face coverings; after handling objects that have been handled by others; after touching high-touch point surfaces (boats, paddles, counters, doorknobs, steering wheel, etc.). Additionally, hand washing will be encouraged for staff after handling all forms of payment and at the beginning/end of work shifts and breaks.*
 - A hand washing station is available outside our shop and portable hand washing stations may be set-up.
 - Guides will carry both hand sanitizer and biodegradable soap for hand washing when soap and running water is unavailable.
 - Individuals may have to supply their own water if surface water is not easily accessible.
 - Water used for hand washing will be dispersed over land and not into surface water (*as feasible*).
- Liquid hand sanitizer will be available at our shop.
- Each bike and boat cockpit will be equipped with a spray bottle containing sanitizing spray. Participants have control over spraying down handlebars, bike and/or kayak seats, cockpits, cockpit coaming, deck, shared gear (such as binoculars, GPS devices, etc.), and paddles as they see fit. To be effective, most sanitizing sprays require remaining in contact with the surface for a minimum of 3 minutes and being allowed to air dry.

- Everyone is required to abide by current CDC, NPS, USFS, MDNR, and State of Michigan recommendations/ requirements to wear a protective covering over their mouth and nose indoors and maintain social distancing where required. ***In addition, individuals — regardless of vaccination status — are required to wear a protective covering over their mouth and nose during boat fitting, launching, and landings since staying 6 feet apart will be difficult or impossible*** (cloth masks are preferred since disposable masks may begin disintegrating when wet). If individuals are riding together in a vehicle, everyone must wear a mask while inside; windows must be open as weather permits, or other cross-ventilation options used.
- Protective coverings over mouth and nose are required in all federally-managed buildings and facilities as well as on all federally-managed lands when physical distancing cannot be maintained, including narrow or busy trails, overlooks, docks, and historic structures. ***This includes the Hiawatha National Forest, of which both Search Bay and Government Island in the Les Cheneaux are part of, and Isle Royale National Park.***
- If anyone does not have a protective covering for their mouth and nose, disposable masks will be made available.
- In the unlikely event someone were to capsize their kayak, neither staff nor participant will be required to use a protective covering over their mouth and nose in order to best address water safety.
- Staff who are not members of a shared household/social cohort will wear face masks whenever within 6 feet of other staff* or participants (indoors or outdoors). (**unless all staff are vaccinated*)
- Staff utilizing cloth masks will follow CDC washing guidelines of washing masks after use in hot water and drying at high heat for 30 minutes or disinfecting by saturating with approved solutions and air drying.
- If anyone becomes injured or ill while on an excursion, guides will follow added COVID-19 protocols for first aid assistance which includes donning goggles, gloves, and an N95 mask or respirator.

Disinfecting Gear (*Woods & Waters uses OdoBan, Clear Gear, and/or 60%+ alcohol-based disinfectant*)

- Contactless payment transactions can be made by using our website or calling to make reservations.
- High-touch surfaces on gear, retail items, and shop surfaces will be disinfected regularly or as feasible.
- All gear will have been disinfected prior to a tour or rental.
 - *Surfaces, such as kayak cockpit coamings and SUP decks that come into contact with participants will be sprayed with a liquid disinfectant; paddles will be wiped with a cloth saturated with a disinfecting solution. Due to the nature of outdoor activities, it is possible kayaks will have sand or gravel in the bottom of cockpits.*
 - *Bike helmets will be dipped in a disinfecting and de-odorizing solution between use. Bike seat and handlebars will be sprayed with a liquid disinfectant.*
- Upon tour check-in or rental gear pick-up, participants will be given disinfected personal safety gear.
 - *Life jackets, spray skirts, removable sit-on-top kayak seats, SUP leashes, and wet suits will be dipped in a disinfecting and de-odorizing solution between each new client use.*
 - *Multi-day trip participants will be assigned their own personal-safety gear and paddle for use during the trip.*
 - *Hangers used to hang gear will be dipped in a disinfecting solution.*
- When gear is either being put away or given to participants, staff will have either washed their hands, used hand sanitizer, and/or grasped the top of the hanger gear is hung on.
 - *If possible, subsequent tours or rentals for a given day will use different life jackets, spray skirts, wet suits, removable sit-on-top kayak seats, and bike helmets.*
- Although the likelihood of disease transmission from touching/sharing gear and equipment is low, we will discourage sharing between cohorts. Either disinfecting spray, biodegradable soap, and/or disinfecting wipes will be available for use on hands and shared gear (such as binoculars, GPS devices, company vehicles (steering wheels, etc.)) and any other equipment after use. *At minimum, the spraying of hands will be requested.*
- Disinfecting spray will be available on all kayaks and bikes allowing for participant self-management.
- Although the likelihood of transmitting COVID-19 through the touching of snack containers is low, at this time we will not be offering any group snacks. Individuals will be responsible for their personal snacks.
- If our physical indoor space(s) or vehicle(s) have been the site of a recent known exposure (<4 days), we will detail clean and thoroughly and air the space out. Outdoor open-air venues will not require this measure.

