

Western Diocese Armenian Church Summer Camp Staff Waiver

All information contained in this application is correct so far as I know. I understand that the Camp Committee takes each application very seriously, and stresses the importance of honesty. Furthermore, if it is determined that false information is provided, I may be disqualified from participating in the camp program.

I hereby release, indemnify and hold harmless the Western Diocese Summer Camp Program, its directors, officers, employees, volunteers and agents from all liability for any injuries or damages sustained.

I understand that the Summer Camp Program has been created to provide an environment of community, which inspires individual growth and the values of Christian fellowship under the teachings and guidance of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

I have read and understand all of the rules and policies described below and I agree that failure to abide by any of those items may result in expulsion from camp and denial to return to the Western Diocese Summer Camp program for any specified period of time. I further agree that failure to alert a member of the Directing Staff to any violation of these items by myself, another staff member, camper, and/or any other individual at Camp may result in expulsion from camp and denial to return to the Western Diocese Summer Camp program for any specified period of time. If expelled from camp, I accept full financial liability (if applicable).

GENERAL CAMP RULES FOR DIRECTING, PROGRAM AND COUNSELING STAFF

**VIOLATION OF CAMP RULES MAY INCUR PENALTIES UP TO AND INCLUDING
EXPULSION FROM CAMP**

Cars are to remain in the designated parking lots. Only camp owned, delivery and or emergency vehicles are to be driven in camp.

Closed toed shoes are required at all times. There are many rocks, bees, roots and holes around the camp that can cause injury to unprotected feet. Sandals are for the swimming area only. This rule is not only for the campers but is for everyone. Campers will follow our example!

Quiet time in camp is observed between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Be considerate of those trying to sleep. There will be no visiting after lights out.

All counselors and staff are expected to attend all scheduled classes, church services and meals unless excused by the Camp Director.

The kitchen prep areas, cleaning areas, cooking areas, serving areas, storage areas and refrigerators are off limits except to paid camp staff or designated volunteers.

AT ALL TIMES, Boys' cabins are off limits to girls and girls' cabins are off limits to boys.

Cabin raids are strictly prohibited.

For personal safety, walking is restricted to designated paths and trails only. Poison oak and rattlesnakes are located on the camp property and any sightings should immediately be reported to the Directing Staff. Picking of wild flowers is prohibited.

Bears and wildlife are located around and on the camp property. Do not approach or attempt to touch or feed any wildlife. Please report all sightings of wildlife to the Directing Staff immediately.

Cabins and all surrounding areas must be kept clean and free of debris. Do not discard food or food containers in any receptacles except at the main lodge. Wildlife is attracted to garbage and this will assist in keeping wildlife away from camp.

The camp medical staff must dispense all medication to be taken by a camper.

All broken or damaged items and or equipment should be reported immediately to the Directing Staff immediately.

Sports equipment is to be checked out through and returned to the camp office.

All fishing knives must be held by the camp office staff that will check-in and check-out the knives as needed for fishing.

Possession of shaving cream on the camp premises will only be permitted for the purpose of shaving.

When leaving camp, cabins/general camp area is to be left in the same condition it was upon arrival.

No visitors will be allowed without the prior permission of the Camp Director.

No one is allowed in or on the lakes without the presence of the camp lifeguard.

Swimming is permitted only at scheduled times in the designated swimming area. Non-swimmers may only go into the water at waist deep level.

Canoeing is only allowed in the designated canoeing areas.

Everyone is required to wear a life jacket while in a canoe. No standing, splashing or horseplay while in the canoe.

Cell phones should remain off once you arrive at Camp and should not be turned on until your departure. This will strictly be enforced.

CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT FOR DIRECTING, PROGRAM, AND COUNSELING STAFF

That I am volunteering to provide direct and/or indirect supervision of children and/or young adults attending the camp sessions. And in that position, I take responsibility for the health and well being of each camper assigned to my care, and will put their needs and interest first when making decisions. I understand that in an emergency situation it is my primary responsibility to secure the safety of each camper assigned to my care, and secondarily to assist in the security of other campers and staff.

That I will refrain from participating in any activities that are contradictory to or violate any of the rules as set forth by the American Church Summer Camp. In my position, I will uphold those rules to all campers. I have read and understand those rules (a copy of which is attached and is a part of this document).

