

**CAMP**  
**CLAIRE**  
**ESTABLISHED 1916**

# Parent Manual



## **A HISTORY**

In 1916, members of the First Congregational Church of Meriden began fellowship retreats to a parcel of land in Lyme, CT owned by a local farmer. Years later, the parcel was purchased by a member of First Church and donated to be utilized as a youth camp. Then, in March of 1954, the church sold Camp Claire for one dollar to Camp Claire, Incorporated.

Since those early years, campers and staff have come to Camp Claire from all over the world. For over 100 years, Camp Claire has forged a countless number of friendships that have been maintained and nourished by people who have been a part of the Camp Claire family. We strive to sustain those friendships by keeping contact with Alumni and getting them involved in the years following their camp experience. Every year one or two weekends are dedicated to gathering Alumni for reminiscing and collecting thoughts on how to better preserve Camp Claire's experience for all.

Camp Claire is operated by a Board of Directors; a group of volunteers who have demonstrated a love for Camp Claire. Their main task, (among others) is to oversee finances, hire staff and maintain facilities. In the 1960's, Camp Claire became Camp Claire, Inc., a 501 C-3 not for profit summer camp. It continues to provide a quality camping program for children focusing on group cooperation and community building.

## **REGISTRATION**

Camp Claire accepts all registrations solely online! We accept registrations on a first come, first serve basis. A \$50.00 deposit per registration is due at the time of registration. There is a **non-refundable** fee of \$125.00 per registration. The balance on your account will be charged to your card on file on June 1.

Receipt of the confirmation email indicates whether your child has a place in the session(s) that you have requested or whether your child has been placed on the waitlist for the session(s) that you have requested. If there is a question about a session or if your child has been waitlisted, we will contact you to verify your child's placement.

If you have any contact information changes, such as phone number or address, please make those changes using your registration account accordingly.

All cancellation requests or changes need to be e-mailed to the registrar at [cereg2016@mail.com](mailto:cereg2016@mail.com). There will be no refunds for early departure once your child has arrived at Camp however, emergencies and illnesses will be examined on a case-by-case basis. Camp Claire reserves the right to make a decision in these particular instances.

It is important to understand the reasoning behind a policy of non-refund. Because of the limited space during certain sessions, a camper who is registered has been included in the total session number which is crucial to planning for food and programs. In some instances, a camper might have been turned away because a session was filled. Please note that we will NOT reserve space until a registration, deposit and medical forms are received.

## **MISCONDUCT**

Any camper who engages in illegal drugs, alcohol, abusive language, inappropriate sexual behavior/misconduct, or aggressive/violent behavior will be asked to leave camp, and parents will be contacted immediately. For other issues related to behavior, parent contact will be made, and behavioral strategies will be implemented. If, after intervention, the behavior issue is not resolved, the camper will be sent home. ***THERE ARE NO REFUNDS IN THESE CASES.*** **Camp Claire also reserves the right to refuse registrations as a result of a previous season's misconduct.**

Parents are expected to set an example of respect. If any parent engages in verbal and/or physical abuse toward staff, the camper will be sent home. ***NO REFUND WILL BE AVAILABLE.***

## **RESIDENT CAMP CHECK-IN/CHECK-OUT - NEW PROCEDURE FOR SUMMER 2021**

**CHECK-IN: Sunday: 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM – staggered time slots per family**

**CHECK-OUT: Sunday: 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM – staggered time slots per family**

## **AT CHECK-IN:**

***As much as we love your furry family members, please keep all pets at home.***

### **NOTE:**

**Please be prepared with face coverings for all family members in the vehicle\*, including campers. Staff will be wearing face coverings, too.**

### **NOTE:**

**All individuals entering camp property will be required to have their temperature checked upon arrival.**

### **NOTE:**

**\*We ask that only one family member accompany their camper on drop off and pick up day.**

Each camper family will be **assigned a check-in time** for Sunday between 2:00pm and 4:00pm.

You will receive your time slot the week prior to your camper's session(s). It is especially important that you arrive at camp at this time. The gate will be closed to all guests unless it is your time to check-in.

