

# 2025 Silver Lake Staff & Volunteer Handbook

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Silver Lake Camp & Retreat Center is the year-round Outdoor Ministry of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ.



**Southern New England Conference**

United Church of Christ

*Living the Love & Justice of Jesus*

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## WELCOME TO SILVER LAKE!

We are glad to have you aboard and we look forward to a great summer!

As a Silver Lake Camp and Retreat Center (SLCRC) Staff and Volunteer, you have become a member of a Christian community.

Thank you for your cooperation and support of each other to make this summer very special in the lives of our Campers. Questions are welcome, and we appreciate your suggestions for future consideration.

### **The Mission of Silver Lake Camp & Retreat Center**

Silver Lake Camp & Retreat Center, a year-round outdoor ministry of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ, is called to covenant in partnership with God and with the churches of the Program in the work of forming life-sustaining leaders for the Church and world, by offering:

- Experiences of inclusive and nurturing Christian community
- Opportunities to grow and participate as Christ's disciples
- A model of sustainable environmental stewardship of God's world

We worship, learn, play, serve and work together, respecting the right of private judgment. We seek to provide a safe environment of acceptance regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, reflecting our unity in Christ and respecting the faith journeys of all of God's children.

*If your personal, religious, or political views differ from this mission, we ask that you be respectful of our mission for the time that you are with us.*

## **Inclusivity Statement**

Silver Lake Camp and Retreat Center (SLCRC) strives to create an intentional, welcoming, Christian community accessible to all. The Staff and Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ believe that exposure to diverse expressions of humanity is beneficial to all God's children.

Silver Lake welcomes and affirms Campers, Staff, Volunteers, and guests of all races, ethnicities, gender identities and expressions, and sexual orientations. Please be in touch with camp administration so that we can best support you while you are here.

Silver Lake respects the gender identity and preferred names and pronouns of all participants. Mistakes will be made, but Silver Lake does not tolerate the intentional denial of another person's gender identity, preferred names, and pronouns.

All persons, including Campers, have the right to privacy. This includes the right to keep private one's transgender status or gender non-conforming presentation at camp. Transgender and gender non-conforming individuals have the right to discuss and express their gender identity and expression openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much to share their private information.

When contacting the parent or guardian of a transgender or gender non-conforming Camper, camp Staff will use the Camper's legal name and pronoun corresponding to the Camper's gender assigned at birth unless the Camper, parent, or guardian has specified otherwise.

## **The Benefits of Attending Silver Lake**

At Silver Lake, we strive to provide all Campers (inclusive of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic status, or ability) an experience of God's love, an experience of being loved for exactly who they are.

Campers will explore their faith, both what they believe and how they live out that belief. Campers will unplug from the demands of modern life and engage in intentional Christian community, making lifelong friends and practicing how to handle conflict in a way that strengthens relationships rather than damaging them. Campers spend time outside being active, engaging with Creation, and will take age-appropriate risks in a safe environment, from trying new food to climbing the ropes course.



When Campers leave after their time at Silver Lake, they go home prepared to bring God's love out into the world with them. Parents report finding their Campers to be more respectful, more empathic, and more concerned about their impact in the world. We hear repeatedly from our Campers: "At Silver Lake, I can be my true self."

## **Training Opportunities**

Training opportunities held before each summer are a vital part of your Staff and Volunteer training. Please make every effort to attend. Please be in touch with the Program Director if you are not able to attend a scheduled training.

Training is a required, vital part of your employment or volunteer commitment for the summer. If your non-camp responsibilities prevent you from attending the entire training, please notify the Program Director immediately.

The Training experience is designed for you to work in teams, training and preparing for the summer camp season. It's our chance to begin forming the community we will live in all summer as Staff. This will be a fun and exhausting time and one of the best of the summer.

