

YMCA Camp Ralph S. Mason

Outdoor Center

This policy booklet is herein appended to the signed, short term camping agreement signed between the YMCA and your organization. These have been developed through the combined experiences of many organizations and conference group outings involving thousands of participants. As such, they represent our best efforts of operation for the mutual benefit of all. Please see that these policies and procedures are disseminated to your participants.

HISTORY OF CAMP MASON

Mason is one of the oldest continuously operating youth camps in the United States. We started in 1900, as Camp Washington, owned by the Trenton/Mercer County YMCA. A few years later, we moved to an island in the Delaware River and changed our name to Camp Wilson. After a flood destroyed the site in 1955 we moved to our current location and rebuilt as "Central New Jersey Y Camps".

We then became an "Independent Y Association" serving children from all geographic areas. In the 1980's our name was changed to YMCA Camp Ralph S. Mason to honor the man who was instrumental in rebuilding camp after the flood, and served as the volunteer Chairman of the Board of Directors for 34 years!

Each year we host nearly 1,000 campers in our summer camping programs as well as over 11,000 at our outdoor center. These "non-summer" campers come from over 120 different schools, groups and other organizations who use our facility for environmental education, outdoor education, outdoor recreation, retreats, family camps and group getaways.

One of the best ways to discover what our organization is all about is from our Mission. Our Mission is our "map" for how we operate all our programs. Like any great journey, it helps to have good directions!

CAMP MASON'S MISSION

Through the transforming experience of outdoor camping – rich in bonding friendships, physical activity, and fun – YMCA Camp Mason will lead youth, families, and community to an awareness of our core traditions of environmental stewardship, spirituality, and respect for our fellow man.

CAMP MASON'S VISION

We embrace a vision of YMCA Camp Mason as a premier service organization providing a meaningful, lasting experience to all guests in our beautiful and inspirational outdoor setting. The Camp Mason experience will include creative programming, strong management, comfortable, environmentally-friendly facilities and an emphasis on the development of healthy relationships.

Here are some of our guiding principles:

- Our programs are designed to be active, keeping both body and mind in motion.
- We focus on being outdoors, immersed in the natural environment.
- Our activities are geared towards groups working and playing together rather than solitary pursuits.
- We strive to catch campers being good, engaged in behaviors that demonstrate the desire to follow our core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.
- We demonstrate the value of these character traits within the context of the Camp Mason community.
- We teach the foundations of life skills and leisure activities that last a lifetime.
- This place is a welcoming shelter along the journey of life where campers can be a part of a community and feel safe physically and emotionally.

POLICIES

Contracted Hours:

The effective period for the contract shall extend two (2) hours before the first meal, (or 5:00 PM if encampment begins with lodging but no evening meal) through three (3) hours after the last meal. Extension of the coverage and facility use is available by prior arrangement.

Advance Reservations:

If your group wishes to reserve the same dates for the following year, you have first priority, but you must do so within two (2) weeks of your group's departure. This is secured with a 20% deposit. After that time, reservations are made on a first come, first served basis.

Sharing the Camp:

The camp management reserves the right to assign group use to lodges and other facilities as it deems necessary for the most efficient and equitable use of the facilities. Camp Mason accommodates the following numbers in its villages and lodges.

- Hilltop Village: 112 beds
- Ridgeline Village: 72 beds
- Skyview Village: 72 beds
- Lakeside Village: 60 beds
- Hillside Lodge: 27 beds
- Spruce Lodge: 48 beds

Groups failing to meet their contractual number may be assigned alternative lodging facilities at the discretion of the camp. Exclusive use of the camp is only available to groups numbering 225 persons minimum for a mid-week stay, and 300 persons minimum for a weekend stay.

Check Out Procedures:

All group leaders should tour the facilities used by the group before leaving. After the group has left, a Mason staff member will walk around to assess any damage. If the leader of the group chooses not to tour, the leader then accepts responsibility for any damage incurred by a facility based on staff inspection after departure.

Recreational Aquatic Safety:

Program activity areas are available on a seasonal basis. The camp regulations have been developed in compliance with Insurance Standards, the American Camping Association Standards, and New Jersey law. See "Procedures" for details. Activities requiring Camp Mason staff supervision must be arranged at least thirty (30) days in advance.

