

# CAMPS PROGRAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

## Table of Contents

- FAQs about Registration ..... 4**
- Q1: When does registration for camp start? 4**
- Q2: Where can I find an application for camp? 4**
- Q3: What if I don't have internet access? 4**
- Q4: How long does registration take? 4**
- Q5: What is the cost for a week at camp? 4**
- Q6: What forms of payment are accepted 5**
- Q7: Can I make a partial payment? 5**
- Q8: What is your cancellation policy? Can I get a refund? 5**
- Q9: Are scholarships available for children whose families require financial assistance? 6**
- Q10: May a child who is 10 years old now but will be 11 in September attend camp this year? 6**  
**What about my 13-year-old who is turning 14 this year? 6**
- Q11: May a child attend Teen Ecology Week (for 14 to 17-year-olds) even if they didn't attend the program for 11 to 13-year-olds? 6**
- Q12: What is the deadline for camp registration? 6**
- Q13: I need to switch my camper to another week after I registered, how can I do this? 6**
- Q14: My child was sponsored by a local organization but is unable to attend camp this summer. Can I give their sponsor code to a friend? 7**
- Q15: I didn't get the week I wanted! Is there a waiting list for each session? 7**
- Q16: May I register my child for more than one week of camp? 7**
- Q17: Are DEC camps inclusive? 7**
- Q18: Who do I talk to for more help or questions? 7**
- FAQs about Pick Up and Drop Off ..... 8**
- Q19: When does camp start and end? 8**
- Q20: Who is responsible for the camper's transportation 8**
- Q21: Is it a problem when a child needs to leave camp early 8**
- Q22: We will arrive late for the Sunday check in, is this a problem? 8**

Q23:	May a camper's parents provide transportation home for a child other than their own?	8
Q24:	What if I can't pick my camper(s) up on Friday?	8
	FAQs about Camper health and safety	10
Q25:	Can you accommodate a child who is on medication?	10
Q26:	How does a child receive medications at camp?	10
Q27:	Can a child with a food allergy be accommodated?	10
Q28:	What emergency procedures are followed in case of an accident or illness at camp?	10
Q29:	What experience do camp counselors have?	10
Q30:	How do you deal with homesickness? May a child call home if homesick?	11
	FAQ About Camp Activities	12
Q31:	What is a typical day like at camp?	12
Q32:	What is the Hunter Education Program?	12
Q33:	What is Bowhunter Education?	12
Q34:	What is Trapper Education?	13
Q35:	What is Week 4 - Outdoor Adventure Week at Pack Forest?	13
	FAQ About Staying at Camp	14
Q36:	Is it okay for a child to attend camp at the same time as a friend and share the same cabin?	14
Q37:	Does a child need any spending money at camp?	14
Q38:	Are cell phones and other electronic devices allowed at camp?	14
Q39:	What should a child take to camp?	14
Q40:	What are the cabins like?	14
Q41:	Is laundry service available?	14
Q42:	What food is offered at camp?	15
Q43:	Where can I see more photos and get updates on the DEC summer camps?	15
	Sponsor FAQs	16
Q44:	I represent an organization and we want to sponsor a child (or 10!) to camp. What do we do?	16
Q45:	I need help with the online system, where do I get it?	16
Q46:	I am a sponsor. Do I have to register each camper I am sponsoring?	16
Q47:	What if the child I sponsored can't attend camp?	16
Q48:	As a sponsor, why am I not allowed to register the campers my organization is sponsoring?	17

Q49:	How do I, as a sponsor, know if my code was used?	17
Q50:	Is there a limit on how many campers a sponsor can sponsor?	17
Q51:	Our organization has paid for more campers than we have kids that are going to camp. What happens to the extra money?	17
Q52:	Is there a discount if an organization sponsors a certain number of campers?	18
Q53:	I'm a sponsor, when can I add money to my account for the next year's season?	18
Q54:	I want to help send a specific child to camp, can I do that through donating?	18

## FAQs about Registration

### Q1: When does registration for camp start?

**A:** Registration for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) 2022 summer season will open Sunday, March 6, 2022 at 1:00 PM.

