



## **BaMidbar Wilderness Therapy Our Roadmap to Summer 2021**

### **PREFACE**

BaMidbar Wilderness Therapy will open its doors during summer 2021 for in-person programming.

With your partnership, we remain steadfast in our commitment to create a safe operating environment for both students and staff, while continuing to deliver on our mission to ensure that Jewish youth and young adults have the confidence, skills, and community support to navigate life's challenges and thrive in the face of adversity.

BaMidbar Wilderness Therapy is a program of Ramah in the Rockies, and operates at the Ramah in the Rockies' ranch. A team of medical and public health professionals and our year round staff continue to monitor guidance from the [CDC about summer camps](#) (last updated 4/24) recommendations from [The American Camping Association \(ACA\)](#) (last updated 4/16), as well as the rules and regulations put out by [Jefferson County Health Department](#) (last updated 4/22) and the [Colorado Department of Human Services](#) (last updated 4/16) for child care facilities, under whose license we operate. We are committed to meeting and exceeding all local guidance while taking into account best practices of running a camp facility as published by the ACA and the CDC.

### **STARTING SOMEWHERE**

Before a typical programming season we prepare for a variety of scenarios. We have plans if a student breaks a bone, if there is a bear in camp or if there is a fire at camp and we need to evacuate to a safe place. Scenario planning is key to running a safe community. We are taking a similar approach to preparing for Summer 2021; we are considering a multitude of scenarios and coming up with plans for each.

There are things we know we have not planned for yet, and this document will continue to change and evolve as we get closer to the programming season. We are committed to updating this manual each month before the summer and sharing the updates with our community. We have committed ourselves to being fully transparent with our community, and see the publication and monthly updating of this manual as integral to this process.

### **WHAT YOU WILL FIND THIS DOCUMENT**

This document is dynamic, posted on our website, for all to see our latest thinking and plans. It is a snapshot of our thinking based on the regulations and guidance today. We expect to have additional guidance most weeks between now and the end of the program. We outline our core assumptions and various operating procedures below including sections about community structure, health & safety, travel, program, food service, facility, and communication strategies.

## **Six Word Overview**

Keep COVID out. Contain COVID spread.

### **THE TWO-MINUTE OVERVIEW (for those who have time for just the “Cliff Notes”)**

BaMidbar will open in 2021 for in-person programming. BaMidbar will remain a laboratory for joyful self-exploration and self-discovery. In an effort to keep our community safe, we are introducing measures to mitigate the spread of COVID.

**With increasing vaccine availability, BaMidbar will require full vaccination for all students and staff involved in the summer program. In addition, students and staff will likely need to follow responsible physical distancing before arrival to BaMidbar, and will need to bring documentation of a negative COVID test before stepping foot on the property.** Our program will operate as a “bubble” with limited ins/outs of students and staff.

BaMidbar operates at the Ramah in the Rockies ranch, and these guidelines are based off of Ramah in the Rockies’ health and safety guidelines. You can read more [here](#). BaMidbar will operate as one cohort within the Ramah in the Rockies’ community. BaMidbar operates on a secluded portion of the Ramah in the Rockies ranch, and BaMidbar students and staff will not interact with any Ramah in the Rockies staff or campers at any point. The total number of students and staff participating in a BaMidbar program at any given time will not exceed 20 people. Our entire community will undergo regular health checks, receive COVID tests, and be asked to use NPI’s (non-pharmaceutical interventions) whenever possible, like mask wearing, distancing, and being outdoors. Program activities will be structured in a way to support distancing and outdoor activities. We know that remaining flexible with our planning will be key to running in-person programs.

While we will be introducing measures to keep our community safe, our program will in many ways remain the same. Wilderness and adventure-based experiences will be used as a vehicle to promote therapeutic growth, and students will build a toolkit to face life’s challenges. This remains core to who we are at BaMidbar.

### **WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER**

Finally, we appreciate your trust and your patience. We are asking students and staff to buy into our safety protocol that ensures the greatest level of success this summer. We recognize that the protocols before and during the summer may be beyond what you do in your ordinary life now regarding COVID-19. However, because we operate at a licensed childcare facility and residential overnight camp, we need to remain strict, erring on the side of extreme caution, especially in our pre-program protocols, meeting and sometimes exceeding changing guidelines.

