

Skokie Park District

Summer Camp

Parent Handbook

2026

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Introduction

Welcome to the Skokie Park District summer camps!

We pride ourselves on giving our campers the best experience possible. To ensure this, we have the following policies and procedures in place to make camp a fun and safe experience for all involved.

ACA Accreditation

The Skokie Park District is one of a few park districts in the nation accredited by the American Camping Association (ACA). This nationally recognized program, developed exclusively for the camp industry, focuses on program quality, health, and safety issues, and requires us to review every aspect of our day camp operation. We have voluntarily submitted to this independent audit by camp experts and have earned this mark of distinction. Summer 2025, the Skokie Park District was re-accredited for the 26 summer in a row.

Vision

The Skokie Park District envisions a community where all its residents enjoy a high quality of life through leisure time pursuits, beautiful open spaces, and first-rate facilities.

Mission

The Skokie Park District will realize its vision through teamwork, community partnerships, sound fiscal management, and creativity in every area of its operation.

Core Values

The Skokie Park District will fulfill its mission through: Commitment, Service, Integrity, Openness, Innovation, Environmental Stewardship, Inclusiveness

General Camp Program Goals

To provide every camper with a safe, fun, and memorable camp experience that helps develop a sense of self-respect, respect for others, cooperation, a sense of accomplishment, sportsmanship, and an appreciation of nature.

To help each camper develop a positive self-concept by giving the camper an opportunity to interact with campers of all different backgrounds and lifestyles and develop a sense of curiosity about the world and an enthusiasm for learning.

To provide opportunities for campers to develop emerging social, cognitive, and self-help skills by giving the campers an opportunity to establish relationships with other campers and adults, make choices and be able to accept the outcome of their choices, explore, create, and express themselves at their own levels.

To provide for the physical and emotional well-being of each camper by creating an atmosphere of warmth, safety, and acceptance and to provide an environment that is stimulating and allows the camper to feel a sense of belonging.

To meet parents' expectations for the health, safety, welfare, and education of their campers.

To establish a climate of teamwork among staff through open communication, mutual respect, and a willingness to share in the camp experience. Camp is for campers, but it is also an excellent opportunity for staff to grow and learn more about themselves.

To maintain the high quality of the camp program through excellent instruction in activities, a mixture of traditional and innovative programming, the teaching of fun games, an emphasis on environmental appreciation, and an emphasis on camper growth.

Outcome-based Goals

The purpose of the outcome-based goals is to ensure a balanced camp experience covering social, emotional, physical, educational, and wellness-related growth. These goals are measurable and achievable at all park district-run camps:

- **Engagement:** Ensure 80%+ of campers actively participate in at least three structured activities per day.
- **Skill Development:** Have at least 85% of campers complete a hands-on project (e.g., a craft, a performance, or a nature survival skill).
- **Social Growth:** Ensure that 100% of campers participate in at least one teamwork or leadership activity.
- **Emotional Growth:** Facilitate at least two group reflection sessions per week to track emotional growth
- **Physical Activity:** Ensure campers engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity daily.
- **Wellness:** Offer at least three different sports or outdoor activities per week.
- **Outdoor Education:** Have all campers complete at least one nature-based activity (e.g., hiking, bird watching, or animal tracking).
- **Environmental Education:** Conduct at least two workshops on sustainability, conservation, or local wildlife.

Counselor-In-Training Program

Summer camps may have Counselors-In-Training programs. Counselors-in-Training (CITs) are campers with increased responsibility who are learning how to become counselors in the future. CITs are under the direction of their camp's director. Because CITs are still considered campers, they will never be left alone with campers; the Camp Director or a Camp Program Leader must always be present with all campers.

CITs have two levels; Level I is between the ages of 12 and 13 years old, and Level II is between 14 and 15 years old.

Overview

The Counselor in Training program is designed to help campers develop the necessary skills needed to take care of children and foster creative and critical thinking in social settings. Campers will gain valuable experience necessary for the future, including leadership skills, responsibility, and enhanced communication skills.

Our CIT program will help campers explore new areas of development in a safe environment, all while learning vital skills needed to be a leader once they are of hiring age.

Expectations

- Independently participates and assists with campers in an assigned group.
- Works collaboratively every day in a team environment.

- Resolves conflicts in an effective way by seeking help from counselors and camp directors.
- Acts as a positive role model and stays present daily.
- Seeks opportunities to be helpful within the camp community.
- Accepts feedback from counselors and the camp director and uses it to reflect on and improve performance.
- Families will receive information via email in May regarding the individual camp's CIT/Apprentice program, along with the goals and expectations of the program. Campers are required to meet these expectations to participate in the program.

