

Camps

Camps can range from daycamps conducted for several hours in a day (not overnight) to programs that are residential and involve many weeks in group settings.

Daycamps, where campers do not sleep at the camp facility, are unlikely to be an environment conducive to bed bugs. For these types of camps, a similar approach to the [one outlined for schools](#) would be appropriate.

Residential camps, where campers sleep at the camp facility, are at significant risk for bed bug infestations. The risk of infestation can be reduced by replacing wood bed frames with metal frames and using vinyl-covered mattresses or zippered mattress covers. If feasible, inspecting and cleaning beds and mattresses between camp sessions may help to identify bed bug problems early on, when they are easier to treat.

Keeping sleeping areas tidy and clean can also make it easier to spot a bed bug infestation. Campers should be instructed to tidy up their sleeping area regularly, eliminating any unnecessary clutter and vacuuming if appropriate. It is also prudent to keep each camper's belongings separate, preferably in sealed containers.

It may be difficult to distinguish bed bug bites from other bug bites. Because campers are frequently outdoors, they interact with many biting insects throughout their camp stay. See [Health Concerns Associated with Bed Bugs](#) for more information on bug bites. Campers should be encouraged to use bug repellents to ward off bites from mosquitoes, ticks, etc. Although these repellents are not effective against bed bugs, they can help to reduce other bites. If a camper is regularly using repellent and they are still finding a significant number of new bites, their sleeping area should be inspected for bed bugs. See the [Inspection section](#) for information on what to look for when a bed bug infestation is suspected.

If a suspected bed bug is found in a camp sleeping area, the following procedures are recommended:

1. The camp director should contact their pest management company and/or local health department for assistance in identifying the specimen(s). It is important to confirm that the bugs found really are bed bugs before proceeding.
2. If the specimen is confirmed as a bed bug, then the entire cabin, tent, or room should be inspected, as well as any adjoining rooms or sleeping areas.
3. If a sleeping area is found to be infested, all the campers' machine-washable bedding, clothing, towels, etc. should be machine dried for 30 minutes on the hottest recommended setting, and then sealed into plastic zippered bags. Once their belongings have been treated, the affected campers should be moved to another (non-infested) sleeping area.
4. There is no reason to exclude affected campers from camp activities. Bed bugs infest places, not people, and there is no scientific evidence that bed bugs spread disease.
5. Before the affected campers return home, the camp director or nurse should inform the campers' parents and/or guardians of their child's exposure or potential exposure to bed bugs. Educational materials should also be provided to the families, such as those found at www.michigan.gov/bedbugs.
6. Ongoing pest management should be overseen by the camp director in partnership with a licensed pest management professional and should conform to an [Integrated Pest Management plan](#). Previously infested areas should not be used until they are certified as bed bug free by a pest management professional.