When you arrive, staff will guide your vehicle to the designated drop-off area.

Upon arrival, we ask that you and your camper(s) **check in with the Director and Registrar at the Check-in Table** where you will be greeted and directed to go with your camper to the nurses cabin porch.

**Once you have checked in with the nurse, please say goodbye to your camper and a Counselor will be at the designated drop off area to meet your camper.**

**NOTE:** Please pack your camper's under-the-bed container in the trunk of your car, as staff will assist your camper in the removal and precautionary sanitizing of these items.

***Possession of phones or electronics is immediate grounds for dismissal without a refund***

### **AT PICK-UP:**

To allow for optimal cleaning and airing out time of cabins between camper groups, 2-week camp sessions will end on Fridays. Pick-up times will be scheduled for between 2:00pm and 4:00pm on Friday afternoons.

Campers will have their luggage with them at the front gate for pick-up. We ask that all family members stay in their vehicles during this time. Staff will help with the loading of the under-the-bed containers into your vehicle's trunk.

### **SWIM TEST**

Each camper is required to take a swim test upon arrival at Camp Claire. Our Pool Director will place campers in an appropriate level to accommodate their swimming ability. This helps ensure their safety at camp when participating in programs and classes that include water activities.

## **DAY CAMP CHECK-IN**

Day Camp check-in daily from 8:30 AM – 9:15 AM - staggered time slots per family  
You must check-in your camper each day when you arrive.

Campers will be assigned a cabin and bunk for Rest Period/Siesta.

Campers should also check in with their counselors.

Day Camp check-out daily from 4:30 PM – 5:15 PM – staggered time slots per family

***For Summer 2021, there will NO early morning drops off late afternoon pickups.***

Parents must notify camp if their child will not be attending on any particular day. During the session, Day Campers are invited to participate, free of charge, in a late night on Wednesday where we will have a cookout and campfire. Pick up for Wednesday late night will be from 8:30 PM – 9:15 PM – staggered time slots per family.

**Our camp phone is: 860-434-0368**

## **LUGGAGE**

A Rubbermaid tote or a trunk is a great way to bring your clothes to camp, but we ask that it be no greater than 13 inches in height as all camper belongings must be stored under the bunks this year.

## **WHAT TO PACK:**

The following is a packing list for two weeks of overnight camp:

***PLEASE DO NOT PACK ANY FOOD OR SNACKS***

***PETS OF ANY KIND ARE PROHIBITED***

30-50 disposable face masks

10 cloth/fabric face masks (not vented, no gaiters or bandanas)

4 Beach towels

4 Bath towels

4 Wash cloths

1 Pillow

2 Pillow cases

Sleeping bag or: flat sheet and blanket

Fitted sheet (to cover mattress)

NON MESH Laundry bag

Toothbrush & toothpaste

Soap & soap dish

Shampoo

Hairbrush & comb

10 T-Shirts

8 Shorts

4 Jeans or long pants

2 Sweatshirts/hoodies

4 Sleepwear

16 Pairs of underwear

16 Pairs of socks

Raincoat or poncho

Lightweight jacket

Extra pair of sturdy shoes/sneakers

Sandals/water shoes

1-2 Dressy outfits for dances

4 Swimsuits

Flashlight & extra batteries

Sunscreen

Insect repellent

Water Bottle labeled with your child's name

Optional: disposable camera, costumes, hats, book, deck of cards

## **LAUNDRY**

Please send your child with adequate clothing for the duration of his/her stay. We will not be able to do any laundry for your child.

## **BUNKING ASSIGNMENTS**

One of the goals at Camp Claire is to create a loving community which is inclusive of all. Some campers are new, and some have been coming for years. We encourage making new friends as part of this experience of community.

We limit bunking requests to one person, recognizing that for some newcomers, it will mean comfort in a new situation. Please make bunkmate requests at the time of online registration. We will try to honor a request but ***cannot guarantee*** it will be filled.

