



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

NYSDEC ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CAMPS

COLBY, RUSHFORD AND PACK FOREST

PARENT/CAMPER HANDBOOK

Welcome to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) environmental education camps. For 76 years, DEC has provided a residential summer camp program in conservation education for youth. We are excited to spend time with your child at camp.

Due to COVID-19, DEC summer camps and programming structure will be modified for the foreseeable future. To provide the safest environment for campers and staff we have incorporated the latest Centers for Disease Control (CDC), American Camp Association (ACA) and the New York State Department of Health (DOH) guidelines. Camp activities that previously included all camper participation will either be enhanced or replaced using physical distancing. This handbook has been revised to reflect these COVID-19 changes. Please pay special attention to the areas that have the highlighted COVID. Specific procedures will be provided prior to the camp week.

This parent/camper handbook contains important information for both you and your child, including ways in which we can work together to ensure your child has a safe, educational, fun, and unforgettable camp experience. It will help you both to understand our policies and procedures. **Read and review this booklet carefully with your camper.** It contains important health and safety, facilities, and diversity, equity, and inclusion information. Involving your camper in the process of planning for camp from the beginning will help to build a strong camp connection.

We will use e-mail to contact you regarding camp updates. You must provide an e-mail address when you register. The e-mail address can be updated as needed. Remember, only a parent or legal guardian may register a child for camp.

Connect with the camp program on Facebook at "NYSDEC Summer Camps."

Table of Contents

HOW TO REACH US.....	3
COVID COVID-19.....	3
COVID TESTING AND VACCINATION	3
COVID MASKS.....	3
SUNDAY CHECK-IN.....	4
FRIDAY CHECK-OUT	4
HEALTH MEDICATIONS AND FORMS.....	5
STANDARD OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS	5
DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION AT CAMP	6
DAILY SCHEDULE AND CAMP LIFE.....	6
CABIN ASSIGNMENTS (BUNK MATE).....	6
CAMP STAFF.....	6
DRESS CODE.....	7
ELECTRONICS	7
FACILITIES	7
HOMESICKNESS	7
HUNTER EDUCATION PROGRAMS	8
LAUNDRY	8
LOST AND FOUND	8
MEALS.....	8
MAIL	9
OUT-OF-CAMP TRIPS	9
SAFETY AT CAMP.....	9
TELEPHONE.....	9
VISITING.....	9
VOLUNTEERS	9
CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS	9
ILLNESS WHILE AT CAMP	111
DEC CAMPER CODE OF CONDUCT.....	11
FIVE-STEP DISCIPLINE SYSTEM	11
SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES (YOUR CHILD AND DEC STAFF AFTER CAMP)	12
DRIVING DIRECTIONS FOR DEC CAMPS AND CONTACT INFORMATION	12
CAMP COLBY.....	12
CAMP PACK FOREST	13
CAMP RUSHFORD	13
PACKING CHECKLIST	14
A HEALTHY CAMP STARTS AT HOME!	15
CHILDREN'S CAMPS IN NEW YORK STATE	16

HOW TO REACH US

	Mailing Address	Physical Address & GPS Coordinates	Phone/Fax/E-mail
Camp Administration	NYSDEC – Camps Program 625 Broadway, 3 rd Floor Albany, NY 12233-5256	Physical: 625 Broadway Albany, NY GPS: N 42 39.087, W 073 44.554	Year-round (Monday – Friday, 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM): Land Line Phone: 518-402-8014 Fax: 518-402-9033 E-mail: educationcamps@dec.ny.gov
Camp Colby	90 Camp Colby Road Saranac Lake, NY 12983	Physical: 90 Camp Colby Road Saranac Lake, NY GPS: N 44 21.121, W 074 08.738	Only during Camp Season: Phone: 518-891-3373 Fax: 518-891-0077 E-mail: colby@dec.ny.gov
Camp Pack Forest	PO Box 777 Warrensburg, NY 12885	Physical: 276 Pack Forest Road Chestertown, NY GPS: N 43 33.238, W 073 48.809	Only during Camp Season: Land Line Phone: 518-623-2037 Fax: 518-623-4433 E-mail: packfore@dec.ny.gov
Camp Rushford	8717 Rush Creek Road Caneadea, NY 14717	Physical: 8717 Rush Creek Road Caneadea, NY 14717 GPS: N 42 20.667, W 078 13.788	Only during Camp Season: Land Line Phone: 585-437-5351 Fax: 585-437-5400 E-mail: rushford@dec.ny.gov

COVID COVID-19

There will be COVID-19 procedures that you and your child will need to comply with to safely participate in camps this summer. We will highlight several of them here and follow-up with detailed protocols prior to the camp week. Please be aware that the specific details of how camp may operate are subject to change based on the guidance from the New York State Department of Health and Governor's Office.

NOTE: DEC will notify parents of their child's exposure to a COVID-positive individual (camper or counselor) who shares their cabin but will not test campers who do not have symptoms as the Center for Disease Control advises "If you were exposed to COVID-19 and do not have symptoms, wait at least 5 full days after your exposure before testing. If you test too early, you may be more likely to get an inaccurate result."

COVID TESTING AND VACCINATION

To attend a session, DEC requires that all campers use a rapid antigen test upon arrival at camp for camp check-in. (If the test is positive, they will need to return home and will be refunded the cost of camp).

In accordance with the New York State Department of Health's Camp Safety Advisory Council Summer Camp Guidelines, DEC Summer Camps strongly encourages that campers be up to date with an approved COVID-19 vaccine. Vaccination information is available at <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/covid-19-vaccines-children-and-adolescents>. Vaccination documentation is included in the Health Care Provider Form.

COVID MASKS

Campers and staff will be given the option to wear masks when indoors or outdoors. DEC will provide masks but individuals may provide their own mask if the mask fits snugly over their nose, mouth, and chin.

SUNDAY CHECK-IN

COVID Camper check-in is between 2:00-4:00 PM Sunday at the camp. Due to COVID-19, please limit vehicle occupants to the driver and camper.