### Q2: Where can I find an application for camp?

**A:** All summer camp registration is done through an [online registration system](#) [leaving DEC website]. You can set up your account at any time.

### Q3: What if I don't have internet access?

**A:** You can go to any public library and set up a free e-mail account through Microsoft Outlook, Yahoo, Gmail, or another online email provider. Once you have the account, you can go online to create your account and deposit your funds via e-check or credit card. You do not need to have a computer or home access to the internet.

If you have a tablet or smartphone, look for locations with free internet access such as chain restaurants and coffee shops.

If none of these options are available, please contact our staff at 518-402-8014.

### Q4: How long does registration take?

**A:** For a first-time registration it may take half an hour or more to complete. This includes filling out the camper's information, medical history, and all permission forms. This will require you to have the camper's medical history and health insurance information on hand. If paperwork is not complete, the camper will not be allowed to attend camp.

For first-time campers, we recommend creating an online account and filling out the paperwork in advance by visiting the Document Center. Once logged on, click on the menu icon in the top left of the screen and then click Document Center. Then, once registration opens, you will only need to confirm the information, sign off and submit.

For returning campers, updating the forms will take 10-30 minutes.

### Q5: What is the cost for a week at camp?

**A:** Each week at camp costs \$350. Full payment is required upon registering for each week.

**Commented [C1]:** Added the hyphen here for consistency.

**Q6: What forms of payment are accepted?**

**A:** Our online registration program only accepts Visa, Master Card, or Discover credit cards, debit cards with a credit card logo and e-checks.

**Q7: Can I make a partial payment?**

**A:** No, the cost of camp must be paid in full at the time of registration.

**Q8: What is your cancellation policy? Can I get a refund?**

**A:** You may cancel your child's summer camp registration up to 23 **calendar** days, by close of business, prior to the day that your child is scheduled to check into camp and receive a refund. **To cancel a camp registration, you must call 518-402-8014 between Monday - Friday 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM.** It must be done over the phone using this main number; do not call the individual camps. You will get a confirmation of the cancellation via email.

Refund and Cancellation Dates

Camp Week	Camp Start Date 2022	Cancellation deadline by 4pm
Week 1	July 3	June 10
Week 2	July 10	June 17
Week 3	July 17	June 24
Week 4	July 24	July 1
Week 5	July 31	July 8
Week 6	Aug. 7	July 15
Week 7 (Rushford & Pack Forest)	Aug. 14	July 22

**Commented [C(2):** Removed week 8 from the table for 2022 on website

**Medical Refunds:** Refunds requested due to medical illness or injury occurring while at camp will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If your child is unable to attend camp due to a medical reason, you may request a full refund at any time **prior** to the start of the camp week they are registered for (not after camp has closed for the season) by providing a doctor's note. The doctor's note must state that the child is unable to participate in camp activities due to a medical excuse. It must be signed and dated by the doctor. Refund requests made after camp closes for the season will not be honored.

**Commented [C(3):** removed the wording in parenthesis here as it is written in another sentence in the paragraph

Refunds will not be credited to credit or debit cards. A check will be issued by DEC. It may take up to 60 days to receive a refund check.

**Q9: Are scholarships available for children whose families require financial assistance?**

**A:** Many of our campers (50 percent) are sponsored by organizations such as sporting clubs, bird clubs, rod and gun clubs, fishing clubs, civic groups (Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions), fire departments, etc. Check with your local organizations. The DEC Camps program does not maintain a list of sponsoring organizations.

**Q10: May a child who is 10 years old now but will be 11 in September attend camp this year? What about my 13-year-old who is turning 14 this year?**

**A:** Yes, for Youth Camp, all children must be 11 years old by December 1, 2022. For Teen Week, campers must be 14 years old by December 1, 2022.