## **A NOTE ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK**

This Handbook is designed to help us all have a great summer together. Please take the time to read it carefully and ask questions. Covered here are many of the most important policies and procedures. In addition to items covered in the Handbook, specific positions will have other rules, regulations, and expectations that pertain to the work of that position. Position-specific information will be covered during pre-camp training.

This handbook is a work in progress and will be updated periodically as necessary and will be our guide for the summer. In most cases, the official policies of the Southern New England Conference, United Church of Christ (SNEUCC) will take precedence over anything written here, and, if changed, will be included in this Handbook.

## **How to be an Exemplary Silver Lake Role Model**

You are an important role model in the lives of the young people you are leading. They will look to you for how they are supposed to act and behave throughout the week. This is an awesome power and a huge responsibility. Because of it, you always need to model good manners and behavior, even when you think there is no one around.

- Welcome & respect all the campers, Volunteers, families, Staff, vendors and guests
- Work hard
- Safe, appropriate play
- Love God, Yourself, Your Neighbor, and Creation
- Get your hands dirty
- Laugh
- Listen
- Talk
- Always be on the lookout for ways to improve
- Do your part
- Follow the SLCRC rules and hold others accountable
- Support each other

## **Be a Year-Round Ambassador**

### Recruitment

Recruit young people to attend your week specifically and Silver Lake in general. Our best advertising is word of mouth, and your endorsement will go a long way toward making a new family feel comfortable taking the leap. Talk to your Pastor about doing a Silver Lake presentation at your church. Contact camp for Ambassador supplies.

### Scholarships

If you know of anyone that you feel would benefit from coming to Silver Lake, but is unable due to financial restraints, please direct them to apply for a scholarship through their local church, through Silver Lake, or both. Our goal is to make it possible for anyone who wants to, to come to a program.

## SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE POLICIES

Silver Lake Camp and Retreat Center is owned by the Missionary Society of Connecticut (MSC) and operated by the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ (the SNEUCC or the Conference), which means that all Silver Lake employees, including Volunteers, are subject to the Conference's policies. The Southern New England Conference Employee Handbook supersedes policies set forth in this handbook, when applicable. The following are some important SNEUCC policies that summer Staff and Volunteers should be aware of.

### **Employment At Will**

The Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ, Inc., (SNEUCC) follows an "employment at will" policy, in that the staff member or the SNEUCC may sever employment at any time, or for any reason consistent with applicable state or federal law.

This handbook is not a contract of employment. To be employed, the staff member be lawfully authorized to work in the United States, and must show the employer satisfactory proof of employment authorization and identity; failure to submit these documents will result in denial of employment.

The SNEUCC may investigate and verify all data given on the staff member resume, on related papers, and in interviews. The staff member authorizes all individuals, schools, and firms named therein, except the current employer if so noted, to provide any information requested about the staff member, and releases them from all liability for damage in providing this information.

In the event of non-operation of the camp, for any reason whatsoever including but not limited to war, illness, epidemics, government restrictions, acts of God or any other reason, their agreement shall be considered null and void and no salary will be forthcoming. In the event that the camp should close after it has started the season, or reduce its employment roster before the scheduled closing date, then a pro-rata salary to the time of closing will be paid to the Staff member whose employment has been terminated and there shall be no further claim.

This Handbook is not a contract. Nothing in this Handbook is intended to create or constitute an express or implied contract of employment between the Conference and its present or future employees. The provisions of this Handbook do not contain all policies of the Conference and policies and/or benefits may be revoked or modified at any time by the Conference Board of Directors in its absolute discretion, without prior notice to employees. The Conference will not recognize or be bound by any contract of employment with any employee, potential employee

or group of employees unless such a specific/individual contract is prepared in writing and is signed by both an officer of the Conference and the employee(s).

## **EEO Policy & Diversity**

The Conference has a philosophy and intention to be proactive in implementing equal employment opportunities for individuals who represent various segments of the work force in our community and has adopted a proactive approach to diversity. We believe that diversity and pluralism increase the effectiveness of our work team. Any questions or concerns regarding our practices should be directed to the Executive Conference Minister or the designated Director for Human Resources and Staff Engagement, who have the responsibility for coordinating the employment practices of the Conference.