Kindness Ambassador Program

The Skokie Park District is proud to continue our Kindness Ambassador Program, now entering its fifth year! Since 2022, this initiative has inspired campers to lead with empathy, celebrate differences, and create a welcoming camp community where everyone belongs.

Each summer, our theme has been built upon the last - from Bee Kind (2022) and Bee a Bucket Filler (2023) to Growing Seeds of Kindness (2024) and Coloring Camp with Kindness (2025). In 2026, we're celebrating "Kindness is Our Superpower" - reminding campers that everyday acts of kindness have the power to make a big difference. Through hands-on activities, reflections, and team challenges, campers will explore how their words and actions can lift others up and strengthen our camp community.

As part of our kindness mission, we also help campers understand that kindness includes responsibility. Each child is expected to uphold our camp's Behavior Code of Conduct by showing respect for themselves, others, and the environment. Staff guide campers in making positive choices and hold them accountable when behavior doesn't align with our values - always with the goal of helping them learn and grow.

Families can join in by encouraging conversations at home about kindness, inclusion, and respect - helping their campers bring those "superpowers" beyond camp.

All camps will celebrate together on July 15, 2026, during Camp Kindness Day, a nationwide event honoring the power of compassion and community.

Registration Policies

Camp Registration

Registration dates are established each year. For the 2026 season, resident registration was held on February 8, 2026 at 12noon online and in person. Non-resident registration began February 22, 2026 beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Proof of Residency

Visit one of our facilities (Devonshire Cultural Center, Emily Oaks Nature Center, Oakton Community Center, Skatium, or Weber Leisure Center), and a Customer Service Representative will be happy to assist you with setting up an account. Visit skokieparks.org to find all the up-to-date facility hours before visiting a park district facility. Please bring proof of residency. See below for acceptable forms of proof.

Acceptable proof of residency includes: Valid driver's license or state ID with a Utility bill or Property tax bill.

Residency & Exemptions

The individual's primary residence must be within the Skokie Park District boundaries (which may vary from the Village of Skokie's boundaries - check your property tax bills). Any owner of real estate within the boundaries paying taxes to the Skokie Park District will be considered a resident, as will their immediate family. Immediate family is defined as husband, wife, civil union partner, life partner, and children who reside in the owner's household. Residency rates for Skokie Park District camp programs apply to residents of zip codes 60076, 60077, and 60203. For additional residency information and boundaries, please visit www.skokieparks.org/residency-policy/

Exemptions to the residency policy include Morton Grove residents whose children attend Skokie School District 69 schools. These households will be given the camp resident rate, but cannot register until the non-resident registration date, February 22, 2026.

Camp Payment Options

Option 1: Full payment.

Option 2: Auto Debit Installment Billing: Only Registrations made before April 12 qualify for this option. All registrations after April 12 will require full payment.

Auto-Debit means you pay deposits for each camp section at the time of registration and the remaining balances are paid in 2 installment bills. The remaining balances require a credit or debit card to complete the registration. All one-week camps require a \$20 deposit. All other camps require a \$50 deposit.

One-half of the remaining fee is auto-debited on April 14, and the second half is auto-debited on May 14.

Payment Methods

The Skokie Park District accepts the following as method of payment:

- Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express
- Cash for in-person registrations
- Checks; payable to Skokie Park District with proper identification. No second-party or co-signed checks are accepted. Checks that are returned from the bank for any reason will incur an additional \$25 charge.

Fee Assistance

Fee Assistance is available for qualifying families. Visit Skokie Park District's [Fee Assistance page](#) for more information, or email Lisa Hanley at LHanley@skokieparks.org

Camper Refund/Waitlist/Transfer Policy

[Found Here.](#)

Insurance

The Skokie Park District does not provide individual Accident or Health Insurance.

In addition, for insurance purposes, Park District programs and camps require a signed waiver. Patrons will not be able to participate in classes or camps if the waiver is not signed.

Health and Safety

Camper Emergency Forms Through ePACT

Before the start of camp, all campers must have emergency forms completed. This form is through ePACT, and families will receive an invitation through ePACT upon registration. This form includes pertinent information such as emergency contacts, allergies, medication waivers, and special accommodation requests. The personal information included on this form is confidential and shared only with the necessary individuals.

Medication Administration

If your camper takes any kind of medication, please complete the medication section on the ePACT emergency form. Please note that medications will not be dispensed without the completed and signed emergency forms. It is preferred that medication schedules be planned around the camp program whenever possible to avoid dispensing medication at camp.

All medications must be kept in their original containers and used according to the directions on the forms. All medication should be given only to the Camp Director. The Camp Director will supervise and log the distribution of any medication that must be taken during the camp day.

