

Metro Parks Summer Camp Parent Handbook

2022



COLUMBUS & FRANKLIN COUNTY METRO PARKS

Dear Camp Family,

Welcome and thank you for choosing Metro Parks Summer Camp! We are so excited for this fun-filled summer. In order to be greatly prepared for camp, please read the following information.

VISION, MISSION, AND GOALS

Metro Parks Summer Camp is a program designed to foster the discovery of nature, provide a safe place to be yourself, and create a fun-filled summer that can lead to life-long friendships. The Camp Team works hard to make sure campers have a great summer while also providing the necessary information to ensure our parents and guardians are informed and involved.

MISSION OF METRO PARKS

To conserve open spaces, while providing places and opportunities that encourage people to discover and experience nature.

GOALS OF METRO PARKS SUMMER CAMP

- Create a safe and inclusive environment in which campers can discover nature.
- Provide opportunities for campers to make new friends and build relationships.
- Introduce campers to new outdoor recreation and nature experiences.
- Facilitate the development of new skills through hands-on learning.
- Foster a life-long appreciation and understanding of the natural world.
- Change lives naturally.
- Have fun!

CONTACT INFORMATION

Audrey Beam, Camp Supervisor
E-mail: adbeam@metroparks.net
T: 614-895-6227

Ashley Yockey, Camp Specialist
E-mail: avyockey@metroparks.net
T: 614-895-6213

Metro Parks Camps Line
E-mail: naturecamps@metroparks.net
T: 614-508-8008
- please leave a message at this number for after hours family or medical emergencies

Head Counselor: You will meet your Head Counselor and receive their contact information on the first day of camp.

REGISTRATION

REFUND POLICY

Metro Parks refund policy is as follows:

- 50% refund until Monday May 23. No refunds after that date.
 - ❖ Please contact the Camp Supervisor in the event of a medical or family emergency that results in a child being unable to attend camp.

PAYMENT

Payment for Metro Parks Summer Camp is due in full at the time of registration. You may register and pay online, over the phone or in person at Metro Parks Headquarters. Please note that registering in person or over the phone does not guarantee you a spot.

REQUIRED FORMS

All forms must be completed and returned before camp in order to finalize the registration process. Forms will be attached to your registration confirmation email or available by request. Campers will not be admitted to camp without completed forms.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Metro Parks offers camp scholarships based on financial need. If you are interested in receiving a scholarship application, please email naturecamps@metroparks.net.

TAX ID NUMBER

For tax filing purposes, Metro Parks' tax ID # is: 31-1578154

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

COMMUNICATION

It is our goal to provide a safe and inclusive environment for campers to discover nature, develop new skills, and make new friends. This is aided greatly through open communication between parents and our staff. Counselors are a wonderful resource and we suggest you check in with them daily. Do not hesitate to bring up concerns, ask questions, or just get a recap of the day. You are also more than welcome to reach out to the Camp Supervisor and Camp Specialist to discuss matters further. We want to make sure your camper has the best summer!

CAMPER INFORMATION

If concerns about our camp program arise during your week of camp, please bring them to the attention of the Camp Supervisor or Camp Specialist. We also encourage you to share as much information about your camper(s) with your counselors as you are willing. Knowing how to meet the individual needs of each of our campers will help our counselors to better create a safe, inclusive and fun experience each week.

OFFICE HOURS

The office hours of our camp team are as follows:

- Monday-Friday: 7:30am-5:30pm
 - ❖ If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's camp, please contact us no later than the Wednesday prior to your week of camp. We will not be responding to emails or voicemails left over the weekend until the following Monday.

MEDICATION

MEDICATION

Any and all medications must be indicated on the Emergency Medical Form. Metro Parks employees are not authorized to administer medication of any kind with the exception of epinephrine auto-injectors (please see below). Medications to be taken at camp must be clearly labeled with the camper's name and given to the Head Counselor at drop off. Counselors will have a first-aid backpack onsite where camper medications can be stored and can check in with campers if medications are scheduled for a certain time of day.

