



Arkansas Department of Health

4815 West Markham Street • Little Rock, Arkansas 72205-3867 • Telephone (501) 661-2000
Governor Asa Hutchinson
José R. Romero, MD, Secretary of Health

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Guidance for Recreational Pool Operations regarding COVID-19

The Secretary of Health, in consultation with the Governor, has sole authority over all instances of quarantine, isolation, and restrictions on commerce and travel throughout Arkansas, as necessary and appropriate to control disease in the state of Arkansas as authorized by Ark. Code Ann. §20-7-109--110. **Community spread of COVID-19 remains active within the State. Therefore, the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) makes the following recommendations for how to best prevent transmission of COVID-19 at pools and aquatic facilities.**

This guidance is for all types of recreational pools, including seasonal outdoor pools for state parks, hotels, motels, apartments, subdivision/POAs., indoor pools, municipal and community pools, splash pads, aquatic centers, pools at fitness centers, commercial water parks, as well as swim beaches.

Pools and aquatic facilities should follow these recommendations to prevent spread of COVID-19:

- The number of people allowed in the facility should not exceed the patrons' ability to maintain six (6) feet physical distance.
- Restrict pool access to fewer entrances as needed to control access and overcrowding.
- Except for while swimming, face coverings are recommended whenever physical distance of six (6) feet cannot be assured particularly at indoor swimming facilities. Face coverings that have become wet or saturated should be discarded or replaced. ADH does not recommend wearing a wet face covering. See the [Face Coverings Guidance](#) for more information.
- Screen employees for fever, cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, recent loss of taste or smell, or other COVID-19 symptoms upon arrival for each shift and exclude them from work if they are ill.
- Place signage regarding the COVID-19 symptoms and exclusions at all entrances. These signs should inform patrons and staff that those who have any of the following characteristics should NOT be allowed to enter:
 - Have had a fever of 100.4°F or greater in the last two (2) days;
 - Have a cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, recent loss of taste or smell, or other

- COVID-19 symptom;
- Had contact with a person known to be infected with COVID-19 in the previous fourteen (14) days and they themselves are not fully vaccinated;
- Had a positive COVID-19 test within the last ten (10) days;
- Waiting on the results of a test for COVID-19.
- Place signage at all entrances advising the public that they may wish to refrain from entering if
 - They are 65 years of age or older.
 - They have underlying health conditions including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, severe obesity, asthma or weakened immunity.
- Physical distancing of six (6) feet should be maintained between people in all pool areas. However, household members may sit together and/or enter the pool together.
- Maintain physical distancing at slides, diving boards, and other features that require waiting in line. Place markings on surface to maintain a six (6) foot distance and monitor for compliance.
- Facilities that do not require lifeguards should post clear signage regarding safe physical distancing of six (6) feet or more.
- Tables, chairs, water fountains and other high touch surfaces should be disinfected frequently. Adjust poolside tables or chairs so that seats are minimum of six (6) feet from seats at adjacent tables. Household groups together but six (6) feet should be maintained between household groups.
- Maintain pool chemistry at the required levels. Test and document pH, free chlorine before opening and mid-afternoon to ensure proper residuals.
- Snack bars are permitted but should follow the guidelines for [Restaurant Dine-in Operations](#).

This guideline does not cover social events held at poolside. Such events are covered under the guidance for large [indoor](#) or [outdoor](#) venues.

Sample sign which could be posted at entry and other locations:

https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/pdf/COVID-19_No_Entry.pdf

CDC Guidance for Pools and Aquatic Facilities:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/aquatic-venues.html>