Illness Policy

Campers should not be brought to camp with an illness that is contagious, or with a fever (100.4 or above), diarrhea, vomiting, unidentifiable rashes, and/or lice infestation. Campers may not return to camp until they are fever- and/or diarrhea-free for 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication).

If a child shows any signs of illness or has a fever recorded at camp, parents are required to pick up the child within 60 minutes of notification. If a parent is reached but cannot pick up their child within 60 minutes, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for an alternate pickup with someone listed on the child's emergency contact list (on the Camper Information Form). If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will begin to call the people from the emergency contact list, until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up.

Thermometers will be available at camp in case staff need to take a child's temperature during the day.

Dependent upon illness, a doctor's note stating that the camper may safely return to camp may be required.

Parents are responsible for letting the Camp Director/Supervisor know immediately if their child has symptoms or has been diagnosed with a Communicable Disease. If a camper has a communicable disease, all parents/guardians with a camper at the respective campsite will be notified by the Camp Supervisor.

Emergency Procedures

The Camp Director and/or Assistant Director are certified in both CPR and First-Aid. In case of a major accident, injury or health emergency, local paramedics will be notified by calling 911.

In addition, every effort will be made to contact parents/guardians immediately. Staff will provide care for which they are trained until paramedics arrive and will reassure campers throughout, maintaining a safe and calm environment.

Emergency Action Plans

An Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for summer camp is essential to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants and staff. The plan outlines

procedures for responding to various emergencies, including severe weather, health crises, missing persons, and more.

Each camp has its own specific EAP and will practice the plans and drills throughout the summer. For further details, contact the Camp Supervisor directly.

Inclement Weather

Some camps are located primarily outdoors, while others are indoors and spend time outside. Outdoor camps have rain sites listed in the camp Welcome Letter. In the event of rain, thunderstorms, or excessive heat, campers will be brought indoors to the designated rain site location. During heat emergencies, the camp will spend time both outside and indoors. Campers will be rotated indoors, to shaded areas, and take frequent water breaks.

Air Quality

The Park District monitors daily air quality using the Air Quality Index (AQI) and adjusts camp activities as needed. Due to the outdoor nature of many camps, full-day indoor relocation is not always possible. Staff are trained to reduce exertion, increase breaks, and prioritize camper well-being. Parents of children with asthma or respiratory conditions should use discretion when sending their child on poor air quality days.

Activity Modifications by AQI

AQI 0-100 (Good-Moderate): Regular camp activities.

AQI 101-150 (Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups): Reduced intensity, more breaks, increased hydration, and staff monitoring.

AQI 151-200 (Unhealthy): Limit outdoor time when possible, focus on low-exertion activities, and use shaded or available indoor/covered spaces.

AQI 200+ (Very Unhealthy-Hazardous): Significant program modifications; camps will seek indoor or sheltered options when available. Camp activities or hours may be adjusted if needed.

Eating, Allergies, and Dietary Restrictions

Campers must bring their own lunch and water bottle each day. Camp locations are not equipped with a refrigeration system for perishables. Since lunch at camp may not be until noon or 12:30 p.m., we strongly encourage campers to eat breakfast before arriving at camp.

On hot summer days, it is critical that campers stay hydrated. Therefore, campers are encouraged to bring a labeled reusable water bottle.

Campers and staff will not be allowed to share food or drinks.

Please be aware that campers suffering from severe health allergies may be in attendance and that we may count on your cooperation to make alternate food choices for the safety of all campers. If severe allergies exist, you may be asked to refrain from sending peanut or peanut product snacks with your camper due to allergies.

Safety Precautions During Lunch and Snack

Whenever possible, lunch/snack will be picnic style outdoors, spread out throughout the park. Hands will be washed/sanitized before and after lunch. Individual groups may be designated as peanut and tree nut free.

Group Treat Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that any group treats provided by campers or staff meet the dietary restrictions of all participants. Substitutions will not be accepted.

Group treats must be approved by the camp supervisor in advance. The person providing the treat must consult with the supervisor to understand the group's dietary needs and submit the treat approval at least three (3) days in advance of the intended treat day. The submission should include a complete list of ingredients and any relevant preparation instructions to ensure all dietary restrictions are observed. The supervisor will review the treat submission and either approve or deny the request based on its compliance.

Approved treats will be communicated to the group by the supervisor to ensure transparency and awareness. Any concerns or issues with the provided treats should be directed to the supervisor immediately.

