

OHIO VALLEY CHRISTIAN CAMP

Guidelines for Camp Deans

Minor update September 21, 2022

1. INTRODUCTION.

Congratulations on being selected as a Camp Dean! Hopefully these Guidelines will be of help to you to prepare for your week of Camp and to guide you through the week. Some items noted in these Guidelines represent Board policies and decisions and some are merely practical suggestions.

If you have further questions, or suggestions for improvement, please advise the Board Chairman. In particular, if you are a first-time Dean at O.V.C.C., let us know of areas not covered that would have been of help to you, so we can improve these Guidelines for future leaders.

2. GETTING STARTED.

a. Appointments.

(1) The Dean of a week of Camp is responsible for selecting his staff. These normally include the class teachers and any special speakers such as Vespers or Campfire or Missions; and selection of special helpers such as teenage workers or college teams. You should designate dorm Dad's and Mom's; designate a Nurse (who must have a Red Cross First Aid plus CPR Course Certificate or equivalent); and designate an Assistant Dean to be in charge if you are called away. You may find it helpful to designate such positions as recreation leader, head lifeguard, song leader, head musician, team leaders, flag-raiser, chief dorm inspector, etc. In recent years, the camp Board has been recruiting the cooking staff, so the Dean is relieved of that task. If the cook needs your help in obtaining assistants, please attempt to provide that.

(2) While often some persons can serve in more than one of these positions, care should be taken to not overwork any individual; or, conversely, to recruit so many persons that the Camp is plainly overstaffed and physically and financially burdened by the extra staff. For example, it probably is too much of a load for one person to serve as cook's assistant, which requires an early morning start and many hours' effort during the day, and as Dorm Mom, which may require extended conversation with a camper into the night. However, a person who teaches one class and is also vespers' song-leader could probably serve as Dorm Mom as well. It should be noted that we have had more problems in the past with insufficient adult staff help than with too much, and to err on the side of overstaffing is better. It is helpful for the Campers to have staff that will be with them consistently throughout the week, so trusting relationships can develop; on the other hand, it may be easier to recruit workers if they are only obligated for a portion of each day and then are allowed to leave the camp. Use your best judgement in balancing these considerations, but you are responsible to plan for enough staff to always be present so that all campers are always properly supervised.

(3) Other guidelines: do not commit to paying or reimbursing for staff expenses unless prior Board approval has been granted; make sure that your staff are appointed sufficiently ahead of time and are sufficiently briefed so that they can be well-prepared; and make sure that each person on your staff has the proper maturity, both physical and spiritual, to handle their tasks. Remember that all persons in a Christian camp serve a spiritual role, even if in a primarily physical assignment.

(4) The Board has adopted the following policy concerning teenage helpers: persons entering the 9th grade and up may help with Intermediate or First Chance Camp; high school graduates may help with Junior High, Intermediate, or First Chance Camp. For Senior High week, Bible College students, or upper-class secular college students who are active in a campus ministry or local church work may be considered. Prospective teenage helpers are expected to have attended their own

week of camp, and to attend an orientation day prior to the camp season, if one is offered; if not, the Dean of the week in question will be responsible for orienting the helpers. Training guidelines are available upon request. Any exceptions to these policies should be approved by a committee consisting of the camp Board Chairman, the prospective helper's Minister or Elder, and the Dean of the week in question. Teenage helpers should be registered on the special form for them, which includes Parent's permission and medical information.

(5) Persons assigned staff duties are given free room and meals while serving on the staff. In some cases, staff persons may have to bring children along; this is acceptable (though it may not be desirable for the Camp, and other possibilities should be sought), and they are also given free room and board. Staff children are expected to be answerable to the Dean for proper behavior.

