



Monmouth County Park System

Parent Camp Handbook

2025



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Thank you for choosing Monmouth County Park System summer camps for your child. We offer a diversity of quality summer camps that will enrich and enhance the lives of our participants emotionally, socially, and physically. Through our camp activities, we provide a variety of memorable experiences by fostering an appreciation of nature and the environment, inspiring a sense of adventure, and encouraging opportunities to make new friendships. We strive to create a sense of belonging, empowering campers to build a positive self-image, improve self-esteem, develop self-confidence, further skill development, discover inner talents, and learn to be respectful and supportive of each other. Our campers have unique opportunities to express themselves creatively, grow their passions, and find success through encouragement to expand their interests by trying new activities.

Our mission is to provide a fun, safe, inclusive, welcoming, and enriching environment that allows campers to play, learn, and grow. Monmouth County Park System staff are positive role models trained to provide a nurturing atmosphere through patience, compassion, and acceptance, and promoting the well-being of all campers. This handbook will present you with an understanding of how our camp operates and give you the information you will need to prepare you and your child for a safe and fun summer camp experience. Please contact us if you have additional questions or concerns.

*We look forward to seeing you
in the parks this summer!*

Our Values

- **Care** for yourself
- **Care** for and respect others
- **Care** for and appreciate the environment
- **Care** for and be positive role models

Contact Information

The Park System Information Desk is staffed Monday through Friday from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. and weekends from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. If you need to contact us, please call **732-842-4000, ext. 4312**, or email info@monmouthcountyparks.com.

If you have signed up children other than your own, please call us at 732-842-4000, ext. 4312, with the child's information so we can be sure their parents receive important information about camp.

Camp Goals & Outcomes

1. To encourage each child to challenge themselves by attempting new things and gaining new skills.
 - Each camper will be scheduled to participate in age-appropriate activities based on the camp they were registered for, such as nature activities, outdoor adventure activities, sports, performing arts, games, horseback riding, surfing, skateboarding, fishing, culinary arts, fine arts, sewing, and arts & crafts.
 - Staff will encourage each camper to participate in every planned activity for at least 15 minutes and will creatively motivate and instruct the group through fun and rewarding activities.
 - Campers will be encouraged to value activities because they are intrinsically rewarding and important for their physical, mental, and social development.
2. To provide each camper with a safe and secure environment and opportunities for fun.
 - Staff will complete orientation and training sessions that emphasize the safety of the campers as a priority and provide resources for proper safety procedures.
 - The Camp Nurse will always be accessible to all campers and staff, even when off premises.
 - All state regulations will be adhered to, and staff will be properly trained with appropriate ratios and obtain the required certifications.
3. To provide opportunities that stimulate the development of each camper's self-esteem and confidence.
 - Campers will participate in getting-to-know-you games during the first 24 hours of camp.
 - Staff will provide campers with positive comments and encouragement throughout their day.
 - Staff will focus on positive reinforcement in a noncompetitive environment where counselors lead/teach intrinsically rewarding activities.
4. To help each camper appreciate the outdoors and natural surroundings and take an active role in the stewardship of our environment.
 - Staff will model "reduce, reuse, recycle" practices through responsible waste management, minimizing water usage, and conserving energy.
 - Campers will develop a sense of personal responsibility and connection to the environment as they experience camp in a public park setting, learning to respect the environment through low-impact activities.
 - Staff will promote camper health and well-being by supporting sustainable practices that foster a sense of shared responsibility for the natural world.

Benefits of Camp

- Personal growth
- Responsibility
- Self-worth and sense of belonging
- Problem solving and decision making
- Confidence
- Respect for others and the environment
- Independence
- Fun

Camp communication is sent via email from a Monmouth County Park System email address. Please monitor your inbox for important camp announcements!