**Q11: May a child attend Teen Ecology Week (for 14 to 17-year-olds) even if they didn't attend the program for 11 to 13-year-olds?**

**A:** Yes, a camper is not required to attend the youth program to be eligible to attend Teen Ecology Week.

**Q12: What is the deadline for camp registration?**

**A:** We accept applications throughout the summer, as long as space remains. Campers are also put on wait lists if their first choices are unavailable. After registration opens, the beds fill up fast!

**Q13: I need to switch my camper to another week after I registered, how can I do this?**

**A:** Please contact camp staff at 518-402-8014 to make modifications or cancellations to your account. If you register your camper for an additional week you will be charged an additional \$350. It could take up to 60 days for your refund to be processed if you cancel the first reservation.

**Q14: My child was sponsored by a local organization but is unable to attend camp this summer. Can I give their sponsor code to a friend?**

**A:** No. Anyone using a sponsor code must be approved by the sponsor. If your camper was sponsored and unable to attend camp, please contact the original sponsor so another child can go to camp.

**Q15: I didn't get the week I wanted! Is there a waiting list for each session?**

**A:** Yes, there is a waiting list for each session. If the week you would like to attend is full, you can request to be added to the waiting list. You will be notified by email if a spot becomes available. **You should check your email, including your SPAM folders regularly for this email. You will then have THREE (3) days to make the reservation. If you do not register within THREE (3) days, the spot will be given to the next child on the waiting list.** We cannot restore anyone to the waiting list.

**Q16: May I register my child for more than one week of camp?**

**A:** No, not initially. Individual campers will be limited to one week of camp but can sign up to be placed on a waiting list for other weeks. If there are still spots at camps available after May 27<sup>th</sup>, campers will be allowed to sign up for multiple weeks.

**Q17: Are DEC camps inclusive?**

**A:** Yes, all campers should feel welcome and safe at DEC camps. Camp staff are versed in acknowledging diversity, conveying respect to all people, being sensitive to differences, and promoting equitable opportunities. During registration, you will be given the opportunity to elaborate on your child's specific circumstance. If you have questions specific to your child, please contact the Summer Camp Administrative staff by calling 518-402-8014 or emailing [educationcamps@dec.ny.gov](mailto:educationcamps@dec.ny.gov).

**Q18: Who do I talk to for more help or questions?**

**A:** You can contact the Summer Camps Administrative staff by calling 518-402-8014 or by emailing [educationcamps@dec.ny.gov](mailto:educationcamps@dec.ny.gov)

## FAQs about Pick Up and Drop Off

### Q19: When does camp start and end?

**A:** Camp starts at 3:00 PM on Sunday afternoon and ends with a ceremony at 4:30 PM on Friday afternoon. All campers are encouraged to arrive on time on Sunday to ensure a smooth check in process. This is important so that campers have time to meet with the camp staff, including the Health Director and Cook, to discuss their concerns and needs.

### Q20: Who is responsible for the camper's transportation?

**A:** Transportation is the parent/guardian's responsibility; DEC does not provide transportation.

### Q21: Is it a problem when a child needs to leave camp early?

**A:** No, the child's parent or guardian should let the camp director know when the child will be picked up to ensure that they are ready on time. The parent or guardian must sign out the child at the time of pickup.

### Q22: We will arrive late for the Sunday check in, is this a problem?

**A:** We strongly encourage campers to arrive on time for check in. Check in is a busy time and it's important to keep things moving. Not only is it time for the campers to meet with staff, it is also time for them to meet each other and enjoy ice breaker games together as campers. However, if it is unavoidable that a camper will be late, please notify the camp staff in advance by emailing [educationcamps@dec.ny.gov](mailto:educationcamps@dec.ny.gov) or calling 518-402-8014. Please note, there are no refunds for no-show campers.

### Q23: May a camper's parents provide transportation home for a child other than their own?

**A:** Yes, as long as the camp has written authorization from the other child's parent(s) granting permission and naming the person who will provide that transportation. This permission can be given in the online registration system by providing a list of authorized people to pick up the camper.

