



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YMCA Camp Takodah OUTDOOR EDUCATION STAFF EXPECTATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

Revised 2/1/15: PAS

The purpose of this Personnel Policy is to define expectations of Cheshire YMCA & Camp Takodah staff members. As a member of the Takodah staff team, you represent the Cheshire YMCA, its volunteers, and its staff on a daily basis. The policy has many similarities with that of our Residential Summer Camp however there are some important changes to be aware of. [If you have been a summer camp staff member I would encourage you read the full document again with particular attention to changes in BLUE.](#)

We require staff to obey all national/state laws and local regulations, as well as the practices and procedures outlined below. We consider these policies and practices to be considered part of your contractual agreement, and your acceptance of them is implicit in signing the agreement for seasonal employment with the Cheshire YMCA & Camp Takodah. The terms of these policies in no way supersede the common law at-will employment doctrine.

TERMS OF WORK

Eligibility: Cheshire YMCA and Camp Takodah does not discriminate due to age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or any other protected status. By law, in the State of New Hampshire, employers must have signed parental permission for staff members under 18 to work. Parents may denote this permission by co-signing your staff contract.

Criminal Background Checks: In accordance with American Camp Association and NH Youth Recreation Camp standards, criminal background checks are conducted on all staff on an annual basis at the expense of the Cheshire YMCA & Camp Takodah. Your hire and staff contract are both conditional on a clean criminal record. Young people make mistakes from time to time. The Outdoor Education Director and Executive Director are prepared to discuss lapses in judgment and make determinations about your appropriateness for service with youth, provided you are open and honest with us when you apply.

Attendance: Staff members are expected to attend all program functions and assigned duties (e.g. flag raising and lowering, meals, evening programs) unless otherwise assigned, or specifically excused by the Outdoor Education Director or onsite Program Director. We hold staff meetings daily during program season as scheduled by the Outdoor Education Director or onsite Program Director. These will typically take place before a group arrives, before breakfast, after dinner and after a group leaves. Attendance is mandatory unless staff members have been excused due to a conflicting duty.

Time Off: Given that all outdoor education programs are booked and contracted independently, The days that staff will be working will be agreed with the Outdoor Education Director and Program Directors at the beginning of the season. Outside of these programs or events staff are free to come and go as they please. When scheduled to be in program, staff members may leave camp only with the permission of the Outdoor Education Director or onsite Program Director. Staff members are expected to check out with their immediate supervisor before departing the property

Salary, Payment & Contracts: You will be compensated for your work at the YMCA. Each staff member has agreed to work for specified pay rate, which is agreed to by signing a letter of agreement. Each staff member's pay rate is a personal matter, and not for general discussion. If for any reason staff members need to discuss pay, the Outdoor Education Director is available to answer questions.

Pay Periods and Timesheets: Staff will be trained on the completion of Timesheets. These must be submitted by 5:00pm every Friday. Staff will be paid according to their timesheets so please be sure to complete these accurately and fully. Staff will receive a paycheck at the end of each two-week pay period worked. Each staff member is responsible for completing and signing their own timesheets that will be kept in the main office. Seasonal staff members are not eligible for direct deposit of payroll. Any questions about pay are to be directly to the Outdoor Education Director.

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Verification & Taxes: In accordance with Federal Law, we are required to review your eligibility for employment and to withhold a portion of your paycheck(s) for income and social security tax according to your instructions. Staff will be asked to fill out an I-9 and W-4 form with either: (1) a passport or (2) a photo ID/driver's license and a birth certificate or social security card prior to their arrival to YMCA Camp Takodah. **Staff must also bring the originals of these documents with them to staff training.** We will also need you to share a valid social security number with us.

Insurance: Staff members are responsible for their own health and safety. Accordingly, health and accident insurance coverage is the responsibility of each individual. Should you need medical services during your employment, the Cheshire Medical Center staff and other doctors are on call in the area and available after consultation with our own health services staff.

