



2026

FAMILY HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

Dear Camp Families,

This handbook is meant to serve as a helpful guide for preparing you for the upcoming summer. By following the handbook's instructions, tips and guidelines, we hope that you will find getting ready for camp quite simple.



Although all the information in our Family Handbook is important for you to read and understand, we have highlighted some very specific points of information in the handbook with a star.

Again, we want to thank you for choosing Camp North Star! Our family and staff are looking forward to another great year up in Maine. If there is anything you need, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Warmest regards,

Brooke & Steven Bernstein

Contact Information



Camp Office:

(207) 998-4777

The Camp Office is open 7 days a week from 8:30am – 6:00pm
office@cnsmaine.com



Contact Steven & Brooke

Steven - steven@cnsmaine.com

Brooke - brookeb@cnsmaine.com



Mailing Address

Camp North Star
200 VERRILL ROAD
POLAND SPRING, ME 04274



Emergency Phone Number

In the event of an emergency after hours, contact Steven or Brooke at 215.892.5528 (Steven) or 215.910.0102 (Brooke).

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

For campers arriving by car, detailed arrival day schedules will be shared in June. With more than 150 campers arriving by car on some days, our goal is to make the check-in process as smooth and convenient as possible for campers and families.



BY CAR

ARRIVALS:

For sessions starting on **June 28** and **July 26**, families from ME, VT, NH, and MA arrive 9:30 AM - 11 AM. All other families arrive 12:30 PM - 2 PM.

For the session starting on **July 12**, check-in is 12:30 PM - 2 PM.

An arrival area will be set up at the Dining Hall. This is where you will say goodbye to your camper before they are escorted to their cabin by a counselor. Their luggage will be waiting for them, and their counselors will help them unpack, make their bed, and meet their fellow campers in their cabin.

DEPARTURES:

Check-out is from 9:00-10:00 AM. Please do not arrive at camp earlier than 9:00 am.



BY CHARTER BUS

Fees for Coach Bus Service do apply.

Fees are listed on the Transportation Form after you click on Bus Service Icon.

IMPORTANT:

All transportation forms for optional charter bus service to and/or from camp must be submitted in in your CampMinder account by **May 1**.

LUGGAGE FOR BUS SERVICE

Campers are permitted ONE large duffel or soft trunk only. A backpack or bag that can fit under the seat is also permitted. Additional luggage should be shipped to camp prior to your camper's arrival Ship Camps (see info on page 8) or via USPS, FedEx, USPS, etc.

CAMP BUS TO CAMP (ARRIVAL DAY) LOCATIONS & TIMES:



Arrival dates for Charter Buses to camp: Sunday, June 28; Sunday, July 12; Sunday July 26

NEW JERSEY BUS



New Jersey Turnpike – Vince Lombardi Service Area (just north of Exit 18, near MetLife Stadium). Meet at the bus parking area.



Arrive by 6:45 AM. Camp staff members will check you in and load luggage when the bus arrives at your location.



Pack a lunch, snack, and drink for the ride to camp. **NO NUT PRODUCTS PLEASE.**



Bus departs by 7 AM

NEW YORK CITY BUS



Lincoln Center south side, on West 62nd St. between Amsterdam and Columbus Avenues.



Arrive by 7:30 AM. Camp staff members will check you in and load luggage when the bus arrives at your location.



Pack a lunch, snack, and drink for the ride to camp. **NO NUT PRODUCTS PLEASE.**



Bus departs by 7:45 AM

CONNECTICUT BUS*



Darien, CT I-95 NORTHBOUND Service Plaza between exits 12 & 13



Arrive by 9:00 AM. Camp staff members will check you in and load luggage when the bus arrives at your location.



Pack a lunch, snack, and drink for the ride to camp. **NO NUT PRODUCTS PLEASE.**



Bus departs by 9:15 AM (traffic permitting)

MASSACHUSETTS BUS**



Lexington Service Plaza (I-95 NORTHBOUND near exit 30)



Arrive by 12:15 PM. Camp staff members will check you in and load luggage when the bus arrives at your location.