EPIPENS AND AUTO-INJECTORS

Properly trained Metro Parks employees may assist and if needed administer a camper's personal EpiPen in a medical emergency. To be properly trained, the employee will need to have participated in and successfully completed a Metro Parks First-Aid program that covers the use of EpiPens. If EMS has not been activated prior to an employee administering epinephrine, they will immediately be activated once the epinephrine has been administered. If a child has an EpiPen at school, they must also have one at camp.

ALLERGIES

Allergies are taken very seriously at camp. If your child is allergic to something, please verify this on their Emergency Medical Form. When you arrive at camp, please notify the Head Counselor of this as well.

ILLNESS

AT HOME & AT CAMP

For the safety and health of all our campers, the symptoms shown after this paragraph will require at least a 24-hour absence from camp and appropriate medical treatment (if applicable). Please inform your Head Counselor if your child won't be at camp due to an illness. Should these symptoms present at camp, a counselor will notify you via a phone call. Your child will then be removed from camp and transported to a quiet location away from other campers. They will remain under the supervision of a Metro Parks staff member until an authorized adult arrives for pick up. The camper will not be allowed to return to camp the next day and will need to be symptom free for at least 24-hours before returning to camp.

Symptoms

- Fever: Temperature of 100.4 degrees F or higher
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Rash: Body rash, with itching or fever
- Head Lice: Itchy head, active lice
- Eye Infection: Redness, itching and/or drainage from eye

EMERGENCIES

In the event of a medical emergency, counselors will activate Metro Parks' Emergency Response Plan. Counselors will immediately notify the ranger on duty and a squad will be dispatched. Counselors will then contact the Emergency Contact(s) listed on the child's Emergency Medical Form. Counselors are certified in First-Aid/CPR and will provide appropriate treatment until medical personnel arrive on scene.

CAMPER INFORMATION REPORTS

Camper Information Reports are filled out by counselors for any type of injury, illness, insect sting, etc. and require a parent/guardian signature of acknowledgement at the end of each camp day. Parents/guardians will be contacted via phone call if the injury, illness, insect sting etc. is severe in nature and requires immediate medical attention.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

DISCIPLINE

Metro Parks teaches Camp Counselors to approach discipline with patience and understanding. The rules of our camps are discussed with campers at the start of each week and revisited throughout the week. We encourage respect for others and the environment, teamwork, participation, open communication and safety.

These are the following steps our camp program follows when handling discipline:

1. Observe and listen to the situation
2. Redirect inappropriate behavior
3. Speak to the camper individually
4. Listen to the camper and offer guidance
5. Continuously monitor the situation

If the behavior continues:

6. Separate the camper and discuss inappropriate behavior
7. Document the situation and discuss with parents

INCIDENT REPORTS

Incident reports are filled out by counselors for any type of continued or significant inappropriate behavior and verbal or physical conflict. Incident reports require a parent/guardian signature of acknowledgement at the end of each camp day. Parents/guardians will be contacted via phone call if the incident is severe in nature and requires more immediate action.

SUSPENSION

If a camper receives three incident reports in one week, the camper will be asked to leave camp for the remainder of that week of camp. If the camper in question is signed up for more than one week of camp, they may return for their next scheduled camp week. However, if the camper receives three incident reports in one week for a second time, Metro Parks reserves the right to cancel all remaining camp registrations and issue a full refund for remaining weeks.

INCLUSION**ZERO-TOLERANCE**

Metro Parks believes camp should be a fun, engaging and safe place for everyone. Therefore, Metro Parks has a zero-tolerance bullying policy. If a camper exhibits any form of bullying they will be given a verbal warning and an incident report will be written up. If the bullying behavior continues, the camper's parent/guardian will be called to pick up the child from camp immediately. Depending upon the severity of the behavior, the camper may be suspended for the following day or rest of the week.

CAMP NEED TO KNOWS**DROP OFF/PICK UP**

Full day camp hours are from 8:30am-4pm. Unless you are registered for a camp that includes Before and After Care (see next section), you may not drop off before 8:30am or pick up later than 4:00pm. We understand that emergencies happen and ask that you notify your Head Counselor via phone call immediately if you are running late. Campers must be signed in and out each day by an authorized adult with a picture ID. Please make sure all adults authorized for pickup (including yourself) are listed in your camper's paperwork and have your IDs ready.