Worker's Compensation Insurance: Staff members are protected by Worker's Compensation Insurance, which provides coverage for work-related accidents and illnesses. Any work-related injuries must be reported to the health services staff immediately.

Staff Orientation: Before the arrival of our groups, there will be a seasonal orientation period devoted to training topics and team building. For a new staff member this will be a one-week period. We will run one training in the Spring and one in the Fall. Attendance by all staff members during the training sessions prior to a work season is mandatory. In the unlikely event that a staff member is granted permission to miss any segment of staff training, they must at least join us for the long weekend at the end of the week and make up material via an individual briefing with his or her Program Director. Additional written materials (e.g. staff manuals, program-specific information) are provided to all staff. Staff members are required to read them and become familiar with their contents before the start of the program season.

Evaluations: All staff performance is overseen and evaluated by an immediate supervisor (Program Director) and/or the Outdoor Education Director, who should provide ongoing formal and informal feedback, including a final evaluation. Staff members should understand that feedback is given in order to support individuals in their personal growth. As such, staff members should accept feedback with an open mind and a commitment to giving their best to their participants and the camp community. When listing work-related experience on a resume, you may use the YMCA Camp Takodah and the Outdoor Education Director as references.

ROLE MODELING AND CONDUCT AROUND CAMP

Motto: "Friendly to All" is the motto of Camp Takodah. More than a motto, it is our way of life. Staff should model the Friendly to All spirit and the YMCA core values of honesty, caring, respect, and responsibility in their interactions with everyone who is a part of the Takodah community—both at camp and beyond.

Appearance: All staff members are to keep themselves and their living/working clean and sanitary. Staff members should always present themselves in a way that would meet the approval of the parents of our participants. Camp Takodah recognizes the rights of individuals in relation to dress and appearance, but reserves the right to require staff members to compromise on dress and appearance when health, safety, or role modeling to groups is involved.

For example: The YMCA administration might ask that certain body piercing rings/studs be removed or that tattoos be kept covered. Common sense tells us that staff cannot wear revealing clothing or shirts with racy slogans or advertising tobacco, drugs, or alcohol. Persons with long hair must wear it in a bun, ponytails, braids, or net while in the dining hall. Hats are required for food service crews.

Staff Clothing: Upon completing of staff training, staff members will be provided with a staff vest and at least one Takodah staff shirt. It is mandatory to wear this vest during the arrival of any group. During events such as weddings staff members must wear our uniform. This consists of a Takodah staff shirt (provided), with a khaki skirt, shorts, or trousers. If you have been provided with a name badge this must be worn at all times too.

Staff Fraternalization: Staff members must not let their friendships and relationships with fellow staff interfere with their duties. We certainly expect that rich friendships will develop amongst our staff, but our primary function is to serve groups. We also do not allow staff to mingle in living areas of the opposite gendered staff without permission from the Outdoor Education Director. Staff members must refrain from intimate displays of affection in the presence of children, teachers, group leaders, parents, and other staff.

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Guests & Visitors: Staff should greet and welcome every guest, alum, or visitor to camp, displaying friendliness and appropriate body language. Upon the arrival of a guest please notify the Outdoor Education Director or onsite Program Director by radio. Guests other than those who are part of the contracted group are not allowed unsupervised access to our facilities or programs. If guests or intruders persist in trying to visit camp or facilities without visiting the camp office, staff should alert the Outdoor Education Director.

Alcoholic Beverages, Drugs, Stimulants, Depressants: All staff members are required to abstain from using alcohol or drugs of any type (unless ordered by a physician – We do not have a nurse onsite during the season) while engaged in any event or program on our property. Violation of this policy will result in dismissal and termination of their work agreement (in accordance with the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988). Seasonal staff members are forbidden to bring alcohol onsite at any time but are permitted to consume alcohol offsite in their own time provided this has no impact on the programs and events taking place at camp. Any breach of this responsibility will also result in termination of employment as determined by the Outdoor Education Director

Tobacco Use: The Cheshire YMCA recognizes both the danger of tobacco use and the poor role modeling that youth workers who use tobacco set for children. Therefore, we do not allow our staff to use tobacco while working at Camp Takodah. Violation of this policy may result in verbal warnings, written warnings, and/or termination of employment. Wherever possible we encourage our groups to keep Camp Takodah a smoke free environment. In the event that a group does require tobacco use this may only take place in designated areas approved by the Outdoor Education Director with the presence of effective disposing containers. The location is usually behind the loading dock of the Dining Hall.