Pack a lunch, snack, and drink for the ride to camp. **NO NUT PRODUCTS PLEASE.**



Bus departs by 12:30 PM (traffic permitting)

** Connecticut Bus Arrival & Departure Stops are NOT the same location. Please make sure you have the correct location for Arrival to Camp and for Departing from Camp.*

*** Massachusetts Bus Arrival and Departure Stops are NOT the same location. Please make sure you have the correct location for Arrival to Camp and for Departing from Camp.*

CAMP BUS FROM CAMP (DEPARTURE DAY) LOCATIONS & TIMES:



Departure dates for Charter Buses from camp:
Sunday, June 28; Sunday, July 12; Sunday July 26

NEW JERSEY BUS



New Jersey Turnpike – Vince Lombardi Service Area (just north of Exit 18, near MetLife Stadium). Meet at the bus parking area.



Arrive by 4:30 PM. Camp staff members will facilitate check-out when the bus arrives at your location



Bus is scheduled to arrive approximately between 4:30-5:00 PM. This depends on traffic conditions on the day of travel. The camp office will keep you updated on any major delays.

NEW YORK CITY BUS



Lincoln Center south side, on West 62nd St. between Amsterdam and Columbus Avenues.



Arrive by 3:30 PM. Camp staff members will facilitate check-out when the bus arrives at your location.



Bus is scheduled to arrive approximately between 3:30-4:00 PM. This depends on traffic conditions on the day of travel. The camp office will keep you updated on any major delays.

CONNECTICUT BUS*



Darien, CT I-95 SOUTHBOUND Service Plaza between exits 10 & 9



Arrive by 1:15 PM. Camp Staff members will facilitate check-out when the bus arrives at your location.



Bus is scheduled to arrive at 1:30 PM. This depends on traffic conditions on the day of travel. The camp office will keep you updated on any major delays.

MASSACHUSETTS BUS**



Newton Service Plaza (I-95 SOUTHBOUND near Exit 22)



Arrive by 10:15 AM. Camp Staff members will facilitate check-out when the bus arrives at your location.



Bus is scheduled to arrive at 10:30 AM. This depends on traffic conditions on the day of travel. The camp office will keep you updated on any major delays.

*Connecticut Bus Arrival & Departure Stops are NOT the same location. Please make sure you have the correct location for Arrival at Camp and for Departing from Camp.

**Massachusetts Bus Arrival and Departure Stops are NOT the same location. Please make sure you have the correct location for Arrival at Camp and for Departing from Camp.



BY AIRPLANE

ALL ARRIVING AND DEPARTING FLIGHTS MUST BE APPROVED BY THE CAMP OFFICE PRIOR TO THE PURCHASE OF TICKETS. We do not guarantee transportation from airports that have not been approved by the camp office. All requests and approvals must be done in writing.

Boston Logan Airport

Arrive at camp the **DAY BEFORE** your enrolled camp session.

Saturday, June 27; Saturday, July 11; Saturday, July 25

Flights should be scheduled to arrive between 1:00 - 6:00 PM

Portland Jetport

Sunday, June 28; Sunday, July 12; Sunday, July 26

Flights should be scheduled to arrive between 9:00 AM - 12 PM, or to arrive the day before between 11 AM - 5 PM

Parents/guardians MUST pay for the unaccompanied minor fees at time of ticket purchase directly with their airline. A Camp North Star staff member MUST be allowed to escort your camper to their departure gate. There is a fee from the airline for this service. Please send proof of purchase/receipt of the fee paid. We may need to provide this to your airline carrier on departure days. Any fees incurred by camp for luggage, travel fees, etc., will be charged to the family's credit card on file.