- Driving directions to the camps are located on pages 13 and 14.
- COVID Camper check-in time will be staggered every half hour between 2:00-4:00 pm (2:00, 2:30, 3:00 and 3:30). We will email you your check-in and pickup times. We cannot accept early check-ins, so we will direct you to temporary parking if you arrive early.
- If you anticipate arriving at a time other than your assigned slot, please contact the Camp in advance to let the Director know.
- Your camper's Health Care Provider Form signed by the parent or legal guardian **AND** physician will need to be **completed and** brought to camp (you will find this under "Health Documents Bring to Camp Check-in" in the online registration system's Document Center). Campers will only be checked in with a completed health care provider form. **Campers without this form will be turned away at check-in until a completed form is obtained.** Please see page 6 for more details.
- At check-in, a copy of your health insurance card will be scanned. Please follow the instructions on the posted check-in signs and from staff stationed at check-in areas.
- COVID Do **NOT** leave your vehicle. Drivers need to stay in the car for the health screening and drop-off process.
- COVID Camp bathrooms are **NOT** available and there may not be public restrooms close by so please plan ahead.
- COVID The Health Director and other camp staff will come to your vehicle for your camper's health screening, medication check-in, review of authorized pick-ups, health insurance card, hunter education, camper t-shirt, gear check-in and lice checks

All campers will meet with the Camp Director and Health Director on Sunday afternoon. The entire process of cabin assignments, health screening/collection of medications, moving in, and meeting camp staff takes about one hour to complete. Because the first few hours at camp are among the most important, we discourage late arrivals. All non-campers must be off camp property by 5:00 PM so that we may begin our camp program.

FRIDAY CHECK-OUT

COVID Camper pickup is FRIDAY AFTERNOON BETWEEN 4:00-5:30 PM. Due to COVID-19, please limit vehicle occupants to the driver only.

- COVID Camper pickup time will be staggered every half hour between 4:00-5:30 pm (4:00, 4:30, 5:00 and 5:30). We will email you your pickup time.
- If you anticipate a late arrival, please contact the camp in advance to let the director know
- Please follow the instructions on the posted pickup signs
- To ensure each camper's safety, parents must sign out their camper before leaving camp. You will be required to show photo ID before signing out your camper.
- COVID Do **NOT** leave your vehicle. Drivers need to stay in the car to sign out their camper and pickup process. (You will **NOT** have permission to use a camp bathroom so please plan ahead)

The camp does not have resources to care for campers after 5:30 PM. Please be on time or make arrangements (provide written instructions during check-in) to have someone else pick up your camper. Notify the camp director at check-in on Sunday, or at least 24 hours beforehand, who will be picking up your camper if it will be someone other than an authorized pickup person listed on your online account. Campers are prohibited from using public transportation systems without a parent/guardian.

HEALTH AND MEDICATION FORMS AND GENERAL CAMP FORMS

Accurately completing all camp forms is essential to ensuring your camper has a safe and enjoyable time while at camp. It also ensures camp staff will know who to contact if questions arise. These forms are available in the online registration Document Center page. To find the Document Center, login to your account, select the menu icon in the top left (three bars) of the page and then select 'Document Center'. You must complete the Camper Medical History Form to register and update it as needed before your child attends camp. This is a separate form from the Health Care Provider Form that must be completed by a healthcare professional and signed by a parent/guardian.

Campers will not be allowed to check-in at camp without a completed Health Care Provider form and health insurance card on file. Complete the camp specific Health Care Provider form and bring it along with a photo of your health insurance card to the camp check-in. The Health Care Provider form was emailed with your camp registration confirmation, and a copy may also be found in the 'Document Center' listed under 'Health Documents – Bring to Camp Check-in'. **The camper's Health Care Provider form must be signed by a parent or legal guardian and a physician.** Other forms such as patient visit summaries or school physical forms will **not** be accepted. The NYS DOH requires the camp specific Health Care Provider form to be on file and does not recognize another form. If your camper is attending two different DEC camps in one summer, they will need each camp specific form to be submitted. To attend multiple weeks at one camp, the camper does not need more than one Health Care Provider form completed.

If your child will require medication while at camp—whether prescription, over the counter, or dietary supplement—it must be provided to the camp Health Director in the original container; campers are not allowed to share medications with siblings and friends. Medications and supplements will be dispensed based on the doctor's written instructions only and done so individually for each child. All medicines and medical forms are locked in the Health Director's office when not in use.

If your camper has a medical issue, specific need related to a disability, or may face challenges related to language, paying attention, or socializing with others, please provide that information ahead of time by calling the camp administrator at 518-402-8014. The information will be shared with the camp's Director, Assistant Director and Health Director.

The use of sunscreen and insect repellent is authorized by the parent as part of the online "Camper Medical History" portion of registration.

For the well-being of your camper and the safety and well-being of other campers in our program, you may be asked to pick-up your child if they show signs of illness.

Standard Over-the-Counter Medications

An Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) may serve as the Health Director at each camp. An EMT, by law, cannot assess the health condition of any camper to administer Standard Over-the-Counter (OTC) and "as needed" (PRN) medications (e.g., cold remedies, allergy medication, analgesics, etc.) to campers. However, camper provided over-the-counter medications shall be available in the health office (see Health Care Provider form) and may be self-administered by the camper in the presence of the EMT if the appropriate Health Care Provider authorization is completed on the Health Care Provider form. In other words, your physician must approve this by completing the section of the Health Care Provider form labeled Standard Over-the-Counter Medications. The EMT will witness and record all standard over-the-counter medications that are self-administered by the camper. Failure to complete the section of the Health Care Provider form for Standard Over-the-Counter Medications shall constitute non-authorization and the Standard Over-the-Counter Medications may not be self-administered by the camper. **Please remember that parents cannot authorize use of the Over-the-Counter medications, it is required to be done by a physician on the Health Care Provider form.** We strongly recommend that you meet with your child's physician to discuss the completion of this form.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION AT CAMP

The DEC Summer Camps are environmental education camps that foster a love of nature and respect for all. Each person arrives at Camp with a unique background. Camp should be a welcoming and inclusive place where anyone can learn and grow. Every staff member should help create a safe environment for campers and fellow staff. We encourage families to contact our Camps Administrator by emailing EducationCamps@dec.ny.gov or calling 518-402-8014 to discuss our commitment to inclusion at camp and to create a plan to best welcome and support your camper(s).

