

THE FACILITY SPACE + STAFF COMBINATION

by Western DuPage Special Recreation Association (WDSRA)



OUR GOAL CONTINUES TO BE SERVING AS MANY FAMILIES AS POSSIBLE.

At the Western DuPage Special Recreation Association (WDSRA), our number one priority is delivering quality programming while keeping participants, families and program staff safe. We continue to use the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) as our guides.

ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION IN CAMPS AND PROGRAMS ARE DETERMINED BY STATE GUIDELINES.

Guidelines (updated June 2021) have been revised with the goal of opening and adapting programs for as many participants as possible. They include distinctions regarding

- Participants and program staff who are vaccinated
- The ability to follow mask and physical distance regulations for those who are not vaccinated
- Considerations for those who require a higher level of physical contact as limited by individual facility guidelines

FACILITY SPACE IS A LARGE FACTOR IN WHAT PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES CAN BE OFFERED.

In-person programs are community-based recreation. That means that our programs are designed to immerse participants into the communities in which they live. As facility space, like park districts, bowling alleys, churches, etc., become available we have been able to expand our in-person programming.

It is important to note that while these businesses may have reopened to the public, specific availability for programs may not be offered to WDSRA at this time. We are working closely with partners to identify all options for facility space. Many partners not able to commit to giving us dedicated space at this time. We have adapted programs due to the uncertainty. As recently as 6/1/21, our partners are still trying to respond to the latest round of restrictions being lifted.

FACILITY SPACE IS A LARGE FACTOR IN DETERMINING THE GUIDELINES FOR ELIIGIBILITY.

Each independent facility where we host our programs may have their own guidelines that we must follow. These may vary widely from space to space and community to community. We must incorporate those guidelines into our plans. This may limit eligibility of individuals with needs requiring close contact.

VACCINATION STATUS OF PARTICIPANTS AND PROGRAM STAFF STILL WIDELY VARIES.

While the number of people vaccinated has increased dramatically over the past few months, there are still a percentage that are hesitant or not planning to be vaccinated. Additionally, children under the age of 12 are not yet able to receive one. That complicates what our adaptations are within a program. We need to prepare for a mix of both in participants and program staff. In addition, it may confuse some participants as to why they may need to still wear a mask and keep physically distant when their peer doesn't.

SUFFICIENT PROGRAM STAFF IS AN OBSTACLE IN OFFERING ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS RIGHT NOW.

Like many businesses right now, finding qualified staff is a struggle. At the beginning of COVID19, our program staff was furloughed. Some are coming back. Many who were high school and college age have moved on. Yet others are reticent about coming back at this time.

This drastically impacts our ability to offer summer camps. Camps typically tend to be a very high staff-to-participant ratio due to the needs of participants attending. It is not unusual to have 1 head instructor leading the camp, 8-15 campers and another 8-10 program staff working one-on-one with campers. And that is only one section of one camp. That one-on-one support may be the only way a camper can attend.