Medical Policies:

The camp does not provide a specific medical facility for groups. Medical care and attention is the responsibility of the visiting group. However, Camp Mason staff are certified in first aid and CPR for the Professional Rescuer. Basic first aid kits are available in the Camp office, dining hall and in program areas. Camp Mason also owns two Automatic External Defibrillators (located in our office and Dining Hall) and staff are certified in their use. We advise every group to provide an adult on duty with CPR and first aid certification from a nationally-recognized provider, during all activities. In addition each group should ensure that a vehicle is available at camp, prepared to transport participants to medical attention in non-emergency cases. Each group should have the names and addresses of all participants, their emergency contact names and numbers, a listing of allergies and health concerns of individuals, and for participants under the age of 18 a permission to treat form signed by a parent / guardian. All participants at Camp Mason are also required to complete a program waiver which will be sent under separate cover.

Except for the specific contracted activities that are supervised by Camp Mason staff, all groups, their group leaders, and parents are responsible for the welfare of their own children and group members. Mason will not be responsible for activities we do not lead. Any Mason staff member assisting at the scene of injury, or offering first aid of any kind, does so on their own, not as a representative of camp, but as a Good Samaritan.

Camp does not offer nor carry any medical insurance other than liability insurance. Injuries or accidents of any kind requiring medical treatment must be reported to the camp, in writing, on a prescribed accident form (see appendix: forms, also available from the camp office) within twenty-four (24) hours. Failure of the group or its leaders to do so will cause the group and its leadership and sponsoring organization to indemnify the camp from any future suits or claims resulting from that injury or accident.

A note on un-well guests:

Due to the nature of the camp environment Camp Mason recommends that all participants that are unwell remain at home. The camp environment is highly susceptible to communicable disease. Our guests eat together, participate in activities together and share cabins and bathrooms. The likelihood of a sick individual transmitting the illness to others is extremely high. If a participant should become ill while at camp, that individual must be isolated from other people. If the individual has vomited, we must ensure that the clean-up is done properly and effectively. The isolation of an ill participant must continue for 24 hours after all symptoms have passed. Given the short-term nature of most groups' camp experiences, it would make more sense for an ill participant to be evacuated from camp and returned home. Please communicate with us immediately should a participant become ill.

Telephone and Communications:

Phones are answered in the office between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. After hours and on weekends messages can be left in our general mailbox which is checked regularly. For police or medical emergencies only, our on duty staff member can be reached via a cell phone 24 hours a day. The duty number will be given to the group leader upon arrival. **To activate the EMS system please call: 911.** The on duty staff member should always be called after calling 911 to facilitate the best possible handling of the emergency situation.

Internet use is available for groups in residence. Camp's office and Dining Hall both have wireless capability and group members in need of internet are welcome to sit outside our main office or inside the Dining Hall and connect. The network is **MasonGuest** and the password for the internet access is **CampGuest**.

Cooking:

All meals are typically prepared by the camp. Cooking and preparing meals by any group is prohibited unless authorized by contract.

Vandalism:

Any vandalism/breakage occurring (other than everyday use) will be charged to the responsible group. The contract deposit serves as a vandalism/breakage deposit. Labor charged for all repairs is \$65.00 an hour plus materials. Graffiti is considered an act of vandalism. Costs for removal start at \$75.00.

Theft:

The camp assumes no responsibility for loss, breakage, or theft of personal or group properties brought to camp or used by the group.

Fire Extinguishers:

Fire fighting equipment is placed strategically throughout camp. Tampering with any fire fighting equipment is strictly prohibited. Any fire extinguisher which has been discharged or which has the safety pin pulled will result in a vandalism fee charged to the group using that building where the fire extinguisher is or was located (except in the event of a valid fire). The service call fee to recharge a fire extinguisher is \$75.00. Smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are located in each lodge. Tampering with the detectors could result in failure of operation. Costs related to damage of any of this equipment are the group's responsibility.

Alcohol, Controlled Substances and Firearms:

All guns and explosives, including fireworks, air rifles, etc. are strictly prohibited on camp property. Guests should not bring their own target, riflery, or archery equipment. All such equipment for supervised activities will be supplied by the camp. The use and consumption of alcoholic beverages is not permitted on camp property. The use and consumption of illegal drugs is not permitted on camp property. Persons violating the drug policy and any intoxicated persons will be asked to leave camp. No refund will be given to any person leaving camp for violation of these policies.

Pets:

Pets are not permitted at Camp Mason.