The Conference provides equal employment opportunities and does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of race, color, religion/creed, sex, gender, national origin, ancestry, age, physical disability, mental disability, intellectual disability, citizenship, marital status, protected hairstyles, pregnancy, or a condition related to said pregnancy, including but not limited to, lactation, or the need to express milk for nursing child, amnesty or veteran's status, criminal record, gender identity or expression, transgender status, or sexual orientation, genetic information or any other status protected by law.

This policy governs all aspects of employment, including prospective employment and the application and interview process, selection, job assignment, compensation, discipline, termination, and access to benefits and training.

Employees with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of their immediate supervisor or the Director for Human Resources and Staff Engagement.

Employees may raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination including retaliation or reprisal, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Policy on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

The Conference is committed to building an inclusive community for all Conference staff, including interns and summer staff through diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

The Conference has a philosophy and intention to be proactive in implementing equal employment opportunities for individuals who represent various segments of the workforce in our community and has adopted a proactive approach to diversity.

We are a stronger and more effective organization with diversity, equity, and inclusion, as it increases our organization's strengths, capabilities, and adaptability. Through diversity and inclusion, the Conference can more effectively accomplish our mission with the varied perspectives, experiences, knowledge, information, and understanding inherent in a diverse and inclusive environment.

We believe that diversity and pluralism increase the effectiveness of our work team. Any questions or concerns regarding our practices should be directed to the Director for Human Resources and Staff Engagement, who has the responsibility for coordinating the employment practices of the Conference.

### **Open Door Policy**

An open environment where employees are able to ask questions, express concerns, report issues, or make suggestions without fear of reprisal. If employees have concerns about work conditions or compensation, they are strongly encouraged to voice these concerns openly and directly to their supervisors using our Open Door Policy.

Employees should speak first with their immediate supervisor. We believe that open discussion is usually the easiest and most effective way to deal with any question, concern, or conflict. Most issues can and should be resolved within the department.

If an employee does not feel comfortable speaking to their immediate supervisor or wishes to pursue the issue further after discussing it with their immediate supervisor, they may contact the Director for Human Resources and Staff Engagement. The Executive Conference Minister is also available to assist with any issue, upon request from either an employee or the Director for Human Resources and Staff Engagement, via email or by phone.

### **Harassment /Sexual Harassment**

It is the goal of the Conference to promote a workplace that is free of harassment and sexual harassment. In keeping with this commitment, the Conference will not tolerate harassment or sexual harassment by any applicant or employee, or by anyone, including any member of leadership, supervisor, co-worker, vendor, or customer.

## Harassment

The Conference has a fundamental commitment to treat each individual with dignity and respect and is committed to maintaining an environment that is free from discrimination whereby employees at all levels can feel free to devote their efforts to their work.

Harassment is a form of discrimination. Harassment of an employee by a supervisor, co-worker or vendor on the basis of race, color, religion/creed, sex, gender, national origin, ancestry, age, physical disability, mental disability, intellectual disability, citizenship, marital status, protected hairstyles, pregnancy, or a condition related to said pregnancy, including but not limited to, lactation, or the need to express milk for nursing child, amnesty or veteran's status, criminal record, gender identity or expression, transgender status, or sexual orientation, genetic information or any other status protected by law is prohibited by federal and state law, will not be tolerated by the Conference, and will lead to progressive discipline, up to and including termination.

It is the policy of the Conference to maintain a working environment free from harassment, insults or intimidation. Verbal or physical conduct by a supervisor, vendor or co-worker is a form of discrimination when it relates to an individual's on the basis of race, color, religion/creed, sex, gender, national origin, ancestry, age, physical disability, mental disability, intellectual disability, citizenship, marital status, protected hairstyles, pregnancy, or a condition related to said pregnancy, including but not limited to, lactation, or the need to express milk for nursing child, amnesty or veteran's status, criminal record, gender identity or expression, transgender status, or sexual orientation, genetic information or any other status protected by law which has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, unreasonably interfering with your work performance or adversely affecting your employment opportunities, is prohibited and will not be tolerated.

## Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment of employees occurring in the workplace or in other settings in which employees may find themselves in connection with their employment is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Conference. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment is unlawful and will not be tolerated. To achieve our goal of providing a workplace free from sexual harassment, the conduct that is described in this policy will not be tolerated and the Conference has provided a procedure by which it will deal with all inappropriate conduct.

Because the Conference takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, the Conference will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment and where it is determined that such

inappropriate conduct has occurred, will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

Please note that while this policy sets forth the goals of promoting a workplace that is free of sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit the Conference's authority to discipline or take remedial action for workplace conduct which the Conference deems unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

#### DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT:

Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the employment relationship. "Sexual harassment" is defined as sexual advances (either verbal or physical), requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

Sexual harassment means any unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or any conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or,
- Such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive work environment

Under this definition, direct or implied by requests of a supervisor for sexual favors in exchange for actual or promised job benefits such as favorable reviews, salary increases, promotions, increased benefits, or continued employment constitutes sexual harassment.

The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad and in addition to the examples set forth in this policy, other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a workplace environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to employees may also constitute harassment.

Sexual Harassment whether same sex, opposite sex, based on gender identity, sexual orientation, or affectional orientation is strictly prohibited. Examples may include the following:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions, or other sexual comments
- Sexually offensive jokes
- Physical assaults or touching that is sexual in nature
- Preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment to an employee for submitting to a sexual conduct, including solicitation or attempted soliciting or attempting to solicit any employee to engage in sexual activity for compensation or reward
- “Sexist” or “Discriminatory” comments or behavior (in other words, conduct that demeans other individuals because of their sex, gender identity, or affectional orientation, even if it is not vulgar or sexually provocative)
- Any displays of sexually oriented pictures, posters or other reading materials which include electronic materials
- Punishing or retaliating against an employee who filed a complaint about harassment, including but not limited any of the above

All employees should take note that, as stated above, retaliation against an employee who has complained about sexual harassment, and retaliation against employees for cooperating with an investigation of sexual harassment complaint is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Conference.

All employees whether, in office or on your own time are expected understand you are representatives of the Conference and any actions whether inside or outside the office that may have an effect on the organization or employment may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## COMPLAINTS OF HARASSMENT

If any employee believes that they have been subjected to harassment, including sexual harassment, the employee has the right to file a complaint with the Conference.

If you would like to file a complaint you may do so by contacting:

- Your supervisor or Manager
- Director of Human Resource and Staff Engagement via email at [reyesi@sneucc.org](mailto:reyesi@sneucc.org) or by telephone at 203-936-7266 or
- The Executive Conference Minister via email at [goodwind@sneucc.org](mailto:goodwind@sneucc.org)



The complainant does not have to be the person at whom the unwelcome conduct is directed. The complainant, regardless of gender, may be a witness to and personally offended by such conduct.

The harasser may be anyone including a supervisor, a co-worker, or a non-employee, such as a recipient of public services or a vendor.

If the incident involved your supervisor or you are uncomfortable discussing your complaint with your supervisor, you may report the incident directly to the Director of Human Resource and Staff Engagement or the Executive Conference Minister.

Supervisors who receive a complaint of harassment or witness or become aware of any alleged or possible harassment should immediately contact the Director of Human Resource and Staff Engagement. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## HARASSMENT INVESTIGATION

When the Conference receives a complaint, it will promptly investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner.

Complaints must be done in writing or orally including the complainant's full name, date of the alleged incident, name and work area/address of the individual whom the complaint is filed, and a clear concise written statement of the basis of the complaint, and a detailed description of the acts, including dates, locations, names of witness or any other individuals with relevant information.