Sun and Insect Protection Policy

The Skokie Park District encourages the use of sunscreen and insect repellent to protect participants during outdoor activities. To support participant health and comfort, staff may assist children with application when needed.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

- Provide sunscreen and/or insect repellent labeled with the child's name
- Apply sunscreen prior to arrival when possible
- Ensure products are appropriate for your child
- Inform staff of any allergies or sensitivities

Staff Support & Application

- Staff may assist participants with applying sunscreen and insect repellent to exposed skin
- Assistance may include application to the face, with care taken to avoid the eyes and mouth
- Spray products will not be applied directly to the face
- Participants will be encouraged to apply products independently when age-appropriate
- Staff will support reapplication as time and program schedule allow
- While staff will make reasonable efforts to assist, timing and frequency of application cannot be guaranteed
- The Skokie Park District is not responsible for missed applications, sunburn, insect bites, or allergic reactions or sensitivities to products provided by families

Toileting

The Skokie Park District is committed to providing safe, supportive, and developmentally appropriate recreation programs for all participants. To ensure a successful experience for both children and staff, we require that all participants in our recreation programs are fully toilet trained prior to enrollment.

Definition of Toilet Trained

For the purposes of our programs, a child is considered fully toilet trained when they:

- Recognize the need to use the bathroom and can do so without reminders.
- Can independently manage their toileting needs, including wiping, flushing, and redressing.
- Have no regular toileting accidents (occasional, isolated accidents may happen, but not on a daily or frequent basis).

Toileting Policy

- Children who are not fully trained are not eligible to participate in Skokie Park District recreation programs.
- If a toileting accident occurs, staff will contact a parent or guardian to come change the child within 30 minutes.
- In cases where the child is capable, staff will provide verbal coaching to help the child change into clean clothing supplied by the family.
- Staff are not permitted to wipe or change participants due to health and safety regulations.

Parent Responsibilities

- Accurately represent your child's toileting abilities during registration.
- Disclose any medical conditions or documented disabilities that affect toileting, prior to registration, and provide documentation.
- Provide a change of clothes in your child's backpack each day.
- Respond promptly if contacted regarding an accident.
- Understand and support this policy to ensure a safe and respectful environment for all participants.

Ongoing Accidents: Staff Procedures

To ensure clarity and fairness, the following procedure will be followed if a child is having repeated accidents:

Initial Notification

- After the second toileting accident within a program week, staff will notify the family that the frequency of accidents is becoming a concern.
- Parents will be reminded of the toilet training requirement.

Written Warning

- If the child continues to have accidents (three or more in a program week, or a consistent pattern over two weeks), a formal written warning will be issued.
- Staff will document incidents and communicate with the family regarding expectations and potential next steps.

Temporary Removal

- If the accidents persist after a written warning and it is determined the child is not fully toilet trained, the child may be temporarily removed from the program.
- Re-enrollment may be considered once the child demonstrates consistent, independent toileting at home and/or in another structured environment.

Staffing and Behavior

Camp Staff

Summer camp staff contribute to the success of our diverse programs. Camps have Camp Supervisors, Camp Directors, and/or Assistant Directors, Program Leaders, and/or Junior Program Leaders. Camp Supervisors are full-time employees at the Skokie Park District who oversee summer camps off-site. The Director and/or Assistant Director are seasonal staff who are qualified and experienced adults who supervise each camp on-site.

Program Leaders and Junior Program Leaders are a mixture of mature and enthusiastic college and high school students, parents, educators, and coaches. 80% of staff at each program site are 18 years of age or older. Additionally, staff will be at least two years older than the campers they supervise.

All camp staff complete an extensive training program that includes supervision and safety techniques and program development. Camp staff are instructed to create weekly and daily schedules to provide consistency and organization. Staff are encouraged to be innovative and creative in their pursuit to provide a unique camp experience.

To provide a safe and adequately supervised program, the following staff-to-camper ratios will be followed when feasible:

Ages 3-5, at least 1 to 6

Ages 6-8, at least 1 to 8

Ages 9-14, at least 1 to 10

Behavior -- Code of Conduct

Behavior & Discipline Policy

To support a structured and respectful environment, all participants are expected to:

- Show respect to fellow participants and staff
- Follow directions from staff and volunteers
- Follow all established rules and regulations
- Respect equipment, supplies, and facilities
- Refrain from abusive, discriminatory, or offensive language, gestures, or written communication
- Refrain from aggressive or disruptive behavior

Behavioral Consequences

Behavior concerns will be documented when necessary. Repeated or ongoing behaviors may result in the implementation of a three-strike policy. Parents/guardians will be notified when the policy is put into effect and after each incident resulting in a strike. Participants may be suspended or dismissed after three documented incidents.

Please note: Depending on the severity of the behavior, the Park District reserves the right to bypass the three-strike policy. Serious incidents may result in immediate suspension or removal from the program.

Physical Aggression

Any participant who engages in physical aggression toward another participant or staff member including, but not limited to, hitting, kicking, punching, biting, or spitting-will be required to be picked up immediately for the remainder of the day.

