

CAMP CLAIRE



DAY CAMP HANDBOOK 2025

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A LITTLE 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. In March of 1954, the church sold Camp Claire for \$1.00 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 countless numbers 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.

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 campers focusing on group cooperation and community building.

KNOW OUR "WHY"

PHILOSOPHY:

Take who we are and what we've got and make it better!

MISSION STATEMENT:

Camp Claire - Where youth can develop curiosity, creativity, confidence, and self-esteem in a natural inclusive community environment; providing a lifetime of memories and skills that prepare camperren for an active place in a multicultural society.

OBJECTIVE:

We believe in freedom, flexibility and individual integrity, and thus we do not regiment our community except where physical and psychological health and safety are concerned. Therefore, there are many choices available to the staff, as well as the campers. We are enriched by all that is natural, so we seek to provide a wholesome environment in an incredibly beautiful setting.

Camp Claire aims to:

1. Provide opportunities for campers to foster and develop personal creativity and self-esteem.
2. Help each camper appreciate the natural surroundings and learn about the environment.
3. Provide situations for campers to develop curiosity while discovering their own skills and abilities.
4. Allow each camper to develop skills to participate actively in a multicultural society.

INCLUSION POLICY

Camp Claire strives to create an environment inclusive of all, regardless of race, sex, age, religion, creed, national origin, disability, physical/mental handicap or medical condition, as well as gender identity and expression. Camp Claire does not tolerate discrimination or harassment of any individual for any reason. We work hard to provide sensitivity training to staff during the summer and establish this inclusion policy to prevent discrimination, bullying, and harassment.

Gender Inclusion Policy

Camp Claire welcomes staff and campers of any and all genders. As with any sensitive personal information, we consider the gender identity of our campers and staff to be private unless the individual wishes to share it. Any individual who wishes to keep that information private has the right to do so, and we will not share that information with anyone except medical staff when appropriate. Staff and campers are welcome to share their preferred pronouns if they feel comfortable doing so. Staff and campers are expected to respect preferred pronouns and as such any intentional mis-gendering will be seen as bullying (please see our misconduct policy for further information). For information on bunking assignments as related to gender-identity, please see the "Bunking" section of this handbook.

REGISTRATION

Camp Claire accepts all registrations solely online! We accept registrations on a first come, first serve basis. A \$100 deposit per session you are registering your camper for is due at the time of registration. There is a non-refundable fee of \$100.00 per registration. The balance on your account will be charged to your card on file on July 1.

Receipt of the confirmation email indicates that your camper has a place in the session(s) that you have requested. If there is a question about a session or if the session is filled, we will contact you to verify your camper's placement. If you have a contact information change, 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 registrar@campclaire.org and are subject to a \$135 cancellation fee. There will be no refunds for early departure once your camper 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.

DAY CAMP DROP-OFF

Day Camp Drop-Off Time: 9:00 am

Families can proceed down the driveway where a staff member will greet your camper each morning.

On the first day of the session families will need to check-in with the Day Camp Director and Nurse. The Day Camp Director will give your camper a name tag with their cabin assignment. Check-in with the camp nurse will include a lice check and temperature check as well as a conversation about any medications that will be given at camp or any additional pertinent medical information.

Please make sure to take all phones and electronics home with you. Possession of phones or electronics is immediate grounds for dismissal without a refund.

If your camper is going to be absent please call and let us know. Main camp number: 860-434-0368.

DAY CAMP PICK-UP

Day Camp Pick-Up Time: 4:30 pm and 8:00 pm on optional Wednesday late night.

Pick-up will take place in the same location as drop-off. Anyone picking up a camper must be on the pick-up authorization list filled out during registration. Please email registrar@campclaire.org with any changes needed. Anyone picking up a camper will need to present photo identification.