Child/Sexual Abuse:

Camp Mason's top priority is to provide a safe place for our guests. Camp Mason's policy is very simple. Any type of physical, sexual or psychological abuse of campers will not be tolerated. At Camp Mason any allegations of child abuse are reported the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services. It is against the law not to report a case of child abuse when there is distinct knowledge that such an act may have or did in fact occur. The number for reporting cases of child abuse is: 1-800-792-8610.

Smoking:

Smoking, the use of candles or incenses, or any other type of incendiary is absolutely prohibited in any camp building.

Fishing and Hunting:

Fishing is permitted on camp property subject to all New Jersey Fish and Games commission laws, regulations, and license requirements. Hunting of any type is strictly prohibited on camp property at all times.

Parking and Driving:

Driving to lodges and/or dining hall areas is prohibited. Please park only in our approved parking lot at the main entrance. Cars parked within the villages are breaking fire and emergency regulations, as well as limiting the sensation of camping in a beautiful natural environment. Any exceptions must be approved by the camp director. Driving up into the villages for loading and unloading is acceptable. Failure to adhere to this can result in a fine to the camp, which is in turn will be passed on to the group. Snowmobiles, motorcycles, ATV's, and any other off road vehicles are strictly prohibited on camp property.

Climbing Wall and Ropes Courses:

All persons are strictly prohibited from any use of Adventure Education area or equipment unless a Camp Mason instructor is present, in charge, and has given directions accordingly. All Camp Mason staff running the climbing wall, low ropes and high ropes courses will be doing so according to the training that they have received, and are not permitted to deviate from that training – please do not ask them to.

Media Policy:

Any media opportunities that your group may have during your experience at Camp Mason must be cleared with the camp administration prior to your stay. All media personnel must report to the camp office immediately upon arrival at camp.

Strangers/Visitors:

All staff and group leaders are empowered and instructed to stop any strangers on camp, politely introduce themselves, and ask the person if they need help. Staff may escort any strangers/visitors to the camp office for further assistance if needed.

PROCEDURES

Camp Visits:

The camp administration highly recommends that a representative of the group under contract visits the camp property prior to arrival in order to familiarize themselves with the camp and thus help facilitate outing planning.

Before Arrival:

It is strongly suggested that before arrival in camp, assignment of group members to resident lodges be completed. If it is not practical to distribute these assignments to the members before arrival, a registration process should be conducted upon arrival by the group leader.

Group members should be informed of:

- Dining hall procedures and meal times
- Schedule of recreational and meeting room facility use.
- All relevant aspects of the camp policies found on the group contract.

Upon Arrival:

The host will greet the group. The group leader is expected to inspect all cabins and other facilities to be used, noting any breakage or damaged facilities. All such notations should be reported to the camp office in order that deficiencies may be corrected and/or damage charges both be correctly addressed upon departure. Before the first activity or at the first meal the Camp Mason host will provide an orientation regarding Camp Mason policies and regulations as outlined in this manual.

Dining Hall:

Meal times should be arranged with the director prior to your arrival at camp. When there are two or more large groups present, the camp reserves the right to determine meal service times to best accommodate everyone. All meals are served buffet style unless other arrangements have been made.

After the meal, someone from each table should stay behind to sponge down the table and sweep underneath it. Adults should supervise children during clean up to ensure a thorough job is done.

- Group members should plan to arrive at the Dining Hall promptly at meal times. Food will be set out at these times and no provisions can be made for late arrivals or extended meal times unless prior arrangements have been made. After approximately half an hour the food is removed (as per State and County health guidelines) and the kitchen will be closed.
- Each group will be assigned tables in the Dining Hall based on number of people.
- Group members will be expected to sort their dishes, trash, food waste and recycling at the end of the meal.
- Groups wishing to use the PA system or use the Dining Hall fireplace should consult with the Director prior to the arrival.
- At the end of their stay group members will be expected to stack their chairs.

In accordance with New Jersey State law we cannot allow guests into the kitchen. If any group members require assistance please ask one of our staff.

Use of Recreation Lodges:

Lodges are furnished and pre-arranged for the greatest comfort and efficient use of space for camp guests. Please do not transport furniture from building to building, or move them about the building's interior. If the arrangements provided are unworkable, please contact your host.

Heat and Power:

All buildings on camp are fully winterized and heated. Please use good judgment when controlling the heat in buildings. All doors and windows should be kept closed whenever possible to conserve heat. Duplex cabins operate on a single heating system (one thermostat for both sides) so doors and windows must be kept in check on both sides. The thermostat is in the odd numbered cabin. In cold weather, opening doors and windows, even for a few hours can cause pipes to freeze and severe plumbing damage to occur. Any damage to thermostat casings due to tampering or forcing will be billed to your group. In the interest of conservation of natural resources, groups are expected to extinguish all lights during daylight and when the building is not in use.

