

# Frequently Asked Questions for Camp Operators

## Permit Questions

### Do I need a summer camp permit?

If your day camp/traveling day camp consists of 10 or more children that are under 16 years of age (18 for overnight camps), and provides indoor or outdoor organized group activities, involving two or more activities, of which at least one is a high-risk activity, then yes, you must get a permit. Examples of high-risk activities include but are not limited to: sports, amusement parks, gymnastics, swimming, aquatics theme parks, boating, organized games, hiking, rock climbing, trampolines, play spaces, playground/sprinklers, and cooking.

### When is the application submission deadline?

We encourage you to submit your application as soon as possible but no later than 90 days prior to your camp's start date (weekends and holidays are counted).

### How long does it take to receive a permit?

The time it takes to receive a permit varies and depends on several factors, such as early submission of a completed summer camp application, a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) or Letter of No Objection (LNO), getting approval from New York City Fire Department (FDNY) and passing the Health Department's preliminary site inspection.

### I am temporarily moving my camp to a new building or school, do I need to apply for a new record/permit?

Yes. If the camp's building address has changed, you are considered a **new** camp and must apply for a new camp permit. You will receive a new record ID and DC ID number.

### I am changing my camp's name or DBA name. Do I need to apply for a new camp permit?

No. Your camp name or DBA name does not affect your permit. Unless you are changing ownership or Employer Identification Number (EIN), you are not required to apply for a new camp permit.

### How do I enroll my program to accept subsidized child care payments?

Call the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) - Child Care and Head Start program at **311**, or visit the nearest Human Resources Administration (HRA) office.

### How do I apply to have summer youth workers at my camp?

Call the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development's Youth Connect hotline at 800-246-4646.

### My camp program includes children with special needs. Would it be classified as a camp for children with developmental disabilities?

According to the New York State (NYS) Sanitary Code, a developmental disability is "a severe, chronic disability of a person which is attributable to mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism or neurological impairment, or is attributable to any other condition of a person similar to mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism or neurological impairment because such condition results in similar impairment of general intellectual functioning and/or adaptive behavior and requires treatment and services similar to those required for such persons; originates before 18; is likely to continue indefinitely." In addition, the developmental disability must be identified as such by a health care provider.

If 20 percent or more of your campers have a developmental disability, your program will be deemed a camp for children with developmental disabilities and must adhere to additional requirements of the New York State and City regulations. See [Requirements for Camps for Children with Developmental Disabilities Fact Sheet](#) for more information.

## Staff Qualifications and Requirements

### What staff members are required for a summer camp?

A summer camp's core staff includes an operator (who may also be the camp director), the camp director, an on-site health director/designee, trip leaders (during off-site trips) and senior counselors (who directly supervise campers). See the [Staff Qualifications Guideline for Summer Camps](#) fact sheet for additional information.

### Does my health director have to be on site at all times?

At a day camp, your health director may be on or off site as specified in your approved safety plan. If the health director is off site, an on-site designee must be present with the camp during operational hours. At an overnight camp, the health director must be always on site.

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### How many staff members should be certified in advanced first aid?

On-site health directors/designees and trip leaders must possess an acceptable advance first aid certification. Visit [First Aid Certifications](#) for a list of acceptable courses. (Refer to the first set of courses listed.)

### How many staff members should be certified with CPR?

There must be at least one staff member certified in an acceptable CPR training for every 100 campers. CPR certifications are valid for **only one year** regardless of the expiration date. The on-site health director/designee may be counted towards the first 100 campers. Visit [Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation \(CPR\) Certifications](#) for a list of acceptable courses.

### How many staff members should be certified with standard/basic first aid?

There must be at least one staff member certified in an acceptable standard first aid training for every 50 campers. At day camps, the on-site health director/designee may count towards the first 50 campers. Visit [First Aid Certifications](#) for a list of acceptable courses. (Refer to the second set of courses listed on the second page.)

### Does the health director have to be present during camp trips?

All camp trips must have a trip leader, as well as someone certified in advanced first aid and CPR - which may be the trip leader or health director/designee. If the trip leader does not possess advance first aid and CPR certifications, then the certified health director must be present on the trip. Whenever some campers remain on site, there must also be a health director/designee present who is with certified in advanced first aid and CPR.