PAPERWORK

Paperwork that must be completed **BEFORE** your camper's arrival at Camp Claire in order for your camper to attend camp:

- **Health form:** This must be updated and signed by a physician every 12 months. Your camper cannot stay at camp without an updated health form. The parent or guardian must also sign the health form yearly indicating that they have reviewed the information and that it remains accurate.
- **Release:** You will be asked to complete a form indicating who your camper can leave camp with. Please let the people know that they will be asked to show identification when they come to get your camper. This is for your camper's safety.
- **Balance Due:** If you have a balance due you should discuss this with the registrar who can be reached at registrar@campclaire.org. All balances must be paid prior to attendance at camp.
- **Medications:** Any medications that you need us to administer at camp will have to have the appropriate forms. These medications need to be in their original containers with the administration information from the pharmacy attached. We also require that paperwork for that prescription be completed and signed by the physician as well as the parent. Please refer to the health information you received from Campdoc.com for further information. Campers are not allowed to carry medications and self-administer without the proper medical authorization, which is completed by the camper's doctor, camp nurse and parent. That form is available on the camp website. This is a State of Connecticut health regulation.

SPECIAL PROGRAMMING

On Wednesday nights we invite day campers to stay for evening activity and dinner. This is entirely optional and is something you should discuss with your camper. Camp must know by Tuesday morning if your camper is going to stay for the extended day.

LUNCH & SNACKS

We provide day campers with lunch. Each meal is planned ahead of time, but peanut butter and jelly is always available for picky eaters. Each afternoon campers are provided with a nutritious snack. Water is available continuously throughout the day. If you have a concern with your camper's eating habits, please let the day camp director know.

CAMP STORE

The drive-by camp store will be open during Monday Day Camp Pick-up and Friday Day Camp Pick-up for your family to purchase a variety of Camp Claire themed clothing and accessories. Please do not send any cash. Campers do not need any money during their stay at camp.

SWIM ASSESSMENT

Each camper is required to take a swim assessment 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.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Many photographs are taken during the week, including an all camp picture and individual cabin photos. A link will be provided to parents mid week where all photographs can be viewed.

LOST AND FOUND

Please label all clothing, towels, and personal items with the camper's name. Please, **NO initials!** Unclaimed items will be washed and donated to shelters or other groups in need. Please call as soon as an item is discovered missing and we will do our best to locate it. **Camp Claire is not responsible for any clothing items lost, stolen, or damaged.**

CABIN ASSIGNMENTS

One of the goals at Camp Claire is to create a loving community which is inclusive of all. Campers will be assigned to cabins by their gender identity as provided by their guardian during the registration process. In regards to gender non-conforming campers, camp staff will speak with the guardian to find the best fit within our current cabin model.

Any camper who is uncomfortable using a communal, gender-segregated facility, regardless of the reason, shall, upon the camper's request, be provided with a safe and non-stigmatizing alternative (for example, using the bathroom in the Nurse's Cabin). However, requiring any camper to use separate facilities threatens to potentially stigmatize them and therefore will not be done unless requested by the camper.

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 can be filled. Bunkmate requests must be mutually requested

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.

MISCONDUCT/BULLYING

Parents will be contacted immediately if a camper engages in illegal drugs, alcohol, abusive language, inappropriate sexual behavior/misconduct, or aggressive/violent behavior and the camper will be asked to leave camp. For other issues related to behavior, at the director's discretion, guardians may be contacted, and behavioral strategies will be implemented. If, after intervention, the behavior issue is not resolved, the camper may be sent home at the discretion of the Camp Director. **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.**

Bullying is defined as when one or more individuals exclude, tease, taunt, gossip, hit, kick, or put down another person with the intent to hurt that individual. **At Camp Claire, bullying is inexcusable, and we have a firm policy against all types of bullying.** Our Camp philosophy is based on our mission statement which ensures that every camper has the opportunity to develop curiosity, creativity, and build new skills and relationships. We work together as a team to ensure that campers gain self-confidence, make new friends, and go home with great memories.

Our leadership staff addresses all incidents of bullying and our staff is trained to promote communication with their co-counselors and campers so that both are comfortable sharing any problems during their camp experience. Every person has the right to have the best possible experience at camp. By working as a team to identify, prevent, and manage bullying, we can help ensure that all campers and staff have a great summer at Camp Claire.