We take steps to foster a safe environment for all campers, including:

- Promoting EHSTO: **Everyone Has Something To Offer**
- Camp staff training on topics including creating a safe camp, inclusive language, implicit bias, and camper emotional and mental health
- Hiring staff that demonstrate commitment to principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Gender neutral and private shower and/or changing area available upon request
- Encouraging campers and staff to share their personal pronouns during introductions
- Including group dynamics and team building activities throughout the week's program
- Cabin group discussions on the first night that outline on-camp resources available to campers, respectful and inclusive communication, and behavior expectations along with other topics

DAILY SCHEDULE AND CAMP LIFE

During check-in on Sunday, campers meet the Directors, Health Directors, Counselors, and other camp staff. After the camper is checked in, they will participate in team-building activities, discuss the camp program, tour the camp and, weather permitting, take a swimming test. **Campers will be given an overview of the rules and COVID-19 protocols,** review waterfront safety and have their first camp meal. The day ends with a campfire to welcome everyone.

A typical camp day begins at 7:00 AM with some optional early morning activities. Everyone assembles at 8:00 AM for breakfast. Mornings typically include environmental education lessons, followed by lunch. Afternoons include either more lessons, or several other options. Optional activities may include but are not limited to fly fishing, canoeing, archery, interpretive nature hikes, and arts and crafts. Some campers may go on out-of-camp trips during this time.

After dinner, there are camp-wide evening activities. These may include presentations by other DEC staff, a night hike or another special group activity. Most campers will spend one night camping outside. When at camp, all campers are in their cabins with lights out around 10:00 PM. Camp days are busy and long, so it is important for campers to get a full night's sleep.

All campers stay in rustic cabins, with at least one staff member assigned to each cabin. Campers are responsible for keeping their living areas neat and clean. Campers must stay with their groups or always be supervised by camp staff. *While staff are trained to spot potential problems, campers should not hesitate to inform counselors or directors if they have any questions or concerns.*

CABIN ASSIGNMENTS (BUNK MATE)

Campers and friends may ask to be in the same cabin; however, each must request the other as a part of the online registration process. If camp staff have concerns, campers may be separated. Only one cabin mate request per camper is allowed.

CAMP STAFF

DEC summer camp staff are college students and graduates who have an interest in working with children and the outdoors. In addition to standard interviews and screenings, all camp staff complete a three-week training program specific to DEC camps before the opening of camp. Camp staff training includes topics on outdoors and naturalist skills, educating in the outdoors, camper mental and emotional health, scouting off-site trips, gender and diversity, equity and

inclusion, and more. **All staff will be trained on 2023 COVID-19 procedures and protocols.** Directors and counselors are trained in CPR, AED, and first aid. All counselors have at least two years of college courses in Science Technology Engineering Mathematics (STEM), natural resources, biological sciences, environmental science, environmental education, or education-based programs.

DRESS CODE

Camp is a place for learning and fun in a safe environment, and campers' clothing should reflect this. Clothing must provide adequate coverage from sun and protect feet from injury. The following dress code will be enforced. If a camper chooses to dress inappropriately, they will be asked to change. A suggested packing list including clothing is provided on page 14.

- Shorts must have a minimum three-inch (3") inseam.
- Clothing with slogans and/or pictures related to sexual innuendo and/or promoting unhealthy lifestyles are prohibited (e.g., alcohol, profanity, gangs, violence, and/or products or slogans which promote tobacco and alcohol).
- Pants and shorts must be worn at the waist.
- Closed-toe shoes must be worn at all times, except at the beach and bathhouse.
- Swimsuits should be modestly cut; one-piece suits are highly recommended, but modest two-piece suits are allowed.
- Swimsuits may be worn only during swimming and water-based activities.
- Transparent clothing is not allowed.

ELECTRONICS

Electronics are not allowed at camp. Electronics, such as cell phones, MP3 players, tablets, gaming devices, etc. are expensive. They can be broken, lost, or stolen. At camp, they are a major distraction to the program. If brought to camp, they will be securely stored in the camp office until checkout.

FACILITIES

Housing at camp is currently separated by female and male gender cabins. Cabin preferences (male or female) are selected by families prior to or during registration on our online registration system. We encourage families to discuss where the camper will feel most comfortable and select the housing that reflects that choice. All cabins have bunk style beds and at least one counselor who sleeps in the cabin with their assigned cabin group.

Each camp has separate female, male, and gender-neutral bathroom and shower facilities. The female and male bathhouses are typically used unless a camper or family requests use of a gender-neutral facility. Both female and male bathhouses have multiple private toilet and shower stalls and sinks while the gender-neutral facility is single occupancy. Single occupancy bathrooms may also be used for a separate space to change clothes. Each camp's Health Cabin has an ADA accessible gender-neutral bathroom that may also be used by campers, if needed.

HOMESICKNESS

Feeling homesick and missing family, friends and pets is normal. Knowing this beforehand, your child may be more tolerant of homesick feelings. You can help facilitate a successful camp experience by preparing your child for their stay away from home. Encourage them to help with packing and preparation. Please encourage your child to speak with a counselor or Director if they have trouble adjusting to camp. Generally, campers will not be permitted to call home during the camp week as it can lead to a deeper sense of homesickness and take them mentally 'out' of the program.

If you feel your child may become homesick while at camp, please talk with a camp Director during the Sunday afternoon check-in. Knowing your wishes regarding your child's camp experience will help us if homesickness occurs. If your child is having trouble adjusting to camp, you will be called by camp staff. All staff receive training on handling camper homesickness.

HUNTER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

During designated Hunter Education camp weeks, campers aged 11 and up may participate in an optional New York State Hunter Safety Education, Bowhunter Education or Trapper Education course at no additional cost. To participate in a class the parent or guardian must enroll the camper during registration. Registration for the class is on a first-come, first-serve basis as the participation limit is 20 campers per class.

Campers who choose to participate in these programs are required to complete a home-study workbook prior to camp. Campers will receive a paper copy of the workbook in the mail 2-4 weeks before their scheduled camp week. The manual may also be found on the DEC Website: www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/92267.html. The workbooks are also available in the Document Center located after clicking on the menu icon in the top left of the page after logging into your account.

Campers must complete and bring the ‘homework page’ from the workbook to camp, or they will not be permitted to participate in the course. To receive a certificate the camper must pass a test and demonstrate proper attitude and safety while at camp. Successful completion of one or more Hunter Education programs is required before hunters may purchase a New York State hunting license. Classes are taught by DEC-certified Hunter Education instructors. Hunter Education programs differ at each camp, depending on the week. Check our schedule to see which class is offered each week. Although campers may take the bowhunter safety class, to purchase a bowhunting license, they must first successfully complete a Hunter Education course.