### Q24. What if I can't pick my camper(s) up on Friday?

**A:** The Parent/Guardian is responsible for their campers' transportation. You must arrange for an alternate person to pick up the camper, then make sure that alternate is

an authorized pickup in the online registration system. You can do this yourself in your online account or contact the camp director directly to notify them of the change in pick up.

Campers are prohibited from using public transportation systems without a parent/guardian. All campers must be picked up at 4:30 PM on Friday by an authorized adult.

## FAQs about Camper health and safety

### Q25: Can you accommodate a child who is on medication?

**A:** Yes, but all medication must be in its original container and properly marked. Upon arrival, the child's parent or guardian must speak with the health director and provide medication(s). An EMT or a nurse is on staff at all times.

### Q26: How does a child receive medications at camp?

**A:** The health director holds "med calls" at each meal and at bedtime.

### Q27: Can a child with a food allergy be accommodated?

**A:** Yes; the child's parent or guardian **must notify our camps program at least two (2) weeks ahead** of their arrival at camp to ensure that we have the necessary food(s) on hand for the camper. Our camp cooks can easily accommodate vegetarian and nut-free diets. For other diets please contact the Summer Camps Administrator to discuss your child's needs. Additionally, the camper should meet with the camp cook at check in to confirm their dietary restrictions and needs.

### Q28: What emergency procedures are followed in case of an accident or illness at camp?

**A:** All staff on duty carry radios with them, whether at camp or out in the field. The radios link staff to the camp's directors and/or directly to the regional radio system, which can summon help immediately. All off-site trips have been approved by the DEC Camps Administrator and the NYS Department of Health.

### Q29: What experience do camp counselors have?

**A:** DEC camp counselors have at least two years of college, required DEC training and training in first aid, AED, CPR, 15-passenger van safety and fire extinguisher use. They also have training in working with youth, firearm safety, child abuse reporting, bloodborne pathogens, hazard awareness, waterfront safety and preventing sexual harassment. In addition, all camp staff are run through the NYS Sex Offender Registry and Unified Court System for background checks.

**Q30: How do you deal with homesickness? May a child call home if homesick?**

**A:** Normally no; we try to help the child work through homesickness by encouraging involvement in camp activities. If there is concern that a child might become homesick while at camp, the parent/guardian should talk to the health director during check in on Sunday. Knowing the parent's/guardian's wishes regarding a child's camp experience will help us if homesickness occurs.

## FAQ About Camp Activities

### Q31: What is a typical day like at camp?

**A:** Each day is a little different, and each camp is a little different. Generally, campers get up at 7:00 AM and have an early bird activity like a polar bear swim or fishing, and then it's off to breakfast.

After breakfast, there are activities until lunch. These may include playing environmental games, participating in an environmental lesson, hiking, or using sampling equipment to study insects. For example, one popular environmental lesson and game is "Oh Deer!" in which students participate in a game while learning about population biology.

After lunch, there are more activities, such as hiking, canoeing, archery, or field trips. Preparations for an overnight hike or hunter education classes are other possibilities. The afternoon session is followed by dinner.

A guest speaker such as a wildlife biologist, forest ranger, or conservation officer may visit during the afternoon or evening to talk with campers. In addition, taking a night walk, star gazing, playing games or listening to stories around a campfire might round out the day.

Each camp is a little different, and each week is a little different! You can view example schedules for an 11-13-year-old camp and the 14-17-year-old camp online. (<http://www.dec.ny.gov/education/1864.html>)

### Q32: What is the Hunter Education Program?

**A:** Campers ages 11 and older may participate in the New York State Hunter Education Program depending on what week they attend camp. If a camper wishes to get a hunting license, **they MUST complete the home study workbook**, demonstrate proper attitude and safety, and pass the test. The workbook will be mailed home two to four weeks prior to the week of camp for campers registered for this class. A camper under the age of 12 may not shoot live ammunition but may use laser guns or air rifles. DEC Hunter Education instructors and NYS environmental conservation officers oversee the Hunter Education Program. Visit the camps Hunter Education page (<http://www.dec.ny.gov/education/86688.html>) for more information. **This program is optional and space is limited.**

