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Youth Camp Safety Policy

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Youth Camp Safety Policy

General

The University of Maine supports and encourages youth camps in various subjects being held at its facilities, and recognizes that such camps offer an introduction to the university to potential future students. To this end, UMaine has authorized a wide range of youth camps, run by both internal and external organizations, to give young people the opportunity to experience the possibilities of careers, improve their athletic, performing arts, science, and other interests in a highly professional and productive environment.

Although no single policy or procedure will address all safety and health contingencies, UMaine endeavors to balance the value of participation in youth camp against any potential risks to campers and staff.

Goals

The goals of this policy are to:

- Ensure the security and safety of campers;
- Establish requirements and guidance for planning and managing the risks associated with camps;
- Present an organizational structure that creates communication between all groups on and off campus, and;
- Provide training, resources and information systems to our camp programs.

Purpose

This policy establishes the requirements for youth camps, with the goal of maximizing personal safety as well as compliance with applicable UMaine, local, state, and federal regulations. It includes:

- Provision of information, resources and guidance to UMaine administrators to increase their ability to develop and implement safety and health programs and procedures;
- Facilitation of immediate access to data on the location of UMaine campers and ability to communicate rapidly with said campers to verify wellbeing and to provide ongoing instructions or guidance as needed.

Scope

This policy applies to all University of Maine (UMaine) youth camp programs that involve minors that are not part of an academic program.

Responsibilities

The local responsibility for youth camp safety and compliance lies with the Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors, Department Heads, and other managers.

Camp Directors are responsible for ensuring that safety, environmental and compliance concerns within their areas are addressed promptly and with appropriate resources.

Note: The overnight camp directors shall be at least 25 years of age and the day camp directors shall be at least 21 years of age.

Background Checks

Background checks must be performed on potential staff and volunteers, in accordance with established policy of the Office of Human Resources.

The Manager Toolkit from the Office of Human Resources web site explains:

“Background checks are conducted for individuals recommended for hire in selected positions which are designated as financially sensitive, which require driving as an essential duty of the position, or which involve work with children or in police fields. Background checks may include a criminal history check, a driving record check, and/or a credit/bankruptcy check.

Documentation

Camp documentation that must be received from campers before the start of camp:

- Health survey: - Current physicals are required for camps involving vigorous athletic activities;
 - Participants must be in appropriate physical condition for the activity they are participating
 - Participants should be placed in the correct skill level for the activity scheduled
- Liability waiver indemnifying the university;

Parent’s Information Sheet to make them aware of the risks associated with the activities.

Staffing

Required campers per counselor ratio:

- In each non-overnight camp, there shall be at least one counselor for every child:
 - 6 years and under 1 to 5
 - 7-8 years 1 to 6
 - 9-14 years 1 to 8
 - 15-18 years 1 to 10
- In each overnight camp there shall be at least one senior counselor for every:
 - Six children seven years of age or under;
 - Eight children eight years of age or under the age of 18.

Emergency Procedures

Shall be developed, implemented and communicated to all staff and volunteers. All injuries/Illness/Property Damage shall be reported to the Camp Director.

Written emergency procedures must be in place for the following:

- Dangerous weather conditions
- Fire
- Motor-vehicle accident
- Swimming using certified lifeguards
- Lost Camper
- First aid/medical emergencies/administering medications - There shall be on site an adult health supervisor who is one of the following:
 - Physician,
 - Physician Assistant,
 - Registered Nurse,
 - Licensed Practical Nurse,
 - Emergency Medical Technician
 - An athletic trainer certified by the National Athletic Trainers' Association Board of Certification (NATABOC) at all times.

Note: All employees or volunteers administering first aid must have first aid/CPR training and Bloodborne Pathogens Training. They shall be included in the department exposure control plan.

Note: Written procedures for administering non-emergency medications and training of staff must also be in place.

Camp Rules Requirements

Camp procedures must have written staff rules to address supervision of campers for both day and overnight camps.

Camp staff must wear identifying clothing uniform or utilize a credential system.

Written attendance procedures shall be established and implemented, as a minimum at the beginning and end of each day.

Discipline

Each camp shall develop written behavior expectations and discipline procedures. These requirements must be communicated to campers and parents. Consequences for rules violations shall range from suspension from an activity or camp, to prosecution for criminal acts, as determined by the administrative authority at each camp

Each camp must have clearly delineated the circumstances under which parents and/or UMaine authorities will be contacted.