Essential Eligibility Requirements for Park System Camps

1. **Age:** Must fall within the listed age/grade for a program or camp.
2. **Capacity:** An individual must register before the camp has reached its maximum capacity.
3. **Charges:** Payment is due upon registering, or through an approved third-party balance due.
4. **Hygiene:** Participants must be able to manage their personal care including eating, drinking, changing clothing, and toileting.
5. **Required Competency/Readiness Skills to Meet With or Without Modification:**
 - **Ability** to use a consistent form of communication to indicate basic needs
 - **Ability** to work successfully in the specific camp's staff to participant ratio
 - **Ability** to follow three-step directions
 - **Ability** to tolerate and function as a member of a larger social group (six or more people)
 - **Ability** to remain with the instructor/counselor
 - **Ability** to refrain from disrupting activities at camp
 - **Ability** to transition between activities within 3-4 minutes
6. **Conduct:** With or without modification, all participants shall abide by standard rules of conduct:
 - Participants shall be respectful of other participants, staff, and others.
 - Participants shall be respectful of the equipment and use it as instructed.
 - Participants shall be responsible for their words and actions.

Please refer to individual programs for additional eligibility requirements that may be necessary to ensure safety in a camp.

What to Wear/Bring to Camp

- All camp activities require **closed-toe sneakers and socks** for the safety of the campers.
 - Sandals, Crocs, and flip-flops are not acceptable for activities but can be worn during swim/beach time.
 - If your child does not have the proper footwear, they will not be able to participate in camp activities. We will ask you to drop sneakers off at the camper drop off/pick up location.
- **Cool comfortable clothes** that are appropriate for the nature of the camp (clothes may get dirty and/or wet during some camp activities).
- **Sunscreen and bug spray** should be applied before camp. Campers should bring additional sunscreen/bug spray to re-apply throughout the day as needed.
- A **light-colored hat with a brim** is encouraged for outdoor activities.
- **Rain jacket or poncho**
 - Campers **MUST** have appropriate rain gear with them every day for camps that include outdoor activities (NOT a cotton hoody or nylon jacket).
- **Full reusable bottle of water** *No Glass*
 - Water fountains, sinks, and water coolers are available for refilling bottles.

Additional Information for camps with recreational swim activities:

- All campers should arrive at camp wearing a **swimsuit**.
- All campers should bring:
 - **Towel**
 - **Change of clothing**, including underwear
 - **Plastic bag** for wet clothes/towel
 - **Goggles** (optional)

What to Wear/Bring to Camp (cont.)

- **Long sleeve or Fleece shirt**
- **Backpack**
 - Please pack all daily items in a small backpack. Campers are responsible for their own backpacks.

Nut-free snack in a soft-sided, insulated lunch bag, in addition to a *nut-free nutritious lunch* for camps longer than three hours.


Optional items:

- Change of clothes - An extra set of clothing is *recommended* and may be sent to camp each day in your child's backpack.
- Personal hand sanitizer
- Sunglasses
- Eyewear retainer strap

LABEL EVERYTHING with your child's name, including what they wear to camp. Please check the Lost & Found area at sign-out before leaving camp. Two weeks after the end of each session, all items that have been left behind will be disposed of properly.

Please see your camp's information sheet on our [Summer Camp Information](#) page for additional information specific to your child's camp.

 *Freezing juice packs is a great way to keep lunches cool and ensures a cool nutritious drink later in the day.*

 *Campers are strongly urged to eat breakfast before arriving at camp! This will help provide energy for full participation in their camp activities.*

The Monmouth County Park System will not assume any responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged personal belongings.

What NOT to Wear/Bring to Camp

Camp is a natural setting to retreat from the everyday world and to get more in touch with nature and people. With this in mind, we require that your child leave the following items at home:

- Cell phones
- Smartwatches
- ALL electronic devices, including but not limited to iPods and handheld video games
- Collectible cards
- Toys
- Gum or candy
- Soda
- Anything glass
- Money (except on trips)
- Clothing with foul language or inappropriate phrases, symbols, or pictures
- Valuables, including irreplaceable keepsakes and jewelry
 - In addition, we encourage campers not to wear any jewelry that has the potential to catch, cut, or otherwise cause injuries. Campers will be required to remove jewelry during certain activities for their safety.*
- Personal sports equipment
- Alcohol and drugs
- Weapons
- Vehicles
- Animals

Cell Phone & Electronics Policy

Camp is a unique environment. Our mission includes nurturing independence, building social skills, and spending time in nature. Cell phones and other electronics are expensive and can get lost, stolen, or damaged and may function as a potential barrier for children to acclimate to the camp environment and grow, limiting their ability to meet our goals. Therefore, we ask that these devices be left in the safety of your homes.

