



Checklist Camps on Campus



A recent review of underwriting data shows that over half of all UE members host camps and recreational or academic programs for minors on their campuses. In fact, over 15 million children visit UE member campuses for these programs each year. With so many minors attending camps on campus, colleges and universities are advised to review their risk management practices and assess effectiveness.

Camp directors, youth programs specialists, conference and event managers, and administrators are encouraged to use this checklist for guidance on topics such as facilities and equipment, staffing, protecting minors, emergency planning, and contracts and insurance. Use it to increase the likelihood of a safe experience for campers and protect the institution from camp-related legal liability or adverse publicity.

For each question, check the appropriate “Yes” or “No” box. Review any box checked “No” to determine whether the suggested practice or an alternate measure is possible to reduce risk. Use the “Actions Needed” box to identify any follow-up actions your institution may wish to take.



A. Facilities and Equipment

■ Before the camp begins do you:

- Identify all anticipated camp facilities and the department or person that oversees their use, such as:

◦ Classrooms? Yes No

◦ Theaters? Yes No

◦ Laboratories? Yes No

◦ Athletic facilities? Yes No

◦ Parking? Yes No

◦ Housing? Yes No

◦ Food service? Yes No

◦ Health facilities? Yes No

◦ Off-campus spaces? Yes No

◦ Other? Yes No

- Receive permission from the relevant person or department to use all anticipated facilities? Yes No

- Consult with relevant departments or groups with substantial experience running their own camps on campus, such as:

◦ Facilities? Yes No

◦ Security? Yes No

◦ Risk management? Yes No

◦ Environmental health and safety? Yes No

◦ Athletics? Yes No

◦ Theater? Yes No

- Inspect all camp facilities for issues including:

◦ Tripping hazards (for example, uneven ground surface or debris)? Yes No

◦ Construction or maintenance work occurring at the same time as the camp? Yes No

◦ Overgrown trees or shrubs? Yes No

◦ Inability to prevent trespassers from gaining access to a building or space, unlocked doors, faulty windows, or key control? Yes No

◦ Unsafe height risks, such as climbing walls, high ropes courses, zip lines, or jungle gyms that are not regularly inspected or maintained? Yes No

- Correct or mitigate all hazards identified during the inspection? Yes No

- Identify all camp-related equipment? Yes No

- Inspect all camp-related equipment for defects? Yes No

- Correct equipment defects or find alternate equipment? Yes No

◦ Contact local building inspectors to review and inspect any temporary structures, such as tents, if necessary? Yes No

■ While the camp is in operation, do you:

- Regularly inspect facilities and equipment for hazards or defects? Yes No

- Correct the hazards or defects or remove the equipment from use? Yes No

Actions Needed

B. Staffing

Hiring

- Yes No
■ Do you conduct background checks in compliance with your own institutional policies and state and local laws or regulations?

- Prior to the camp's commencement, do you train all staff and volunteers on:
 - Supervising campers during structured and unstructured time including:
 - Meal times? Yes No
 - Bathroom trips? Yes No
 - Locker room visits? Yes No
 - Nighttime (if an overnight camp)? Yes No
 - Free-time activities? Yes No
 - Interacting with campers to promote their physical and emotional safety? Yes No
 - Appropriate electronic interaction outside of camp, including text messaging and social media? Yes No
 - Managing camper behavior without using corporal punishment or verbal abuse? Yes No
 - Taking camper attendance and reporting missing campers? Yes No
 - Releasing campers early? Yes No
 - Providing campers with adequate breaks? Yes No
 - Following emergency procedures for likely camp emergencies? Yes No
 - Following camper health care procedures and policies? Yes No
 - Completing incident or accident reports? Yes No
 - Identifying and reporting suspected child abuse and neglect to camp authorities and the state? Yes No
 - Identifying and reporting incidents of discrimination and harassment that may not rise to the level of child abuse and neglect? Yes No

