

Silver Birch Ranch

Coronavirus Update Page for Fall / Winter Retreaters

UPDATED 7/24/20

OUR COMMITMENT TO KEEP CAMPERS SAFE

The health and safety of kids, families, and staff have always been our top priority at Silver Birch Ranch. As of 7/24/20, we have safely hosted many weeks of summer camp with great success. We want to address any possible concerns you may have about what we are doing to keep all of our retreaters and our staff safe due to COVID-19, as well as other illnesses. For over 50 years we have provided a safe camp with intensive medical and cleaning protocols for a wide range of medical situations. This isn't the first virus outbreak, it won't be the last, and we take them all very seriously. We believe that people need the opportunity to get outside, interact, learn about God, and have fun. We also believe that there needs to be changes and new guidelines in place to ensure the safest camp experience possible for all guests attending SBR. It is with this approach in mind that we bring to you our health and safety commitments for 2020/2021.

ADJUSTING PLANS WITH THE TIMES

These guidelines are written for groups / individual retreaters planning on coming 2020 Fall through 2021 Winter. SBR will be hosting a variety of different groups each weekend, and each of these groups bring unique needs. We realize not every policy fits every group situation, and we want to work with you to the best of our ability while maintaining the safety of every retreaters. We also realize that these times with COVID-19 are ever changing. As time goes on, we may be able to relax on some policies, or we may need to tighten policies if the situation merits.

PLANNING TEAM

SBR continues to plan and review our health policies and procedures with volunteer health professions who have teamed up with us, as well as the CDC and other governing authorities. We have a healthy working relationship with our county health department (Langlade County) as well as the local hospital, clinic, and EMS. We desire to provide the best care to all of our retreaters.

IT STARTS WITH YOU...PARTNERING WITH ADULT GUESTS, PARENTS, AND LEADERS

We know that you put health and safety at the top of your list, and we also want to make sure that all retreaters have a safe and fun time at SBR. Before any retreaters comes to camp, a Pre-Camp Health Screening and Waiver Form will be sent. [Link to form here](#) If you are not able to meet the health standards on this form, we would ask that you keep yourself or your retreaters home for the safety of all the other retreaters. If you are unsure whether you / they should attend camp, you can call our office prior to the first day of camp, and we will work with you on the best plan possible.

THREE-STEP HEALTH SCREEN

1. Screening at home before registering for camp. [Link to Retreaters Pre-Camp Health Screening and Waiver Form here](#)
2. Screening at the bus/van (for groups providing transportation) before coming to camp. **Masks are required during transportation to camp.** [Link to Retreaters Pre-Camp Health Screening and Waiver Form here](#)
3. Screening when the retreaters arrives at camp. [Link to At Camp Health Screening Process here](#)

Once on camp grounds, if you or your retreaters is found to be sick or show signs of sickness, they will be quarantined, and a plan will be put into place for their medical care or plans will be made to go home.

CAMP WILL LOOK DIFFERENT

As we all adjust, you are going to notice camp is the same, yet a bit different. You will notice new policies for your safety and some new forms. Please know that camp will still be an incredible experience that is safe, fun, effective, and affordable. Our goal "To Know Christ and to Make Him Known" has not changed.

HAND SANITATION

Hand sanitation and soap dispensers will be in each cabin, meeting room, in common areas, and meal areas. Our staff will be trained to require every retreaters to use hand sanitizer each time they enter and exit a building, and before / after participation in each activity, or wash their hands before every meal. Our staff will also practice this.

"FAMILY" GROUP UNITS

During the fall and winter retreat season, SBR typically hosts 1-5 separate church groups. These groups will be considered "Family Units." They will stay in their own cabins, have their own designated tables in the Dining Hall, use their own meeting

room, and, to the best of our ability, designated activity times. By staying in Family Units, we are able to limit any possible exposure, help mitigate tracing a source if there is an exposure and keep retreaters safe.

