

Protocols for reopening ACC Bon Echo property

(updated July 27, 2020)

NOTE: These protocols are based on Stage 3 guidelines for reopening properties and activities in Ontario. They may be tightened or relaxed without notice or warning if the government or relevant health authority changes its guidelines. We will follow whichever standards are the stricter.

Government guidelines: ontario.ca/page/framework-reopening-our-province-stage-3

1. The Bon Echo hut, along with the grounds of the club property, will reopen to campers for the 2020 season. But under current provincial restrictions, *the sauna must remain closed for regular use*. (If the province eases restrictions regarding the sauna, the board will consider reopening it with appropriate safety measures.)

The Toronto Section's decision to reopen and operate the hut is based on this government guideline on mandatory gathering limits: "Based on the advice of the Chief Medical Officer of Health and other public health experts, gathering limits apply to higher risk settings and activities where people congregate, including: All organized or spontaneous indoor and outdoor events and social gatherings ..."

As well, a number of rules pertaining to the pandemic will be in force in 2020:

- a. Only 12 people are allowed on the property at a time — one custodian and 11 campers.
- b. Owing to this cap on public gatherings, we are only allowing paid-up ACC members to book camping spots this year. Membership status will be monitored. Midweek camping is allowed, but only if a custodian is available and at least two campers have signed up. (Small groups will be monitored for financial feasibility, and the minimum could be raised on short notice.)
- c. Reservations will be accepted only for July and August to start with. (Notice for September and October bookings will be sent out later.) They will be accepted first come, first served; any excess requests will go on a waiting list.
- d. Starting this year, hut fees (plus the processing fee) will be paid in advance through the Toronto Section's PayPal account. You will have until four days before your chosen trip to cancel your reservation and get a refund. After that, there will be no refunds. The co-chairs of the Bon Echo portfolio will process the reservations.

2. For the duration of the pandemic, there will be additional paperwork. Everyone coming to the club property must:

- a. Read, sign and date a colour copy of the revised 2020 waiver, which now includes a clause regarding Covid-19.
- b. Read, sign and date the revised Bon Echo climbers' code of conduct, which now includes a clause regarding Covid-19.
- c. Read and fill out a **new** Covid-19 self-assessment form and sign a declaration of health that you honestly believe you are not carrying the coronavirus.
- d. Provide a phone number and email address in case contact tracing becomes necessary. (The information will be kept confidential.)

3. Camping on the property involves new pandemic protocols regarding self-distancing and sanitary practices:

a. People are asked to choose tent sites that are reasonably far apart. (Several tent sites have already been closed off.)

b. Cooking, eating and dishwashing are allowed in the hut, but only under certain guidelines. In normal circumstances, there should be 10 people at most in the hut, occupying the designated spaces at the four tables in the dining area to maximize physical distancing. Each household or social bubble should select one of these spots and use it for the duration of the trip.

In unusual circumstances, such as a storm blowing in, all 12 people on the trip can shelter inside the hut. In addition to the 10 designated spots at the tables, two more people can temporarily shelter by the front counter in the kitchen until it's no longer necessary to stay inside the hut.

The kitchen has been divided into two zones — this allows for two households or social bubbles to prep food and cook at the same time. However, there must be *no more than four people* in the entire kitchen area at once.

A complete set of dinnerware, cookware, cutlery and utensils has been placed in each zone; use only the set in your zone. Clean them as soon as reasonably possible; the sinks can be used (subject to usual distancing practices) or campers can set up an outdoor wash station near the greywater bed if they prefer.

Cooking, eating and dishwashing can still take place outdoors if you prefer. There is a propane stove for use on the picnic tables, but campers may consider bringing a spare stove for convenience. The barbecue is available for shared use.

c. Food must be stored inside the hut to avoid attracting animals. Choose a spot for your cooler/food bin in your particular kitchen zone and use that one for the duration of the trip.

d. The board has agreed that the custodian *has the authority to close the hut* if he or she feels that protocols regarding self-distancing and sanitary practices are not being maintained.

4. The pandemic means tighter cleaning and social distancing protocols:

a. The club has provided three foot-operated wash stations and soap — one at the foot of the steps to the hut, one near the picnic tables, and one near the dock. In line with current pandemic practice, campers are urged to wash their hands frequently.

b. Everyone must adhere to all social distancing rules as laid out in the Bon Echo pandemic protocols. That means physical distancing of 2 meters on club property unless you're from the same household or social bubble. Whenever 2-meter distancing is not possible, you must wear a mask. However, it is recommended that masks be worn at all times on the property except in tents. You *must wear a mask inside the hut* except when you are eating or drinking.

Everyone is expected to follow recognized health practices, including coughing and sneezing etiquette, hand hygiene (no shaking hands or high-fives), and cleaning and disinfecting.

c. Social distancing rules also apply while you are on park property — for instance, while on a water run to the North Beach or waiting for a boat pickup at Turtle Rock.

d. Everyone is to bring his or her own mask and hand sanitizer. A pair of gloves for belaying is advised. The club will not provide these items. Campers must clean their masks regularly every day or use new ones.

e. The club is, however, supplying face shields and masks for the first aid kits.

f. Social distancing must be observed everywhere on the property. Campers are encouraged to bring their own chairs.

g. Along with regular trash, each member's used cleaning materials should be taken back to the mainland for disposal.

- h. There is a daily sanitization checklist that everyone is expected to help out with. It involves wiping down the barbecue, hut railing and door handles on all buildings and frequently touched areas inside the hut. The boat should also be wiped down regularly.
- i. Posters outlining COVID-19 etiquette social distancing and hygiene procedures will be posted about the property.

5. Care must be taken with social distancing on the boat, as droplets can blow in the wind:

- a. There will be no more than two climbers and one driver in the boat at one time unless the climbers are from the same household or social bubble.
- b. The climbers will sit towards the bow, as far from the driver as safely possible.
- c. On the advice of the local public health authority, masks are required at all times while riding in the boat, except during safety communications with climbers on the cliff. The club will provide the driver with a face shield.
- d. To help with social distancing, climbers should consider taking the trail back to the hut.

6. Climbing presents particular social distancing challenges, given some of the tight belay stances on the cliff. Here are some preliminary tips (which may change as the season progresses):

- a. There will be no more than one team of two climbers (or one household party) on a route at a time. Parties who converge on the rappel station at the same time should discuss how to stay apart.
- b. No club gear (e.g. fixed rappel lines) will be used except in an emergency. Members will be responsible for sanitizing their own equipment.

7. Custodians:

- a. Must attend a video training session that will bring them up to speed on the latest protocols and to ask any questions.
- b. Will be provided with new trip report sheets that **must** be fully completed and submitted to the Bon Echo chairs the day after the weekend to facilitate with contract tracing or any compliance issues. If it's impractical to file a paper report, it can be submitted as a picture sent from a cellphone or as an emailed scan.