Once the complaint is received, the investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. The Conference will also interview the person alleged to have committed harassment. When the investigation is complete, the Conference will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct had occurred, and where it is appropriate, the Conference will also impose disciplinary action.

Upon receiving a complaint of harassment and as a part of its investigation, the Director of Human Resource and Staff Engagement or other person designated by Human Resources, shall initiate a meeting with the individual who alleges to have harassed the complainant. The individual will have an opportunity to respond to the complaint.

## DISCIPLINARY ACTION

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed by an employee, the Conference will impose disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Such action may range from counseling to termination from employment, and may include such other forms of disciplinary action, as the Conference deems appropriate under the circumstances.

Disciplinary action may follow these steps:

- Verbal notification of conduct that may lead to discipline
- Written Warning
- Termination of employment

The Conference may, based on the circumstances of the individual case, use any of the above options even though the employee has had no prior discipline if it is deemed necessary based on the severity of the employee conduct. In other words, the Conference may implement disciplinary action that is appropriate for a given situation and will not follow a progressive discipline approach if the circumstances warrant otherwise.

## STATE AND FEDERAL REMEDIES

In addition to the above, if you believe you have been subjected to sexual harassment, you may file a formal complaint with the government agencies set forth below for your particular State. Using the Conference's complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short time period for filing a claim (as noted below).

### **United States Equal Opportunity Commission**

John F Kennedy Federal Building  
475 Government Center  
Boston, MA 02203  
(617) 565-3200 or (800) 669-4000  
**Filing deadline is 300 days**

### **RHODE ISLAND**

Rhode Island Commission on Human Rights  
180 Westminster Street, 3rd floor  
Providence, RI 02903  
(401) 222-2661  
**Filing deadline is 1 year**

### **MASSACHUSETTS**

MA Commission Against Discrimination  
Boston Office:  
One Ashburton Place  
Room 601  
Boston, MA 02108  
(617) 994-6000

Springfield Office:  
424 Dwight St  
Room 220  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413) 739-2145

**Filing deadline is 300 days**

### **CONNECTICUT**

CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities  
Administrative Headquarters:  
21 Grand St  
Hartford, CT 06106  
(860) 541-3459  
**Filing deadline is 300 days**

South West Regional Office:  
1057 Broad St  
Bridgeport, CT 06604  
(203) 579-6246

West Central Regional Office:  
Rowland State Government Center  
55 West Main St, Suite 211  
Waterbury, CT 06702-2004

Eastern Regional Office:  
100 Broadway  
Norwich, CT 06360  
(860) 886-5703

**Filing deadline is 108 days.**

## PARTICIPATION IN INVESTIGATIONS

The Conference may, in its discretion, conduct internal investigations to review violations of Conference Policy or to review employee satisfaction.

In the event the Conference conducts an internal investigation, all employees are expected to fully cooperate and be honest and truthful in the investigation. The Conference does not expect any employee to give up or waive their legal rights at any point during an investigation.

Results of all investigations are kept confidential and revealed only to those on a need to know basis.

### **Progressive Discipline Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a disciplinary process in a structured manner when addressing staff performance or behavior issues in the workplace. This policy outlines the steps the Conference will follow when it is necessary to take specific action to help resolve employee concerns. However, it should be noted, the Conference reserves the right to implement steps or skip steps in the process under certain circumstances.

The following steps and level of supervision involvement will be taken when it is necessary to address behavior or performance concerns involving a Conference employee:

1. Verbal Warning [Supervisor Level]
2. Written Warning [HR Level]
3. Final Warning and/or Termination [HR Level] [Executive Conference Minister Level]

#### Verbal Warning

Supervisors should discuss with the employee the performance and/or conduct concerns and listen to any information the employee provides. If the supervisor believes discipline is warranted, the employee is given a verbal warning stating what needs to be done to correct the problem. The supervisor should discuss with the employee any issues that are impacting the workplace and review with them any internal policies that apply to the circumstances.

