

CAMP AND RETREAT MINISTRIES



QUALIFICATIONS

Volunteer Counselors

Church camp counselors are Christians who are active in church and willing to give a week working with children or youth and other adults in an outdoor setting.

CHRISTIAN STANDARDS: The W PA Conference camps: Camp Allegheny, Jumonville, and Wesley Woods are teaching campers high standards of Christian behavior which are fundamental to Christian community. Volunteers and paid staff need to be persons whose Christian values and behavior, year 'round, are a worthy example for campers and for each other. For example, Camping and Retreat Ministries has specific policies prohibiting the use of alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco, weapons, gambling and abusive behavior by staff or campers. There are camp rules about language, music, sexual conduct and dress that are very important in building a Christian community of mutual respect.

Counselors need

- to exhibit high standards of Christian values and behavior.
- to relate personally to the campers
- to be willing to share their Christian faith informally
- to cooperate with event and camp leaders
- to be flexible and helpful while engaged in a variety of tasks and responsibilities.

Counselors **MUST BE** at least 18 years old.* (The reason for this minimum age is to meet liability and camp certification requirements.) Please don't put the camp directors in the very embarrassing situation, for everyone, of sending home an under age volunteer.

***Persons under 18 who are CIT trained and approved may assist in a camp event if they are four years older than the campers and have been assigned by their CIT dean and invited by the event dean. CIT's must not be left alone with campers. That is, someone over 18 must be present to be the "responsible adult" for liability purposes. As an event volunteer, CIT's are continuing their practical counselor training.**

New Volunteers: Information (Application) and Clearances

New volunteers must complete a Volunteer Application. New volunteers must be known by the dean or a camp staff person or pastor, etc. who is recommending them for leadership. The volunteer dean or counselor must mail the completed application to the Conference Center Camping office at least two weeks before camp. The camping office then sends for references and maintains files for volunteers and sends a duplicate file to the camp site. (If a dean has invited & knows the new counselor, the dean may be one of the three needed references.) This process is very important. Thank you for your cooperation.

-New volunteers must fill out the authorized waiver form so that background checks can be done.

Our churches and our church camps require volunteers and staff working with or around persons 17 or under or vulnerable adults to have background checks. If you have your Act 33 and Act 34 or Act 73 clearances please send copies of your clearances to the camping office. The camping office only needs copies of the original forms. If a volunteer has gotten clearances for a job or for other volunteer work, copies of those are satisfactory. The camping office considers clearances valid until the person has moved. Thank you for your cooperation. If a volunteer does not reside in Pennsylvania, he/she provides the equivalent clearances from their state of residence or goes through the federal process Act 73.

Camper- Staff Ratio

The usual camper-staff ratio in the summer camps is 4:1. This ratio includes as staff: a dean (s), all volunteer counselors, program staff, and program specialists staying overnight. CIT's are not in ratio. (Pony Camp 5:1; Horse 5:1; Ex. Horse 6:1; Discovery & Exceptional Persons 2:1)

Health Forms

Counselors must turn in Health Forms. Forms are available at camp, from deans, and the camping office.