If you are sending your child to camp with their cell phone, please understand they are NOT allowed to use it during the camp day. Your cooperation is appreciated.

If you urgently need to get in touch with your child during the camp day, please call the Park System Information Desk at **732-842-4000, ext. 4312**.

Forms and Important Information

To ensure staff is prepared to provide for the needs of campers and appropriately respond to emergencies and health issues, the Monmouth County Park System requires completed camper information prior to the start of camp. This year, camp forms will be completed and submitted electronically through CampDoc. Shortly after you register you will receive an "Invitation" email from CampDoc. If your child was registered for camp last year, your information is securely saved in CampDoc and will just need to be updated for this year. For your convenience, CampDoc saves your information as you complete it, thereby allowing you to return to login to app or campdoc.com to make updates and/or continue filling out your participant's information.



Additionally, CampDoc sends out periodic reminder emails for incomplete health information, and your camp may also use the messaging feature to send out emails via CampDoc. These notifications will come from noreply@campdoc.com, so please add this to your safe sender list to avoid accidental delivery to junk and spam folders. We don't want you to miss important notices about Monmouth County Park System camps!

The security and privacy of your child's health information is important to us. The CampDoc site is secure, encrypted, and password-protected. You can find additional information about CampDoc privacy and security information at www.docnetwork.org/security.

We reserve the right to deny your child participation in our camp if we do not have completed paperwork a minimum of one week prior to their camp start date.

A Special Note

You will notice that we have asked for some personal information about your child in our camp forms. We would like to take a moment to talk to you about these important questions. Some information, such as immunizations, are required by law. Providing us with additional information about a learning disability, attention challenges, or a recent loss or major change in the family or child's life, helps us to be sensitive to your child's need for patience, understanding, and reassurance – especially in the first days of camp. Children often use behavior, rather than words, to tell us something is bothering them. Having advance knowledge of situations that may be difficult for your child will help us understand the message in their actions. When faced with challenges, we can help your child achieve success, more so when we have your help. We encourage you to make us a full partner in planning for your child's safe and successful summer camp experience. If you would like to speak with Park System staff directly about this or share information about your child, please do not hesitate to contact Park System staff as listed on the camp information sheets found on our [Summer Camp Information page](#).

Medication Policy

If your child requires medication to be taken at camp (prescription, non-prescription, EpiPens, etc.) you **MUST** complete a Prescription Medication Authorization on CampDoc. In addition, if your child has a life-threatening allergy, diabetes, seizures, or asthma, you must provide the appropriate Treatment/Action Plan that has been signed by your child's physician and uploaded to your CampDoc account.

- All medications must be current, in the original pharmaceutical packaging, and have the child's name, physician's name, and instructions clearly visible. Medications will be stored securely in a locked box/area that is inaccessible to campers.
- Any medication should be enclosed in a clear Ziploc bag labeled with your child's first and last name and the name of their camp.
- Medication **MUST** be handed to the Camp Director/Head Counselor each morning at drop-off.
- All medication will be returned to the parent/guardian at the end of the camp week. Any medications not picked up within one week after the end of camp will be properly disposed of.

 *Be sure to check the expiration date of your child's medication before bringing it to camp!*

Illness & Injury

In cases of illness and injury, treatment will be provided as necessary by our trained staff on site. You will be notified of minor bumps/bruises/scrapes at pick-up. Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately if your child experiences loss of consciousness, severe bleeding, an allergic reaction, broken bones, head trauma, or any other severe injury. Every effort will be made to contact parents/guardians through all contact numbers provided. If parents/guardians are unavailable, emergency contacts listed on your child's health history & information form will be called until parental contact is made. Should your child require additional medical treatment, emergency services will be notified, and your child will be transported to the local hospital, accompanied by Park System staff who will remain with your child until you, or your designee, arrive.