DEPARTING FROM CAMP BY AIRPLANE

Boston Logan Airport

Saturday, July 11; Saturday, July 25;
Saturday, August 15

Flights should be scheduled to depart between 2:00 - 7:00 PM

Portland Jetport

Saturday, July 11; Saturday, July 25;
Saturday, August 15

Flights should be scheduled to depart between 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

PACKING FOR CAMP

Camp is a place to be active, have fun, and get a little dirty. It is for these reasons that we request that you pack accordingly. Please send campers with wash and wear clothing. A packing list can be found on the Current Families section of our website under forms or in your CampMinder account. Although Camp North Star is NOT a uniform camp, we do require some CNS items that are listed on the packing list and our online Camp Store. Please make sure your camper is properly outfitted since the items are required on trips.



FOOTWEAR POLICY

Campers are **REQUIRED** to wear closed-toed shoes at all times except the waterfront. We define closed-toed shoes as sneakers or hiking shoes. Crocs, Birkenstocks, slides, flip-flops, or similar-type shoes are **NOT** considered appropriate footwear. When walking to and from the waterfront, sandals or water shoes with secured back straps are permitted. Chacos and Tevas, or similar sandals with a secured back, are great options at the waterfront. Questions? Call or email us.



BATHING SUITS

Bikinis are not permitted. Tankinis are acceptable, however, they **MUST** cover the midriff. We recommend girls wear one-piece bathing suits that must provide full coverage, including no deep plunging necklines, no backs that dip below the waist, and no exposed sides or midriffs. Boys must wear appropriate length swim trunks.



LAUNDRY SERVICE

Laundry service is included with tuition. It is provided weekly and starts after the 1st week a camper arrives at camp. The service provides all campers with a laundry bag to use while they are at camp. Please supply your camper with a laundry bag to use for their departure from camp.



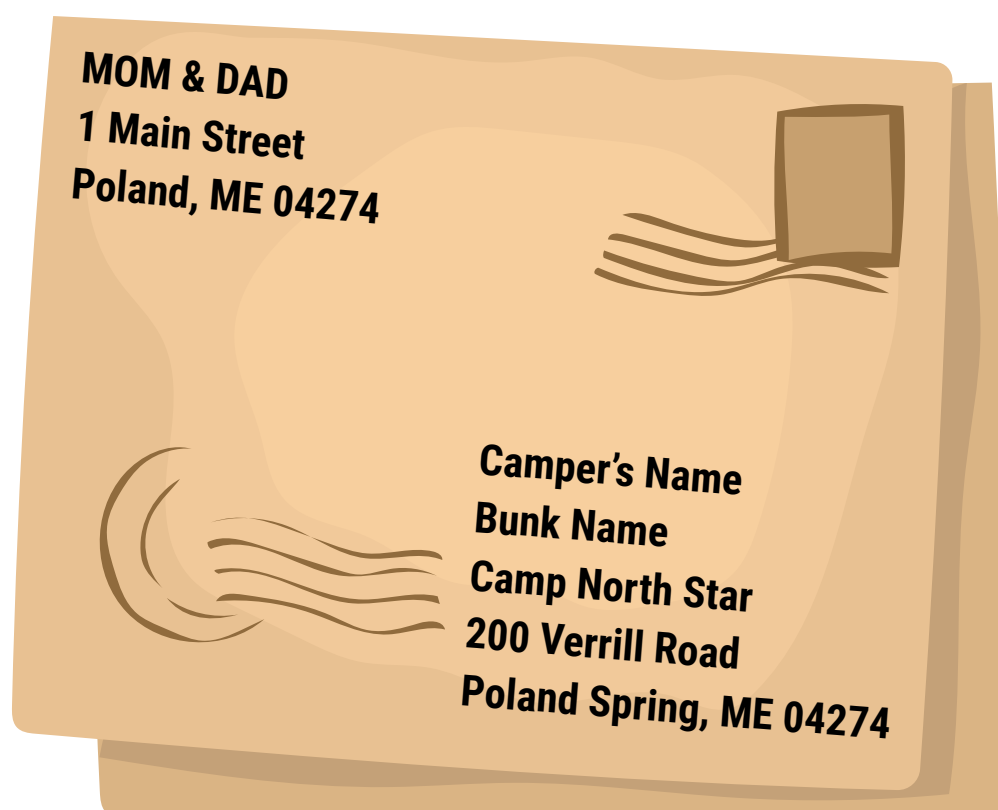
MAIL AT CAMP

Campers are asked to write home once a week while at camp. We request that all families send stamped, home addressed envelopes with their camper. **Please send your camper with ample postage to camp.**