That in my position I will be serving as a role model for the campers and that within my actions, I will strive to set a positive example of conduct at all times.

That participation in or encouragement of any acts of vandalism will result in the reimbursement on my part of any costs incurred for the repair or replacement of any property owned by the Armenian Church Summer Camp.

That I will abide by the following Child Abuse Guidelines for Staff Relationships with Children. At no time should children be left unsupervised (where they cannot be seen by the supervising adult). Staff behavior and disciplinary actions with children must avoid all abusive behavior as defined in the following Definition of Child Abuse.

A physical injury which is inflicted by other than accidental means on a child by another person. Sexual abuse, including both sexual assault and sexual exploitation. Willful cruelty or unjustifiable punishment of a child, resulting in physical pain or mental suffering Corporal punishment or injury. Neglect, including both severe and general neglect.

POSSESSION OF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN:

POSSESSION OF ALCOHOL OR TOBACCO PRODUCTS
POSSESSION OF A FIREARM OR OTHER WEAPONS
POSSESSION OF A REPLICA FIREARM OR ANY OTHER WEAPON
POSSESSION OF ILLEGAL DRUGS OR CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES
POSSESSION OF FIREWORKS OR OTHER FLAMMABLE MATERIALS

Fires are restricted to campfire which can only be started by designated staff, and only in the campfire area.

All campers and staff are required to stay within camp areas at all times. Any departure from the camp facility requires permission from the Camp Director.

That my person and/or property may be subject to search upon request by a staff member, should the need arise for the safety and protection of those attending camp.

That I will obey all laws of the State of California.

In accepting the position of Directing, Program, Counseling Staff or Volunteer with the Summer Camp Program, I further agree that failure to abide by any of the above items may result in my dismissal from the position, expulsion from camp and denial of a return to the Western Diocese Armenian Church Summer Camp Program for any specified period of time. I have read, understand and agree to abide by all the above rules.

Summer Camp Policy Regarding Interaction between Campers and their Relatives on Staff

Once a camper has checked in at the camp office, he/she must be released to the counselor for the ENTIRE week. From that point on, the counselor will be the child's parent and the cabin will be his/her family. Parents and other relatives on staff and are expected to help make this transition by speaking with their children before camp and explaining this policy. This policy is designed to protect other campers who do not have their parents and relatives at camp that can easily be made to feel homesick if their cabin mates get attention from their parents and relatives who work on staff. As a note, if a child is predisposed toward homesickness, presence of their parents and relatives who work on staff will only exacerbate the homesickness.

If you are a parent or relative on staff we expect the following:

- Not to enter the child's cabin or in any other way interfere with their child's camp experience.
- If a staff member has a comment or complaint regarding their child's camp experience, they must see the director or deans.
- The staff member will not confront or otherwise intimidate their child's counselor/CIT or cabin mates.
- The staff member will not remove the child from their cabin or cabin activity.
- The staff member will limit their interaction and will avoid attention/affection with the child (e.g. hugging, kissing, dressing, excessive socializing, doing favors for, etc.)

Remember the staff's primary responsibility is to perform their duties in the staff position assigned for the best interest of all campers. By not following the above mentioned policies, you risk compromising your own position as well as the child's camp experience. Failure to cooperate with this policy will not be tolerated. Thank you for understating the importance of this policy.

I have read the policy above and agree to abide by it.

Western Diocese Armenian Church Summer Camp Abuse Policy

This policy on child abuse was approved by the Camp Committee in June 2000 in order to help safeguard the health and well-being of all campers, counseling staff, program staff and directing staff participating in the Armenian Church Western Diocese Summer Camp program.

Personal Rights (1)

The Western Diocese Armenian Church Summer Camp Committee endorses the following personal rights for all staff and campers. All staff and campers are entitled to:

- Dignity in personal relationships with staff and campers.
- Safe and healthful accommodations, furnishings and equipment.
- Freedom from corporal or unusual punishment, infliction of pain, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse or other actions of a punitive nature including but not limited to: interference with functions of daily living including eating, sleeping or toileting; or withholding of shelter, clothing, medication or aids to physical functioning.
- Not be locked in any room, building or center premises by day or night.