We sit here imagining the feeling of opening day in a few short weeks. We imagine providing experiences full of self-discovery, hope, and healing, and know that these things are needed now more than ever. Please do not hesitate to reach out, connect with us if you have any questions or just to say hi too.

**With Gratitude,**

### **The BaMidbar Wilderness Therapy Team**

Jory Hanselman Mayschak, Executive Director, [JoryH@BaMidbarTherapy.org](mailto:JoryH@BaMidbarTherapy.org)

Nick Magle Haberek, Clinical Director, [NickMH@BaMidbarTherapy.org](mailto:NickMH@BaMidbarTherapy.org)

Emily Heeren, Admissions & Outreach Director, [EmilyH@BaMidbarTherapy.org](mailto:EmilyH@BaMidbarTherapy.org)

## **CORE ASSUMPTIONS**

(The ten minute version of the letter above)

### **Our Roadmap to In-Person Programming in 2021**

First, we start with our core assumptions and recognize that if any of these things change before Summer 2021, our First, we start with our core assumptions and recognize that if any of these things change even in the final weeks of pre-summer planning. Our operating principles will likely need to change alongside these common understandings:

1. ***Regulators and Ramah in the Rockies will allow us to operate*** - BaMidbar operates at Ramah in the Rockies, and is subject to Ramah in the Rockies' COVID-safe practices and final approval for operating. As a licensed child-care facility in the state of Colorado and accredited by the American Camping Association, Ramah in the Rockies adheres to the regulations of numerous local, state, and federal agencies and several national programmatic partners too. We maintain close working relationships with five core policy makers - The Jefferson County Health Department (JeffCo), Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), National Ramah Commission (NRC), Foundation for Jewish Camp (FJC), and American Camping Association (ACA).
2. ***Vaccines will be available for staff and students*** - As vaccine distribution expands, we are now requiring all students and staff be fully vaccinated before the start of the summer program.
3. ***Coronavirus (COVID-19) will be present in our communities and at the Ramah in the Rockies ranch*** - We must operate under the assumption that COVID-19 will still be present in the communities we serve across the world AND that COVID-19 could potentially be present in the Ramah in the Rockies' community too. Our goal is to develop the right protocols for pre-program screening, onsite testing, and an ability to handle any cases should one appear. This is not a one-size-fits all approach, but instead should be viewed as a multi-layered system to keep our entire community safe.
4. ***Masking in communities outside of camp will not be widespread.***  
The CDC's new masking guidelines means that most Americans are on an honor system, whereby vaccinated individuals do not need to mask, while unvaccinated individuals are still encouraged to mask under most circumstances when in close contact with others. We assume that masking will continue to be widespread in congregate living facilities (like camps) and on public transportation.
5. ***Testing will be readily available*** - We are operating under the assumption that PCR testing is readily accessible to families and that we have the ability to test our community at BaMidbar using both rapid and PCR tests.

## **COMMUNITY STRUCTURE**

Based on recommendations from successful camps and communal settings that did operate during summer 2020, we plan to operate mainly as a closed system, with a maximum of 20 people participating in a BaMidbar program at any

given time. Limiting the ins/outs of staff, vendors, and guests can help prevent COVID-19 and the potential spread beyond a small cohort should students or staff contract COVID-19 while en route to BaMidbar or after arrival.

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**If individuals need to interact with people outside of the closed BaMidbar cohort, they should expect to do so with at least two of the following NPIs (non-pharmaceutical interventions), and all three when possible: mask wearing, distancing, being outdoors.**

**Here are some more key details:**

Key Details:

1. Basecamp Support & Field Staff - These staff will be hired for the duration of a program, and will stay within the closed system that will be BaMidbar's community.
2. Clinical & Senior Staff - These staff members do not traditionally live on site during the summer, but visit the programming 2-4 days per week. These staff members will sign a code of conduct regarding their actions when not on camp property. When interacting with the BaMidbar community, they will do so outside or in well ventilated areas, wearing masks, and maintaining physical distance.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY**

### **Our Roadmap to Summer 2021**

We are evaluating a few options to give us the best chance at not introducing COVID-19 into our BaMidbar community.

Pre-program Requirements

We are all in this together. The behavior of students and families before BaMidbar will contribute to our success or failure during the program. We are requiring students and families to adhere to a set of behavior guidelines before BaMidbar, because ultimately, what students and families do in the two weeks before the program impacts how successful we will be in keeping COVID out of BaMidbar. The requirements are guided by the CDC guidelines. We will be asking all students families to sign a form agreeing to these guidelines. Additionally, all BaMidbar staff and students are required to be fully vaccinated before arriving at camp this summer.