Camp Claire will follow the State of Connecticut guidelines for bullying as they apply to public schools. **A camper proven to have bullied another at camp will be asked to leave. Parents of all parties will be contacted and an incident report will be completed.**

MEDICAL FORMS AND ISSUES

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

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. This applies to over-the-counter medications for your camper as well.

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 and parent with dosages and administration times listed. If you have a question about a particular medication, please consult the camp nurse at nurse@campclaire.org

Please remember to list all emergency contacts and all allergies.

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 camper to the hospital or their primary physician.
- If the emergency requires transportation in an ambulance, then one of the camp staff will accompany the camper 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 camper's health insurance is used as the primary insurance.

DAILY SCHEDULE

- ★ 9:00AM Drop Off
- ★ 9:45AM First Activity Period
- ★ 10:45 AM Second Activity Period
- ★ 11:45AM Third Activity Period
- ★ 12:45 PM Wash up/ Waiters
- ★ 1:00PM Lunch
- ★ 1:45PM Siesta
- ★ 2:45PM Snack & Free Time
- ★ 3:45PM Afternoon Program
- ★ 4:15PM Day Campers get ready for pick up
- ★ 4:30PM Pick Up

WHAT TO BRING TO CAMP

Each day the campers bring their things up to their assigned cabin. Each camper chooses a bed where they can keep all their belongings. If you would like to send a sheet or blanket and pillow for their bunk, that is fine.

WHAT TO BRING TO CAMP

*Please label everything with your camper's name

Backpack/bag with:

- Swim Suit
- Towel
- Sunscreen (spray recommended)
- Insect Repellent
- Change of Clothes
- Change of Shoes
- Raincoat/Poncho
- Sweater or Sweatshirt
- Book for Siesta
- Water bottle

PROGRAMS & CLASSES

Our standard classes are offered to campers as well as other creative classes which our staff may be trained in. Campers experience wonderful ingenuity, while learning a new craft.

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 and Water Safety Instructors who oversee and help guide campers in their swimming abilities.

Theme-oriented programs are presented which often involve our staff of counselors leading campers in memorable activities. Programs such as: Penny Carnival, Camp Dance, Camp Claire Clue, Around the World, Froccer, Color Wars, Capture the Flag, Gold Rush are some classic and well-loved examples.

Specialized Program and Activities Camper Qualifications:

- Archery: age 10+, all skill levels
- Kayaking/Canoeing: all ages/ skill levels
- Sailing: age 10+, Level 4+ swimmer
- Fishing: all ages/ skill levels
- Camp Craft: all ages/ skill levels
- Sports: all ages/ skill levels
- Arts and Crafts: all ages/ skill levels
- Low Ropes: all ages/ skill levels
- Swimming/Pool Games: all ages/ skill levels
- Excursions (i.e. canoe trips, walks): all ages/ skill levels

Parent Sign off required for:

- Walks near Camp Claire property
- Camp Claire based canoe trips on the Connecticut River
- Camp Claire Low Challenge Ropes Course activities
- Camp Claire Archery activities

SIESTA/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 campers who may exert high levels of energy during the day.

COUNSELORS

We work very hard to hire a staff that reflects our mission and values. Our senior counselors are 18 and older. Many are in fields related to camper development and education. Junior counselors are 16 or 17 years of age and are under the mentorship of the senior staff. Each cabin is staffed with at least one senior and junior counselor. We maintain a ratio of 1 counselor per 6 campers ages 8 and younger. We maintain a ratio of 1 counselor per 8 campers ages 9 and over.