CAMP TAKODAH STANDARDS OF SUPERVISION

All group leaders, teachers or parents of participants that are onsite with the contracted group are responsible for the primary supervision of their participants, with the exception of specific programs we are contracted to run. These will be outlined in each program. At all times we have a responsibility to encourage the below standards of supervision and use them as our guide while we have participants in a program session.

Staff shall never leave a child unsupervised or release them into the care of anyone but the responsible parent, guardian, or adult authorized by the contracted group.

In order to protect Takodah staff, volunteers, and program participants—at no time during a Takodah program may a staff person be alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others. As staff supervise children, they should arrange themselves in a way that other staff can see them at all times.

Staff shall not abuse children including:

- Physical abuse – striking, spanking, shaking, slapping
- Verbal abuse – humiliation, degrading, threatening
- Sexual abuse – inappropriate touching or verbal exchanges
- Mental abuse – shaming, withholding love; cruelty
- Neglect – withholding food, water, basic care/needs
- Bullying – tolerating abuse of a participant by another staff or group member

Any type of abuse will not be tolerated and may be cause for immediate dismissal.

Staff must use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement, rather than competition, comparison, and criticism. Staff will have age-appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline. Physical restraint is used only in pre-determined situations (necessary to protect the child or other children from harm), is only administered in a prescribed manner, and must be documented in writing.

Staff will respond to children with respect and consideration. All children are treated equally regardless of sex, race, religion, and culture.

Staff will respect children's rights to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their rights to say no.

Staff will refrain from intimate displays of affection toward others in the presence of children, parents, and staff.

While Takodah does not discriminate against an individual's lifestyle, it does require that in the performance of their job they will remain role models at all times. Conversations detailing personal or romantic histories, endorsing political, religious or lifestyle choices, or detailing graphic events should be avoided.

Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs around children is prohibited.

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Smoking or use of tobacco around children is prohibited.

Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one's personal life and any kind of harassment in the presence of children is prohibited.

Staff must be free of physical and psychological conditions that might adversely affect children's physical or mental health. If in doubt, an expert should be consulted.

Staff will portray a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity.

Staff may not be alone with children they meet in Takodah programs outside of camp. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, and inviting children to your home. Any exceptions require a written explanation before the fact and are subject to approval from the Outdoor Education Director.

Staff are not to transport children in their own vehicles, unless they receive approval from the Outdoor Education Director. If given approval, staff are required to follow all applicable laws.

Staff may not date children enrolled in Takodah programs unless they have graduated from high and/or reached 18 years of age.

Staff are required to read all policies related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse and attend trainings on the subject, as instructed by the Outdoor Education Director.

Staff are required to review their Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts, as well as any other online presences, to ensure that all images and comments are consistent with the values of Camp Takodah. Any staff member who has online photos of smoking, consuming alcohol, using drugs, or role modeling other inappropriate behaviors will be dismissed from the staff team. Staff are required to review their privacy settings and ask friends to remove inappropriate content of them.

In order to protect our staff, children, and Takodah—at no time may you use the name Takodah or the names of other YMCA facilities on a personal or other non-authorized web page or in any other public domain on the internet (i.e. Facebook, and other peer networking sites). Similarly, you may not post the Takodah logo on personal or other websites not authorized by the Outdoor Education Director.

Under no circumstances may a member of the staff post identifying information or photos of children on their personal web page or any other public domain on the internet not authorized by the Outdoor Education Director.

Staff shall not initiate contact with participants on-line in any manner, including (but not limited to) email, instant messaging, personal web pages, and other public domains on the internet not authorized by the Outdoor Education Director.