Please note:

*The availability of Hunter Education classes is based on student interest. If fewer than eight students register for any class, it will be canceled, and an alternate activity will be offered. There is a maximum of 20 students allowed in a class.

*Please contact DEC Summer Camps by emailing EducationCamps@dec.ny.gov if your child changes their mind about taking a course before camp so someone from the waiting list can participate in that class.

*Hunter Education Programs will take the majority of one of the camp days. Campers will not participate in the off-site overnight trip but will instead camp out on site.

LAUNDRY

There are no laundry facilities at camp except for emergencies. Please ensure your camper has enough clothing for the week.

LOST AND FOUND

DEC assumes no responsibility for lost personal items, although we attempt to return all such items to campers during the week. At the end of each camp week, items left behind are placed in “lost and found.” If your child is missing something, please check this area before leaving camp. Unclaimed items will be held until the end of the summer camp season, after which they will be donated to charity. To retrieve a camper’s lost item please contact the camp’s director to arrange a time to pick it up before August 20, 2023. The Camp Program **will not** mail lost/forgotten items after a camper has left.

MEALS

COVID Campers will eat outside to the greatest extent possible. If rain or other inclement weather happens, campers will eat inside. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation, increased cleaning and physical distancing will occur.

Our menu is nutritionally balanced and designed to appeal to most appetites. Fruit, salad, and daily vegetarian selections are always available. If your camper has dietary restrictions, including food allergies, you must inform camps administration **at least two weeks** before arrival at camp so arrangements can be made (email EducationCamps@dec.ny.gov). If anyone has a nut allergy, the kitchen will be nut-free that week. We may not be able to accommodate highly specialized diets, in which case campers may provide their own food to the camp cook, with **at least two weeks’ notice**. Do not bring or mail your camper a “care package” containing food as it can attract unwanted animals into camper cabins. Any food will be held by the kitchen staff and returned to the camper at checkout.

MAIL

Children enjoy receiving cheerful, positive letters while at camp. **Please consider sending a letter seven days ahead of opening day so your child receives it within the first couple of days of their stay.** If you send mail early it will arrive when the camper is at camp, not after they have left on Friday. Consider packing stamped, self-addressed postcards so your child can write to you as well. Do not send food or anything from the “Contraband” list found on page 14. If such items arrive, they will be held in the camp office until the end of the session. The mailing address for each camp can be found on page 3 of this booklet.

OUT-OF-CAMP TRIPS

Campers may take off-site day or overnight trips during their stay at camp. They are transported in vehicles driven by trained staff. Campers are given safety guidelines to follow while on trips. Off-site swimming is permitted only at locations approved by the Department of Health.

SAFETY AT CAMP

While our staff make every reasonable effort to minimize risks associated with camp activities, not all accidents can be avoided. By participating in our program, campers and their parents knowingly and willingly assume all the risks associated with participation in a summer camp program. Even after reasonable precautions have been taken, accidents occasionally happen; parents will be notified immediately. In the event of weather emergencies, all camps have emergency plans in place that include shelters, communicable disease, back-up generators and evacuation routes.

TELEPHONE

Each camp has only one telephone line, which must be kept free for camp business and emergencies. Campers may not use the office phone to call home or to receive calls, except for emergencies. We strongly believe that calling home prompts homesickness and interrupts the campers’ routines. If you have concerns about your child, please call the camp and speak with the director. Contact information is on page 3. If there are any concerns with your child, the Director will contact you.

VISITING

There are no visiting times during the week. Mid-week visits can cause homesickness, not only for your child but for other children as well.

VOLUNTEERS

Every week, each camp hosts up to four camp volunteers. Potential volunteers are selected by camp staff at the end of each camp session and are invited to apply to be volunteers the following summer. Campers who are selected to be volunteers are mature, enthusiastic, and very engaged in all camp activities. As volunteers, these campers participate in the camp program but are assigned other tasks as well to help camp run smoothly. Volunteer’s main assignments are assisting the kitchen staff preparing for meals and cleaning up after meals. During their volunteer week, volunteers are evaluated based on performance, attitude, and overall helpfulness. They may be asked to not return as volunteer, depending on how well they do during the week. After their first session, volunteers may reapply to return each summer until they turn 18 years old.

CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS

A cancellation procedure has been created due to the increased demand for available camper space and to ensure fairness to all.

Refunds: Refunds will not be credited to credit or debit cards. A check will be issued by DEC and sent by the NYS Office of the Comptroller. It may take up to 60 days to receive a check for a camp registration refund. The check will not have indication that it is from DEC Camps.

Cancellations: You may cancel your child’s summer camp registration up to three weeks (*23 calendar days*) prior to the day that your child is scheduled to check in to camp to receive a refund. We do not give refunds for cancellations with less than three weeks' notice. To cancel a camp registration, you must email EducationCamps@dec.ny.gov with the best time to call you between Monday – Friday, 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM. We will return your call as soon as we can. Cancellations must be done by year-round staff; do not call the individual camps. You will get a confirmation of the cancellation via email. If any camp sessions are cancelled by DEC for any reason, you will be fully refunded.

2023 Cancellation Deadlines

Camp Week	Camp Start Date	Cancellation Deadline, 4:00 PM EST
Week 1	July 2	June 9
Week 2	July 9	June 16
Week 3	July 16	June 23
Week 4	July 23	June 30
Week 5	July 30	July 7
Week 6	Aug 6	July 14
Week 7	Aug 13	July 21

Medical Reasons: Refunds requested due to medical illness or injury occurring while at camp will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

If your child is unable to attend camp due to a medical reason, you may request a full refund at any time **prior** to the start of the camp week they are registered for (**not after camp has closed for the season**) by providing a doctor's note. The doctor’s note must state that the child is unable to participate in camp activities due to a medical excuse and be signed and dated by the physician. Please send the doctor’s note to:

NYSDEC Summer Camps Program
625 Broadway, 3rd Floor
Albany, NY 12233-5256

Or by email to EducationCamps@dec.ny.gov Attn: Tom Shimalla.

Sponsored Campers: Sponsored campers who cannot attend camp must inform their sponsor so another camper of the same gender and age for the assigned week may have the opportunity to attend camp. The parent or guardian, not the DEC camps administration, is responsible for informing the sponsor. Sponsors will not receive a refund if a camper does not show up at camp or leaves during the week. Cancelled reservations before the refund deadline will automatically return to a sponsor’s account as a credit. Sponsors need to request a refund separately to receive one.