CAMPER NEEDS

- **Dietary Needs:**
 - Be sure to include any campers allergies or dietary restrictions in registration forms. We can accommodate all dietary needs, but we must know this in advance to ensure we plan accordingly.
 - For picky eaters: If they do not like the food, or are refusing to eat, they have access to our salad bar and peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Everyone needs to eat at each meal and eating 3 meals a day is part of camp safety.
- **Health Needs:**
 - Campers should practice daily hygiene (washing hands, wearing deodorant and sunscreen). Staff will facilitate this and it is part of cabin codes of conduct.
 - Reminder: please send campers to camp with all personal care products they typically use at home.

- **Emotional Needs:**
 - If campers typically see a mental health professional outside of camp, we will accommodate ensuring this continues while at camp. **Virtual sessions can be held and we can provide technology and a private space for this.** Please contact the Director if you would like to discuss camper mental health needs further.
 - Camp Claire has an on-call social worker. If we feel that a camper may benefit from discussing something with the social worker, the Director will contact you to discuss the situation and to receive your consent.

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 camper. Camp Claire is a small camp in a beautiful location. Many of its buildings and locations were fixed years ago. We do our best, but also acknowledge that steep hills, stairs and roots do limit some campers.

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

It is also important to let the Director or Nurse know of any events in your camper's life which may affect his/her stay away from home. Additionally, please notify us if your camper has had a recent change in any medications. This information will help us in providing a safe and supportive environment for your camper to thrive in.

Every camper is treated with respect and confidentiality

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 camper under the age of 18. In consideration for my camper being allowed to participate in Camp Claire's summer Program, I acknowledge and agree to the following:

1. This Program affords my camper 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 classroom, 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 camper 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 camper as a result of his/her participation. I, the undersigned, on behalf of my camper, 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 camper is covered by adequate health insurance necessary to provide for and pay for any medical costs that may directly or indirectly result from my camper'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 camper 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 camper'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.

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

You have entrusted your camper's care to the staff of Camp Claire. We are committed to providing the best and most appropriate learning experiences possible for your camper. Occasionally, there are factors in a camper's appearance and behavior that lead to suspicions of camper abuse or neglect. Connecticut law requires that all childcare professionals report suspected abuse or neglect to the authorities in order that camperren 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 camperren and Families' Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline. At all times, the intent is to protect camperren from harm and to provide services to strengthen families.

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

Camp Claire prioritizes the safety and well-being of its campers and staff. Thank you for reading this document and for helping to ensure your camper is prepared to have an amazing camping experience!

Please reach out to info@campclaire.org or call us at 860-434-0368 if you have any questions.

COVID19 REFUND POLICY AND HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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

1. The COVID19 pandemic is an ever changing situation that cannot always be controlled, despite the policies in place. I understand that sending my camper to camp during the COVID19 pandemic may result in exposure to the virus and/or catching the virus. I have read the COVID protocols outlined in the handbook and agree to the efforts being put in place to keep the campers and staff safe.
2. In the case of my camper having tested positive for COVID-19 I will be asked to make arrangements to pick up my camper at my earliest convenience within a reasonable amount of time. If my camper is asked to go home for illness reasons, and not for misconduct, I agree to risk sharing the cost of camp. I will be given a 50% refund to be applied for the next camping season, a program at a later date (if space allows) or a direct refund.
3. My camper will follow the COVID-19 protocols at camp and before camp and help keep everyone safe.

PARENT / GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

DATE

CAMPER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

4. I agree to follow all camp rules and regulations and to positively contribute to the camp environment while having a safe, fun and memorable experience at Camp Claire.
5. I understand that camp is an inclusive environment, where not everyone may share the same beliefs that I do. I may encounter situations that I have never experienced before. I will handle all those situations with respect and openness.
6. I will have the best summer ever!!!!

CAMPER SIGNATURE

DATE

DIRECTIONS:

From I-95 Exit 70 Follow CT 156 West (approx. 4.5 mi)

Take the FIRST LEFT after the Lyme Volunteer Fire Department

Then take a LEFT onto Cove Rd.

Take a RIGHT at top of the hill and

Welcome To Camp Claire!

Our In-Season address is:

15 Oakland Ave.

Lyme, CT 06371

Phone: 860-434-0368