We encourage LOTS of mail to our campers throughout the summer. It is so important to receive mail from home that is positive, encouraging, and supportive of your camper's time at camp. We strongly encourage families to send a letter to their camper several days before camp starts so that their camper has a letter waiting for them when they arrive at camp. Things to put in this first letter are how proud you are of them for making the choice to attend summer camp and that you are sure they will LOVE camp and all that it has to offer.

Please be sure to address mail with your camper's name and bunk name on the envelope. Bunk names will be emailed before the start of camp. *You don't need to include the bunk name on the first letter you send to camp before your camper's arrival.*

Address all mail as follows:



NO PACKAGES AT CAMP

At North Star, we place the highest value on relationships and experiences rather than "stuff". That's why packages will only be accepted if your camper celebrates a birthday at camp and for necessities. If your camper forgets to bring something, contact the office first so we can approve the package before mailing it. Please share this information with other family members too. If your camper receives mail that does not meet our guidelines, it will be unopened and stored until the day your camper departs.

When packing for the summer, please give your camper any books, cards, stationery, friendship string, spirit wear, etc., they will be need for their camp season.



TELEPHONE



The Camp Office is open 7 days a week for our camp families. Office hours are 8:30 AM-6:00 PM. Our office staff can assist you with most details relating to camp. If you need to speak with our Nurses or any of our Directors, please leave a message in the camp office and we will get back to you as soon as possible. Messages left on the Voice Mail after office hours will be returned the next day when the office opens. In the case of an emergency after hours, call Steven or Brooke's cell phone. The phone numbers are on page 2, and they are always available to talk with camp families.

CAMPER PHONE CALLS

After the first week of each session, campers will be scheduled for a phone call home. Each cabin will have a specific day and hour window of time for their calls home. This will allow us to have minimal disruption to campers' schedules. Calls will be made using camp phones to the cell phone number of the primary parent. In a situation where a camper doesn't live with both parents/guardians, the camper will make both calls within the same time slot. The June newsletter will list the days and times of the calls.

Camper phone calls are limited to 10 minutes. Phone calls are meant for parents/guardians only. Please let extended family and friends know that campers will not be calling during their stay at camp. Campers who have parents living separately are permitted to make calls to each of their parents.

EMAILS AND ONLINE PHOTOS

Communication at camp is very important to us and we enjoy sharing with you all the happenings at camp. That's why we encourage you to join our online communities both on social media and with our partners at Bunk1. Through our website, and via Bunk1's app, you can access our password-protected photo galley and send and receive electronic notes to and from your camper. Instructions to use Bunk1's platform can be found in your CampMinder account.

Bunk1 offers one way email service that we call **Bunk Notes**, for free! There is also an option to send your camper a Bunk Reply for an additional fee. Including a **Bunk Reply** with your **Bunk Note** allows your camper to write a hand-written response that is delivered as a PDF file to your Bunk1 account.

Emails are printed and distributed with our regular mail. **Emails sent after 3 PM will be distributed the next day.**

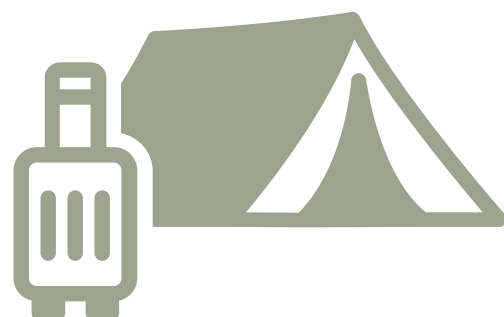
Although these services are great and lots of fun, please do not over analyze or look too much into photos. Your camper may be in the background or in a candid shot. These photos are not meant to be used as a reflection of your camper's experience at camp but just fun photos for parents/guardians to get a sense of happy campers having a great time! If you have concerns or questions PLEASE contact the camp office.