### Does my camp staff need to be fingerprinted?

No. Fingerprinting for camps staff is not a health code requirement.

### Does my camp staff need to complete a State Central Register Database Check (SCR) form?

No. Only the camp director must complete and submit an SCR form to the Department. However, if 20 percent or more of your campers have a developmental disability, then all staff must be SCR cleared.

### Does camp staff need to be cleared against the Staff Exclusion List (SEL)?

No, unless 20 percent or more of your campers have a developmental disability.

### Do I need to conduct a sex offender registry search on my staff?

Yes, you must [conduct a search](#) of the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) Sex Offender Registry on all staff members, including your Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) workers and volunteers.

### Does camp staff need to complete child abuse training?

The camp director is the only person who is required to complete a training on [child abuse and maltreatment](#).

### Is emergency preparedness training required?

A plan for evacuation and medical emergencies must be outlined in the camp's written safety plan. For information on preparing for other types of emergencies, such as *extreme heat* and *attacks in public places*, visit <https://www.ready.gov/be-informed>.

## Pools and Aquatic Staff Questions

### I will be taking my campers to a public pool. Do I need my own lifeguards?

When a camp uses any off-site facility for swimming, the camp operator should supply one lifeguard for every 75 campers provided that the owner or operator of the off-site facility states in writing that they will provide additional lifeguards to maintain a ratio of one lifeguard to every 25 swimmers. Your aquatics director must be present.

### I will be taking campers to a public pool or an aquatic theme park. Do I need an aquatics director?

Yes. You need an aquatic director for all water activities, except sprinklers.

### Can my campers use a wading pool?

Yes, but you will still need an aquatic director, and the pool must have a filtration system. The wading pool must be 24 inches throughout the entire pool and have a gate with a self-closing mechanism.

## Fire Inspection Questions

### How do I obtain a fire inspection?

Once a valid certificate of occupancy or letter of no objection for your program is on file, a fire safety inspection request will be automatically sent to the NYC Fire Department (FDNY). All programs must pass a fire inspection before a permit can be issued. If your program passes the fire inspection, FDNY will send the report directly to our office. The FDNY charges a fee for the fire safety inspection.

### My camp will be located in a public school. Are we responsible for fulfilling the fire inspection requirement?

Yes. The Bureau of Child Care will make the initial inspection request to the FDNY. Prior to selecting a facility, the camp must discuss fire safety and buildings compliance with the Department of Education (DOE), school principal or school custodian. Fire safety and facility violations are filed against the camp, not DOE or the building owner.

### Do I need a Certificate of Fitness?

Any building with a fire alarm system or other related system, such as a sub-system, must have an individual holding a Certificate of Fitness for Supervision of Fire Alarm Systems and Other Related Systems (S-95). The individual must be physically present during hours of operation. FDNY could inform you if you need one. You can also ask the building owner or management if there is an individual on site who already possesses this certificate.

There must also be a staff member holding a Certificate of Fitness for conducting Fire Drills (F-07/W-07). If camp is located in a school, D10/D20 certificates of fitness are also acceptable as long as the individual holding such certificate is present when your camp is in operation and conducting fire drills. Fire drills must be conducted within the first 48 hours of each camp session.

## Facility and Occupancy Questions

### I am renewing my camp permit. Do I need a new Letter of No Objection?

Letters of No Objection are valid as long as it has not expired, and the description of the program has not changed.

### My camp will be in a public school. Do I need to submit a Certificate of Occupancy or Letter of No Objection?

Yes. We require these documents even if the facility is a public school building.

### What should I do if I have already submitted my application, but now I need to relocate?

You will need to apply again as a new summer camp. You will receive a new Record ID/DC ID number and undergo a new site inspection. However, you should contact your respective child care [borough office](#) and let them know you are changing locations so that relevant documents can be transferred to your new file. A new application must be submitted as soon as possible. Be sure to submit a new certificate of occupancy or letter of no objection as well as any pages of the safety plan that pertains to the facility. *Ensure that the NEW Record ID/DC ID number and camp address are reflected on all documents that you submit.*

## Food Safety and Certification Questions

### When would a 15-hour Food Protection Certificate be required?

A supervisor of food preparation and service is required to hold the 15-hour [Food Protection Certificate](#) if food is prepared on site or when food is catered and delivered in bulk quantities by a permitted/licensed food service establishment.