Communicable Disease Management

We are concerned with the health and welfare of each child. In order to prevent illness from being spread to campers, if any of the following symptoms occur at camp, you will be called to take your child home. Upon notification, we require your child to be picked up within one hour.

- Temperature over 100 degrees
- Severe cold
- Difficult and/or rapid breathing
- Severe pain or discomfort
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Rashes that cannot be identified or have not been diagnosed by a physician
- Contagious diseases such as measles, chicken pox, mumps, rosella, pink eye, or impetigo
- Ear or throat infections
- Unusual behavior, such as extreme lethargy, refusing to eat or drink, etc.

Return to Camp Policy

Children sent home from camp can only return if they are free of symptoms for 24 hours. Written medical clearance from a doctor stating the camper is cleared to participate in all activities on a definitive date is required for any concussion, broken bones, sports injury, or other serious illness/communicable disease.

Parent Involvement

We take the safety and well-being of our campers – your child – very seriously. After all, giving your child over to the care of others is perhaps the greatest act of trust a parent can engage in. We aim to do everything we can to earn and keep that trust. We also know we cannot do this without your help, and our partnership ensures your child has the safest experience with us possible.

- Please educate your child on the importance of [sun protection](#) and [tick prevention](#) prior to camp.
- Please apply a high SPF sunscreen to your child before dropping them off at camp.
- Although staff will perform tick checks for groups that have been exploring in the woods, parents are strongly advised to check their children daily for ticks.
- Please complete your camper's information and health history in CampDoc at least one week prior to camp.
- Prior to arrival at camp every day, each parent/guardian is asked to complete a daily screening with their child(ren) at home to identify signs of illness. Campers who have a communicable disease or are feeling ill will not be permitted to attend camp. If a camper has a communicable disease, a doctor's written clearance will be required to return to camp.

Rainy/Inclement Weather

Most camps are held rain or shine, but some may be canceled in the case of inclement weather. All weather cancellations are listed on our weather cancellation message. Call the following number 1 ½ hours prior to your camp's start time to find out whether it has been canceled: **732-842-4000, ext. 6**. Please see your camp's information sheet on our [Summer Camp Information page](#) for additional information specific to your child's camp.

Attendance/Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

Please park in designated areas and follow the directions of the Park System staff to the correct camp check-in location.

- Parent(s)/Guardians or an authorized driver **MUST** sign in campers at the designated camp meeting location no sooner than 10 minutes before the start of camp.
- Attendance is taken daily. If your child will be absent, please contact the staff member listed on your child's camp information sheet on our [Summer Camp Information page](#).
- Late Arrivals: Our camps jump right into the fun. For some camps, this may mean departing the camp drop-off location within 15 minutes of the start of camp. Camps cannot wait for late campers. Please speak with the Camp Director/Head Camp Counselor or the Park System Information Desk at 732-842-4000, ext. 4312, if you will be arriving late to determine if your camper will be able to join the group.
- Early Pick-Up: If you need to pick up your child early from camp, please contact the staff member listed on your child's camp information sheet on our [Summer Camp Information page](#) or the Park System Information Desk at 732-842-4000, ext. 4312. Please Note: Not all camps, especially those with trips, may be able to accommodate an early pickup.
- Parent(s)/Guardians or authorized pick-up person **MUST** sign out campers at the designated camp meeting location no later than 15 minutes after the completion of camp.
- Camp staff will not release a camper to anyone other than the person(s) listed on the Pick-up Authorization Form. All authorized pick-up persons must be prepared to present a valid photo ID. Under no circumstances will a camper be released to someone under 18 years of age.
- If you need to add someone to the list of authorized persons who can sign out your camper, you **MUST** notify the Camp Director in writing prior to the first day that person will pick up your camper.



To avoid any "day of" complications, we suggest that a parent/legal guardian sign in the camper on the first day of camp.