b. Schedule. Most camps will follow a schedule that consists of three class sessions, recreation periods, an evening Vespers service, and an evening "special events" program. Many camps also choose to have a period that concentrates on Missions (or a Mission) or on the call to Christian service, usually in the morning. Realize that the different age groups will of necessity have different schedule arrangements; the older campers can handle longer class periods than the younger, for example. The Sunday evening and Friday evening schedules usually differ from the midweek's, with Sunday having a "get-acquainted" aspect and Friday's a "good-bye" aspect and sometimes a baptismal service. The arrival and departure times also are a factor to plan for on these days, with the attending confusion. Many Deans have a staff meeting on Sunday afternoon. If this is done, try to recruit additional temporary adult help, perhaps parents or other church leaders who are bringing campers, to supervise the campers while you conduct your staff meeting. You will also need to make sure someone is at the camp from before the opening time until after the staff meeting to welcome and supervise arrivals, make sure they get situated, and accept late registration forms and money (often Tammy Renfrow, our Treasurer, does this). It is highly recommended that you develop a printed schedule well in advance of your Camp week, in consultation with your more involved staff persons, and have the printed schedule available for campers as they arrive. Include some basic, though not exhaustive, behavior guidelines in your schedule. The Board should have adopted a Camp "Theme" for the summer which you should consider in your programming; if they haven't, it may be useful to develop one, especially for the older groups. This may be based on the curriculum or the Mission program or the Vesper speaker's subject or other considerations, as you desire; it frequently helps "tie things together" for the staff and students both. It may be helpful to request sample Schedules from previous Camps of your age group.

c. Class Curriculum. The Board has adopted a "Curricula Guide" as a suggestion for Deans to follow for Camp weeks. This is an outline of basic content that attempts to provide for a broad Christian education of campers over the years and to avoid duplication from year to year. It is not required that you follow the Curricula; but if you feel the need to depart significantly from it, please advise the Board so this can be noted and revisions can be considered. At this writing, the current Curricula revision date is January 2011.

d. Camp Objectives. In addition to the Curricula guide, please consider these general objectives, and communicate them to your Staff:

(1) The primary goal of the First Chance camp is to provide an enjoyable, non-threatening experience of Christian Camp life for the young camper. It should be designed so that campers will like the experience and want to come back.

(2) The Intermediate, Junior High and (if offered) Second Chance weeks should provide a balance of fun and recreation with some serious teaching times. Opportunities should be provided to encourage decisions for Christ; for education in Bible and Faith subjects; and for guidance in

matters of practical Christian living.

(3) The Senior High week should continue the efforts of the previous years, with appropriate attention to the difficulties typically faced by high school students; and additionally, to prepare the campers for an adult life that values Christian service. Each season's Senior High camp should include encouragement for the campers to either attend Bible college, or if they are attending a secular college to become involved in a campus ministry, or if they plan to begin their working career to begin serving their church in some capacity.

3. CAMP SUPERVISION AND OPERATION.

a. Camper age considerations. Prospective campers are instructed to select and attend their appropriate week of camp by school grade and age. Unless there are appropriate extenuating circumstances, campers should not be allowed to attend camps of other age groups. A camper who can not attend his/her normal week due to family vacation, school, or other significant commitment conflicts may request to be allowed to attend a week representing one year earlier or later in age. Such an application for exception must be endorsed by the camper's Minister or Elder. The Dean of the week that the camper would be attending has the final decision. If you receive such an application, you are requested to consider it carefully; if it appears reasonable, and properly endorsed, and the camper does not have a history of problem behavior, you should grant the request. You should not allow a camper to attend a week of camp that represents two years or more difference in age eligibility without consulting the Board Chairman. Ministers or Elders who feel that such an exception should be allowed must clearly justify the request, stating why the proper week or one-year exception can't be managed. Also, you should normally not allow a camper to attend a week of camp outside his/her age bracket simply to be with his/her friends, or to attend a second week of camp. Also, the structure of the new Second Chance camp provides the possibility for an alternate or a second week of camp for the 4th-7th grade age group [if it is offered—the past few years we have not been able to offer this camp]. Don't fear being "hard-nosed" in these matters; you should prayerfully consider the request of a camper for an exception and consider his/her needs, but also consider the overall needs of your campers and the fact that an out-of-age camper can often disrupt things.

b. Camper behavior and discipline.