Following the incident, staff will review the situation. Based on the findings, the participant may face additional consequences, including suspension or removal from the program.

Discipline Approach

Our goal is to support each participant in developing self-control, responsibility, and positive behavior. Staff will set clear expectations and respond to behavior in a consistent and developmentally appropriate manner.

When addressing behavior, staff will use the following guiding principles:

- Be Safe - Behavior will be addressed immediately if it poses a risk of harm
- Be Kind - Behavior will be addressed if it negatively impacts others
- Respect the Environment - Behavior will be addressed if it causes damage to property or materials

Staff may use strategies such as redirection, problem-solving, and communication with families. However, behaviors that impact safety or significantly disrupt the program may result in more immediate consequences.

Bullying, Harassment, and Discrimination Policy

The Skokie Park District is committed to protecting campers and staff from bullying, harassment, or discrimination for any reason and of any type. All campers and staff are entitled to a safe, equitable, and harassment-free experience. Bullying, harassment, or discrimination will not be tolerated and is cause for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Bullying is defined as systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more participants or employees. It is further defined as 'unwanted purposeful written, verbal, nonverbal or physical behavior, including but not limited to any threatening, insulting or dehumanizing gesture, that has the potential to create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment or cause long term damage; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's performance or participation, is carried out repeatedly and is often characterized by an imbalance of power'.

Discipline Philosophy

Effective discipline has three purposes:

- To encourage self-esteem, self-control, and responsibility
- To discourage irresponsibility and inappropriate behavior
- To ensure the safety of all campers and staff under our supervision

To be effective, discipline must be a part of a positive, respectful relationship between adults and campers. While campers cannot assume the same rights and responsibilities as adults, they can be treated as equals in terms of worth and respect. Staff is expected to communicate their behavioral expectations in a way that is understandable to campers.

Inclusion

The Skokie Park District works cooperatively with the Maine-Niles Association of Special Recreation (M-NASR). M-NASR is an extension of 7-member park districts, including the Skokie Park District. They provide recreation programs specifically for individuals with disabilities, and they work together with our park district to assist in assessing and providing reasonable accommodations in our programs. This can include additional training for staff, resources such as schedules and visual aids, and, but not guaranteed, additional staff to work more closely with your child in the program as needed. There are no additional costs for inclusion services.

If you feel that your camper would benefit from additional assistance at camp, please communicate the necessary information to the Camp Supervisor at the time of registration.

For more info about M-NASR, visit www.mnasr.org.

If the Camp Director and/or Camp Supervisor observe behavior in a camper that would benefit from having additional assistance, the parent/guardian will be informed, and a request to M-NASR for their staff to perform an observation will be made. M-NASR will then determine if assistance for the camper would be beneficial.

Communication

Parent-Camp Communication

Ongoing, open communication between parents/guardians is essential to a positive experience for each camper. Parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss questions and concerns with the Camp Supervisor. Should your camper be experiencing something at camp or in their personal life that may be reflected in their behavior or attitude towards camp, please inform a staff member right away.

The main forms of camp communication are the camp cell phone and camp email. Camp cell phone and email will be monitored by the Camp Director and/or Assistant Director. Emails, texting, calling, and voicemails are encouraged and accepted.

Camp Cell Phones

Camp cell phone calls and texts will be answered/responded to during camp days and hours. Camp cell phones will be turned off at night and on weekends. Voicemails will be checked the next business day.

Camp Emails

Camp emails will receive a response within three hours on camp days. Emails outside of camp days and times will be replied to the next business day.

Camp cell phone numbers and emails will be provided in the camp email blast on May 21, 2026.

Contact camp cell phone or email for the following reasons:

- Reach and communicate with your camper
- Report absences
- Arrange early pick-ups or late arrivals
- Obtain campsite location changes due to weather, if applicable
- Obtain field trip updates and swim schedules, if applicable
- Report lost and found items

- Issues or concerns

Contact the Superintendent of Recreation, [Breanne Labus](#), and/or Assistant Superintendent of Recreation, [Mary Amato](#), for issues previously reported to the Camp Supervisor that remain unresolved or are recurring.

Welcome Letters

Welcome Letters are each camp's way of providing parents/guardians with camp-specific information necessary to know prior to the start of camp. Welcome Letters will be emailed May 21, 2026. Information includes:

- General Camp Procedures
- Drop-off and pick-up locations
- Sign-in and out procedures
- Camper and staff requirements

Skokie Parks Summer Camp App

Most camps will utilize the Skokie Parks Summer Camp App, an App-based program that will provide parents/guardians with pertinent information, including reminders, calendars, and rain-site location changes. The Welcome letters will provide further information on how to access this platform.

