Arkansas Department of Health

4815 West Markham Street • Little Rock, Arkansas 72205-3867 • Telephone (501) 661-2000
Governor Asa Hutchinson
Nathaniel Smith, MD, MPH, Secretary of Health

Effective Date: May 22, 2020

Directive for Recreational Pool Reopening Proposal

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. Based on available scientific evidence, it is necessary and appropriate to take further action to ensure that COVID-19 remains controlled and that residents and visitors in Arkansas remain safe.

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, commercial water parks, as well as swim beaches, can open to their patrons on May 22, 2020, if they meet the following requirements. Facilities can begin today to contact their local health units to facilitate opening.

The following measures are required:

- The number of people allowed in the facility is restricted to up to 50 percent of the approved bather load or capacity.
- Restrict pool access to fewer entrances as needed to control access and overcrowding.
- Maintain a log of persons entering the facility when possible for use in contact tracing should an outbreak occur.
- Screen employees for fever, cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat or loss of taste or smell upon arrival for each shift, and exclude them from work if they are ill.
- Place signage regarding the COVID19 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 2 days;
    - Have a cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell;
    - Had contact with a person known to be infected with COVID-19 in the previous 14 days
- 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 6 feet should be maintained between people in all pool areas. However, family members may sit and enter the pool together.
- Physical distancing must be enforced at slides, diving boards, and other features that require waiting in line. Place markings on surface to maintain a 6-foot distance and monitor for compliance.

- The pool's responsible party is required to maintain the safety of bathers by enforcing physical distancing of 6 feet.
- Tables, chairs, water fountains and other high touch surfaces should be disinfected frequently.
- Adjust poolside tables or chairs out so that seats are minimum of 6 feet from seats at adjacent tables. Household groups may sit closer together than 6 feet at tables.
- 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 no self-service condiments or similar items are allowed.

Pools and other water related facilities which require lifeguards can begin immediately to open for lifeguard training purposes only, once approved by the health department.

This directive does not cover social events held at poolside. Such events are covered under the directives 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