As a small, positive community, we encourage inclusiveness. Cliques can often be a form of segregation, and we try as best we can to discourage an atmosphere of negative behavior. Consequently, we reserve the right to move campers if we feel a serious problem has arisen, regardless of bunkmate requests.

## **REST PERIOD**

Each day after lunch, campers are given some personal time to sleep, read, write letters, draw, or converse quietly with their new friends. This time of day is especially important to small children who may exert high levels of energy during the day.

## **MEDICAL FORMS AND ISSUES**

By law, we cannot admit your child unless we have a current health form signed by a physician which includes a full immunization record with dates.

**PLEASE BE SURE TO READ ABOUT OUR 2021 PANDEMIC PROTOCOLS ON OUR WEBSITE. WE HAVE OUTLINED CRUCIAL INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SUMMER OF 2021 FOR YOU AND YOUR CAMPER(S)**

***All prescriptions are mandated by law to be properly labeled in their original containers with only the number of pills needed for the length of the session.***

If you are sending over-the-counter medications for your child, they must be clearly marked, and given to the camp nurse upon arrival at Check-In.

***All forms of medication, including over-the-counter drugs and supplements must be noted on the health form with authorization and a signature from a physician.*** If you have a question about a particular medication, please consult the camp nurse.

***Please remember to list all emergency contacts, all allergies and all health concerns and important information regarding your child's mental and physical health.***

**At the time of your online registration you will be required to read and sign the following:**

**PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT/ WAIVER OF LIABILITY**

I hereby certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of the camp participant, a minor child under the age of 18.

In consideration for my child being allowed to participate in Camp Claire's summer Program, I acknowledge and agree to the following:

1. This Program affords my child the opportunity to participate in activities, including, but not limited to: swimming, sailing, canoeing, kayaking, stand-up paddleboard, other waterfront activities, nature walks, local field trips, fishing, team play, indoor and outdoor sports, activities in the class room, low ropes courses, and crafts. Safety is a priority in all Camp Claire activities. Nevertheless, there are inherent risks involved with these and similar activities, including, but not limited to, risk of bumps, scrapes, lacerations & sprains, insect bites, food allergies, more serious injury or even death. I choose to voluntarily allow my child to participate in this Program. I voluntarily assume full responsibility for any risk of loss, property damage or personal injury, including death, which may be sustained by my child as a result of his/her participation. I, the undersigned, on behalf of my child, for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators, waive, release, hold harmless, defend, indemnify and forever discharge Camp Claire, Incorporated and its directors, officers, employees, agents, representatives, successors and assigns of and from all rights and claims for damages, injury or loss to property or person (including injury to one's body, mind or emotions), or wrongful death, all manner of liability, claims, actions, causes of action, suits, judgments, executions, or claims for economic loss (collectively Losses) which may be sustained or occur during participation in Program activities or while at Camp, whether or not Losses are due to negligence.

2. I certify that my child is covered by adequate health insurance necessary to provide for and pay for any medical costs that may directly or indirectly result from my child's participation in this Program. I agree to pay for any insurance deductibles or other uncovered medical costs.

3. I understand that this Program involves physical activities and, except as otherwise communicated in writing to Camp Claire in advance of the Program, I know of no medical reason why my child should not participate.

4. I agree to indemnify and hold harmless Camp Claire for any loss, liability, damage or costs, including court costs and reasonable attorney's fees that may occur as a result of my or my child's negligent or intentional act or omission while participating in the Program.

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS PERMISSION AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND HAVE HAD SUFFICIENT TIME TO SEEK EXPLANATION OF THE PROVISIONS CONTAINED ABOVE. AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION, I SIGN THIS DOCUMENT VOLUNTARILY AND WITHOUT ANY INDUCEMENT.

## **MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

In the event of a medical emergency we will follow the following protocols:

If the emergency does not require transportation in an ambulance, the parent/ guardian will be contacted, and the parent will take the child to the hospital or their primary physician.

If the emergency requires transportation in an ambulance, then one of the camp staff will accompany the child in the ambulance and the director will contact the parents/guardians. The parent or emergency contact person will be expected to meet the ambulance at the hospital as soon as possible.