No Refunds: No refunds or partial refunds will be made for:

- Cancellations less than 23 calendar days before your child is scheduled to attend camp
- Not showing up for a scheduled session
- Showing up for the wrong session
- Late arrivals to camp after check-in
- Early withdrawals from camp after session has started
- Dismissal due to misconduct; the camp director reserves the right to dismiss any camper whose influence and conduct become detrimental to the best interest of the program
- Withdrawals resulting from homesickness

ILLNESS WHILE AT CAMP

If your child becomes ill or develops the following symptoms while attending camp (fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting or diarrhea), the Health Director will decide if the child will be sent home.

COVID In cases where there may be a chance of illness due to COVID-19 the child will either be isolated until a parent/guardian arrives to take them home (if parent or guardian did not authorize rapid testing) or the child will receive a rapid antigen test:

- If the test is positive, the child will remain isolated until the designated pick-up parent or guardian arrives to take them home.
- If the rapid test is negative, the child will be further assessed to determine if symptoms permit remaining at camp or necessitate a pick-up.

In cases where there may be a chance of gastrointestinal illness a 72-hour quarantine period is recommended by the Department of Health; this will therefore mandate that the child be sent home. The camp does not have the resources to maintain one or more campers for a 72-hour quarantine time period.

The designated pick-up parent or guardian will need to pick-up a sick camper within four (4) to six (6) hours of daytime notification or the following morning for evening or nighttime notification to remove the child in a timely manner. Parents and guardians should not be sending their child to camp if they have had any of the previously mentioned symptoms 72 hours prior to the start of camp. This is for the health and safety of all campers and staff.

DEC CAMPER CODE OF CONDUCT

We will provide your child with a safe and secure environment, and create a warm, comfortable, and fun atmosphere that will make them look forward to participating at camp each day. However, we are not equipped to handle continual behavioral issues. Certain behaviors are severe enough to merit immediate expulsion from camp (e.g., physical aggression, stealing, sexual harassment, defiance of discipline code, bullying, and/or repeated incidents of inappropriate language). These behaviors will not be tolerated and, if severe enough, may warrant visitation by a law enforcement officer; parents will be notified immediately if law enforcement is involved. If a camper is sent home for disciplinary reasons, they will not be allowed to return to camp in the future, nor will camp fees be refunded. If a camper's attitude and behavior is serious but does not warrant immediate dismissal from camp, it is the camp administration's decision whether to allow the camper to return to camp in subsequent sessions or years. If your child is not permitted to return to camp, you will be notified by DEC camp administration.

To promote good behavior, campers must agree to abide by the following code of conduct:

- I will be honest and respectful of peers, camp staff and myself.
- I will follow directions and rules at camp.
- I will respect other campers and staff members.
- I will respect property belonging to the DEC camp, other campers and staff members.
- I will behave appropriately and use appropriate language.
- I will stay within camp boundaries unless accompanied by a camp staff member.
- I will treat all campers fairly and equally.
- I will respect wildlife and natural spaces.
- I will do my best to HAVE FUN!

FIVE-STEP DISCIPLINE SYSTEM

Each of our campers has a reasonable expectation to enjoy a positive camp experience. The misbehavior of one camper or of a group of campers should not be permitted to negatively affect the camp experience of others. We strive to ensure all campers practice social skills that will allow them to resolve conflicts and meet their needs without resorting to harmful or destructive behaviors. When problems occur, we act promptly. We follow a five-step system for discipline, described below. A camper's actions may warrant skipping a step or steps and going directly to step 4 or 5 outlined below. For example, hitting someone, bullying, sexual harassment, or possession of illegal substances are automatic grounds for being sent home.

- 1) *Verbal warning* – The counselor speaks with the camper and identifies and describes the unacceptable behavior. The counselor offers methods to correct the behavior and describes the consequences if there is no change in behavior. The counselor notifies the camp director.
- 2) *Time out* – The counselor removes the camper from the activity. At the end of the time out, the counselor reminds the camper what is expected of them (appropriate behavior) and what the consequences will be if inappropriate behavior continues. The counselor notifies the camp director.
- 3) *Meeting with camp director* – The camp director meets with the camper. Together they complete and sign a written “behavior agreement” outlining acceptable behavior and acknowledging understanding of the consequences of continued poor behavior. Depending on circumstances the camp director may contact a parent or legal guardian prior to this meeting.
- 4) *Meeting with camp director and calling parents* – The camp director contacts the parents or legal guardian, typically via telephone. Together, the camp director, camper and parents discuss the camper’s behavior and actions and develop a plan that allows the camper to stay at camp. It also impresses upon the camper the seriousness of the situation and the potential that they may be sent home if there is no improvement or if the poor behavior is repeated.
- 5) *Camper sent home* – The camp director contacts the parents to notify them that they must pick up their camper. The camper may not return to camp.

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES (YOUR CHILD AND DEC STAFF AFTER CAMP)

Online social networking sites such as, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat and many others can be fun and positive ways for people to interact with friends. While DEC has an official Facebook page for the camps program, we cannot monitor unofficial camp pages on social networking sites. DEC is not responsible for interactions among campers, volunteers and staff after the camp season has ended except for DEC’s Camps Facebook page. We recommend our camp staff not “friend” campers on other sites, but we cannot monitor their actions during the off season or on sites where we have no control.

DRIVING DIRECTIONS FOR DEC CAMPS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

CAMP COLBY

90 Camp Colby Road Saranac Lake, NY 12983	Phone: 518-891-3373 Fax: 518-891-0077 Email: colby@dec.ny.gov
<i>From the West, via the NYS Thruway to Utica, through the Adirondacks:</i> Take I-90 East to Route 8/Route 12, Exit 31. Go straight on Route 12 for 22.6 miles to the Route 28N Exit toward Old Forge. Merge onto NY 28 through Old Forge, Raquette Lake and Blue Mountain Lake. In Blue Mountain Lake, take Route 28N and Route 30 to Long Lake, and continue on Route 30 to Tupper Lake. Take Route 30/Route 3 to where they split and continue on Route 3 to Saranac Lake. Turn left onto Route 86 at the second light. Follow the “airport” signs out of the village on Route 86. After passing the Adirondack Medical Center Hospital on the right, turn left at the four-way intersection. Bear left between the two stone pillars and follow the signs. <i>From the South and East:</i> Take the Northway, I-87, to Exit 30 (US 9 and Route 73). Turn left onto Route 9 and continue to NY Route 73 North by following the signs to Lake Placid. After passing the ski jump towers (as you enter Lake Placid), bear left onto Old Military Rd. (County Rd. 35), and follow it to the end. Turn left onto Route 86 and proceed to downtown Saranac Lake. At the second light, follow the “airport” signs out of the village on Route 86. After passing the Adirondack Medical Center Hospital on the right, turn left at the four-way intersection. Bear left between the two stone pillars and follow the signs.	