In the 14 days before camp, campers and staff must:

1. Practice good handwashing frequently.
2. Wear a well fitting mask that covers both nose and mouth **anytime** you are interacting with individuals outside of your immediate household.
3. We strongly discourage students & staff from attending any large gatherings, outdoors or indoors, even if everyone at the gathering will be masked.

Pre-camp Testing

We are requiring all students and staff complete one (1) molecular PCR COVID tests in the 72-hours prior to camp.

1. Students & staff must have one (1) molecular PCR COVID test no more than 72 hours before arrival to the program. Students & staff must have a negative result on this test to arrive at BaMidbar. This test should be taken no earlier than Monday June 14.
2. We ask that students or staff who receive a positive test at any point within two-weeks of arrival contact us immediately, and that individuals without a confirmed negative test do NOT board airplanes or drive to BaMidbar.

**Students & staff without negative COVID test results, 0-72 hours before arriving at BaMidbar (unless they have proof of COVID 13+ days out), WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ATTEND BAMIDBAR. No late arrivals to BaMidbar will be allowed this summer.**

**Please do not put your BaMidbar experience, and those of others in our community, at risk by engaging in risky activities before BaMidbar.**

#### Arrival Week and Ongoing Monitoring

1. All campers and staff will receive an antigen COVID test on the fourth day after arrival. A student with a positive result will be isolated, and given a PCR test. Results of this test should be back 24-48 hours later
2. With further guidance, we may exclude vaccinated students and staff from this testing protocol
3. All campers and staff will have common symptom checks throughout the summer

#### Face Coverings for Students & Non-medical Staff

1. All students and staff will wear masks throughout the duration of the program, except when in one's personal living quarters, during meals, or in activities only with their cohort
2. Anyone required to leave property for work-related business, or a student visiting a healthcare clinic MUST wear a mask

#### Preventing Spread at BaMidbar

1. When possible, medical staff will examine students for non-COVID related needs outside
2. Any student or staff presenting COVID-like symptoms or who tests positive during arrival week testing will be immediately isolated from the rest of the community. Students and staff who were in contact with this person will be monitored for symptoms and tested according to the guidelines set forth by JeffCo and CDPHE
3. BaMidbar and Ramah in the Rockies' medical staff work closely with JeffCo and CDPHE to manage any positive cases or outbreaks
4. We recognize the idea of isolation or quarantine for any students or staff might seem scary / annoying/ frustrating / "all the above"; we promise that anyone required to isolate or quarantine will still have the opportunity to experience the magic of BaMidbar, just likely in modified way
5. This might mean access to board games, a small outdoor gathering space specifically for isolated students, or additional art projects, furthermore we promise to communicate our plan for our facilities to accommodate isolation or quarantine by April 2021, so that students coming to BaMidbar have a clear picture of what it might look like before they arrive

#### Positive or Suspected Cases - Isolation and Quarantine

Regardless of a test pending or positive, students requiring further medical care or evaluation will be taken to Swedish Hospital Colorado. The decision to present to a hospital will be at the discretion of the responsible physician on site. As there are a variety of symptoms, related and unrelated to COVID-19, that require evaluation and treatment outside of the scope of the medical staff and facilities on site, it is not possible to list signs or symptoms that would indicate transport to a medical facility.

1. If a student or staff member presents symptoms of COVID-19 that are not severe enough to warrant hospital care, they will be isolated on site until their test results are returned.
2. If a student or staff tests positive for COVID-19, they will be isolated, and be supervised on site by medical staff. They can be readmitted to the group in accordance with JeffCO and CDPHE guidelines (which continue to evolve).
  - a. Students who are within 2 weeks of their session end date must be picked up (either at Ramah in the Rockies or from a meeting place in Denver) within approx. 48 hours of notification.
  - b. Students who have more than 14 days remaining in their session will be allowed to continue isolation at BaMidbar, and will have the opportunity to re-join their cohort after their isolation period has ended.
3. Students and staff who were exposed to a positive case will be quarantined together according to JeffCo and CDPHE guidelines. This quarantine area will have it's own sleeping, toilet, shower, and dining facilities. JeffCo and CDPHE guidelines will determine which close contacts must quarantine and for how long.
  - a. All persons exposed to a positive case will receive ongoing monitoring and testing according to JeffCo and CDPHE regulations.
  - b. Students and staff will continue with BaMidbar-style activities while in the quarantine period. We will further communicate our plans for the quarantine area activities in April 2021.