Social Distancing Policies

- Retail store will be limited to 4 non-cohort/related individuals; our store is small — ask us to come outside!
- Maintain social distancing protocols of being minimally 6–10 feet apart as much as possible.
- At kayak launch site, participants will be given previously-disinfected paddles. Paddle length will be used to establish safe social distances of 6–10 feet during kayak instruction and beach safety talk.
- ***Individuals, regardless of vaccination status, are required to wear a protective covering over their mouth and nose during boat fitting, launching, and landings since social distancing will be difficult or impossible.*** Cloth masks are preferred since disposable masks may disintegrate when wet.
- ***Recognize that some activities, such as hands-on rescues, cannot be performed while maintaining social distancing and that wearing a protective covering over the mouth and nose may not be practical or safe for the situation.***
- Individuals will be asked and reminded to avoid being directly downwind of others.
- Everyone will launch and land in established social cohorts (family units, couples, etc.).
- Staff will remind everyone about maintaining social distancing during activities and indoors as needed in order to keep encounters brief and avoid creating extended interactions.
- Multi-day trip participants will bunk with their chosen/assigned social cohorts (tent/Rock Harbor Lodge room).

Additional Safety Plan Procedures

- Although not required for employment, all eligible staff are encouraged to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and allowed time-off to receive and/or recover from their dose(s).
- If individuals on a multi-day trip show signs of COVID-19, we will consult with the National Park Service/Rock Harbor Lodge/YMCA with regards to how to isolate the individual and/or arrange for quarantining and/or transport to a medical facility. Staff on multi-day trips will have additional camping equipment (tent, sleeping bag, and sleeping pad) in order to facilitate quarantining either a staff member or participant. This may be required for a YMCA camping trip or on Isle Royale if Rock Harbor Lodge does not have available room(s) and if motorized transport to the mainland is not immediately available or required.
- Multi-day trips will either be assigned two guides in case one guide becomes injured or ill (Isle Royale), or an alternate guide will be available to assume responsibility for the trip (Les Cheneaux).
- If an injury or illness occurs during an excursion, Woods & Waters staff will utilize at least one method of communication (as appropriate for the incident location) — including verbal, phone, email, or Garmin inReach — in this order: request emergency medical services (if EMS is needed and available), notify the home office of Woods & Waters, notify the appropriate land manager to coordinate emergency services if needed, and notify the participants listed emergency contacts/and or physician. Communication may be managed by the home office if guides are in the field.
- If a suspected COVID-19 case becomes verified either during or after a trip, or we are notified of an infection after a trip, we will contact trace using our participant lists and alert individuals known to have close contact* either in person or via phone while keeping the identity of the infected individual private (*if possible*). We will provide in writing the most up-to-date recommendations from the CDC regarding their next steps — including what they need to do, if anything. **Close contact is defined as being within approximately 6' for a prolonged amount of time (such as an enclosed space or proximity for a minimum of 15 minutes while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing space with the infected person — or having direct contact with the infectious secretions of a COVID-19+ individual. Accounting for close contact starts from 48 hours prior to the individual's first symptoms and includes cumulative brief encounters in each 24-hour period ≥ 15 minutes.*
- Following CDC guidelines, fully vaccinated individuals do not need to proceed with quarantining, however they will be reminded to continue practicing social distancing protocols and report any symptoms.