Special Procedures for Fort Monmouth Recreation Center Camps:

- Camp drop-off and pick-up happens outside the building, limiting the number of people inside the building to include only necessary staff and campers.
- Families registered for Before Care should pull up into the bus lane in front of the building and bring your camper in the main entrance to check in.
- All other campers will loop around the parking lot to the Atrium side, where staff will escort campers into the building and to their age group's homeroom.
- Campers will receive two paper placards for their parent's vehicle(s) during the first day of camp. We ask that you display the placard, with your last name facing out, in your windshield when picking up. We assume that if you give someone a placard that they have your permission to pick up your child(ren). If there is no placard, we will check that they are on your pickup authorization list and ask for ID.
- At the end of the day, cars will follow the same route through the parking lot and pull up into the bus lane; the staff will bring the child(ren) to the car.
- Families registered for After Care should pull into the bus lane in front of the building and come inside the main entrance to sign their child out.

Safety & Security

To ensure a safe, productive, and fun camp experience, the Monmouth County Park System has established mandatory procedures. For the safety of campers and staff, we require:

- Staff wear distinctive Monmouth County Park System staff shirts and name tags.
- All Monmouth County Park System camp staff who have direct supervision with children have been interviewed and had reference checks completed by the Camp Director, in addition to annual criminal background checks and a search conducted through the National Sex Offender Registry by our Human Resources staff.
- All Camp Directors and Head Camp Counselors are college-age or older (18 years or older) and trained in First Aid, CPR, and AED. All camp staff attend mandatory camp training and development programs prior to the start of camp.
- All vehicles used to transport campers are driven by staff who have attended Defensive Driving Training and hold a valid New Jersey Commercial Driver's License with a passenger endorsement.
- All camps are assigned at least two staff members, with a minimum camper-to-counselor ratio of 2 staff:12 campers (ages 4-5 years), 2 staff:16 campers (ages 6-8 years), 2 staff:20 campers (ages 9-17 years), with lower staff to camper ratios required for therapeutic recreation camps. All recreational swimming occurs under the supervision of certified lifeguards. During swim time, campers who choose not to participate must sit on the pool deck.
- Participants registered for camps with the following activities:
 - Kayaking, canoeing, and stand-up paddle boarding - Must wear a PFD (personal flotation device) regardless of their swim level or ability.
 - Biking - Must wear properly fastened and fitted safety-certified bicycle helmets. The label in the helmet must read: "complies with U.S. CPSC safety standard for bicycle helmets for ages 5 and older".
 - Horseback riding - Must wear properly fastened and fitted SEI-certified helmets that meet the ASTM F1163-15 standard.
 - Skateboarding - Must wear helmets, knee and elbow pads, and wrist guards.
 - Surfing - Must be able to pass a swim test, which will be held at the Dorbrook Recreation Area T-Pool. Participants will be notified of the test date(s) and time(s) prior to the start of camp.
- Camp Directors ensure emergency drills are practiced regularly during camp. These may include lost camper/swimmer, shelter in place, and minibus evacuation drills, where applicable. Emergency drill procedures are reviewed with the campers to ensure they know what to expect when they happen.

NOTE: Some camps are offered through the Monmouth County Park System with a contract. The Contractor is required to perform criminal background checks and general reference checks on all instructors, teachers, coaches, and assistants. Additionally, teachers shall have a minimum of two years of experience providing educational programs to grade school children. The contractor shall provide adequate training on the class subject matter or sport. Teachers must have First Aid Training from a recognized certifying agency (i.e., American Red Cross).

Behavior Management Policy

We are looking forward to providing your child with a fun, memorable, and safe summer camp experience. Each camper has a responsibility to act in a way that assures a positive experience for all. To that end, all campers are required to follow these guidelines.

Behavior guidelines:

- Campers shall be responsible for their words and actions.
- Campers shall be respectful of others.
- Campers shall follow directions from staff members.
- Campers shall leave all electronic devices at home, such as iPods, handheld computer games, and cell phones.

Prohibited behaviors:

- Endangering the health and safety of themselves, other campers, and/or staff or volunteers.
- Stealing, damaging, or failing to care for Park System or personal property.
- Continual disruption of the program.
- Refusal to follow the behavior guidelines.
- Inappropriate physical contact.
- Using profanity or inappropriate language or displaying clothing or other personal items with offensive content.
- Bullying or acts of aggression or violence.
- Possession or use of illegal substances, tobacco, or alcohol.
- Threat of use or possession of weapons. Any object that may cause harm to another, or place another person in fear of their safety, may be considered a weapon.