***In all circumstances, the child's health insurance is used as the primary insurance.***

## **DAILY ACTIVITIES & CLASSES**

Different than past summers at Camp Claire, for the Summer of 2021, campers will eat and participate in activities within their small cabin groups. Under the guidelines put forth by both the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Camp Association (ACA) this practice is highly recommended. Summer camp activities will proceed as usual, with activities such as Arts and Crafts, Camp Craft, and Ropes happening outdoors. At activities such as sailing, canoeing and archery where equipment is needed, equipment will not be shared during use and will be cleaned in between cabin groups. This is to help lower the risk of cross-contamination. Additionally, each camper will be assigned a life jacket (or they are welcome to bring their own) which will travel with them to each water activity and will be hung outside their cabin. Any all-camp activities, including afternoon and evening program, flagpole, and Vespers, will proceed normally but with social distancing between groups and face masks will be worn.

Swimming lessons are also presented to campers to teach those who either have little or no swimming experience, or to those who want to refine the skills they already possess. Our Pool Director is supported by a team of lifeguards who oversee and help guide campers in their swimming abilities.

## **PHOTOGRAPHS**

Photos from each session will continue to be made available through our Smugmug account. The account login and password will be provided upon pickup at the end of the session for you to access session photos.

## **CARE PACKAGES**

**For Summer 2021, Camp Claire will not be accepting any camper packages due to COVID-19.**

Daily mail of small letters and cards will still be accepted. If your camper has forgotten an important item please email [director@campclaire.org](mailto:director@campclaire.org) or call the office at (860) 434- 0368, we will work with you to get this item to your camper.

***Food is not allowed in cabins at all.***

## **VESPERS**

Vespers is a time when we gather as a community and reflect on the day's memories, thoughts, and learning experiences. Some may consist of skits, songs, stories, and poems which are conducted by both staff and campers. Social distancing will be maintained and face masks will be worn.

## **Our summer season address is:**

15 Oakland Ave.  
Lyme, CT 06371  
Phone: 860-434-0368

## **ABUSE & NEGLECT POLICY OF CAMP CLAIRE, INC., LYME, CT**

You have entrusted your child's care to the staff of Camp Claire. We are committed to providing the best and most appropriate learning experiences possible for your child.

Occasionally, there are factors in a child's appearance and behavior that lead to suspicions of child abuse or neglect. Connecticut law requires that all childcare professionals report suspected abuse or neglect to the authorities in order that children may be protected from harm and that the family be helped.

Our policy supports Connecticut laws in this regard and requires that all staff report suspected abuse and neglect to the Department of Children and Families' Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline. At all times, the intent is to protect children from harm and to provide services to strengthen families.

All parents are required to read and sign the Abuse and Neglect form during the online registration process.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Please label all clothing, towels, and personal items with your child's name.

Please, **NO initials!** Pictures will be posted on our Smugmug account at the end of each session to help you claim missing items. Unclaimed clothing will be held until the end of the last session. Then all items will be washed and donated to shelters or other groups in need. Please call or email us as soon as an item is discovered missing and we will do our best to locate it. Camp Claire is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged clothing or other camper items.

### **VALUABLES**

Do not bring valuables to Camp! Camp Claire is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged items.

**Please, do not send any cash. Campers do not need any money during their stay at camp.**

## **CALLING HOME**

Camp Claire does not allow campers to have cell phones in their possession during their stay. This is a liability issue and is necessary for the safety of our campers. ***If a child is found with a cell phone they will be sent home with no refund.*** In an emergency the Director will contact home. Campers are not allowed to use the camp phone unless there are extenuating circumstances. In such an instance, calls will be overseen by the Director.

In respect to Camp Claire's quiet environmental surroundings, no camper cell phones or other electronic devices are permitted.

## **MAIL**

Mail is distributed each day (with the exception of Sundays). If you feel that your child may become homesick, please do not mail more than one letter each day. It is helpful in these instances that the following phrases **NOT** be used:

"I miss you s-o-o much!"