Parents are encouraged to enable notifications and check the app regularly for daily photos and updates, field trip and swim dates, and special information.

Photo and Video Policy

Registration in Skokie Park District programs grants permission for the Park District to photograph and/or video participants for promotional and informational purposes. These images and recordings may be used in, but are not limited to, brochures, program guides, advertisements, social media, websites, and other Park District materials. No compensation will be provided for use of these images or recordings.

The Skokie Park District reserves the right to use any photographs or video taken during programs or events without additional consent.

Parents/guardians who do not wish for their child to be photographed or recorded must notify the Camp Supervisor in writing prior to the start of the program. While reasonable efforts will be made to honor these requests, the Park District cannot guarantee that participants will be excluded from all incidental or group images.

Camp Schedule and Daily Expectations

Calendar

Camp-specific calendars will be provided to parents via e-mail, paper, and through the Skokie Parks Summer Camp App. Parents are encouraged to check these calendars regularly for field trip dates, swim dates, and special information. Camp calendars will be provided May 21, 2026 via email.

Camp Attire

Campers should wear comfortable clothing and close-toed athletic shoes with backs. Proper footwear is strongly recommended to support safe participation in camp activities.

Please keep in mind that our camps provide a relaxed, informal setting. We recommend that valuable clothing and accessories be kept at home. We also suggest labeling your child's belongings and providing an additional change of clothing.

The Skokie Park District is not responsible for injuries that may occur because of inappropriate or unsafe attire, including but not limited to improper footwear. Campers may be restricted from certain activities if attire is deemed unsafe by staff.

Personal Property

The Skokie Park District values all participants' personal property; however, responsibility for it rests solely with the participant. The Park District and its staff are not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of any personal property brought to or left at camp locations or associated venues.

It is strongly recommended that campers do not bring valuables to camp. This includes, but is not limited to, games, toys, sports equipment, expensive jewelry, electronics, or other personal items of value.

Campers are responsible for keeping track of their belongings at all times and for collecting all items at the end of each day. Campers should not share personal items with other campers or staff.

For the safety of all participants and staff, the possession of illegal substances or weapons is strictly prohibited.

Lost and Found

Campers should report any loss or damage to their personal property to the Camp Director and/or Assistant Director as soon as possible. While the Park District cannot assume responsibility for these items, we will assist, where possible, in locating lost property.

Camp locations will provide a Lost and Found service as a courtesy. However, this service is not a guarantee of recovery, and the district does not assume responsibility for the condition or return of the lost items. Items collected in the Lost and Found will be kept until the end of the camp session and any unclaimed items may be disposed of or donated according to the district's discretion.

Cell Phones and Smart Devices

Campers may bring their personal cell phones and/or smartwatches to camp. However, the use of cell phones or any smart devices by campers is strictly prohibited at all times during camp hours. This includes, but is not limited to, making calls, texting, browsing the internet, using social media, and taking photos or videos.

If a camper is found using a cell phone or any other smart device, the device will be immediately taken away by a camp staff member. The device will be securely stored and returned to the camper's parent or guardian at the end of the day.

Campers who need to contact their parents/guardians for any reason during camp hours are encouraged to approach the Camp Director and/or Assistant Director, who will assist with making the call.

Parents/guardians who need to get in touch with their child during camp hours can do so by calling the camp cell phone. Camp staff will facilitate communication between the camper and their parent/guardian.

The purpose of this policy is to foster a more engaging, interactive, and present experience for all campers. We aim to encourage social interactions and engagement in activities without the distraction of cell phones, smart devices, or watches.

Activities and Off-Site Experiences

Water Activities

To help keep campers cool, water activities may take place during the day. As a result, your camper will probably get wet at times. We strongly recommend that your camper pack a towel and an extra set of clothing in their backpack each day, in case they get wet and want to change into dry clothes.

Field Trips

At camp, field trips are an exciting opportunity for campers to explore new environments, engage in hands-on learning, and build lasting memories. Not all camps go on field trips. Check your camp calendars and Skokie Parks Summer Camp App for clarification and field trip locations. Your child's safety is our top priority. For all field trips:

- Staff maintain established camper-to-staff ratios. See the *Camp Staff* section for details.
- Campers are expected to follow all camp rules and behavior expectations while on field trips.
- Staff carry first-aid kits, emergency contacts, and any necessary medications.
- Campers must wear their identifying camp T-shirts (provided by Skokie Park District).
- Attendance is taken regularly throughout the trip to ensure all campers are accounted for.

