Wilderness Inquiry's core values are seeking the exceptional, paddling together, and finding a way. Furthermore, at the heart of all we do our first priority is safety. Given the industry we are in, safety means a number of things ranging from well maintained vehicles and proper loading of trailers to ergonomically correct transfers when working with individuals with mobility issues to proactively watching weather and water conditions. We are also responsible for the physical and emotional safety of our staff and participants. There are limitless risks to our organization and we do all we can in our power to mitigate those risks. With proper policies, standardized procedures, robust training, and ongoing risk management efforts we operate as safely as possible.

With the introduction of COVID-19 in 2020, we have needed to relook at what it means to operate safely as an organization. Similar to how we lean into expertise in other risk areas, we established a Safety and Inclusion Advisors group to help inform and make decisions around safety, with a particular focus around COVID-19. We continue to adapt and adjust our policies and practices as new information, research, and resources become available.

At this time, organizations are faced with decisions at the intersection of staff and participant safety, community health and responsibility, and the bottom line. As an organization that serves people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities, we believe it is important that we do everything in our power to achieve our mission while keeping our participants and community at large safe.

We will follow the below practices as we make decisions around COVID-19:

- We will make decisions based on the scientific evidence as presented by the World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Minnesota Department of Health, and other reputable sources of information.
- We will consult with groups of local professionals and community experts and liaisons to reduce negative impacts to overall individual and community health and wellbeing, to the best of our ability.
- We will design policies and practices that keep our most vulnerable community members, including individuals with disabilities, at the forefront--staying true to our

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foundling principles that each individual is a valued and important member of society and deserves access to opportunities.

- We will not proceed with experiences solely based on the bottom line of the organization if there is a disregard to personal or community health and safety.
- We will evaluate each program, at least quarterly, to ensure that the benefits to those being served outweigh the risks involved with participation and facilitation.
- We will do everything in our power to keep our staff, volunteers, and participants safe in environments where we work, serve, and participate.

In closing, Wilderness Inquiry’s decisions around safety protocols related to COVID-19 will attempt to provide safe environments for all—including those who are often marginalized or are at higher risks from COVID-19. Safety, including providing safe environments that promote health and wellness, will remain a top priority.

**Addendum — Current Policies**

As of May 2, 2022, our current policies are below. These policies are supported by our medical consultants based on our commitment to the above policy statement.

**MASKS**

We no longer require masking in most situations; however masking is required in the below environments to ensure we are protecting our most vulnerable populations and taking precautions for our staff so that we can continue to operate our programs and services.

**Office/Warehouse Environment**

- Please wear a mask if you are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19.
- Please wear a mask if you are meeting with any individual that is choosing to wear a mask, for any reason. (Courtesy masking)

**Transportation**

- Please wear a mask anytime you are in a Wilderness Inquiry van or vehicle with another individual or traveling on official Wilderness Inquiry business.

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Trips / Programs / Events

- Masking is not required outdoors or during programs. Anyone may choose to wear a mask and we ask that all participants respect the choice of individuals who may choose to mask, acknowledging that we all have different levels of risk and unique personal situations.

Additional Notes

- Wilderness Inquiry staff will wear a mask upon request of a group.

VACCINATIONS

- Wilderness Inquiry staff are required to be fully vaccinated and up-to-date against COVID-19. One booster shot is required as part of being up-to-date.
- Participants are required to be fully vaccinated and up-to-date for all trips that involve an overnight experience. (This includes a booster shot for everyone that is eligible.) Vaccination is not required for day trip experiences.
- Wilderness Inquiry will review medical exemptions on a case-by-case basis. Please complete Wilderness Inquiry's medical exemption request form for consideration. Those with medical exemptions will need to show proof of a negative PCR covid test within 3 days of trip departure and may need to mask in specific situations, such as when unable to maintain social distancing.
- As of May 2, 2022, since there is no vaccine available for children under the age of 5, they are exempt from the vaccination requirement and must submit a negative PCR COVID-19 test.

OTHER NOTES & GUIDELINES

- TESTING: Wilderness Inquiry strongly recommends COVID-19 testing prior to trip experiences in addition to protocols above with vaccination and masking. Please notify Wilderness Inquiry if you have tested positive prior to your trip experience. Wilderness Inquiry staff may be required to test in specific situations, such as an extended Canoemobile tour.
- SANITIZATION: Wilderness Inquiry will have hand sanitizer and sanitizing spray if needed during the program or trip. Participants will be encouraged to use hand
sanitizer before their canoeing activity begins and should always wash hands or use hand sanitizer before and after eating.

- **PODS:** Shared tents are a part of the Wilderness Inquiry experience. Tent pods will be assigned and remain the same throughout the duration of the trip to the extent possible.

Wilderness Inquiry will adhere to all local and federal requirements beyond the above stated policies. These policies will be continued to be monitored and updated as applicable. Please contact info@wildernessinquiry.org with questions.

*Updated 5/02/2022*