For SBR sponsored retreats (such as Ladies' and Men's Retreats), since we anticipate lower numbers, there will not be Family Units set up, but our pre-screening process will still be in place, and we ask those retreaters to self-monitor their social distancing practices while at the retreat.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

We are setting limits on the number of retreaters in all spaces of camp, mitigating large groups, limiting the number of retreaters per cabin, and helping with sleeping arrangements in each housing area. We will train retreaters and staff on proper coughing and sneezing. We will educate on limiting retreaters physical contact, but because they will already be in a Family Unit, they can do many of the things you have normally been doing in your home, and will not be restricted to the standard 6 foot social distancing in their Family Unit.

KEEPING IT CLEAN

Our staff will lead daily mandatory cleanings in all shared spaces (bathrooms, meeting rooms, Dining Hall, Canteen, offices, etc.) using EPA disinfectant products, and will be held accountable through daily check lists. A deep cleaning of all cabin spaces will occur at the end of every retreat. We also provide cleaning products in every cabin that can be used at any time. To the best of our ability, activity areas will be sanitized between each activity or retreaters group. (Example: helmets for zip line)

[Link to Cleaning Procedure here](#)

TRAINING AND ORIENTATION

At the beginning of each retreat, all retreaters will be trained on updated safety protocols which include practicing good hygiene and approved social distancing. Staff will receive training on updated protocols, additional care, and action steps to take if a retreaters gets sick.

SBR STAFF HEALTH CHECKS

As an on-going routine, each SBR staff will have his/her temperature checked and logged periodically. If a temperature comes back higher than our determined standard, or if he / she have any other signs of symptoms of sickness, he / she will be quarantined from work and further evaluated.

FIX-IT INFIRMARY

Brad Ellis is our resident EMT and LPN. While retreaters are at camp, he is available to address medical concerns that may come up throughout the camp session. Many of our full-time and volunteer staff are trained with First Aid and CPR and are trained to identify illness and help.

FOOD SERVICE

We are working with the WI State Health Inspector to make sure we follow all food service guidelines and regulations. Some of these are listed below.

- Every guest washes or sanitizes hands before and after entering the Dining Hall.
- The peanut butter and jelly station will be closed, but premade PBJ sandwiches are provided in zip lock bags.
- The Dining Hall coffee machine is open for guests only during meal times. We close this area in-between meals but keep the Canteen / Coffee Bar area open as much as possible in the afternoon / evening.
- Sneeze guards have been placed in areas where food is provided.
- Standard hair restraints and gloves must be worn, but the State of Wisconsin is not requiring staff to wear masks.
- All food service employees are health screened before every shift, including temperature checks.
- Groups sit with their Family Unit at designated tables. They go through designated lines with their Family Unit.

SENDING SICK CAMPERS/STAFF HOME

In the event that a retreator or staff member becomes sick with an illness that could spread, he / she will move to a designated quarantine area, and our medical team will implement a quarantine protocol that works to identify, control, and contain the illness. **If SBR determines that a retreator/volunteer/staff member needs to go home, the parent or group leader is responsible to provide transportation for that person within 12 hours of being notified.**

LIMITING EXPOSURE

We will be greatly limiting the number of non-program staff, visitors, and vendors on our properties during camp sessions to help limit exposure to illness.

CONTRACTS / CANCELLATIONS

We understand it is hard to plan ahead and commit during these times, so we are taking on much of the risk financially. We are altering our cancellation policy in the following two ways:

1. If you need to cancel (due to COVID-19 related reasons), there will be no financial penalty, with the exception of forfeiting your deposit.
2. If Silver Birch Ranch needs to cancel (due to COVID-19 related reasons), you will receive a full refund.

COVID-19 WAIVER

Adults and parents of minors will be responsible for completing one waiver for each retreat. This will be turned in upon retreat arrival along with the Pre-Camp Health Screening Form. [COVID-19 Waiver](#)

We will continue to evaluate and update the details of each category and make any additional changes according to CDC or local guidelines and regulations.

Please continue to join us in prayer for every retreat, staff member, family, and church partner who will be a part of Silver Birch Ranch this year!