Prohibitions (2)

Inappropriate behaviors or disciplinary measures, including but not limited to the following, shall be prohibited:

- Corporal punishment, including hitting, spanking, beating, shaking, pinching, and other measures that produce physical pain
- Withdrawal or the threat of withdrawal of food, rest, or bathroom opportunities.
- Abusive or profane language.
- Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment.
- Any form of sexual abuse.
- Any form of emotional abuse, including rejecting, terrorizing, ignoring, isolating, or corrupting a child.

Any staff member or camper must report any such known abuse immediately to the Western Diocese Armenian Church Summer Camp Director. Any staff member or camper engaging in such behaviors faces dismissal by the Western Diocese Armenian Church Summer Camp Committee. Any person against whom a complaint of abuse is made shall be entitled to a hearing within 24 hours of the receipt of the complaint, if possible. The private hearing will be held before a panel consisting of, at a minimum: the Camp Director, Camp Deans, one neutral member of the clergy and another neutral individual designated by the Camp Committee. The affected individual(s) will also meet privately with the same panel. The panel will privately consider the findings with the Western Diocese Armenian Church Summer Camp Committee before the Camp Committee determines if the person against whom the complaint was lodged will be dismissed from camp. All information provided and considered during the hearing process and all findings will remain confidential.

Definitions (3)

Following are descriptions of four major types of maltreatment: physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse. While State definitions may vary, operational definitions include, but are not limited to, the following:

Physical Abuse is characterized by the infliction of physical injury as a result of punching, beating, kicking, biting, burning, shaking or otherwise harming a child. The parent or caretaker may not have intended to hurt the child, rather the injury may have resulted from over-discipline or physical punishment.

Child Neglect is characterized by failure to provide for the child's basic needs. Neglect can be physical, educational, or emotional.

Sexual Abuse includes fondling a child's genitals, intercourse, incest, rape, sodomy, exhibitionism, and commercial exploitation through prostitution or the production of pornographic materials. Emotional Abuse (psychological/verbal abuse/mental injury) includes acts or omissions by the parents or other caregivers that have caused, or could cause, serious behavioral, cognitive, emotional, or mental disorders. Examples include extreme or bizarre forms of punishment, such as confinement of a child in a dark closet, as well as less severe acts, such as habitual scapegoating, belittling, or rejecting treatment.

As a staff member for the Western Diocese Armenian Church Summer Camp, I have read and agree to abide by the child abuse policy adopted by the Summer Camp Committee. I understand that failure to do so may result in my dismissal from summer camp.

1. Derived from the State of California Regulations for Child Care Centers.
2. Derived from policies outlined by the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care, located at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center in Denver, Colorado, and funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.
3. Derived from definitions provided by the National Clearinghouse for Child Abuse and Neglect.

Disclosure and Authorization for Background Investigation

I understand that in connection with my application to be employed/volunteer at the Summer Camp Program (including contracts for service), the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America will use an outside agency to research and verify information I have provided. I hereby authorize Western Diocese and/or entity directed by Western Diocese prior to or at any time after my employment/volunteer service commences to obtain a consumer report for employment/volunteer service purposes. I understand this consumer report may include inquiries regarding my work history, court records, including criminal convictions record, as permitted by law; driving history; verifications of Social Security number; and references obtained from professional and personal associates.

I hereby authorize all previous employers, educational institutions, consumer reporting agencies and other persons or entities having information about me to provide such information to Western Diocese or other entities that obtains information for Western Diocese. I further fully release Western Diocese, its employees, officers, directors, agents, successors and assigns, and all other parties involved in the investigation, from any claim or action for any liability whatsoever related to the process or results of the background/reference investigation.

I understand results of my background check may be used in determining whether to make an offer of employment/volunteer service and other employment/volunteer service decisions, and that the Disclosure Authorization is not an offer for employment/volunteer service by Western Diocese or a contract with Western Diocese. I further understand that no representative of Western Diocese other than an Executive Officer has the authority to enter into any agreement for employment/volunteer service for a specified period of time, or to otherwise alter Western Diocese's Employment Policy.

AFFIDAVIT REGARDING STAFF CONDUCT AND CAMPER-STAFF CONTACT

I certify the following:

- I have read the current year's staff manual as provided to me by the Western Diocese Armenian Church Summer Camp, and I understand the policies and procedures for proper supervision of children, role modeling, child safety (physical and emotional), and curriculum development and instruction.
- I am informed about safety procedures dealing with a variety of camp activities (e.g., fire drill) and when specially trained staffing is required. I am informed and know what to do in case of emergency or missing child and procedures on strangers and wildlife.
- I have read all information presented to me in writing, and I have attended the orientation session where my supervisor or camp administrative personnel further explained the duties and responsibilities of my job.
- I intend to abide by all written and verbal information provided to me, including all personnel policies.