CAMP PACK FOREST

276 Pack Forest Road PO Box 777 Warrensburg, NY 12885	Phone: 518-623-2037 Fax: 518-623-4433 E-mail: packfore@dec.ny.gov
From the South: Take the Northway, I-87, to Exit 23 (Warrensburg/Diamond Point). Please note this is not NYS Thruway Exit 23 in Albany. Turn left off the exit and then right onto US 9. Proceed on US 9 through the Town of Warrensburg for approximately 5 miles. You will see a large white sign on the left-hand side of the road stating, "Charles Lathrop Pack Demonstration Forest." Turn left into the driveway, and continue slowly (15 mph) to camp, approximately 1.2 miles. From the North: Take the Northway, I-87, to Exit 23 (Warrensburg/Diamond Point). Turn right off the exit and then right onto US 9. Proceed on US 9 through the Town of Warrensburg for approximately 5 miles. You will see a large white sign on the left-hand side of the road stating, "Charles Lathrop Pack Demonstration Forest." Turn left into the driveway, and continue slowly (15 mph) to camp, approximately 1.2 miles.	

CAMP RUSHFORD

8717 Rush Creek Road Caneadea, NY 14717	Phone: 585-437-5351 Fax: 585-437-5400 E-mail: rushford@dec.ny.gov
From the NYS Thruway: Take the NYS Thruway, I-90 West, to Exit 46 (I-390 Rochester/Corning). Take I-390 South to Exit 8 (US 20A Geneseo). Turn right onto US 20A and go straight to NY 39. Turn right at S. Main St./NY-39 W. Turn left onto NY 19A, which eventually becomes NY 19. NY 19 will lead you to Caneadea, NY. Turn right onto Route 49 and continue straight until you see a public beach on the right. Turn left onto Rush Creek Road and go approximately 2 miles. Turn left into the entrance to Camp Rushford. Look for the yellow and brown NYSDEC signs. From Jamestown (West): Go east on Interstate 86 to Cuba, Exit 28. Turn left onto State Route 305. Go north on Route 305 to Belfast. Turn left onto State Route 19 and go north. Turn left onto County Route 49 (just south of Caneadea) and continue until you see a public beach and the Rushford Lake inlet. Turn left onto Rush Creek Road and go approximately 2 miles. Turn left into the entrance to Camp Rushford. Look for the yellow and brown NYSDEC signs. From Elmira (East): Go west on I-86 to Belmont, Exit 30. Turn right on Route 19 and go north. Turn left onto County Route 49 (just south of Caneadea) and continue until you see a public beach and the Rushford Lake inlet. Turn left onto Rush Creek Road and go approximately 2 miles. Turn left into the entrance to Camp Rushford. Look for the yellow and brown NYSDEC signs. From Buffalo: Travel west on NYS Thruway I-90 to Exit 54 (Route 400). Merge onto Route 400 South toward East Aurora. Divided highway ends and becomes Route 16 South in the Town of Yorkshire. Turn left onto Route 39 East. In the Village of Arcade, turn right onto Route 98 South. Continue straight on Route 98, which becomes Route 243 East. After passing a few commercial buildings on your left, look for Hillcrest Rd./County Route 49 (blue and gold sign). Turn right onto Hillcrest Rd./ Co. Route 49. Look for the Rushford Lake public beach on your left and Rush Creek Rd. on your right. Turn right onto Rush Creek Road. Go about 2 miles and look for a large barn and the Camp Rushford entrance on your left.	

PACKING CHECKLIST

Please label everything packed for camp with a permanent marker. It will help return items misplaced during the week back to campers before they go home.

What to Bring

Clothing (also see Dress Code, page 7):

Pack old but functional clothes. Campers will get dirty and may tear their clothing.

Clothing with slogans and/or pictures promoting unhealthy lifestyles are prohibited (e.g., alcohol, profanity, gangs, violence, and/or products or slogans which promote tobacco and alcohol).

- ☐ Three (3) pairs of long pants
- ☐ Shorts (minimum 3" inseam)
- ☐ Three (3) long-sleeve shirts
- ☐ T-shirts (Must have sleeves or have straps that are more than two fingers wide. Halter tops, backless shirts, visible cleavage, spaghetti-strap shirts, muscle shirts or tops with a high midriff are prohibited)
- ☐ Changes of underwear
- ☐ Seven (7) pairs of socks, including one (1) pair wool or polar fleece
- ☐ Sleepwear (2 changes – warm and cool weather)
- ☐ Swimsuit
- ☐ Sweatshirt/sweater (label with name)
- ☐ Warm jacket/fleece (label with name)
- ☐ Hat (label with name)
- ☐ Rain gear that will KEEP you dry (hooded jacket and pants, preferred; most programs and activities are held outside even when it's raining.)

Footwear:

Do not pack new shoes; ensure shoes are comfortable to avoid blisters while at camp.

- ☐ Pair of sneakers (label with name)
- ☐ Second pair of closed-toe shoes (e.g., hiking boots, sturdy shoes, pair of sneakers) (label with name)
- ☐ Closed toe water shoes (will get wet!) (label with name)

Bedding:

- ☐ Sleeping bag or blanket with a twin sheet
- ☐ Pillow with pillowcase

Other:

- ☐ Two (2) bath towels/face cloths
- ☐ Toiletries (soap, toothbrush, etc.)
 - Note: Unscented deodorant and lotion are less likely to attract insects than scented varieties
- ☐ Two (2) 32-ounce water bottles (reusable highly recommended)
- ☐ One white 100% cotton t-shirt or bandana, pre-washed (for tie-dying)
- ☐ Flashlight
- ☐ Sunglasses

A signed permission form a parent/guardian is required for the following items. Permission is a part of the Camper Medical History Form.