Playground Rules

Playground use will be at the discretion of individual camps. However, the following procedures will be enforced if used:

- No one is allowed to jump off or stand-up on swings.
- Everyone must slide down the slides on their bottoms.
- Children are restricted from climbing on top of any of the tunnels or slides and from climbing up slides. Only allowed to climb on equipment designed for climbing.
- Running is permitted on grass and sandy areas only.
- Campers must stay within the boundaries established at each site (i.e., sidewalks, trees, playground, etc.)
- Animals and plants should be treated with respect. No chasing or feeding of animals, no pulling on or eating plants.

Aquatics and Water Safety

Pool Rules and Procedures

Summer Camps may visit the pool. Please see individual camp calendars for more information about when and where swimming will occur.

If you do not feel comfortable having your camper(s) go swimming, please inform the Camp Director/Supervisor. Camp staff will be available with activities in grassy areas away from the pool for those who do not wish to swim.

On the first day your camp visits each facility, the pool staff will go over the pool rules, where to go if a child is lost, hours, and other general information for your camp participants.

Pool and Swimming Test Information

Campers who wish to have access to all areas in the pool (slides, diving boards, and water deeper than their own armpits) will be required to take the district's swim test. Swimming tests will be available to all campers at every pool visit.

If the camper is in multiple camps, they must take the test at each camp for which they are registered.

Swimming tests will be supervised by lifeguards and camp staff.

To pass the swimming test, the camper must swim the length of the pool without stopping. Lifeguards and staff will determine 'pass' or 'fail' and will issue 'pass' campers a wristband. The wristband is to be worn by the campers at all times in the pool and will signify to staff that the camper is allowed in all areas of the pool, including slides and diving boards.

If a camper does not pass the swim test, they can retake it at their next visit.

Campers who do not take the swimming test or do not pass it should remain in shallow water. This is determined as water shallower than their own armpits. These campers will not be allowed on the slides or diving boards.

Along with lifeguards, camp staff will be in and around the pool to provide extra supervision and monitor the wristbands.

Depending on the camp, campers may be asked to use the buddy system while swimming in the pool and using the locker-room bathrooms. Buddies will have similar swim abilities.

The following rules exist for the Skokie Water Playground and Devonshire Aquatic Center:

Pool Facility Rules

- Approved bathing suits are required in the pool area. No unlined shorts, cut-offs, or leotards are allowed.
- Clean footwear is allowed on pool decks.
- Please keep our pools clean. Take a shower before entering the water.
- All infants must wear a swimsuit over their approved swim diaper and/or rubber pants.
- No running, jumping, or horseplay will be allowed in the aquatic facility.
- No diving is allowed in the Aquatic Centers.
- Smoking is not allowed anywhere in the aquatic facility.
- People with open sores, skin infections, contagious diseases, or band-aids will not be allowed in the water.
- The District is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
- Please advise management staff if you wish to use a video or standard camera.
- Glass objects of any kind are not allowed inside the aquatic facilities.

- Flotation devices, hard-throwing, and spraying objects are prohibited.
- Deck lounge chairs must remain on the deck areas only. Turf lounge chairs must remain in grass areas only. Please keep lounge and deck chairs 4 feet from pool edge.
- Management is authorized to institute appropriate rules to ensure safety when necessary.
- The District reserves the right to revoke any season passes, as well as suspend individuals paying daily admissions, if there are continual violations of facility rules.

Water Slide Rules

- One person on the waterslide at a time; NO tandem riding allowed at any time.
- The wearing of goggles, glasses, or t-shirts while on the water slide is prohibited.
- No twists, flips, or headfirst sliding allowed. All persons must slide in a sitting position or on their back, feet first.
- Please exit the splash pool immediately after each slide.
- No metal objects such as jewelry, locker keys, or metal snaps are allowed on the water slide.
- Please obey the Water Attendant at all times. Disregarding these rules may result in loss of slide privileges or expulsion from the facility.

Children's Water Play & Sand Play Area Rules

- The water play area is primarily for children under 8 years of age.
- Parents/guardians and Camp Staff are required to supervise their children in the area.
- Climbing on any apparatus in an unsafe manner is strictly prohibited.
- Baby strollers are not allowed in the water. They must be kept in the deck area.
- Hard-throwing and spraying objects are prohibited.
- Unruly or rough behavior is strictly forbidden and may result in loss of water play area privileges or expulsion from the facility.

Accidents & Rescues

If a camper is injured and is in need of first aid treatment by the aquatic staff or if a camper becomes distressed in the water and a lifeguard performs a rescue, the Camp Director or Camp Supervisor will go with the child into the office and fill out an accident or rescue report with the aquatic management staff. Parents will be notified immediately of the incident.

Other Aquatic Facilities

The following rules apply when camps go on field trips to non-SPD aquatic and/or open water facilities:

- Camps may only attend other aquatic facilities with certified lifeguards on duty.
- Camps may only attend other aquatic facilities where the staff is trained on written procedures that specify their supervisory roles and responsibilities.
- Appropriately trained facility staff must also be able to identify possible hazards and implement procedures to limit access.