- Do you ensure training on these issues for those staff or volunteers who are:
 - Hired or recruited later than the norm? Yes No
 - Rehired from previous years? Yes No
 - Hired mid-camp to replace another staff member or volunteer? Yes No

Supervising

- To ensure campers are properly supervised, do you:
 - Provide enough staff to meet or exceed the minimum staff-to-camper ratios established by the host institution or state regulations? Yes No
 - Screen additional staff or volunteers to have on call in case a staff member does not show or is asked to leave? Yes No
 - Follow a policy for investigating alleged wrongdoing by a staff member or volunteer such as the physical or sexual abuse of a camper? Yes No
 - Prevent unsupervised access to campers by any staff member or volunteer that is the subject of an investigation for wrongdoing until the investigation is complete? Yes No
 - Observe staff behavior regularly? Yes No
 - Address promptly any observed inappropriate staff behavior? Yes No
 - Ensure the camp complies with all applicable state regulations including licensing requirements and background checks? Yes No

For an overview of camp regulations in your state, go to the [American Camp Association](#) website.

Actions Needed

C. Protecting Minors

Protecting minors from harassment, discrimination, and abuse is the responsibility of colleges and universities that host camps. Since 2012—when the Freeh Report describing athletic coach misconduct toward minors at The Pennsylvania State University was published—multiple states have updated or passed youth protection laws. Statutes and institutional policies should be followed closely to guard children and promote compliance.

- Does your institution have a written policy that explains its commitment to protecting minors who participate in institution-sponsored programs on campus, such as:
 - Registration requirements for programs involving minors? Yes No
 - Age, experience, or employment requirements for individuals who oversee programs involving minors? Yes No
 - If direct contact and one-on-one contact between an adult and a child are permitted? Yes No
 - Obligations for reporting suspected child abuse, harassment, or discrimination? Yes No
 - A procedure for notifying the child's parent or guardian in case of incident or emergency? Yes No
- Do all campus constituencies involved in the camp process meet to discuss:
 - Policies and laws that address protection of minors? Yes No
 - The institution's reporting obligations? Yes No
 - Crisis response protocols in the event of child abuse, harassment, or discrimination? Yes No
- When camps on campus are operated by third parties, are these parties:
 - Required to meet the same child protection standards as camps operated by the institution? Yes No
 - Obligated to report incidents of child abuse, harassment, or discrimination to the institution? Yes No
- When hiring employees or enlisting volunteers who work with minors in camps or similar programs:
 - Are background checks used as an initial screening mechanism? Yes No
 - Are protecting minors resources included in staff training, specifically resources age-appropriate for the given camper population? Yes No
 - Are employees and volunteers advised how to report suspected child abuse, harassment, and discrimination? Yes No
- Are incidents of child abuse included in the institution's annual Clery Report? Yes No

Title IX

Sexual misconduct against minors, whether perpetrated by college employees, volunteers, contractors, or students, is also a form of discrimination covered by Title IX, the federal statute prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex at any educational institution receiving federal funds. Title IX requires that institutions implement a nondiscrimination policy and select a Title IX coordinator and investigator.

- Does your institution have a written policy that:
 - Establishes that sexual assault includes sexual misconduct involving minors and that each is a type of sex discrimination under Title IX? Yes No
 - Includes examples of conduct prohibited by the policy? Yes No
 - Applies to sexual assault or sexual misconduct involving minors that occurs outside a school program, if the conduct negatively affects a victim's school experience or the overall school environment? Yes No

Actions Needed

- Do those individuals with camp oversight meet with the Title IX coordinator to discuss:
 - How camps are operated on campus and how these operations intersect with Title IX? Yes No
 - How incidents of sexual misconduct are reported? Yes No

For more information about protecting minors, see “Checklist for Protecting Minors on Campus: Title IX Issues” and the [Protecting Children Learning Program](#). For more information about the roles and requirements of Title IX coordinators, see “[Title IX and Beyond: Title IX Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities Regarding Campus Sexual Violence](#).”