SHIPPING LUGGAGE TO AND FROM CAMP

We've made it easy and convenient for families to send luggage to camp and/or home at the end of your camper's summer with us. We now partner with Ship Camps. They provide hassle-free service by collecting luggage at your doorstep and/or having it sent to your home. By going to a dedicated webpage for North Star families you can create a family account on Ship Camps - <https://shipcamps.com/north-star-maine>

Most luggage is sent via FedEx and UPS. There is no fee to create an account. You'll receive savings compared to going directly to FedEx, UPS, or USPS.

You can also find information in your CampMinder account that explains more about the service offered and the process of using Ship Camps.



HEALTHCARE AT CAMP

Medical Information: Please complete your Medical Forms by **May 1**. There are 2 parts to the required medical forms. All forms are available online in your CampMinder account. *The Camp North Star Health Forms* include a Physician and Immunization Form. Both forms are completed and signed by your camper's doctor. *The Health History Form* is an online form and is completed by a parent/guardian. No camper will be permitted into camp unless we have received all completed Medical Forms. Abbreviated medical forms from your physician may not be substituted in place of the required camp forms. The State of Maine requires a full listing of up-to-date, physician-documented immunizations (including current tetanus).

MENTAL, EMOTIONAL & SOCIAL HEALTH OF CAMPER

All information about your camper's psychological or social development (including any counseling) is invaluable as we work to maximize your camper's experience at camp. In your CampMinder account under forms is the Mental, Emotional, and Social Health Form. This is a required form. All information is treated with the care, respect, and confidentiality it deserves. Please contact Brooke or Steven if there is anything you would like to discuss over the phone.



MEDICATIONS

For the safety of our campers, and to meet state health requirements, we partner with The **Medicine Shoppe**, in Lewiston, Maine, for our pre-packaged medication program to dispense and package ALL of your camper's medication for camp. Camp families are **required** to use The **Medicine Shoppe** if your camper takes any prescription medicine and/or over-the-counter medicine while at camp. All pills will be dispensed and individually packaged in sealed packets labeled with your camper's name, medicine, dosage, date and time to be given. Directions for ordering medication are available in your CampMinder account under "Forms".

International Campers - contact the Camp Office by phone or email so we can assist you with your medications.



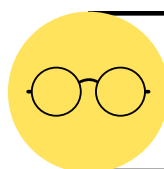
All medications, both over-the-counter and prescriptions are kept at the health center and locked in a cabinet for safekeeping. The two exceptions are Epi-Pens and asthma inhalers with a doctor's note. Please do not send your camper with any at-home tests, such as for the flu or COVID-19. The only medical testing done at camp is by our nurses.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

In the event a camper requires medical attention while at camp, our nurses will perform an assessment. Our experienced nurses can treat many common camp related problems, however, if our nurse feels a provider should be consulted, they can initiate a real-time video visit with one of the Camp Doctors' providers. While many conditions can be diagnosed and treated through a virtual visit (especially with our nurse present to examine your child) occasionally the provider will recommend evaluation at urgent care or emergency room. If medications are required, a prescription will be sent to the local pharmacy and billed through your insurance. North Star nurses will inform camp families when their camper requires a telemedicine appointment. The cost of the telemedicine appointment is covered by camp tuition. For more information visit www.thecampdoctors.com.



Dental Work: Please complete all dental and/or orthodontic work before camp.



Eyeglasses: Please send a second pair of glasses with your camper if they wear glasses.



