

Anonymous Non-profit

Sector: Nonprofit | Size Range: 1000+ Employees | Interviewed: 6/22/2020

The Organization

Large non-profit. Their facilities offer childcare, fitness equipment, group exercise classes, summer camps, aquatic activities, youth programming, community services, and more.

Staffing

The staff has been drastically reduced due to the closure of many of their facilities. At the time of our interview, the organization currently had about 120 of its formerly 1,250 employees in active status on staff. The leadership team and branch executives continued to work throughout the pandemic. Many direct service delivery staff (lifeguards, front desk, exercise instructors, childcare workers) were heavily impacted by the layoffs. Some staff continued to provide direct delivery of programs through virtual options. Some administrative functions such as Human Resources, selected finance operations, and maintenance were never laid off. The association has been calling back employees as childcare centers, camps, and aquatic facilities reopen.

Laid off employees may continue to access the staff website, and the organization is able to communicate with active and laid off employees through their HRIS system. Leadership has shared updates through the staff website and HRIS including available resources, information on applying to unemployment, and workshops on financial planning and budgeting. Their EAP ran weekly sessions which active employees and employees on lay off status can call into. The organization has launched an Employee Assistance Fund to provide financial assistance to employees who have been impacted by COVID-19 and/or the closure of their facilities. Laid off employees can apply for relief through the program if they experience delays in getting their unemployment checks or face other financial hardships.

COVID Relaunch Task Force

Several different staff participated in planning and decision-making for the organization's Relaunch effort. The overall Relaunch Committee is composed of the Chief Operating Officer, Chief Human Resources Officer, Director of Strategic Initiatives, VP of Communications and Marketing, and their District and Branch Executives. The Director of Strategic Initiatives chairs multiple quality teams, each focused on separate functional areas such as camp, aquatics, and childcare. Members of each team worked to develop launch plans specific to their respective functional areas.

Communication with Other Like Non-Profits

Nationally and statewide, the overarching organization has set up various working groups by function. Group members can engage with each other on Zoom calls and attend webinars. They have the opportunity to reach out to other similar organizations

throughout the country to learn about what worked and did not work in their reopening processes. In one example, every week, Chief Human Resources Officers and HR Directors at similar New Jersey organizations participate in a lunchtime call.

Childcare

Two of their locations have remained open to essential healthcare workers and first responders throughout the pandemic. These services have been available free of charge to workers whom the state confirms are essential. Their other childcare locations will reopen once childcare to non-essential worker residents resumes on June 15th. Childcare employees were generally willing and able to return to work.

Camps

The organization has had to pivot their camp offerings. While they are not permitted to run their residential camps, they are going to run day camps where possible. Whether each day camp runs is dependent on whether they have sufficient enrollment. One of their residential camps is shifting to offering family camps, where families can rent cabins on site. In addition to in-person offerings, the association is piloting virtual camp programs.

Virtual Programming & Exercise

The organization started to develop virtual programming for children and families soon after their facilities closed. Driven primarily by their VP of Strategic Initiatives, they started by focusing on kindergarten readiness, knowing how difficult it is for parents to balance teaching their children with their own careers. They have also expanded their virtual exercise offerings, offering workouts and programs through Facebook. The organization has begun to roll out outdoor group exercise classes, causing them to call back additional employees.

Safety Measures

Each location has access to a Workplace Safety Playbook as well as specific branch and functional relaunch plans detailing safety measures branches should follow. Not all portions are relevant to all branches, as not all facilities offer childcare or aquatics, for example. Many of their playbooks are available on the association's website. The organization is currently working to modify their fitness spaces to ensure they are prepared for an eventual reopening. The Wellness and Fitness group has concentrated on how to manage flows through their hallways, space out their equipment, and determine how many people can be accommodated. Communication with other similar nonprofits throughout the country has been very enlightening in guiding these decisions.

Employee Re-Entry

Employees are recalled by phone calls and mail reach-outs. Once recalled, employees can watch a re-entry safety webinar covering what has changed at the organization. This is coupled with onsite training for their branch and functional discipline.

Board Involvement

The Corporate Governance Board regularly meets with the Chief Executive Team, which includes the President and CEO, Chief Development Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Human Resources Officer, and Chief Financial Officer, VP of Marketing and Communications, and VP of Strategic Initiatives as well as the Branch Executives. The full executive committee and board meet over Zoom, and the Board receives regular reports. Budgetary and policy changes, such as the creation of the Employee Assistance Fund, are brought before the Board.