D. Instructional Program

- To reduce the risk of camper injuries and liability for those injuries, do you:
 - Ensure that the camp’s instructional program is appropriate for the skill level of the campers? Yes No
 - Explain accurately in the camp’s promotional materials the nature of the camp activities, the potential for injuries, and the physical requirements of campers? Yes No
 - Require campers and their parents, if the campers are minors, to sign a release or an assumption of risk form specifying the nature of camp activities and the potential risks? Yes No

For more information on drafting waivers and releases, see “[Checklist for Effective Releases](#).”

- Arrange for legal review of camper promotional materials? Yes No

E. Health and Medical Care

Policies and Procedures

- A camp should have a written health policy that articulates the scope of health care services provided. In addition, do you:
 - Ensure that the camp’s written health care policy is reviewed periodically by legal counsel and a physician or registered nurse? Yes No
 - Document all incidents requiring professional medical treatment? Yes No
 - Require campers or their parents, if the campers are minors, to sign a permission form allowing the camp to provide routine medical care and seek emergency medical treatment? Yes No
 - Accommodate campers or minors who arrive on campus with Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) or Section 504 plans? Yes No

Medication Management

- With respect to prescription and nonprescription medications dispensed at the camp:
 - Are they stored under lock and refrigerated if necessary? Yes No
 - Are nonprescription drugs dispensed pursuant to the signed instruction of a parent or the camp’s written health care procedures? Yes No
 - Are prescription drugs dispensed pursuant to a physician’s directions and with a parent’s signed authorization? Yes No

Contact and Health Information

■ Do you gather the following information on campers:

- Current contact information, such as:
 - Name? Yes No
 - Date of birth? Yes No
 - Age? Yes No
 - Phone number of emergency contact? Yes No
 - Name and phone number of physician? Yes No
 - Name, phone number, and address of the adult responsible for minor campers? Yes No
- Health information, such as:
 - Physical evaluation completed within the past two years? Yes No
 - Past medical treatment? Yes No
 - Immunizations? Yes No
- Chronic conditions, such as:
 - Allergies? Yes No
 - Seizures? Yes No
 - Diabetes? Yes No
- Prior to the camp's commencement, do you:
 - Have a trained staff member review each camper's health information to ensure it is complete and that campers with special medical needs are identified? Yes No
 - Alert staff members about campers with special medical needs? Yes No
 - Provide training for staff members who administer medication or assist students with chronic conditions? Yes No

F. Emergency Planning

■ Prior to the camp's commencement, do you notify representatives from the following organizations about the camp's operation:

- Campus security? Yes No
- Fire officials? Yes No
- Local law enforcement? Yes No

■ Do you have procedures for handling emergencies including:

- Alleged physical or sexual abuse of a camper? Yes No
- Fire? Yes No
- Weather? Yes No
- Crime (for example, an assault or homicide)? Yes No
- Lost or missing camper or staff member? Yes No
- Death, illness, or injury of a camper or staff member? Yes No
- Natural disasters endemic to the camp's geographic location? Yes No

■ Do your procedures for handling emergencies include considerations for campers with:

- Physical mobility limitations, such as wheelchairs? Yes No
- Visual impairments? Yes No
- Hearing impairments? Yes No

Actions Needed

Actions Needed

■ Do you have a staff member trained in first aid and CPR on duty at all times during the camp including camp field trips? Yes No

■ Do you arrange to provide emergency transportation of campers and staff at all times during the camp? Yes No

Please refer to the next section "Transportation" for important additional considerations.

■ Have you assessed the need for an automated external defibrillator (AED) at the camp? Yes No

■ Do you have a crisis communications plan that addresses how to communicate factual and up-to-date information with campers, staff, parents, the media, and others in a crisis situation? Yes No

For more information on establishing a crisis communications plan, see Risk Research Bulletin, "A Guide to Developing a Campus Crisis Communications Plan."