### Q33: What is Bowhunter Education?

**A:** Campers aged 11 and older may participate in the NYS Bowhunter Education Course depending on what week they attend camp. If a camper wishes to get a bowhunting license, they must also pass the regular Hunter Education Program. However, it is not a prerequisite for this course. This course does include a home study workbook that **MUST** be completed prior to attending camp. The workbook will be

mailed home two to four weeks prior to the week of camp for campers registered for this class. Visit the camps Hunter Education page (<http://www.dec.ny.gov/education/86688.html>) for more information. **This course is optional, and space is limited.**

### Q34: What is Trapper Education?

**A:** Trapper education will be offered to campers age 14-17. Campers must complete a home study portion of the class before they attend camp. Booklets will be mailed home two to four weeks prior to the week of camp for campers who are registered for this class. Visit the camps Hunter Education page (<http://www.dec.ny.gov/education/86688.html>) for more information. **This course is optional, and space is limited.**

### Q35: What is Week 4 - Outdoor Adventure Week at Pack Forest?

**A:** For a camper who loves being outdoors, Week 4-Outdoor Adventure Week at Pack Forest is a variation on the standard week at of camp. This week features special programming including a visit by colleges with environmental majors, a round table with DEC staff, and additional demonstrations of advanced research techniques like electrofishing. Some of the week's trips and overnights may be unique to this program. The Outdoor Adventure Week does not offer a Hunter Education program, but still offers archery among other camp activities. This is a week of camp meant to help youth explore deeper into their love of the outdoors while considering future conservation career fields.

## FAQ About Staying at Camp

**Q36: Is it okay for a child to attend camp at the same time as a friend and share the same cabin?**

**A:** Yes, however, each child must request the other on their application, and both should understand that they could be separated if camp staff have any concerns. Only one cabin mate request per camper is allowed.

**Q37: Does a child need any spending money at camp?**

**A:** No, all money and valuables should be left at home.

**Q38: Are cell phones and other electronic devices allowed at camp?**

**A:** No, cell phones, electronic devices, digital games, MP3 players and similar items are not allowed at camp and will be confiscated by staff until the camper is leaving for home. Confiscated items will be returned to the camper during check-out.

**Q39: What should a child take to camp?**

**A:** Once a camper is registered, they will receive all the necessary forms and documents, including a packing list and Parent/Camper Handbook. You may also download the [Parent/Camper handbook](#). This includes a list of items the campers should bring as well as a list of forbidden items.

**Q40: What are the cabins like?**

**A:** Cabins are rustic and have bunk beds. Approximately ten (10) people sleep in each cabin, including a counselor and possibly a camp volunteer or second counselor. A general bath house is located within 200 feet of each cabin. Cabin size and style varies from camp to camp.

**Q41: Is laundry service available?**

**A:** No. Campers should bring enough clothing to last the entire week. However, there is a washer and dryer at each camp that can be used for emergencies if “accidents” happen.

**Q42: What food is offered at camp?**

**A:** Meals consist of wholesome foods prepared by experienced cooks. There are plenty of options for everyone. Meals might include things like:

- Dinner: Taco night with rice and beans, a cookout with burgers (including veggie burgers), baked ziti, stir fry, BBQ chicken and vegetable sides
- Lunch: build your own sandwiches, chicken noodle soup, pasta salad, quesadillas, and mac and cheese
- Breakfast: breakfast burritos, tofu scramble, build your parfait bar, pancakes, waffles, French toast, and granola

**Q43: Where can I see more photos and get updates on the DEC summer camps?**

**A:** Visit our Facebook page! [Link leaves DEC's website]  
(<https://www.facebook.com/NYSDECsummercamps/>)

## Sponsor FAQs

**Q44: I represent an organization and we want to sponsor a child (or 10!) to camp. What do we do?**

**A:** Great! You'll need to set up a sponsor account with our [online registration system](#) (*link leaves DEC website*). Then you'll purchase a sponsorship code to give to the child/children you are sponsoring.