(1) The following guidelines for behavior and dress are quoted as they are printed in the annual Camp Program brochure, and must be enforced: "The purpose of these rules is to assist each camper to 'set your mind and affections on things above' (Col. 3:1). Each program of the camp is designed to assist in your spiritual development by helping you with the things you should 'think' about (Phil. 4:8). 1. All faculty members & campers are to abide by the Schedule unless excused by the Dean. 2. No one is permitted to leave the camp without the permission of the Dean. 3. The use of tobacco, intoxicants, and illicit drugs on the campground is strictly prohibited at all times. 4. All sickness and injury must be reported to the Nurse and to the Dean at once. 5. Radios, music players, cell-phones, pagers, magazines, cards, pets, firearms and fireworks are not allowed. 6. Except for medical reasons, do not bring food, drinks or snacks. Any brought must stay in the kitchen (this is a state law). 7. Campers are not permitted to ride on any camp vehicle except for scheduled activities. 8. Campers or teen helpers that drive to camp must lock their vehicle and turn their keys over to the Dean. 9. Any camper causing property damage will be held responsible for the cost, which will be determined by the camp Dean in cooperation with the camp Board. 10. Any serious or continuous infraction will result in dismissal from camp without any refund. We want you to enjoy yourself by obeying all rules.

"The Dress Code is as follows, to be obeyed by all campers and faculty: 1. No clothing or patches on clothing with slogans of an unChristian nature printed on them: i.e. beer labels, or suggestive implications. 2. Modest bathing suits only. No bikini or revealing type suits allowed. If a suit is questionable, the Dean may require you to wear a long T-shirt or other covering, or may not allow you to swim. 3. Shoes and sandals must be worn at all times other than the pool. 4. Girl's blouses are to be unrevealing."

(2) You should realize that people can get hurt, and the camp may be liable for damage claims, if a camper is hurt due to rough play or unchaperoned/ improperly chaperoned activities that result in injury. Therefore, you are cautioned--and hereby required--to always make sure that campers are supervised by an adult and are engaged in safe activities. This includes recreation times at the camp, at the pool or other off-campus places, or enroute. It also includes campers (or Staff) that might be tempted to engage in practical jokes at any time, and campers that might sneak out of activities or from the dorms at night. Think "safety first"!

(3) Night-time pranking is a particular risk and concern. Please remember that young campers, possibly away from home for the first time, may be easily alarmed, and that accidents can easily occur when in the dark in a panic. You should avoid having such risks. Think "safety first"!

(4) Another area of concern is the pairing-off and "courting" of boys and girls, particularly in the older age groups. The campers should be encouraged to be friends with everyone, but to not pair off. Many of the area school systems forbid prolonged physical contact between students: no holding of hands, no kissing or romantic hugging, and "space" should always be visible between them. Should not a Christian Camp hold to at least this high of a standard? There's no intention here that we should teach that physical contact is wrong--but it is felt that it can be disruptive to the desired spiritual atmosphere of the Camp week, so it should be discouraged while at Camp.

(5) Boys should be prohibited from entering the Girls' dorm, and vice-versa. Try to find places for group or team meetings that avoid using the dorms.

(6) You should restrict older campers who bring cars to camp from going to them without escort--they may be hiding cigarettes or other items. Even if they just "listen to music", that's disruptive to camp spirit. You should require that campers and teen helpers turn their keys over to you for safekeeping. This is listed in the rules in the Camp Program brochure.

(7) If a camper willfully or repeatedly breaks the rules, you must discipline him/her. The proper discipline depends on the severity of the conduct and the attitude of the camper. If a discussion with an erring camper results in an apparently true repentance, you are encouraged to accept this and provide little or no punishment. It is suggested that you use removal of privileges or a short separation from the group for an offense that does require some discipline. Physical punishment is to be avoided. Do not hesitate to call a camper's parents and/or send him/her home if the situation warrants--the rest of your campers may deserve it, and the spiritual success of your week may depend on it.

(8) You are requested to include at least a mention of behavior rules and the possible discipline of being sent home in your Schedule handout and to discuss them during your first meeting with the campers on Sunday night. Make sure that your Staff is aware of the rules. Try to keep the focus positive: "these rules are to make sure we have a good week", etc.

Realize that the above concerns also apply for conduct of teenage helpers during the younger weeks.

c. Safety considerations during activities.