Noise:

Camp Mason is situated in Hardwick Township. Township ordinances require that all guests of camp observe the following quiet hours: 10:00 pm and 7:00 am.

Fire Safety:

In the event of a fire in a residence lodge or other building, completely evacuate the building and notify camp staff immediately. Do not try to fight the fire. Move all campers and vehicles at least 100 yards from the structure.

Fire Drill Procedure:

Every visiting group may participate in a fire drill during their stay. Three long blasts on the air horn or siren signify a general alarm, and signify that all campers and staff should proceed directly to the basketball courts for attendance to be taken by activity group. The group host shall be in charge of the drill, and ensure that everyone is accounted for.

Campfires:

Campfires are allowed at camp only in approved fire rings in each village. Please do not construct additional fire rings anywhere else on camp. A reasonable amount of firewood will be supplied nearby for your use. In keeping with our mission of environmental stewardship we do not have additional firewood available during your stay. Guests are welcome to bring additional firewood with them and may also use any wood they find on the ground in the surrounding forest. (Please do not fell any trees for firewood).

Hospital:

Directions to Newton Memorial Hospital are available in the camp office, or in extreme emergencies, the Blairstown Rescue Squad can be summoned. Camp staff are legally prohibited from transporting any injured group member to the hospital themselves.

Weather Conditions:

The camp staff has no control over weather conditions. We do pledge however to do our best to make our guest's stay as comfortable as possible. No refunds or cancellations can be given for inclement weather. Groups are always responsible for their contracted minimum. Camp staff

monitor weather radar closely and utilize mealtimes to inform guests of upcoming weather. In the advent of snow we clear and maintain roads continuously. The camp is always open regardless of snow or winter conditions.

Trading Post:

Our camp store is located next to the Dining Hall and carries an assortment of souvenirs, clothing items, toiletries, patches, etc. Arrangements can be made to have the store opened at any time for your group to purchase items. Please see your group host during your stay.

Upon Departure:

The group and leaders will be responsible for the following:

- Broom clean all residence and other facilities used, returning them to the condition in which they were originally found and retrieving any personal belongings of the group members. All garbage should be tied up in the plastic garbage bags provided and placed INSIDE the front door of the cabin before departure.
- Report any damage to facilities and/or equipment including the discharge of fire extinguishers, destruction of camp owned and/or leased equipment and properties. Graffiti of all types is to be considered an act of vandalism. The group under contract shall be held responsible for the removal of such graffiti in accordance with camp procedure or pay for removal. Costs start at \$75.00. If the removal process necessitates refinishing an entire wall to match the paint, the cost can be much more significant.
- The group leader should contact the Camp Office following cleaning of facilities in sufficient time before the group's departure to allow a tour of the facilities.

Group Overlaps:

Often there are tight changeovers between groups (groups arriving before the previous group has departed etc.) This may require both groups to stay out of the cabins for a reasonable amount of time necessary for camp cleaning staff to clean. This may require a group to move all personal belongings out early, or arriving groups to move in later. Camp staff will be available during this time to ensure that group luggage is protected from the elements and toilet facilities are available for both groups.

Payment:

Payment of all fees is required prior to check out unless other arrangements have been made. Extended payment terms of up to 30 days are available to public schools and governmental agencies upon presentation of an official purchase order signed by an approved Board officer.

Supervision:

Supervision of your organization's participants are your sole responsibility. The YMCA accepts participant supervision only during specific contracted activities led by YMCA staff. Overnight supervision within our cabins and lodges is the responsibility of the School or Group who should ensure that all cabins have adequate adult coverage – Camp Mason recommends at least 2 adults per cabin group. The YMCA recommends a chaperone to participant ratio of:

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|------------------|--|
| 4-5 years old: | 1:5 (one adult for each five participants) |
| 6-8 years old: | 1:6 |
| 9-14 years old: | 1:8 |
| 15-18 years old: | 1:10 |

There are no exceptions to these general ratios. It is Camp Mason's expectation that all adult chaperones from your organization have been background checked thoroughly.

Camp Mason uses the 'Rule of Three' instead of the Buddy System, and we recommend that you also enforce this rule with your group while visiting Camp Mason for everyone's safety. The Rule Of Three simply means that everywhere a student goes, they are in a group of 3. This group can consist of two adults and one student, three students, or two students and one adult.