- ☐ Sunscreen (lotion or non-aerosol only)
- ☐ Insect repellent (lotion or non-aerosol only)

Optional

Please label belongings with camper's name

- ☐ Fishing gear
- ☐ Small book bag, day pack or backpack
- ☐ Archery equipment – bow and target arrows (These items will be securely stored and provided when needed for supervised programs)
- ☐ Camera (disposable is recommended, NO cell phone cameras)
- ☐ Binoculars
- ☐ Stationary and/or postcards and postage
- ☐ Notebook or sketchbook and pen
- ☐ Internal or external frame backpack
- ☐ Camping sleeping pad
- ☐ Tent
- ☐ Musical instrument
- ☐ Book
- ☐ Shaving razors/blades (These items will be securely stored and provided when needed.)

Contraband (Do Not Bring)

If any of these items are brought to camp, they will be confiscated and returned to the camper's parents at the end of the camp week. These items can be distracting, create an unsafe environment or attract wildlife.

- Cell phone
- iPod, MP3, electronic tablet
- Food, gum, candy, or other snacks
- Money (there is no camp store)
- Knives (hunting, jack, pen, etc.)
- Hair dryer, curling iron, etc.
- Makeup, perfume, cologne, hairspray
- Valuables (jewelry, etc.)
- Firearms, ammunition
- Axe, hatchet
- Pets
- Cigarettes, matches, lighters
- Vaping devices (e-cigarettes, pens, MODs, JUULs, etc.)
- Depilatories (Nair, Neet, etc.)
- Illegal substances (Possession of illegal substances will result in the child being sent home. It may also result in local authorities being notified.)

A HEALTHY CAMP STARTS AT HOME!

Adapted from the American Camp Association

A healthy camp really does start at home. Below are some things you can do to assure your child has a great summer camp experience.

1. When children show signs of illness such as running a temperature, throwing up, has diarrhea, nasal drainage, coughing and/or sneezing, keep them home and contact Camps Administration. This greatly reduces the spread of illness at camp but also supports your child's recovery. Be aware of your camp's criteria regarding camper health and attendance.
2. Teach your child to sneeze into the crease of their elbow and to wash their hands often at camp, especially before eating and after using the bathroom. If you really want to achieve impact, teach your child to accompany hand washing with another behavior: keeping their hands away from their face.
3. If your child has mental, emotional, or social health challenges, speak with the camp director before camp starts. Proactively discussing a camp's ability to accommodate a child can help minimize – if not eliminate – potential conflicts.
4. Closed-toe shoes are a requirement for activities such as sports and hiking. This will help avoid slips, trips, and falls, which could cause injuries. Stress to your child the importance of wearing closed-toe shoes to prevent a toe, foot and/or ankle injury.
5. Send enough clothes so your child can wear layers. Mornings can be chilly, and afternoons can get hot. Dressing in layers allows your child to remove clothing as they warm while still enjoying camp.
6. Fatigue plays a part in injuries and illnesses. Explain to your child that camp is not like a sleepover. Emphasize that they should not try to stay up all night!
7. Don't forget to pack sunscreen (and a signed note permitting its use) and instruct your child in how to apply it and how often to do so.
8. Please send two reusable water bottles. Instruct your child to use them and refill them frequently during their camp stay. Staying hydrated is very important for a healthy camp experience.
9. Talk with your child about telling their counselor, health director or director about issues or things that are troublesome to them at camp. These camp professionals can be quite helpful as children learn to handle being lonesome for home or cope with things such as losing something special. These helpers can't be helpful if they don't know about the problem – so encourage your child to talk to them.
10. Building a partnership between you and camp staff is essential for your child to have the best camp experience possible this summer!

Children's Camps in New York State

Please Note: This is a New State Department of Health publication and does not reflect every aspect of the DEC Summer Camps Program.

Children's Camps in New York State



In New York State, summer camps must have a state, city or county health department permit to operate legally. These permits are issued only if the camp is in compliance with the state's health regulations. The permit to operate must be displayed in a conspicuous place on the premises.

The camp must be inspected twice yearly by a health department representative. At least one inspection must be made during the time the camp is in operation. Each camp is checked to make sure that the physical facilities are safe and that supervision is adequate.

When choosing a summer camp for your child, consider the following:

Staff Credentials/Supervision

What are the qualifications of the camp director?

The New York State Health Code requires that the director of an overnight camp be at least 25-years-old or hold a bachelor's degree; a day camp director must be at least 21-years-old.

All directors must have experience in camping administration or supervision. Camp directors' backgrounds are screened by the Office of Children and Family Services Central Register Database for reported incidents of child abuse and maltreatment. Their backgrounds are also screened by the Health Department for criminal convictions. Only individuals who are considered to pose no risk to campers are accepted by the Health Department as camp directors.

What are the qualifications of the camp counselors and how are campers supervised?

Counselors must have experience in camping and supervision of children or have completed an acceptable training course. Stringent counselor-to-camper ratios and staff qualifications are mandated for supervision of swimming, archery, riflery and camp trip activities.

At overnight camps, 80 percent of the camps' counselors must be at least 18-years-old; up to 20 percent may be 17-years-old. There must be at least one counselor for every 10 children aged eight years or older, and one

counselor for every eight children younger than eight years old.

At day camps, counselors must be 16 years of age or older. There must be a minimum of one counselor for every 12 children.

Camps that must provide at least 10 counselors may choose to use counselors-in-training (CITs) to meet 10 percent of the required number of counselors. These CITs must be at least 16 years of age at an overnight camp and 15 years of age at a day camp. They must work with senior staff, have had previous experience as a camper and complete a training program. Ask the camp operator if any of their counselors are CITs and how they are used to supervise campers.

Ask about the camp's staff and supervision procedures, including discipline policies. Do they meet your expectations?

Health

Ask about medical coverage and when you will be notified if your child becomes ill or injured. Is a doctor or nurse in residence or on call for campers at all times?

Physicians or nursing services must be available. All summer camps in New York State are required to have a health director and a written medical plan approved by the Health Department.

The written plan must include, among other things, provisions for medical, nursing and first aid services. Injuries and illnesses must be reported to the Health Department and are thoroughly reviewed.

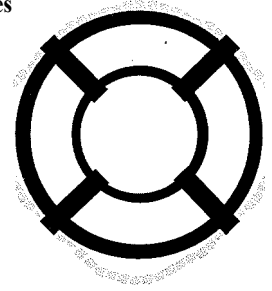
Does the camp require medical records for campers?

Camps must keep current medical history reports on file for all campers. Be sure to detail your child's history of immunization, illness, disability or allergy. Specify special diets and activity restrictions. Provide instruction for any medication your child must take.