(1) Use of the ropes course requires that a trained facilitator be present.

(2) Food use policy: Deans and activity leaders are cautioned to not have activities that involve

deliberate choking and vomiting. There are both immediate dangers and long-term consequences of appearing to endorse bulimia and anorexia.

(3) You should limit stressful recreation during the heat of the day. It is best to plan any ballgames or other activities that involve much running for morning recreation, and schedule a rest period just after lunch, and/or have some early afternoon classes. Swimming during the afternoon, even if hot, usually is fine. Make sure that at least you or your assistant Dean are present for all stressful recreation, and at least one other adult, preferably the one qualified for First Aid. Have drinking water available.

d. Recreation.

(1) The pavilion, ballfield, basketball and volleyball courts at the Camp provide opportunities for group recreation. There is some recreational equipment in the shed by the pavilion. For group swimming, in recent years we have arranged to use a motel pool in Aurora. Stay with the arranged times, check in with the office when you arrive, and keep and report a count of how many campers and staff swim. You will need to have at least two adults designated as lifeguards and to maintain discipline and safe play. Have the campers prove that they can swim before allowing them into deep water. As this is a motel, restrooms are not conveniently available: tell the kids this and have them use the restroom before leaving Camp. In the past we have used the pool at the city-county Park in Murray, where we can set up a charge-account arrangement; but due to distance, large numbers of swimmers present, and other distractions, this is not as desirable a location. Lake swimming is also available at Kenlake State Park nearby; but the pool swimming is safer and is cleaner, so is preferred, particularly for the younger campers. Experience has shown that swimming is a most favorite activity of the campers, particularly the younger ones (it also makes sure all those little boys get washed each day!). You should bring some board games or other suitable indoor games for rainy days. A TV or projector and a VCR/DVD player are available at the camp for use. You may substitute another recreation of comparable cost for the swimming, if you desire—miniature golf is popular. See “Budget” below.

(2) Camp insurance DOES NOT cover the following activities unless additional coverage is applied for in advance, with additional premium: (a) Adventure sports, including but not limited to mountain climbing, rappelling, spelunking, challenge/high-rope courses, white water rafting or canoeing, wind surfing, jet skiing, scuba/skin diving, or rodeo participation; (b) Work activities, including but not limited to remodeling, plastering, roofing, plumbing, brick and block laying, electrical work, concrete work, and using scaffolds, ladders, power or chain saws; (c) in case winter camp activities are ever contemplated, most snow sports. Participation in any of these activities should be cleared in advance with the Camp Board, and the insurance coverage obtained.

e. Budget. For full-week camps, the Board has allocated \$400 to each dean for camp activity expenses. For First Chance camp \$200 is allocated. You may use this amount for swimming or other recreation, paying for outside speakers or other resource groups, special supplies, etc. If a Dean needs more, he should bring that request to a Board meeting before camping season.

f. Transportation Policy. Transporting campers more than 30 miles one way for program or recreational activities requires Board and parental approval. Deans are responsible for arranging safe transportation, especially in regard to the use of seatbelts and proper loading of vehicles. Churches that have them may be willing to provide their vans. Camp insurance provides secondary coverage to the vehicle’s primary insurance, which must be carried by the vehicle owner.

g. Supplies, repairs, and other logistics.

(1) Most food supplies are purchased by the Kitchen Manager in advance of the week of Camp. Minor shortages or other needs may be purchased by you or the Cook. You may use petty cash

money, replacing it with a clearly-labeled receipt of the purchase. You should not make major changes in the menu or make significant purchases without contacting the Kitchen Manager. Receipts and expenses for Canteen items must be kept separate from other kitchen expenses, as we have to report sales tax information on the food items that we sell individually.

(2) If you run out of propane gas, our supplier is Amerigas (formerly Ohio Valley Gas Co., Mayfield), 270-247-3091, Account # 0201983792. The electric supplier is West KY R.E.C.C., phone 877-495-7322 or 270-247-1321; the telephone / Internet company is West KY & TN Rural Telephone Cooperative, phone 877-954-8748 or 270-437-1000; the water company is Jonathan Creek Water Association, 270-354-8474. The Marshall County Health Department does cook certification training, camp inspections, and may be contacted for mosquito spraying, at 270-252-2719 (Environmental office). If available, contact the Property Manager (Bill Call, 270-293-0068 or home 270-753-7870) about these items; but if not available, call the companies directly.