BEFORE AND AFTER CARE

Only our Traditional Day Camps offer before and after care. **Before Care** runs from 7:30-8:30am and **After Care** runs from 4-5:30pm. Drop off will not begin prior to 7:30am. If you arrive before 7:30am, you will need to wait in your vehicle for check in to open. Your child must be picked up no later than 5:30pm. Your child must be registered for a camp including **Before and After Care** to use this service. If a camp offers **Before and After Care**, it will be listed in the description on www.metroparks.net. **Before and After Care** can be purchased separately at a rate of \$25 per week, per child. A link to register for this service will be sent to families prior to camp. If you are not registered for a camp that includes **Before and After Care**, you may not drop off or pick up your child outside of normal camp hours (8:30am-4:00pm).

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Camp will run rain or shine so please send your camper with rain gear if the forecast calls for it. In the event of inclement weather, camp will be moved to a covered or indoor location and parents/guardians will be notified via email of any changes in drop off or pick up location.

LUNCH AND SNACKS

Campers should bring their own lunch and water daily. Lunches should be in a bag or cooler clearly labeled with the camper's name. Refrigerators and microwaves are not available so please plan accordingly. Metro Parks will provide a cookout one day per week of camp. Campers will not need to bring lunch on cookout day. Please check with your Head Counselor for your camp location's cookout day. Metro Parks will also provide two snacks each day for campers. All snacks served by Metro Parks will be free of peanuts and tree nuts. Nutrition information for snacks and cookout supplies will be available upon request.

- ❖ If your child has any food allergies, please include this information on the Emergency Medical Form and consult the Camp Specialist ahead of time regarding any concerns.

BUG SPRAY/SUNSCREEN

All campers should come to camp wearing sunscreen. Campers should also bring sunscreen for reapplication throughout the day, and bug spray if they so choose. Campers will need to apply their own sunscreen and bug spray throughout the day. To prevent any accidental injuries, we ask that they find an outdoor space away from other campers before applying any aerosol type sunscreens or bug sprays. If your child has trouble re-applying sunscreen, counselors may help **ONLY IF** your camper has their own sunscreen clearly labeled with their first and last name. Any sunscreen not labeled with a camper's name, will not be applied. This is to prevent any unknown skin irritation or reactions.

GENERAL INFORMATION

WHAT TO WEAR

Closed-toe, sturdy shoes such as tennis shoes or Keen-like sandals and clothes that can get dirty. A hat is also recommended.

WHAT TO BRING

Bag or backpack with the following:

- Change of clothes
- Change of shoes
- Lightweight jacket or sweatshirt
- Raincoat or poncho
- Insect repellent
- Sunscreen
- Water bottle
- Lunch
- Plastic shopping bag for wet clothes or shoes
- Medications, if applicable
- Notebook, sketchbook, journal, book etc. if desired for downtime
- It is helpful to label all items brought to camp with your camper's first and last name so we can notify you if items are left behind.

WHAT NOT TO BRING

- Cell phones (camper will be asked to keep them in their bag for the day if they are brought to camp and deemed a distraction from the overall camp experience)
- iPads, iPods or any electronic devices
- Toys that can't be shared or replaced easily if broken
- Personal outdoor recreation equipment (i.e. kayaks, fishing poles, bows, etc.). Metro Parks will provide equipment for campers to use
- Valuables

COLUMBUS SCHOOL INTERNS

CSIs are employees between the ages of 16-18 that have a love for the outdoors and camp and may be working at your child's camp. Columbus School Interns go through an interview process, mandatory orientation and training before they are allowed to work at Metro Parks Summer Camps. If you have any questions or concerns regarding CSIs, please call the Camp Supervisor or Camp Specialist.

We can't wait to see you at camp! 😊

Sincerely,

The Metro Parks Summer Camp Team