

APRIL 2020



DECISION MAKING FRAMEWORK

FOUR KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK IN PREPARATION FOR
RE-OPENING YOUR CAMP AND/OR RETREAT MINISTRY SITE.



WHAT'S INSIDE?

Reflecting the thoughts and strategies that are being implemented by several camp and retreat leaders in our United Methodist connection, this document has been created to help you and your team in making strategic decisions over the next several weeks. This document does not make suggestions for what your ministry should be doing. Instead, it lays out a set of questions that will guide you in making the best decisions for your ministry.

01

Conditions for re-opening?

02

How will operations be different?

03

Creating timelines and scenarios.

04

What are the implications?

1) WHAT ARE THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CONDITIONS FOR RE-OPENING OUR MINISTRIES? AND WITH WHAT LEVEL OF RISK ARE WE COMFORTABLE?

Internal - what must we be capable of to meet the current expectations of our client context and/or society in general?

- We anticipate what’s “acceptable” to be different in different areas of the country and for it to change in different ways for different areas as the pandemic progresses.
- The spectrum of internal conditions:



- Internal variables to consider:
 - Screening capacity and availability of fast testing
 - Staff training timing; ability to keep staff healthy
 - Enrollment
 - Financial capacity
 - Large group/small group activities
 - Food service
 - Lodging - pre-, post-, during camp sanitization
 - New risk assessment requirements
 - Health care - support, training, equipment, isolation (proximity to family to send home)
 - Challenge course and waterfront activities - equipment sanitization
 - Day Camps - daily check-in/out and screening issues
 - Vendor capacity for best practices
 - Transportation to trip camps
 - Check-in/out with families

External - what will be the pandemic conditions at which it will be acceptable to our “owners”, clients, and our societal context to be open for camp and/or retreat operations? When will that happen? The first question may be something we can guess at, but the answer to the second is unknowable. The idea is that we will have thought out our answers to the following questions so that we have a better idea of the answers for our organization.

- Can we anticipate that, barring complete disappearance of COVID-19 and prior to the widespread availability of a vaccine, there are acceptable levels of risk for re-engaging socially?
- While it may be “legal” to reopen, the perception of what is “safe” is subjective. To what extent are we able to leave that to the camper family to decide, without appearing irresponsible and uncaring about the spreading the virus?

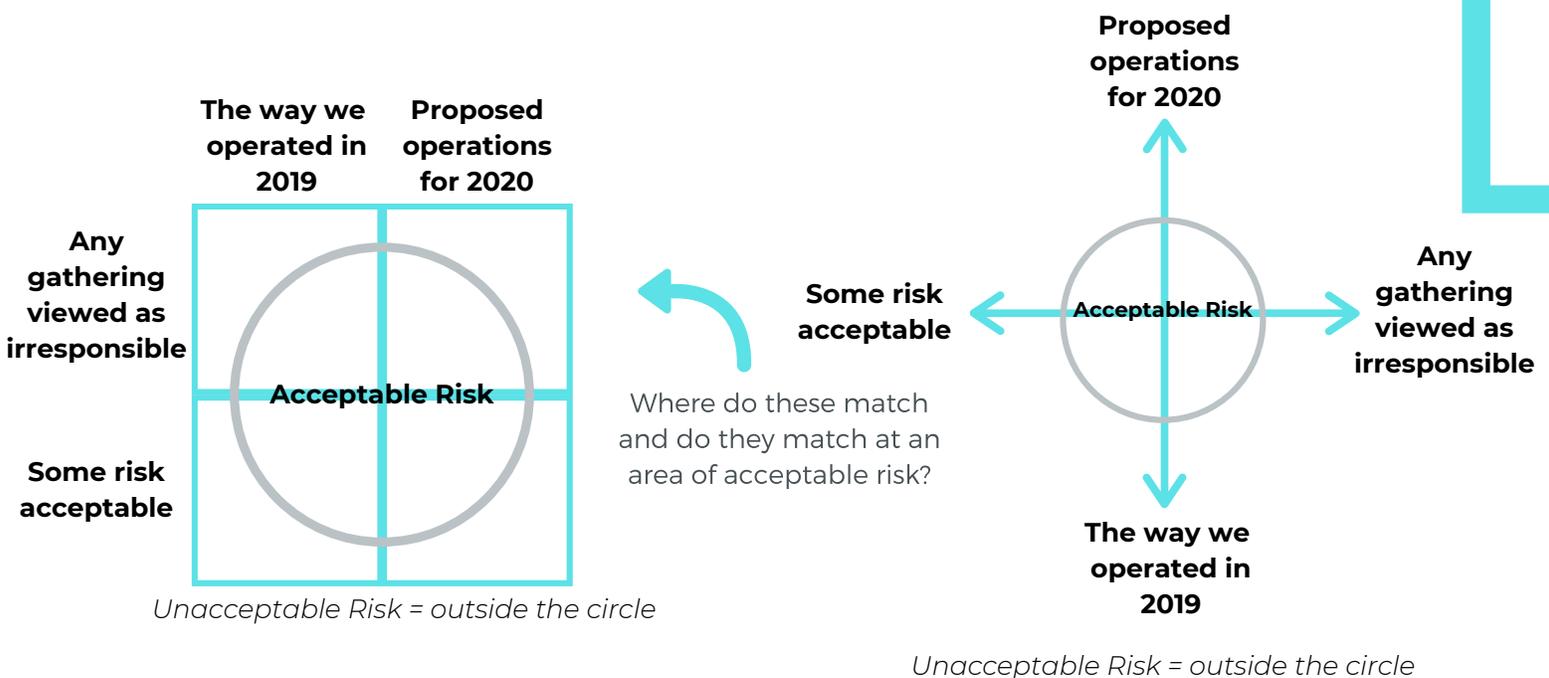
- The spectrum of external conditions:



- External variables to consider:
 - What is the latest recommendation of organizations who define “best practices”? (OSHA, ACA, local school systems, etc.)
 - What are the organizations in our service area doing? (churches, schools, movie theatres, etc.)
 - Do we have the ability to leverage our screening practices, testing, health care on site, operational control, etc., to step to the leading edge of the wave of acceptable interaction/risk?

What level of risk is acceptable to us? Identifying an acceptable level of risk for our organization should help to recognize when we’ve reached a point of reopening. It may also help us define whether we can develop the capacity to restart some ministries based on our ability to mitigate risk sufficiently for our own risk tolerance.

- How are we balancing the value of financial viability, of camper/family member health, and of organizational reputation?
- How are we/do we want to be seen as a leader in social responsibility?
- What is our organizational tolerance for risking external relationships?
 - For losing trust of our families/clients?
 - For negative PR as extending a pandemic?
 - For letting other camper families know we’ve sent home a kid from camp with COVID-19?



2) HOW WILL WE HAVE TO OPERATE DIFFERENTLY NOW, IN A POST-COVID-19 CAMP WORLD?

- What parts of our resident camp operations/day camp operations/retreat operations will have to be changed to account for the risks associated with COVID-19?
 - Pre-camp screening/check-in
 - LodgingHealth care
 - Activities
- What is needed to implement these changes?
- Who needs to do it and do they have the bandwidth necessary?
- At what expense will these changes be made?
- Are these changes possible to implement before summer? Halfway through summer? Before fall?

3) GIVEN THE NEW OPERATIONAL REALITIES AND THE TIME REQUIRED FOR THEIR IMPLEMENTATION, ARE THERE SCENARIOS FOR RESTARTING YOUR MINISTRY OPERATIONS AVAILABLE TO YOU?

Name each of them. (Example: Full Summer, Partial Summer, No Summer, fall retreat season) What is the latest date for each of those scenarios that you can observe the internal/external conditions being right to make the decision to reopen?

- What would have been the last day you could have made a “go/no go” decision about each of your scenarios in years prior? How will COVID-19 move the date of your “go/no go” decision forward or back?
- Who needs to be involved in making that decision? Can that person be available or a meeting of the group be scheduled now so that the decision can be made with as much information on hand as possible?



Utilize the ACA Contingency Planning Framework for Camps

[Click Here](#)

4) WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR OPERATING/NOT OPERATING YOUR MINISTRIES UNDER EACH SCENARIO IDENTIFIED ABOVE?

We shouldn't assume that just because it is possible to restart a ministry that the restart is the best course of action.

- What level of activity in a restart will justify doing so? Below this level will it dig a deeper hole?
- How long is it feasible to go before restarting?
- What are the factors to consider in modify operations (pause, downsize, pivot, cease)?
 - Income history
 - Donor giving history and potential
 - Amount of reserves
 - Capability of debt service, if borrowing
- What costs continue while executing a plan to wind down the ministry? What are the options? Lease, sale, other?

Read the AEI
Roadmap to Reopening

[Click Here](#)



NEED ADDITIONAL RESOURCES?

[VISIT THE UMC RM RESOURCE DATABASE](#)