(3) Make sure that trash is properly collected from the dorms and placed into the dumpster. Marshall County Refuse picks up once or twice a week during camping season; they may need to be notified at the start of camp that we are open, or if there are pickup needs. Number is 270-527-8437.

(4) Attempt minor repairs if you feel qualified or if you feel you have qualified staff. If other repairs are needed, contact the Board Chairman or Property Manager for proper procedures. Do not call a commercial repairman without first ascertaining that volunteer talents are not available, or that previous arrangements have not already been made.

h. Visitors. Visitors are not discouraged from coming to the Camp, but they should not be allowed to disrupt it. Do not allow visitors to call the campers (or helpers) from scheduled activities that they are involved in, unless very good reasons are given. If visitors stay for a meal, the Dean is to collect for their meal costs (rates are in the OVCC Program brochure). Realize that in this day of high divorce, child-custody squabbles, and child-abuse cases, you may need to verify that a proper relationship exists and/or monitor the visitor's activities if you don't know them. Make sure that all your Staff is aware of these concerns.

4. FINISHING UP.

a. Invitation, Decision and Baptism considerations.

(1) Invitations are not expected for the First Chance Camp. It is appropriate to mention that "if a camper has questions or concerns, they should talk with a staffer" or such; but end-of-service Invitations are not appropriate for this age group.

(2) Invitations are expected for the older groups. Generally, they work best as one pre-announced "time of decision" for Thursday night; then the camper may be baptized Friday afternoon if that is requested. Periodic mentions that the staff is available for counsel are also appropriate.

"High-pressure" Invitations are discouraged, and any responses need private interviewing to ascertain that one camper is not following another's example without personal conviction.

Invitations to announce rededication or commitment to full-time service should follow the same guidelines.

(3) If a Camper responds to an Invitation with an announcement of a decision for Christ and a desire to be baptized, then parents and possibly the camper's Minister should be consulted. If parents demand that the child wait before baptism, that request must be honored. The camper should be counseled to obey the parents, but to share their new-found Faith with the parents and show by their changed life that they are sincere.

b. Camper of the Week. Each week of Camp is allowed to designate a "Camper of the Week" (or

even two, a boy and a girl, for a large group) if they desire. The Camp fee will be waived the following year for a "Camper of the Week". Make sure the name(s) is reported on the Camp Week Report form.

c. Camper evaluation forms. [to be developed]

d. Shutting down the camp.

(1) You or a designated Staffer must remain until all campers have been picked up.

(2) Unless yours is the last week of Camp or you have been instructed otherwise, do not turn off the air conditioners, power, or water in the dorms or kitchen. Turn the Air Conditioners back to about 80 degrees. Any time that food is stored in the kitchen and the refrigerators are operating, the Air Conditioning should not be turned off. If the camp will not be occupied for more than several days, then turn the kitchen A/C back to 85 and the dorms' off. Also, in this case, turn the water valves off to all buildings, the water heaters off, and the main circuit breakers off for the dorms--but leave the kitchen breaker and A/C on! If the icemaker is to continue to run in the kitchen, its water must remain on, too.

(3) Make sure that all garbage is disposed of and buildings locked.

e. Reports and evaluations.

(1) A standard Camp Week Report is attached. This should be completed at the end of the week and sent to the Board Treasurer (Tammy Renfrow) along with the camper registration forms, receipts for the week and copies of any purchase invoices.

(2) Any injuries or sickness that required treatment beyond First Aid must be reported to the State. Furnish information about the incident(s) using form CHPS-43 (copies stored in the First Aid closet) and send to the Board Chairman for his consolidated submission to the State (through the Marshall Co. Health Department, 267 Slickback Road, Benton KY 42025). An accident or illness that may result in an insurance claim will also require gathering of information such as witness names and addresses, time and description of incident, doctor and hospital used, primary insurance company, etc. A form and information sheet that must be filled out is in the kitchen closet.