- Beaches or bodies of water marked 'closed', 'high hazard', or 'medium hazard' are not to be attended.

Transportation and Travel Safety

Bus Transportation

The Skokie Park District uses a licensed and insured transportation provider, First Student. All camp rules and behavior expectations apply during bus transportation, including field trips and trips to the pool.

Campers will receive a bus safety orientation prior to transportation. Staff will review expectations and procedures to ensure a safe and orderly experience.

Camp Directors will maintain a roster of all campers and staff assigned to each bus for every trip. Buses will only be loaded within established passenger seating limits.

For the safety of all passengers, campers are expected to follow all bus rules, including but not limited to:

- Stay on the curb while waiting for the bus
- Do not approach the bus until it has come to a complete stop
- Upon entering, go directly to your assigned seat
- Remain seated at all times
- If provided, seat belts must be worn at all times
- Keep hands, arms, and head inside the bus at all times
- Do not throw objects out of the windows
- Keep aisles clear and the bus clean
- Demonstrate orderly and respectful behavior at all times
- Do not harass other riders or the driver
- Do not tamper with the bus or any equipment
- Do not leave personal belongings on the bus
- Remain on the bus during a road emergency until instructed otherwise by the driver
- Observe safety precautions at drop-off locations; when crossing the street, move at least 10 feet in front of the bus
- Follow all instructions provided by staff and the bus driver

Failure to follow bus rules may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Behavior Code of Conduct, including removal from bus privileges and/or camp participation.

Drop Off and Pick-up Procedures

Drop-off and Pick-up procedures will vary depending upon camp location. Please see individual camp welcome letters for details on drop-off and pick-up procedures.

Arrivals and Departures

Campers should be dropped off no earlier than the camp start time and picked up no later than the camp ending time. See specific camp start and end times in the camp Welcome Letter. Parents/Guardians are responsible for signing in their camper daily when they are dropped off and signing them out when they are picked up. Camp staff will be waiting at the assigned sign-in and sign-out location.

The safety of all campers is our number one concern, and it is crucial that each camper is accounted for daily. Parents and guardians will be required to show a picture ID to staff during pick-up the first week of the program or if picking up for the first time. Your patience during the sign-in and sign-out procedure is appreciated.

Staff members are busy preparing for daily camp activities before the campers arrive and after they leave each day. Therefore, please be advised that the camp staff cannot be responsible for supervising campers who arrive before the scheduled start time or who remain after the scheduled end time. The Skokie Park District does not assume responsibility for campers arriving early or remaining on site outside of established beginning and ending times for any program.

Transportation Consent

For children ages 8 and older, parents/guardians may authorize the camper to sign in and out each day on the camper's emergency form through ePACT.

Children under 8 years of age, or who have not been provided with authorization to sign themselves in and out, must be signed in and out by a parent/guardian or an individual listed on the pick-up list on the camper's emergency form through ePACT.

Parents/guardians and additional contacts listed on the camper's emergency form through ePACT will be the only people allowed to sign a camper in or out. If someone not on the pick-up list is dropping off or picking up a child, the camp must be notified in advance via the camp cell phone or camp email. Unauthorized people will not be allowed to transport campers, and the parents/guardians will be notified immediately. The camper will be held with camp staff until an authorized person is available.

Absences, Late Arrivals, Early Pick-ups

If your camper will be absent, late arriving or picked up early from camp for any reason, please contact the Camp Director and/or Assistant Director through the camp cell phone or email. Please make arrangements with staff ahead of time to coordinate where to drop off or pick up.

Late Pick-up Policy

Camp staff will supervise children who are left beyond the scheduled pick-up time until a parent or another authorized adult on the pick-up list arrives. However, late pick-ups will result in a fee. The parent/guardian will receive one verbal reminder of the late pick-up policy. After that, the second time a parent is late a fee will be charged at a rate of \$1.00 for every minute. The late fee will be added to the family's park district account and the balance will be required to be paid before any new registrations or rentals will be taken. All measurements of time are to be according to the camp cell phone. The below Late Fee Form will be completed as a tool for notifying the parent/guardian of the incurred fees.

Final Notes

The Skokie Park District is committed to providing a safe, engaging, and positive camp experience for all participants. The policies and procedures outlined in this manual are designed to support that goal and ensure the well-being of all campers and staff.

By registering for camp, families acknowledge and agree to follow the policies and expectations outlined in this manual. We appreciate your cooperation and partnership in helping create a respectful and safe environment for everyone.

If you have any questions or need clarification on any policies, please contact your Camp Supervisor.

We look forward to a fun and successful camp season.