Guidelines for the Discipline of Children

I understand and accept the following:

- Staff members may under no circumstances hit a child.
- Staff members may not use abusive or derogatory language with campers or other staff members.
- Staff members need to ask for help, even if they do not feel it is necessary. A staff member who encounters a particularly difficult child will seek the assistance of the Directing Staff.
- In all dealings with campers, staff members should strive to be proactive as opposed to reactive.

Guidelines for Camper-Staff Contact

I understand and accept that when touching campers, the following guidelines apply:

- Only on the shoulder, upper back, or upper arm and always with an open palm
- Never against a child's will (unless in the case of clear and present danger of the child)
- Never against a child's discomfort, whether expressed verbally or nonverbally
- Only in the company of other adults
- Never when it would have the effect of over-stimulating a child
- Never in a place on a child's body that is normally covered by a bathing suit, unless for a clear medical necessity or other emergency, and then only with supervision by another adult

Staff Member Responsibility

I understand and accept that I am a caretaker of children:

I understand that there is a clear power difference between the campers and myself (money, mobility, authority, experience, knowledge, different set of rules). I will not abuse that power difference, and I will be aware of the tendency toward becoming overwhelmed and its effect on my judgment. I will always try to retain my supervisory and safety role with campers. If I have trouble, I will ask for help.

I understand that inappropriate sexual contact with, or physical or emotional abuse of, a camper can have severe emotional and psychological effects on that camper that can last a lifetime. These reactions can be so severe that they require professional intervention, which can be disruptive to the victim's life as well as time-consuming and expensive. Actions of this kind will result in my dismissal and possibly in criminal charges. If I feel at any time that I might hurt a camper (e.g., in anger), I will remove myself from the situation and contact the nearest supervisor.

State Law Pertaining to Child Abuse

I am aware of the following:

Definition of "mandated reporter"—I must tell my supervisor or the Director immediately if I suspect that a camper is being abused or if a camper tells me about abuse, whether that abuse is alleged at camp or elsewhere.

- Purpose of the mandated reporter law
- Clarification that a report is based on suspicion of abuse, not proven abuse
- Summary of procedure (time frame, reporting agency, information requested)
- Penalty for not reporting

Further Guidelines for Staff:

I also understand and accept the following:

- This camp has a no-bullying environment that condemns teasing, hazing, and any other "initiation" rites that are abusive in any manner—toward campers or counselors.
- Counselors should avoid being alone with campers for an extended period of time. We encourage double coverage of campers by adults will be enacted during changing times.
- It is not appropriate for campers and staff members to share a bed or sleeping bag.
- Counselors will set limits with children who "cling" or hang on them.
- Actions such as massages, backrubs, and tickling are cases where campers could become uncomfortable with the touch. Counselors will use extreme caution in any such situations, and counselors will never touch campers without their clothes on (except in case of safety).
- Pillow fights, water tossing, and wrestling matches are examples of actions that can become over-stimulating in short time and need to be limited (if not avoided) and carefully supervised.
- Counselors "sleeping together" at camp is grounds for dismissal.
- Romantic lives of counselors should not be shared with campers.
- Adolescents tend to develop hidden or secret romantic fantasies about staff members. Counselors will not encourage these thoughts about themselves or about others and will contact a supervisor if a camper becomes overly attached.

Other Instructions

I agree to the following:

- To watch for signs of stress in myself and others as a way of maintaining a safe environment at camp. I will alert my supervisor if I become aware of these signs in myself or in others
- To alert a supervisor of “at-risk” situations between campers and staff
- To seek help myself if I feel at risk for hurting, over-stimulating, or abusing a camper
- To ask for more supervision, intervention, or support at any time I might need it
- To approach the Director if I do not feel I am getting what I need from my supervisor

Furthermore, I am attesting, by signing below with penalty of perjury, to the fact that I have listened to a talk about appropriate conduct between campers and myself, and that I have read over, understood, and accepted the rules, guidelines, and standards of conduct outlined in this document.