Self-Sufficient Group – Spruce Lodge Only:

All terms stated in the preceding apply to self-sufficient groups with the following additions:

- Camp will provide the building, utilities, small kitchen, stove, refrigerator, garbage removal, and basic cleaning supplies.
- Group will provide their own pots, pans, plates, bowls, cups, flatware, and food.

Availability of the Spruce Lodge for self-sufficient groups is geared to the February-November operating season. Maximum occupancy is 48. Minimum is 25.

Dish-washing and food handling Procedures for Spruce Lodge Kitchen

Minors may not use the kitchen facilities, and only adults knowledgeable in food handling procedures are allowed to use these facilities.

- Perishable items are to be kept below 40 degrees Fahrenheit
- All food must be thoroughly cooked
- Minimize the time prepared food is kept in the danger zone of 40⁰ - and 140⁰
- Dishes should be washed using a three step process. Wash, rinse, sanitize.
- Wash all dishes and utensils in water that is at least 170⁰, rinse in water of at least 170⁰ and sanitize in water of at least 140⁰
- Air dry dishes before storage
- Clean and sanitize all food preparation areas and utensils before and after use
- Use only clean and sanitized utensils and equipment during food preparation
- Use caution around hot appliances and utensils
- When finished kitchen must be cleaned including stove, refrigerator, counters, floors, and equipment.

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

- **POOL** – No one is permitted inside the pool area when it is closed. Use of the pool is restricted to hours previously arranged with the director and only in the presence and under the supervision of camp staff lifeguards with valid Red Cross or YMCA Lifeguard, CPR and First Aid certifications. It is the responsibility of the lifeguards on duty and the group leader to ensure that all pool regulations are followed. Swimming is prohibited any other time or any other place. **Pool season is between Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends**, and interested groups should consult at the time of booking. Any person using the pool, who does not know how to swim hereby understands to stay in designated shallow areas. If he or she moves to deeper areas, where the water line reaches above the shoulders,

does so totally against camp rules and in the event of an accident by this action indemnifies the camp from any liability. ***Camp Mason treats aquatic environments very seriously and will not entertain any adjustment to our posted and published rules and regulations governing these areas. Lifeguards reserve the right to request that a guest leave the pool area if concerns arise to that persons' ability to participate safely.***

- BOATING AND CANOEING – As with the pool, boats and canoes will be used only during previously arranged hours and under the supervision of camp lifeguards. It is the responsibility of the lifeguard and the group leader to see that:
 - All persons in boats wear lifejackets
 - No boats or canoes are operated in an unsafe or overloaded condition. Horseplay will result in participants being asked to leave the activity area.
 - All boats and canoes are kept within the effective supervision of the lifeguard. No boats or canoes are permitted up the inlet stream or otherwise ashore, either to pick up, discharge, or otherwise release passengers.
 - In order to avoid injury to participants and damage to equipment, the lifeguard will instruct all inexperienced boaters in proper techniques before allowing them to use these facilities.
 - Any person who does not know how to swim, and does not notify the Camp Mason instructor of this information, and knowingly uses water craft, hereby does so totally against camp rules and in the event of an accident by this action indemnifies the camp from any liability.
 - A camp staff member will be situated in a rescue boat at all times during boating activity with another staff member available on shore to assist with loading, unloading, instruction and rescue.
 - If groups wish to provide their own boating instructors their lifeguard, CPR, AED and First Aid certifications must be forwarded to Camp Mason and approved 1 month before arrival at Camp Mason.

- RIFLERY – No firearms, ammunition, or other explosives may be in the possession of any group member while present on the grounds. When previously contracted for, however, the use of the rifle range is available to groups only under the supervision of the camp's riflery instructor.

- ARCHERY – As with riflery, no bows or arrows, crossbows or other such weapons shall be brought to camp by any group member. When previously arranged for, archery will be made available, subject to the same procedures and limitations that apply to Riflery.

- ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT– Commonly used athletic equipment is available at a convenient location in the center of camp by the courts. It is the responsibility of the group to return any equipment to this location. If other items of equipment are checked out from the office, they must be returned there after use. We do not recommend bringing personal sports equipment to camp. Board games are available from the Director.

- AUDIO VISUAL – Audio visual or other equipment may be loaned to groups and shall be returned immediately after use. The group and its leader(s) will be responsible for any

damage to such equipment. Equipment should be reserved in advance by contacting your host. There is no rental charge for available equipment.