

# COVID-19 SUPPLEMENTAL DISCLOSURE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



NOLS is excited to welcome you to your upcoming course. We want to ensure you are aware of how we're responding to the coronavirus pandemic, so you can make informed decisions. This is a challenging time, but we think it is a challenge we can meet.

Our commitment to risk management practices guides our operations, and the health and wellbeing of our students, faculty, and staff is our priority. NOLS has been actively monitoring and responding to the evolving situation of the coronavirus pandemic. We are in consultation with federal, state, and local public health experts, peer organizations, and medical advisors, and are reviewing government recommendations as we continue to assess our policies and procedures to manage the risk of COVID-19 for NOLS and our local communities. This is an evolving situation and our practices may change as we gain new information or recommendations change.

NOLS will use medical advice and our best judgment to decide when and under what conditions any courses will operate, and activities or locations of courses may be changed, potentially at the last minute.

Risk is essential to a NOLS education. We operate in dynamic, unpredictable environments and practice thoughtful and effective risk management to attain our educational objectives. Contracting COVID-19, the disease caused by SARS-CoV-2, is a new risk for everyone and (like other risks) cannot be eliminated.

We would like to remind you that the NOLS Student Agreement that you signed includes pertinent statements about medical conditions and our ability to manage them. The following is a summary of those statements.

- The medical information given to NOLS is accurate and all pertinent medical conditions have been disclosed.
- I understand that NOLS' admission of me (or the minor student) to the course is not intended as a representation that NOLS staff will be able to manage successfully a medical event or emergency related to a disclosed, or undisclosed, medical condition.
- NOLS reserves the right to refuse admission or remove a student from a course for any reason it deems is in the best interest of the student or the school.

The NOLS Student Agreement also outlines risks including:

- At times students will be in close physical proximity to one another or instructors.
- Illnesses may include...communicable and other infectious diseases from insects, animals, or people such as diarrhea, flu-like or respiratory illness, and other debilitating or life-threatening conditions including COVID-19 and other diseases caused by coronaviruses.
- The remote locations of our courses may be many days from medical facilities. Communication and transportation are difficult and evacuations and medical care may be significantly delayed.
- Decisions made by the instructors, other staff (including volunteers), contractors and students will be based on a variety of perceptions and evaluations, which by their nature are imprecise and subject to errors in judgment. Misjudgments may pertain to, among other things...medical conditions.

## BEFORE YOUR COURSE

NOLS may require students to exercise certain precautions before attending the course.

People who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 as defined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), including people greater than 64 years old or people of any age with chronic lung disease, moderate to severe asthma, serious heart conditions, diabetes, liver or kidney disease, who are immunocompromised, or have severe obesity (BMI of 40 or higher) should carefully consider, in conjunction with their health care provider, whether to attend NOLS at this time.

We request that you take steps to limit your exposure to SARS-CoV-2 for 14 days prior to and while traveling to your course. This includes practicing physical (social) distancing, wearing a mask or face covering when in public or when physical distancing is not possible, frequent hand washing, and monitoring your health for symptoms of COVID-19.

Do not travel to your NOLS course if you, have COVID-19 symptoms (cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell), have in the past 14 days been in close contact with someone suspected or confirmed as having COVID-19, or you are confirmed or suspected as having COVID-19 in the past 14 days. NOLS has options for tuition credit, course transfer or refund in the case you need to cancel.

## DURING YOUR COURSE

When you arrive at your NOLS location we will conduct a health check by asking you some questions about how you are feeling and taking your temperature. If anyone has symptoms of COVID-19, we will separate that person from the group and seek medical advice. Students who test positive for COVID-19 will not be allowed to go on the course.

We will be practicing physical (social) distancing much of the time during your course. This means staying at least six feet (two meters) from each other while in camp, during classes, and while on the trail. There are going to be times when physical distancing is not possible and during those times students and staff will wear masks (face coverings). We will provide each student with reusable and washable masks and ask you to bring buff-style neck gaiter(s) to use as face coverings. For sleeping, each student will be provided a personal shelter that will allow everyone to be distanced during the night (exceptions might be made for family members on the same course who live and travel together). On longer courses, after 14 days and if no one is presenting COVID-19 symptoms, we may be able to lessen distancing procedures.

Hygiene, particularly hand washing, is an effective means to limit spread of coronavirus. Our hand washing practices will include having one or more hand wash stations set up in camp and regular times when everyone will wash their hands. In addition, you will be expected to wash your hands at other times as necessary. We will provide soap and hand sanitizer for your use. You will be expected to participate in and follow our hygiene practices throughout your course.

For these measures to be effective it will require commitment and diligence from our students and staff. Students who, in our judgement, do not comply with these expectations may be expelled from the course.

Health checks will occur each day of your course. We ask that you bring your own digital oral thermometer for use during the course. If a student develops symptoms of COVID-19, they will be isolated from the group, we will seek medical advice, and follow our COVID-19 illness guidelines which may include evacuation. If required by local health authorities it's possible that the whole course will be evacuated. Decision-making in this situation is without precedent so we'll need to be flexible and adaptable.

Due to the remote nature of our wilderness classrooms, if a student is evacuated, it is unlikely they will be able to rejoin their course.

As is noted in the Student Agreement, all costs associated with an evacuation from a course are the responsibility of the student or the student's family. We have very limited ability to house evacuees at our campuses, and they will need to stay in local lodging until they are able or allowed, per medical advice, to return home. They will also need to make their own travel arrangements to return home. NOLS may be able to provide some assistance in finding lodging or arranging travel.

***I (or the parent or guardian of a minor student) have read and acknowledge the information regarding the risk of COVID-19 on my NOLS course.***

_____	_____	____/____/____	_____
Student Signature	Age	Date Signed	Printed Name
_____	_____	____/____/____	_____
Parent/Guardian Signature		Date Signed	Printed Name

***Please return both pages of this document to NOLS.***