Additionally, the supervisor should discuss with the employee the job performance expectations and offer corrective steps to help resolve the issues before it becomes a greater problem.

#### Written Warning

When the employee concerns continue despite the verbal warning, the Supervisor should formally address the issue with a written warning to the employee. The supervisor's written

warning to the employee is to provide reasons for the disciplinary. The supervisor will discuss the written warning with the Director for Human Resources.

### Final Warning

When performance or conduct issues continue despite the Verbal and Written Warning notifications, at this point, the employee meets with the Executive Conference Minister for a Final Warning and/or Termination decision.

The Conference may, based on the circumstances of the individual case, use any of the above options even though the employee has had no prior discipline if it is deemed necessary based on the severity of the employee conduct. In other words, the Conference may implement disciplinary action that is appropriate for a given situation and will not follow a progressive discipline approach if the circumstances warrant otherwise.

**Employment with the Southern New England Conference is at will and may be terminated by the employee or SNEUCC at any time.**

### **Anti-Bullying**

It is the goal of the Conference to promote a healthy and safe work environment free from bullying. In keeping with this commitment, we will not tolerate bullying by any applicant or employee or by anyone, including any executive, team leader, supervisor, co-worker, vendor, or constituent.

Bullying is the health-harming mistreatment of one or more employees, through verbal or written abuse, threats, humiliating or offensive behavior or actions, or sabotage that prevents work from getting done. Bullying behavior is often persistent and part of a pattern, but it can also occur as a single incident.

Bullying of employees occurring in the workplace or in other settings in which employees may find themselves in connection with their employment is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Conference. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has in good faith made a complaint about bullying is unlawful and will not be tolerated. To achieve our goal of providing a workplace free from harassment, the conduct that is described in this policy will not be tolerated.

If you believe you have been subjected to bullying, or if you feel you have witnessed the bullying of another, you have the right to file a complaint with the Conference. This may be done in writing or orally. You should immediately report your complaint to your supervisor. If the incident involved your supervisor or you are uncomfortable discussing your complaint with

any leadership member, you may report the incident to the Director of Human Resources and Staff Engagement.

Making false or malicious complaints of bullying will also be regarded as a serious disciplinary offense, which if proven, may result in disciplinary action being taken.

The Conference will respond promptly to complaints of bullying and where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, will act promptly to eliminate the conduct, and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

To be clear, violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

This policy cannot lay down rules to cover every possible situation. Instead, it is designed to express the Conference's philosophy and set forth general principles' employees should apply when interacting with one another. This policy acts as a supplement to other Conference policies, including but not limited to our sexual harassment policy.

### **Anti-Retaliation**

The Conference will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who raise issues of retaliation.

Employees who feel they have been subjected to any such retaliation should bring it to the attention of their supervisor or the Director for Human Resources and Staff Engagement.

Retaliation means adverse conduct taken because an individual reported an actual or a perceived violation of this policy, opposed practices prohibited by this policy, or participated in the reporting and investigation process described below. "Adverse conduct" includes, but is not limited to:

1. Shunning and avoiding an individual who reports harassment, discrimination, or retaliation;
2. Express or implied threats or intimidation intended to prevent an individual from reporting harassment, discrimination, or retaliation; or
3. Denying employment benefits because an applicant or employee reported harassment, discrimination, or retaliation or participated in the reporting and investigation process.

No employee should be terminated, demoted, suspended, threatened, harassed, intimidated, coerced, or retaliated against in any manner as a result of the employee bringing forward a concern or cooperating in an investigation.

The Conference prohibits employees from being retaliated against even if their complaints are proven unfounded by an investigation, unless the employee knowingly made a false allegation, provided knowingly false or misleading information in an investigation under this policy, or otherwise acted in bad faith. Those employees who act in bad faith by giving false information, misleading statements or false allegations will be held accountable for their actions up to and including termination. Employees have an obligation to participate in good faith in any internal investigations of retaliation.