Parents/guardians are financially responsible for all charges related to medical treatment that may not be covered by their medical insurance, including but not limited to, a deductible, coinsurance charges, or portions of medical charges that individual insurance companies may decline to pay.



HEAD LICE: All campers are **REQUIRED** to have a **LICE CHECK SCREENING** by Lice Clinics of America upon their arrival to camp and are **REQUIRED** to arrive at camp "Lice Free".

Campers who are discovered to have head lice upon arrival or during their stay at camp will be treated immediately by a Lice Clinics of America technician and our health center staff. Families will be billed \$375 for the treatment.

Camp is not responsible for any post-camp services or products for campers returning home that are discovered with head lice.

CAMP POLICIES

CAMP COMMUNITY

At camp, we follow the simple rule that no one is allowed to have fun at someone else's expense. Camp has a responsibility to every camper and staff member. Camp North Star will not tolerate disrespectful and/or inappropriate behavior or language toward peers or staff. Any inappropriate behavior, contact, or language will result in immediate disciplinary action including the possibility of being removed/dismissed from camp.



CLEANLINESS

Campers must practice personal hygiene and keep their living quarters neat. Please remind campers that daily showers, daily hygiene, and daily bunk inspections are part of the Camp North Star routine. Campers are required to participate in daily chores in both their cabins and around the camp property.



PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES

Smoking cigarettes or any similar substance (such as e-cigarettes, vaping, or Juul), smoking or using marijuana in any form, alcohol, or drugs of any kind are strictly prohibited. Campers who are found to have in their possession, participate in the use of or distribute any of the above substances while at camp will be dismissed from camp. We have a zero-tolerance policy.



PROHIBITED ITEMS

Please do not send electric fans or other electrical equipment, as we do not want to overload the electrical systems in the cabins. Battery-operated fans are acceptable. Please do not send expensive items such as good clothing or jewelry to camp. Large stereos, portable gaming devices, or DVD players are prohibited. The camp cannot assume responsibility for the loss or damage of campers' personal property. Weapons or any hazardous items are not permitted in camp. Pocket knives, hunting knives, Swiss army knives, and the like are also not permitted in camp.



CELL PHONE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY

All cell phones, gaming devices, computers, Apple watches, and other smart watches are prohibited at camp.



The only electronics allowed are digital cameras, Kindle-type devices, and 2 specific types of MP3 players. They are the Mighty Vibe and the FyrFly Player (previously called The Campfire Player). All other MP3 players are prohibited. In addition, other music players, eBook readers, portable game devices, "smart" watches, Apple watches, video players, tablets, laptops, etc., are also prohibited.



Cell Phones are **ONLY PERMITTED** to be brought to camp when campers are traveling to and from camp. Campers are **REQUIRED** to turn their cell phone into the camp office upon arrival at camp. Cell phones will be kept in the office and returned on departure day.

What happens if my camper is discovered with a cell phone or electronic device while at camp?

We take this policy as well as all of our policies at camp very seriously. We expect our campers and families to do the same. Camp reserves the right to dismiss a camper from camp for such infractions. Please help your camper to make good choices and decisions, and keep cell phones and electronics at home.

GRATUITIES

We prohibit the offering of gratuities to our camp staff. All of our staff has been made aware of this policy. It has always been our philosophy to compensate our staff fairly.



CAMP STORE

We don't have a store at camp. We don't see the need to sell junk food or novelty items to our campers. Campers are encouraged to show their camp pride and enjoy the online Camp Store on the camp's website, supplied by our friends at The Camp Spot. The Camp Spot is also where you will find your required logo items from the camp's packing list.



MONEY AT CAMP

There's no need for money at camp. All trips are paid for by camp and don't require spending money. Campers traveling by plane can bring money for traveling to and from camp. This money must be labeled in an envelope with your camper's name and will be kept in the office. Campers aren't permitted to have money in their cabins. Camp is not responsible for money that campers keep on them in their cabins.