When a camper doesn't follow the behavior guidelines, we will take the following steps:

- A counselor will redirect the camper to a more appropriate behavior.
- The camper will be reminded of the behavior guidelines.
- If the behavior persists, staff will discuss the problem with a parent/guardian.
- Staff will document the situation. Written documents will include what the behavior problem is, what provoked the problem, and the corrective action taken.
- If the problem persists to the point where a second phone call becomes necessary, the Camp Director/Supervisory Staff may find it necessary to have the camper picked up.
- If a camper's behavior at any time threatens the immediate safety of themselves, other campers, or staff, the parent/guardian will be notified by the Camp Director/Supervisory Staff that the camper is being dismissed from camp and the parent/guardian/authorized person is expected to pick up the child immediately.
- If a camper persistently engages in inappropriate behaviors as listed above, the Camp Director/Supervisory Staff will make the determination if the camper is to be dismissed for a day, several days, a week, or the camp season and will notify the parent/guardian to have the camper picked up immediately.

If a camper is sent home/dismissed from camp for failure to comply with the camp rules, no refunds will be given.

Camp Locations

Bel-Aire Golf Course

3120 Allaire Road, Wall Township, NJ 07719

Big Brook Park

Main Entrance -

521 Route 520, Marlboro, NJ 07746

Boundary Road Activity Center -

80 Boundary Road, Marlboro, NJ 07746

Deep Cut Gardens

152 Red Hill Road, Middletown, NJ 07748

Dorbrook Recreation Area

353 Route 537, Colts Neck, NJ 07722

Fort Monmouth Recreation Area

2566 Guam Lane, Tinton Falls NJ 07724

Freneau Woods Park

360 Monastery Lane, Aberdeen Township, NJ 07747

Hartshorne Woods Park

Rocky Point Entrance -

1402 Portland Road, Highlands, NJ 07732

Henry Hudson Trail

Popamora Point - 369 Shore Drive, Highlands, NJ 07732

Historic Longstreet Farm

44 Longstreet Road, Holmdel, NJ 07733

Huber Woods Park

25 Brown's Dock Road,

Locust (Middletown Twp.), NJ 07760

Manasquan Reservoir

311 Windeler Road, Howell, NJ 07731

Manasquan River Greenway

Winter Run Activity Center -

270 Southard Ave, Howell, NJ 07731

Seven Presidents Oceanfront Park

221 Ocean Avenue, Long Branch, NJ 07740

Shark River Park

1101 Schoolhouse Road, Wall, NJ 07753

Saint John Vianney High School

540-A Line Road, Holmdel, NJ 07733

Sunnyside Equestrian Center

628 Middletown-Lincroft Road, Lincroft, NJ 07738

Tatum Park

Red Hill Road Activity Center -

151 Red Hill Road, Middletown, NJ 07748

Holland Road Activity Center -

144 Holland Road, Middletown, NJ 07748

Thompson Park

805 Newman Springs Road, Lincroft, NJ 07738

Turkey Swamp Park

200 Georgia Road, Freehold, NJ 07728

Park System Information Desk:

info@MonmouthCountyParks.com

732-842-4000, ext. 4312

Camp Executive Director: Patti Conroy

Patricia.Conroy@MonmouthCountyParks.com

732-842-4000, ext. 4247

Many of our camps have specific policies, such as what to bring lists, schedules, and drop-off/pick-up information to help you prepare for your child's camp visit. To find out more information regarding your child's camp, you can access these camp information sheets on our *Summer Camp Information page*.



Monmouth County Park System

805 Newman Springs Road, Lincroft, NJ 07738

www.MonmouthCountyParks.com

Sponsor a Camper!

Tipping Monmouth County Park System employees is against County Park policy. However, if you feel our staff has done an outstanding job, you can make a donation to our Camp Scholarship Fund, which enables children from low-income families the opportunity to enjoy the same camp experience your children do.