If a staff member is contacted by a child, the staff member can choose to respond by either ignoring the overture or sending a brief reply indicating that on-line communication with children is not allowed.

If a staff member is contacted on-line by a participant in a way that displays inappropriate/unsafe behavior or might have a negative impact on the camp, staff member, or Takodah, the staff member will report such contact to the Outdoor Education Director.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

Harassment Policy: The Cheshire YMCA and Camp Takodah expressly forbid any form of harassment of employees, including but not limited to: slurs, jokes, and other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct which relates to an individual's race, color, sex, religion, national origin, citizenship, age, disability, or other protected status. Harassment also includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, unwelcome or offensive touching, or other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Violation of this policy will subject an employee to disciplinary action, which may result in immediate dismissal.

Employees who feel they are being harassed in any way by another employee, participant, volunteer, or vendor should inform their immediate supervisor and/or the Outdoor Education Director. It is the employee's responsibility to bring such concerns to the immediate supervisor or Outdoor Education Director. Any concerns raised will be handled immediately and kept confidential.

Electronics and Media Use: Camp Takodah is a place "away from the stresses of our technological world." Accordingly, there will be no computers, TVs, electronic games, cell phones, tablets, e-readers or other such units in group cabins or program areas unless approved by the program group. We prefer that Takodah be a place where groups and staff can make their own music, and can enjoy silence and the sounds of the woods rather than the constant chatter of background music.

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Email and Media Use Policy: Camp Takodah has a superb reputation in the community and the camping industry. Staff members are required to maintain this image by respecting the following guidelines:

- We ask that staff use email and postal address lists provided by the YMCA within the bounds of good taste and in accordance with the YMCA's commitment to the core values of honesty, caring, respect, and responsibility. Please do not use this information for commercial purposes.
- The Children's Online Privacy Act requires us to obtain permission to post images, names, and other information about youth under the age of 13 online. While we obtain parental permission to use participants' images in the camp website and other promotional avenues, this permission does not extend to our seasonal staff and personal web presences, or public sites such as Facebook and Instagram.
- We ask that staff supervise any photography going on inside our cabins, and forbid photography in changing areas and bathrooms. Finally, we ask that staff make use of the Camp Takodah name, logos, and images only with the permission of the Outdoor Education Director, especially in print or online public forums such as Facebook.

No Food in Cabins: We ask groups not to bring any food, fruit, candy, gum, or junk food for any participants. It is our role to insist on and enforce this request.

Purchasing: All purchasing for group supplies is done through the Outdoor Education Director, with receipts turned in immediately. Staff may not purchase articles for participants unless specific permission has been granted by the Outdoor Education Director. Staff personal purchases are to be made on personal time off.

LIVING AT CAMP

Food: We will provide food to staff living or working onsite when food service for programs is in session. As always guests come first, staff working second, and staff onsite third. A small stipend for food can be granted to staff living onsite. This is to be used to shop communally during dry spells of food service if there are not sufficient leftovers from any of the programs.

Kitchen Use: Staff are permitted to use the kitchen during the program season. It is mandatory that the kitchen is returned to a clean and hygienic state before the end of each day. If this responsibility is not maintained the Outdoor Education Director reserves the right to close of the main kitchen to maintain it's standard for program use only.

Equipment Use: The YMCA counts on all equipment to be in good repair and ready to use for all it programs. Feel free to use any basic equipment during the season during your free time. For any specialized equipment on the waterfront or ropes course, you may request the use of this through the onsite program director or ropes course manager in line with your specific training and qualifications. Please put equipment back in its right place and report any damages or breaks to equipment so they can be easily fixed or replaced. You may not take any equipment offsite without prior approval; from the Outdoor Education Director.

Equipment Use: During the Outdoor Education season we do not have waterfront directors. Staff may use the waterfront for swimming, boating and recreation in their free time provided a lifeguard is always present and in possession of a lifeguard tube. Staff must never enter the waterfront on their own and must always have a buddy.