### When would a 4-hour Food Protection Certificate be required?

A supervisor of food service is required to hold the [Food Protection: \(4-Hour\) for Soup Kitchen & Summer Camp Workers](#) Certificate if food is delivered to the camp by a permitted or licensed food establishment in individual packaging, or if meals from the DOE Summer Feeding Program are delivered or transported to the camp.

### If parents provide cold ready-to-eat meals, would I need any kind of food protection certificate?

No. You would not need any food protection certificate. Meals must be maintained at a safe temperature (41 degrees Fahrenheit) upon arrival to camp. Whenever programs do not have facilities to refrigerate cold foods (e.g., during camp trips), parents must be notified in writing, that they should provide non-perishable meals for their children.

### Is the food protection course required for snacks or an end of summer barbeque?

The Food Protection Certificate is not required when serving non-perishable snacks that do not require preparation or refrigeration or when holding a one-time, end-of-the-summer picnic, barbeque or pizza party.

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### If children are taken to a school or restaurant, would I need any kind of food protection certificate?

No. A food protection certificate is not required. However, the camp operator must ensure that the restaurant has a current permit/license and must also keep copies of invoices/receipts of all food purchased.

## Camper Supervision Ratio

### What is the staff supervision ratio requirements?

See the chart below for a breakdown of the minimum counselor-to-camper ratio requirements.

Age Group	Normal Activities	Aquatics Activities	Overnight Camps	Trips	Passive Activities
Up to Age 5	1:6	1:4	1:6	1:5	1:25 (all ages)
Ages 6-7	1:9	1:6		1:6	
8 and Older	1:12	1:8	1:8		

There is no maximum group size requirement.

## Medical Requirements at Camp

### What are the medical and immunization requirements for campers?

Every camper must have a record of thorough medical examination by a licensed physician within one year prior to admission. This record must be signed and must have current medical history, including the child's immunization record. Immunization record must include dates for diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis, measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, hepatitis B, pneumococcal disease and haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib). This medical record must be kept on file for every camper and made available to the Department immediately upon request.

### What are the medical requirements for staff?

Every staff member, including kitchen, maintenance staff and SYEP workers, must have a record of a recent medical examination from a licensed health care provider dated within 2 years of working with the camp, indicating that they are physically able to perform their camp duties. Such records must be kept on file made available to the Department immediately upon request.

### Is tuberculin (TB) testing required for staff?

Not at this time. However, the Department may require testing for tuberculosis at any time of any staff or volunteer when such testing is deemed necessary for epidemiological investigation.

### Who can administer medication?

At children's camps, only New York State licensed health care and nursing practitioners are allowed to administer medication. Otherwise, campers must self-administer their medication. Any medication administered or self-administered at a camp shall be patient-specific and indicated on the camper's medical record by a licensed health care provider.

### May MAT (Medication Administration Trained) or EMT certified staff administer medication?

No. At children's camps, only New York State licensed health care and nursing practitioners recognized by the New York State Education Department are allowed to administer medication. EMTs employed at a children's camp may not administer medication.

### How can my camp be prepared for a medical emergency involving an allergic reaction?

According to Public Health Law, a summer day camp, traveling summer day camp, children's overnight camp or a person employed by such a camp can successfully complete a training course in the use of epinephrine auto-injector devices conducted by a nationally recognized organization experienced in training laypersons in emergency health treatment or by an entity or individual approved by the commissioner. See the NYS Bureau of Emergency Medical Services' Policy Statement on [Epinephrine Auto-Injectors \(EpiPen®\)](#) - March 13, 2017

### May campers use sunscreen and insect repellent?

Yes. Campers may carry and use their own insect repellent and sunscreen as long as the camp has written permission from their parent/guardian on file. If requested from a camper, staff may assist campers in applying insect repellent if the camp has written permission from their parent/guardian on file.