Camp Safety

Are the camp facilities and activities safe?

The camp operator must develop a written plan to include maintenance of facilities, provisions for training staff members and orientation of campers, supervision of campers, campsite hazards, emergency procedures and drills, safety procedures and equipment for program activities.



Swimming

Are waterfront personnel qualified?

Are campers always supervised while in the water?

All waterfront activities at camps in New York State must be supervised by an experienced certified lifeguard or water safety instructor. On site, one qualified lifeguard is required for every 25 bathers. All aquatic staff are required to be trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

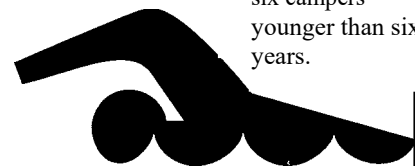
Camps that use off-site pools or beaches operated by others must make special arrangements to provide a safe activity. Even off site, the camp remains responsible for supervising campers.

Some children's camps use sites for swimming that are not inspected by local health departments. Parental permission is required in these instances, and the camp must follow established guidelines to protect campers.

While campers are involved in aquatic activities on site, there must be one counselor for every 10 campers eight years or older; there must be one counselor for every eight children aged six and seven; and one counselor for every six children younger than six years old.

When swimming off-site, there must be one counselor for every eight campers six years or older and one

counselor for every six campers younger than six years.



Are bathing areas marked off for various swimming skills? Are campers tested to determine their level of swimming ability before participating in aquatic activities? Are non-swimmers kept in water less than chest deep? Is the buddy system used? Are campers required to wear life preservers when boating or canoeing?

New York State regulation requires that the answers to all these questions must be "yes."

Camp Trips

Are camp trips supervised by counselors who have the maturity and experience to make decisions that could affect the safety of campers?

All trips must be supervised by a trip leader who is at least 18 years old and competent in the activity. Counselors must accompany trips and all staff must review the safety plan prior to the trip.

Counselors should have the skills and expertise in the camp activity (canoeing, rock-climbing, etc.) to handle any emergency that might arise. Ask whether the camp has conducted similar trips in the **past**, without incident.

In New York State, the drivers of camp vehicles must be licensed and at least 18-years-old. Seat belts must be worn when provided and vehicle capacities not exceeded. When transporting children in a truck, only a truck cab can be used.

Sports and Activities

How are activities in craft shops supervised, especially when campers are using dangerous tools, such as power saws and lathes? Are archery and rifle ranges at a safe distance from activity centers? Are spectators protected at baseball fields and similar areas? Do players wear protective equipment?

State regulation requires that archery, riflery and horseback riding be supervised by counselors with special training in those activities.

Fire Safety

Are there periodic fire drills for both campers and staff? Does each floor of every building have fire exits in two different locations? Are flammable materials (gasoline, pool chemicals, etc.) stored away from activity centers and kept under lock and key? Are functioning smoke detectors located in every sleeping room?

All of the above are mandatory in New York State.



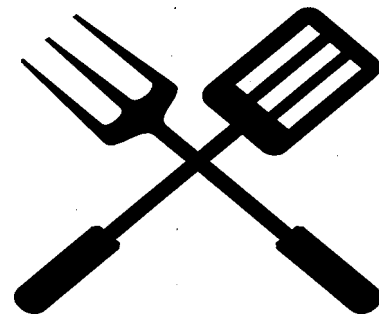
Are barriers erected against such natural hazards as cliffs and swamps? Are foot trails located away from such dangerous areas and from heavily traveled roads and highways? Do the camp facilities (bunks, bathrooms, mess hall, recreation facilities) meet your aesthetic tastes and those of your child? Is the camp located in an area that will not aggravate your child's allergies? Will your child be required to perform chores, such as cleaning or cooking?

For information on the camp's location and facilities, visit the camp or interview the camp operator by telephone, prior to making a decision to enroll your child at the camp.

Nutrition

Are good health practices observed in the camp kitchens, dining areas and food services? Does the camp serve food your child likes?

At camps in New York State, food must be prepared from inspected sources. Food preparation and handling activities are reviewed to assure safe and sanitary practices. Kitchen employees must be healthy and follow hygienic practices. Potentially hazardous food must be maintained below 45°F or above 140°F.



Rights and Responsibilities

The regulatory program of the New York State Department of Health places specific responsibilities on camp operators, and on local health departments that enforce department regulations. Following is a summary of rights and responsibilities:

Rights of Parents and Guardians

- To be informed by the camp director, or their designee, of any incident involving your child, including serious injury, illness or abuse.
- To review inspection and investigation reports for a camp, which are maintained by the local health department issuing the camp a permit to operate (present and past reports are available).
- To review the required written camp plans. These are on file at both the camp and the health department issuing the permit to operate.

Responsibilities of the Camp Operator

- To inform you and the local health department if your child is involved in any serious injury, illness or abuse incident.
- To screen the background and qualifications of all staff.
- To train staff about their duties.
- To provide supervision for all campers 24 hours a day at overnight camps, and during hours of operation for day camps.
- To maintain all camp physical facilities in a safe and sanitary condition.
- To provide safe and wholesome meals.
- To have and follow required written plans for camp safety, health and fire safety.
- To notify the parent or guardian, with the enrollment application or enrollment contract, that:
 - the camp must have a permit to operate from the New York State Department of Health or the designated permit-issuing official;

- the camp is required to be inspected twice yearly; and
- the inspection reports and required plans are filed (address of state, county or city health department) and available for their review.

Responsibilities of Local Health Departments

- To review and approve the required written camp plans for compliance.
- To inspect camps to assure that: (1) all physical facilities are properly operated and maintained; and (2) adequate supervision exists to provide a healthy and safe environment in accordance with the New York State Sanitary Code.
- To issue a permit to operate when the required plans and inspection results are satisfactory.
- To investigate reports of serious incidents of injury, illness and all allegations of abuse or maltreatment.
- When requested, to provide parents or guardians of prospective campers an opportunity to review inspection reports and required plans.

The time and effort spent in selecting the camp your youngster will attend is important. Keep in touch, especially if it is your child's first camp experience. If possible, visit the camp before and during the camping season.

Information

For further information about New York State health laws relating to summer camps, call the State Health Department's Bureau of Community Environmental Health and Food Protection in Troy at 1-(800) 458-1158, ext. 27600.



State of
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