

Frequently Asked Questions for Summer Camp Operators

General Questions

Do I need a summer camp permit?

Yes, if your camp consists of 10 children or more, and provides indoor or outdoor organized group activities, involving two or more activities -- of which at least one is a non-passive recreational activity with significant risk of injury.

Summer day camps and traveling camps service campers under 16 years of age.

Children's overnight camps service campers under 18 years of age.

When is the application submission deadline?

We encourage you to submit your application as soon as possible but no later than 60 to 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 changing my location to across the street or down the block. Do I need a new Record ID number?

Yes. If the camp's building address has changed, you must apply as a new camp permit.

I am changing my sponsor name or ownership. Do I need to apply for a new camp permit?

Yes. If the sponsor's name, ownership or the camp's Tax-ID number has changed, you need to apply as a new camp permit.

I am changing my camp's name or DBA (doing business as) 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 your legal business name, 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 work at my camp?

Call the 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 regulated as a camp for children with developmental disabilities and must comply with additional requirements.

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 requirements including staff required for aquatic activities.

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

At a summer day camp, your health director may be off site as specified in your

approved safety plan. However, an on-site designee (or assistant health director) who is certified in CPR for the Professional Rescuer (CPR Pro) and advanced first aid must be on site during hours of operation. At an overnight camp, the health director must be on site at all times.

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

There should be at least one staff member certified in advanced first aid for every 200 campers.

How many staff members should be certified with CPR for the Professional Rescuer?

There should be at least one staff member certified in CPR Pro for every 100 campers. CPR Pro certifications are valid for only one year regardless of the expiration date.

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

In addition to the health director, there should be at least one staff member certified in standard first aid for every 50 campers.

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

This depends on whether or not some of the campers will remain at the camp site. All camp trips must have a trip leader and someone certified in advanced first aid and CPR Pro, which may be the health director.

Does my camp staff need to be fingerprinted?

No. You do not need to fingerprint your summer camp staff.

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

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

Does my camp staff need to fill out a Staff Exclusion List (SEL) form?

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.

Public 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.

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 pool at a private residence or building?

No. Summer camps can only use a pool permitted or approved by the Health Department.

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?

Programs submitting their application for the first time with a valid CO or LNO must pass an FDNY fire inspection. Once we receive the CO or LNO, we will send an initial fire inspection request to FDNY. Once you pass the fire inspection, FDNY will send the report directly to our office.

My camp will be 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) physically present. Usually the FDNY will inform you if you need one. You can also ask the building owner or management if there is a person on staff who already possesses the certificate.

Facility and Occupancy Questions

I am renewing my camp permit. Do I need a new LNO?

LNOs 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 CO or LNO?

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 then need to move to another location?

You will need to apply again as a new summer camp. You will receive a new Record ID number and undergo a new site inspection. However you should contact your child care borough office and let them know you are changing locations so that relevant documents can be transferred to your new file. Any documents (including forms) relating to the facility must be resubmitted as soon as possible.

Food 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.

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 catered and/or delivered to the camp by a permitted or licensed food establishment, or if meals from the DOE Summer Feeding Program are delivered or transported to the camp.

If parents provide food, would I need any kind of food protection certificate?

You would not need any food protection certification under the following circumstances:

- When parents bring cold and ready-to-eat food
- When campers are brought to a DOE school or permitted/licensed food establishment to eat
- When serving non-perishable snacks that do not require refrigeration
- When the camp holds a one-time, end-of-the-summer picnic, barbeque or pizza party

Camper Supervision Ratio Questions

What are the counselor-to-camper supervision ratio requirements?

Supervision ratio requirements can be found in section **§48.12** of the New York City Health Code. See the chart below for a breakdown of the minimum staff-to-camper ratio requirements.

Age Group	Normal Activities	Aquatic Activities	Overnight Camp Ratio	Off-Site Trips	Passive Activities
Up to Age 5	1:6	1:4	1:6	1:5 (all ages)	1:25 (all ages)
Ages 6-7	1:9	1:6			
8 and Older	1:12	1:8	1:8		

Medical Requirements at Camp

What are the medical and immunization requirements for campers?

Every camper should 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, such as immunization dates for diphtheria, measles, mumps, poliomyelitis, rubella and tetanus. This medical record must be kept on file for every camper and updated annually.

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 health care provider.

Is tuberculin (TB) testing required for staff?

No.

Who can administer medication?

At a permitted summer camp program, only a doctor, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, registered nurse, or licensed practical nurse may 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 history by a licensed health care provider.

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

No.

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