Suspected Child Abuse

Suspected child abuse shall be reported by staffers and volunteers, in accordance with Maine law and University of Maine procedures.

Missing Camper

Campers shall be checked in and out of activity sites by staff using an attendance roster. If a camper does not report to an activity as scheduled, a member of the camp's leadership is to be notified. The attendance program provides for the accountability of every camper participating in the program. If a camper is missing, a Lost Camper Plan must be activated.

Lost Camper Plan

Staff must account for all campers in their programs at all times. If at any time a camper is suspected of being missing, immediately notify the University Police and the Camp Director. Upon report that a camper is missing, the Camp Director shall determine where and when the camper was last seen. He or she will also request additional information as to the camper's emotional state, friends, description, clothing being worn, last place seen, etc.

The Camp Director and UMPD will designate who will search the campus. If the camper is not found, UMPD will open the EOC. If necessary, EOC will contact outside agencies to alert them about the missing camper. At the one-hour mark, if the camper has not been found, the UMPD Incident Commander will release a full description of missing camper. The description shall include height, weight, clothes worn; last place seen, habits and anything else that could help locate the camper. At the two-hour mark if the camper has not been found, Camp Director will notify parents with information.

Access/Security

There shall be a written policy providing that all campers shall only be released from camp into the custody of a designated person, previously identified in writing, who may be the camper's parent, guardian, or other person(s) identified by the parent or guardian.

Overnight camps shall have a written policy for accessing the residence halls, and how to handle access to campers via staff and visitors. The policy shall describe under what circumstances campers' parents and UMaine administration contact is required.

At a day camp, a list of those authorized to pick up each camper must be provided.

Overnight camps shall have the written residential hall access procedures posted on each floor.

If a camper has been taken from camp without the direct approval of the director, get descriptions of all persons involved if possible (hair, clothing, height, automobile license plate number, etc.). Notify the UMaine Police immediately, and then notify Camp Director.

Medications

- All prescription medications brought to camp by campers and staff housed with campers, shall be kept under lock.
- Schedule II drugs shall be kept under double lock or in the immediate possession of the health supervisor or the person specifically designated by such supervisor. The double lock shall be a locked compartment inside of a locked cabinet.
- Each camp shall have a written policy authorizing those campers who are required to self-administer emergency medication, including, but not limited to, an asthma inhaler or an epinephrine pen. To self-administer such medication the following requirements must be met:
- A camper who self-administers emergency medication shall have the prior written approval of the camper's primary health care provider and the camper's parent or guardian.
- The camper's parent or guardian shall submit written verification to the camp from the camper's primary health care provider confirming that the camper has the knowledge and the skills to safely self-administer the emergency medication in camp.
- A treatment log for all campers and staff shall be kept and made available upon request.

Safety and Health Assessment

Each camp shall conduct a risk and safety assessment prior to each camp season using the Youth Camp Safety Checklist.

Upon completion of the assessment, the Camp Director will correct any deficiencies and implement appropriate procedures to reduce risks. These policies, and procedures shall delineate required supervision levels, equipment checks, and operating guidelines to ensure the safe participation of all campers.

Participant Safety

- An adequate ratio of staff to participants shall be maintained at all times; particularly when in residence halls.
- Safety equipment shall be inspected prior to and during camp for safe conditions.
- Grounds shall be inspected prior to and during the camp for safe conditions
- Equipment shall be kept in safe condition and suitable for intended use; and
- Vehicles used for transportation shall be properly inspected, operated by trained staff and follow all operating and passenger rules.

Training

UMaine shall provide annual training for youth camp safety. All camp staff and volunteers shall receive the venue specific training on an annual basis.

The venue specific training for camp staff and volunteers shall cover a wide variety of topics such as safety and risk management, first aid and emergency procedures, preventing bullying behaviors, group dynamics, camper behavior management, camp rules and regulations, and program operations.

Camp Directors shall verify that all of the required training, employment paperwork, and planning requirements have been completed and appropriate documentation is on file for review.

For Additional Information

Contact your Department Safety Coordinator or the Department of Safety and Environmental Management at 207/581-4055.

Document History

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Signature _____

Date _____

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