Staff Visitors: Staff members may have guests in camp only when it will not interfere with that staff person's responsibilities or other programs at camp. Staff members must receive approval from the Outdoor Education Director before inviting visitors to camp. In addition, when staff members are not scheduled to work during a particular session, they may not visit camp without approval from the Outdoor Education Director.

Safety and Health Regarding Bloodborne Pathogens: Bloodborne pathogens are infectious microorganisms in human blood (and any other bodily fluids or excretions) that can cause disease in humans. These pathogens include, but are not limited to, hepatitis B (HBV), hepatitis C (HCV), and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Accidents and illnesses at camp might expose staff members to bloodborne pathogens. Staff members should treat all bodily fluids as potentially infected. Staff members who encounter bodily fluids should protect themselves through the following procedures: Use surgical gloves (available in all First Aid kits) before touching bodily fluids. Place any compromised clothing in a sealed, leak-proof, and labeled bag. Disinfect any surfaces contaminated by bodily fluids. Immediately wash your hands and any other body parts that were exposed to bodily fluids with soap and water. Proceed to the health center immediately. Follow any additional procedures or treatments directed by the health center team.

Telephone: The YMCA office telephone is for emergencies and business—not personal use. If someone must call you, please instruct him or her to leave a message requesting that you call back. If necessary, staff members may use a phone in the YMCA office, after receiving permission from the Outdoor Education Director. Cell phone reception is poor on the camp property.

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WiFi: There is WiFi access for staff, in the Office or Friendship Lodge. Staff members are asked to refrain from tying up the limited bandwidth with instant messaging programs, online games, or downloading audio and video. Takodah requires all staff to follow all laws related to piracy of digital media. If WiFi use becomes a problem, the Outdoor Education Director reserves the right to turn off WiFi access.

Motor Vehicles and Transportation: All personal motor vehicles must be parked in the parking lot and not driven on camp property. We ask that you not loan your vehicle to other staff members. There is no public transportation in the camp area and transportation to and from camp is the employee's responsibility. Only approved drivers 21 years of age or older may operate camp-owned vehicles. Participants are not to ride in any vehicles except on approved trips for medical or specific programs. Approved drivers are required to transport participants in camp vehicles only, unless the Outdoor Education Director has given permission to transport a participant in a personal vehicle. Nobody is permitted to ride on the outside of a vehicle or in a truck bed. Takodah requires staff members to follow all motor vehicle laws when using vehicles while on duty.

Pets: Pets of any sort, even if just visiting, need explicit prior approval of the Outdoor Education Director. Takodah is generally not equipped to have pets reside with staff members at camp. Staff members should arrange other care for their pets during their time working at Takodah.

Personal Gear And Explosives: Personal firearms, ammunition, fireworks, and explosives are prohibited. Should you elect to use personal gear at camp, including (but not limited to): sporting goods, fishing gear, watercraft, computers, books, or games, please note that we cannot be liable for damage or theft. We can allow you to use musical instruments and sporting goods in the program at the discretion of relevant Program Heads. We cannot allow staff to use personal harnesses, ropes, or safety gear on our ropes courses or trips, personal watercraft at the waterfront, or any personal firearms or archery gear.

Laundry: Staff members are responsible for their own laundry. Coin operated laundry machines are available in camp. Staff need to provide their own detergent.

Acceptance: Your acceptance of your work contract will be with the understanding that the standards of daily conduct will at all times reflect the principles of good character and positive role modeling as a criterion of leadership while representing the Cheshire YMCA as a staff member at Camp Takodah.

While the personnel guidelines provide policies and procedures related to common employment issues in a summer camp setting, it would be impossible to predict every possible workplace scenario. As such, the personnel policies may change at any time, with or without notice, as circumstances necessitate. Staff members must always use common sense and good judgment in carrying out job responsibilities. Staff members should always take questions or concerns related to employment issues to the Outdoor Education Director. The personnel guidelines are valid from the beginning to the end of your employment.

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