**Q45: I need help with the online system, where do I get it?**

**A:** You can download detailed instructions for sponsors on the [sponsorship page](#), in the top right corner. There are also quick instructions available for sponsors who just need a refresh. If you still need help, please call the summer camps administrative staff at 518-402-8014.

**Q46: I am a sponsor. Do I have to register each camper I am sponsoring?**

**A:** No. As a sponsor you will have an account which you use to purchase sponsorship codes. The code is like a gift card and you will give the code to the sponsored camper(s).

Each sponsored camper family will create their own account and register themselves. When they reach the checkout portion of their registration, they will use the sponsorship code you gave them as a means of payment.

**Q47: What if the child I sponsored can't attend camp?**

**A:** Sponsored campers who cannot attend camp must inform their sponsor so another camper may have the opportunity to attend camp. Each parent or guardian, not DEC camp administration, is responsible for informing the sponsor. All camper registrations must abide by the cancellation policy.

**Sponsors will not receive a refund if a camper does not show up at camp or leaves during the week.** If a camper notifies their sponsor that they will not or cannot attend camp prior to 23 calendar days (per the cancellation policy) before the start of camp, the sponsor should contact the summer camps administration staff at 518-402-8014 to modify or cancel the registration and arrange for another camper to attend camp.

You may substitute a new camper in place of the original camper if they meet the gender and age requirements of the specific reservation. Please call summer camps administrative staff at 518-402-8014 for substitutions.

**Q48: As a sponsor, why am I not allowed to register the campers my organization is sponsoring?**

**A:** In order to register a camper, forms must be completed that require personal and private information. The information required should only be coming from the parent/guardian of the child attending camp. Under no circumstances should sponsors be viewing personal information, such as a camper's medical history.

All parents/guardians should be creating separate accounts and registering their child using the code provided to them.

**Q49: How do I, as a sponsor, know if my code was used?**

**A:** When your code is used, the system will email you to notify you that someone has registered. You will be able to see that the person has completed registration. You can also log into your account **to find this information**. Once logged in, click on the menu icon in the top left corner of the screen. Select 'Sponsorships', and then select 'View claims made against my codes'. Click on the code to see which campers have used the code. We strongly encourage sponsors to build relationships with the campers and their families they are sponsoring. The camper's family should be in touch with you to confirm they are attending camp.

**Q50: Is there a limit on how many campers a sponsor can sponsor?**

**A:** No, as long as a sponsor is financially able, they may sponsor as many campers as they wish.

**Q51: Our organization has paid for more campers than we have kids that are going to camp. What happens to the extra money?**

**A:** Any money not used towards camper registration will remain in the sponsor's account. A sponsor may request a refund of funds left on their account as well. Please contact the summer camps administration staff at 518-402-8014 to request a refund.

**Q52: Is there a discount if an organization sponsors a certain number of campers?**

**A:** If you pay to send six (6) children to camp, you are eligible to send a 7th camper for free. The payment for the first six (6) campers must be made as one transaction. The 7th camper will use a sponsorship code that the summer camps administrative staff generates. After the six (6) campers have registered online give us a call at 518-402-8014 to receive the free 7th camper code. We will confirm the registrations and provide you with the free code(s). The free 7th camper code is only valid for the year the six (6) campers were purchased as a single transaction. We will not refund any cancelled free 7th camper reservations.

**Q53: I'm a sponsor, when can I add money to my account for the next year's season?**

**A:** We will notify sponsors towards the end of the current year when it is time to add money to your accounts, generally in November. Please be sure your email address is up to date in your online account, so you receive communications from the DEC Summer Camps administrative staff.

**Q54: I want to help send a specific child to camp, can I do that through donating?**

**A:** No, donations to the camps system cannot be given out to specific campers. Donations are put into a fund and used to help campers attend camp who could not otherwise attend. If you want to help a specific child without becoming a sponsor, you will have to work that out privately with the camper's family.