G. Transportation

Camp Arrivals, Departures, and Emergencies

■ Prior to the camp, do you:

• Inform parents and staff about designated drop-off and pick-up locations for campers? Yes No

• Inform parents and staff about alternate drop-off and pick-up locations for campers in the event of inclement weather or other potential emergencies? Yes No

• Arrange sufficient parking and traffic control for the camp? Yes No

Driver Qualifications

■ Do you require that all potential drivers of vehicles transporting campers:

• Demonstrate a driving record free of unreasonable violations or offenses? Yes No

• Provide a license that is appropriate for the vehicle to be driven? Yes No

• Be above a minimum age? Yes No

• Pass a safe-driving exam? Yes No

• Receive training on passenger safety issues—for children and adults—such as:

◦ Loading and unloading passengers including those with disabilities? Yes No

◦ Handling a vehicle breakdown? Yes No

◦ Evacuating the vehicle? Yes No

◦ Controlling camper behavior while driving? Yes No

◦ Lowering the student-to-staff ratio when extra supervision is required? Yes No

◦ Conducting vehicle safety checks? Yes No

◦ Following accident procedures? Yes No

• Orienting passengers on safety procedures? Yes No

Vehicle Safety

■ Do you require that all vehicles transporting campers:

• Contain first aid kits? Yes No

• Are evaluated for mechanical soundness? Yes No

• Be equipped to accommodate campers with special needs, such as:

◦ IEPs? Yes No

◦ 504 plans? Yes No

◦ Physical, visual, and hearing limitations? Yes No

Leasing, Renting, and Chartering Vehicles

- When leasing, renting, or chartering a vehicle with a driver, can you demonstrate that the selected provider:
- Maintains its vehicles? Yes No
 - Conducts safety checks of its vehicles? Yes No
 - Verifies its drivers' driving records and experience? Yes No
 - Trains its drivers on passenger safety issues? Yes No

For more information on transportation safety, see ["Checklist for Safety in Student and Employee Transportation."](#)

H. Contracts and Insurance with Third-Party Providers

Camp directors often contract with third parties to provide services to the camp. For your protection, contracts with third parties must be reviewed, and the third party must be adequately insured. If you are an employee of the host institution or co-sponsoring the camp with it, you should consult with the host institution's contract and insurance experts, such as the general counsel, risk manager, or business officer. If not, use legal counsel and talk with your insurance agent.

- Do you take the following steps when dealing with third-party service providers:
- Define the third party's relationship to the camp's sponsor (the camp's sponsor is most likely the host institution or your employer) in a written contract? Yes No
 - Specify in a written contract how the third party will share responsibility with the camp's sponsor for any claims, losses, or injuries that arise out of camp activities (this contract language is often called an "indemnity," "hold harmless," or "risk allocation" provision)? Yes No
 - Determine what lines of insurance the third party must carry to cover the claims, losses, or injuries that might arise out of camp activities? Yes No
 - Require the third party to provide a certificate of insurance showing that it carries the necessary lines? Yes No
 - Request the third party name the camp's sponsor as an additional insured on its general liability policy? Yes No
 - Impose the same child protection standards as camps operated by the institution? Yes No
 - Mandate reporting of child abuse, harassment, or discrimination to the institution? Yes No

For more information on reviewing contracts and determining insurance requirements, see [Risk Research Bulletins](#), ["Guide for Reviewing Contracts,"](#) ["Improving Contracting on Campus: A Layperson's Guide to Understanding Contract Basics,"](#) and ["Improving Contracting on Campus: Allocating Risks Between Parties."](#)

Actions Needed

I. Post-Camp Evaluation

■ After the camp, do you:

- Collect feedback from campers and parents about their experience with the camp? Yes No
- Meet with staff to review camper feedback and any incident reports to identify what went well and areas for improvement? Yes No
- Consult with campus departments involved in the camp to identify areas for improvement? Yes No
- Save all documents used in planning and carrying out the camp, including any recommendations for improvement, to help plan future camps? Yes No

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Actions Needed



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