"I hope you aren't homesick"

"I feel sad that you are away from home"

"I cried when I saw your empty room"

"The dog/cat misses you"

Emphasize what fun things you imagine must be happening at camp. Encourage your child with questions asking them to write home about their favorite things or new friends. Draw pictures, send cartoons. Enclose favorite magazines, comic books, or other interesting publications which may help illustrate their experience at camp.

If you have any questions about news or world events that might impact your child while at camp, please call and speak with the Director.

### **Helpful tips for writing home:**

Send your child to camp with ***pre-addressed and pre-stamped postcards and envelopes.***

Pack paper, pencils, pens, crayons.

Campers will have time each day during Rest Period/Siesta to write home.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

It is our mission to provide each camper with the environment that will nurture them and allow them to share in the riches of their gifts, and the gifts of others. This builds a wonderfully supportive community celebrating diversity. We have staff trained in many different areas to ensure a positive experience for all.

We encourage parent input to make sure that the programs and facilities meet the needs of your child. Camp Claire is a small camp in a beautiful location. Many of its buildings and locations of buildings were fixed years ago. We do our best, but also acknowledge that steep hills, stairs and roots do limit some campers.

If your child has a physical, mental, developmental, or dietary disability that requires special support, please contact the Director prior to registration. We will make every reasonable effort to meet your child's needs. We are more than happy to schedule a tour so you may determine if we will be a good fit for your child.

It is also important to let the Director know of any events in your child's life which may affect his/her stay away from home. Also important, please notify us if your child has had a recent change in any medications. This information can only help us in providing a supportive staff. We have dealt with a number of serious family and life issues. Each is treated with respect and confidentiality.

## **HOMESICKNESS**

Our staff is highly trained in helping campers overcome homesickness. Homesickness can be a very natural reaction to new experiences away from home but is manageable and an excellent opportunity for growth.

We know from our past experience that not all campers will use the words "I'm homesick." Sometimes it manifests itself as misbehavior or a camper withdrawing to the outskirts of activities. For most campers, the times of day which are most difficult are unstructured times such as Siesta or bedtime.

Counselors have been trained in opening a dialogue with campers and to refer to the Director, or Assistant Director when extra support is needed. We have been so proud of the staff in past years in their patience, empathy and dedication to achieve camper happiness. We let the campers know that it's okay to miss their families and give them strategies to foster independence and resilience. As a small camp we are able to provide campers with personal experiences, so no one feels left out. Counselors also communicate what happens each day. Most fears can be alleviated if campers know what to expect.

The issue for parents to address in the case of homesickness (since many will experience it) is not to deny it. As parents, it is most helpful to encourage your child to have fun and not panic if they mention feeling homesick. The best way to fight homesickness is to engage in camp activities.

## **PARENT / GUARDIAN VISITS**

**Due to COVID-19 we will not be allowing any visits from family members for the duration of your child's time with us.**

## **COUNSELORS**

We have worked very hard to hire a staff that reflects our mission and have the campers as their main focus. Our senior counselors are 18 and older. Many are in the field of education. Junior counselors are 16 or 17 years of age and are under the mentorship of the senior staff. Each cabin is staffed with a senior and junior counselor. We maintain a ratio of 1 counselor per 8 residential campers at all times.

## **COUNSELOR IN TRAINING PROGRAM**

Camp Claire offers a Counselor in Training program as an excellent learning opportunity for 15 and 16-year olds. CITs are involved in all aspects of camp and are encouraged to bring their enthusiastic, creative spirit to Camp Claire. Quality applicants should have previous leadership experience, have worked with children, and be of sound moral character.

### **Program Description:**

**CITs:** (15 and 16 yr. olds) attend 4 weeks of camp with the possibility of being asked back for 2 additional weeks of day camp. The CITs will learn team building, but the focus is on program development. They will become certified in Lifesaving, CPR and First Aid. CITs learn about the needs of campers of various ages and the responsibilities of the camp counselor.