## **TRAVEL**

### **Our Roadmap to Summer 2021**

#### Arrival to BaMidbar

Students will have two options for arrival to BaMidbar, either via Denver International Airport or by private vehicle.

1. Families traveling to BaMidbar via a private vehicle will be allowed to drop students off but will not be allowed to enter tents or tour property.
2. In order to limit our staff exposure and time inside the airport, BaMidbar staff will coordinate with students' families to book the first non-stop flight of the day
3. Students and staff will be masked at all times (even when outside)
4. Students will be asked to show paper evidence of a negative COVID test within 72 hours prior to getting on the bus

#### Departure from BaMidbar

Students will have two options for departure from BaMidbar, either via Denver International Airport or by private vehicle.

1. Families may pick up their students from BaMidbar, but will not be allowed to enter tents or tour property.
2. BaMidbar will provide transportation to the airport, arriving at the airport by 11:00am.

## **Factual Flying**

1. Wearing face masks along with other onboard measures can reduce the risk of infection from respiratory particles to less than 1% (*Harvard University, "Face Mask Use in Air Travel"*)
2. Forward facing seats create a barrier to transmission (*Boeing & University of Arizona research*)
3. HEPA filters remove 99.99% of aerosol particles cabin-wide (*United States Transportation Command*)
4. Air exchanged 20-30 times per hour onboard (*Boeing, University of Arizona and the National Center for Biotechnology Information*)
5. Filters can capture particles 10 times smaller than the COVID-19 virus (*Boeing, University of Arizona and the National Center for Biotechnology Information*)

## **PROGRAM**

### **Our Roadmap to Summer 2021**

#### Masa'ot (Excursions)

1. We believe we can run safe Masa'ot this summer but we also know we will need to rely more on backpacking this summer and less on "front country or car-camping" sites.
2. While driving, groups should keep their windows down to increase air-flow. All passengers must continue to wear their mask, and will not be allowed to stop at the store or interact with any person outside their group. Vans will top off gas at our onsite maintenance tanks on site to decrease the needs to stop
3. Like always, field staff will be encouraged to limit any interactions with strangers on the trail and wear masks when passing other groups on the trail
4. In addition to Dr. Bronners soap, all groups will bring hand sanitizer which will be used in addition to soap after bathroom usage & before cooking, along with bleach to be used on dishes daily.

## **FOOD SERVICE**

### **Our Roadmap to Summer 2021**

1. At basecamp, meals will predominantly take place outside or in open sided dining tents at basecamp
2. Because "family style" meals are prohibited by Jefferson County this summer at residential camps, we will use buffet style food tables served by an individual with appropriate face covering and gloves

## **FACILITY**

### **Our Roadmap to Summer 2021**

BaMidbar operates at the Ramah in the Rockies' ranch, with all programming occurring in primitive camping sites with outdoor space, walled-canvas platform tents, and open sided pavilion tents. Our walled-canvas platform tents have good ventilation, our pavilion tents are open to the great outdoors, and the vast majority of BaMidbar's programs occur outside. We are uniquely positioned in this regard and we see this as a great advantage as we face the challenges of COVID-19.

### Program Facilities

1. Staff and students will sleep in individual sleeping tarps or group shelters with good ventilation
2. In general, hand washing will be required before and after meals and emphasized throughout the day, plus hand sanitizer will readily available
3. Staff will be assigned to daily cleaning, trash removal, and sanitizing of all spaces throughout basecamp on a regular rotation
4. All program areas will be cleaned and sanitized daily
5. All group equipment will be sanitized after every use

## **COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES**

### **Our Roadmap to Summer 2021**

We know that communication is critical to all that we do. It's core to who we are in an effort to provide excellent customer service from inquiry, to registration, to arrival and departure of students to follow up after the summer. Summer 2021 will be no exception and here are some of our communication strategies.

1. Parents will be kept well informed throughout each session about COVID testing, isolation and quarantine measures if required, as well as the "normal stuff" like photos and weekly updates from field directors. Parents should expect weekly emails at a minimum
2. If a student or staff tests positive for COVID while in our care, we promise to notify all parents with students on site via email and identify the specific measures we are taking to address the situation