

CHILDREN'S CAMPS

Information About Children's Camps

Children's camps are fun, and it provides a great learning experience. The Clinton County Health Department wants to make sure that children can enjoy themselves at a camp, while being in a healthy and safe environment.

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 Clinton County 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.

Responsibilities of Local Health Departments

To issue a permit to operate when the required plans and inspection results are satisfactory.

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 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.

Applying for a Permit to Operate

An application for a permit to operate a children's camp and other required documents must be submitted to the permit-issuing official at your local health department at least 60 days before children and staff are to arrive. A Safety plan must be approved 60 days prior to camp opening. The Clinton County Health Department will help walk you through this application process.

Information For Parents

Your first responsibility as a parent is to make sure that the particular camp that you are looking at sending your child to, meets the definition of a children's camp and is permitted by Clinton County.

The key to picking the right camp for your child to attend is making sure that the camp fills the needs of your child. Each child has their own specific needs and to match the child with the correct camp is the parent's responsibility.

NY State has developed guidelines for Camp Directors to follow (NY Sanitary Code Subpart 7-2). Each camp are also required to develop a Children's Camp Safety Plan which outlines how the camp will operate when your child is attending, and is under their supervision.

Here is a summary list of public health hazards listed in the NYS Sanitary Code which are considered a condition which would be expected to be responsible for injury, illness or death at a children's camp:

- Proper staff qualifications
- Sufficient quantity of water and water system operating in accordance with subpart 5-1
- Bathing beach waters monitored
- Proper sewage or garbage disposal and storage
- Medical safety plan implementation and under supervision of approved and qualified medical director
- Proper transportation of campers
- Proper supervision of campers
- Proper supervision, fencing, depth markings at pools or beaches
- Proper rifle range, archery or horse back riding supervision and guidelines
- Proper supervision and adequate sleeping quarters, not to exclude overcrowding issues
- Proper storage of flammable items, fire safety implementation, ventilation of stove and heat producing equipment, fire exits, firefighting equipment
- Campers not allowed to swim outside of approved campsite swimming area
- Minimum safety equipment present at all beaches and pools.
- Usage of life vests during boating and other water front activities
- Use of approved "buddy-system" and buddy board
- Non-permitting of diving in hazardous areas
- Proper identification and restrictions of non-swimmers (to less than chest deep water)
- Failure to implement their camp safety plan
- Any other item protecting a child from being exposed to unreasonable risk

Parents feel free to ask questions of your camp directors to make sure how all these areas of concern of being addressed at their specific camp. An informed parent should be able to make the right choice for their child, therefore, making the child's experience a memorable event in their life.

Contact Us

To receive more information, call or visit us at:

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