CAMP CONDUCT / BEHAVIOR

Campers are supervised throughout the day at camp. Even though campers are with a staff member, a true respect and understanding of camp rules and policies must be met by all campers. Breaking camp rules or policies may result in being discharged from camp. There are no refunds for campers who are dismissed from the camp program. Dismissal from camp is at the discretion of Camp North Star's owners and designees.

- ★ Campers are expected to be present and participate in all activities and to remain in supervised areas at all times.
- ★ Leaving cabins after "lights out" in the evenings or early mornings is by permission only and campers **MUST** be accompanied by a staff member or camper "buddy" designated by a staff member.
- ★ Campers are expected to be respectful of each other, themselves, and our staff at all times. Physical or verbal hostilities or bullying of any kind will not be permitted while at camp or after. We encourage campers to be respectful of the camp community both in and out of camp.
- ★ We aim to teach our campers to follow our value systems, the RICHES, while at camp and at home. It stands for Respect, Independence, Caring, Honor, and Spirit.
- ★ Camp North Star does not allow inappropriate romantic, physical, or intimate relationships at camp. Campers are expected to behave in the same manner as they would with their parents/guardians present at all times or better. We appreciate your support on this issue.
- ★ Campers' emotional and physical safety is our first priority at Camp North Star. In the event a camper is identified to be unsafe or at-risk to themselves or others during their stay at camp, the camp will contact home immediately to make arrangements for the camper to be picked up.
- ★ Campers are not permitted to alter their physical appearance while at camp. This includes but is not limited to hair dying, hair cutting, body piercing, tattooing, etc. Please do not send your camper with any items that would avail these opportunities.
- ★ Camp is home to many others besides our campers and staff. Campers are expected to respect both our furry friends and our natural environment. Teasing or hurting animals and/or destructive behavior, for example, peeling the bark of trees or pulling down live limbs, are not permitted.
- ★ All campers **MUST** adhere to the rules of the Waterfront and Lakes. Campers are not permitted near the water at camp without certified camp staff.
- ★ Cabins are private and open to the residents of each specific cabin only. Campers may not enter a cabin other than their own.
- ★ We expect that North Star's code of conduct is followed year-round between campers. The discovery of mistreatment of others in the off-season may result in the camper not being allowed to return in future summers. Behavior seen or happening via online communities, texting, email, etc., isn't tolerated.

DISMISSAL OF CAMPER

The Camp reserves the right to dismiss, in its sole discretion, any camper whose condition, conduct, influence, or behavior is deemed unsatisfactory or detrimental to the best interests of the Camp or their fellow campers or who violates camp rules and regulations, in which case no refunds will be made.



DISPUTES

All claims or disputes asserted by Camper or Parent/Guardian against the Camp and arising from or related to this Agreement shall be brought and maintained in the courts of the State of Maine, and Parent/Guardian expressly submits to the jurisdiction of such courts. The substantive law of the State of Maine will govern such disputes without regard to conflict of law rules. Any individual bringing legal action against Camp, whose action is decided in favor of Camp, will be responsible for all legal fees, court costs, and out-of-pocket expenses of Camp, its owners, and employees.



CONTACT WITH STAFF MEMBERS OUTSIDE OF THE CAMP SEASON

Camp North Star requires that no staff member, past or present, have unsupervised visits or contact with campers after the camp season.

During the camp season, the same policy applies; campers and staff members are never permitted unsupervised, one-on-one contact.



CAMP FAMILIES ZOOM WEBINARS

We realize there is a lot of information in this handbook to review and digest. Steven and Brooke are always available to answer questions and would be happy to schedule a time to discuss any questions. To best help our families prepare for the camp season, a Zoom webinar is scheduled each spring and hosted by Steven and Brooke. They walk you through everything you need to know about getting ready for the camp season. Details are shared in our monthly e-mails. And the webinars are recorded in case you aren't able to attend the live version.





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www.campnorthstarmaine.com