Employees with questions or concerns about any type of retaliation in the workplace are encouraged to follow our Open Door Policy and bring these issues to the attention of their immediate supervisor or the Director of Human Resources and Staff Engagement.

## **Employee Ethics Policy**

The Conference's standards require its Staff to avoid any activity or interest that might reflect unfavorably upon their own or the Conference's integrity. This applies to actions both within the work environment and in the community. In all our dealings within the Conference and in the community, it is our practice to conduct our business affairs fairly, impartially, and in an ethical manner. Our actions must exemplify harmony, respect, and integrity. The Conference requires that you observe established guidelines, policies and procedures of the Conference and perform your work in a conscientious manner.

The Conference also requires that you comply with the applicable ethical codes as listed below from the UCC Manual on Ministry:

1. I will regard all persons with equal respect and concern and undertake to minister impartially.
2. I will honor all confidences shared with me.
3. I will not use my position, power or authority to exploit any person.
4. I will not use my position for personal financial gain, nor will I misuse the finances of the institution which I serve.
5. I will not perform services without collaborating with or informing my partners in the Conference or unless within authorization already provided to me.
6. I will deal honorably with the record of my predecessor and successor.

In general, the use of good judgment, based on high ethical principles, will guide you with respect to lines of acceptable conduct. If a situation arises where it is difficult to determine the

proper course of action, our Open-Door policy should be followed. All discussions will remain confidential unless otherwise required by law.

Compliance with this policy of business ethics and conduct is the responsibility of every employee. Disregarding or failing to comply with this standard of business ethics and conduct could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **Workers' Compensation Insurance**

Employees are also covered under the Connecticut Workers' Compensation Act for any work related injuries and/or illnesses. Workers' Compensation will be the primary insurance for such work related conditions and will include both medical and disability costs. Employees are required to seek medical attention, report any work related injury immediately to their supervisor, and submit a report within 48 hours of the onset of the incident.



## SILVER LAKE STAFF & VOLUNTEER POLICIES

Summer Staff and Volunteers at Silver Lake Camp and Retreat Center (SLCRC) agree to the following standards of conduct:

- Staff and Volunteers will use good judgement and common courtesy in an effort to be self-governing.
- Staff and Volunteers will be respectful of others. This encompasses their property, living space & sleep needs.
  - This includes, but is not limited to: respecting bedroom areas, and knocking and receiving permission before opening doors, receiving permission before borrowing items, and cleaning up after oneself.
- Staff and Volunteers will avoid gossip.
- Staff and Volunteers will observe Quiet Hours between 10 PM and 7 AM.
- Staff and Volunteers will receive permission to leave camp from their supervisor AND sign out when leaving the premises & in upon return.
- If you are walking or driving offsite, please be careful on Low Road, and be sure to sign out and back in upon return.
- Staff and Volunteers will observe curfew as 10:00 PM in the building where they live Sunday through Friday nights. Curfew is extended Saturday nights until 11 PM.
- Staff and Volunteers will enter the waterfront only during supervised times, with the Waterfront Coordinator present.
- Smoking is not allowed on SLCRC Property.
- Staff and Volunteers will not possess alcohol or marijuana on site.
- Staff and Volunteers who are 21 years of age or older and choose to drink alcohol during their time off agree to choose appropriate times and places (off-site) to drink. Staff members 21 years of age or older do agree that any drinking they do will be done responsibly and will include a designated driver. Staff will not wear “STAFF” clothing while doing so.
- Staff and Volunteers will not use or possess illegal drugs or controlled drugs that are not specifically prescribed to them by a physician.
- All Staff and Volunteers must keep all medications (including non-prescription) in the Health Center and may not possess them in their rooms.
- Bedrooms are the domains of those who live in them: for sleeping, retreating and relaxing. Visits should occur in the common rooms or the Staff Lounge (in the Health & Welcome Center basement), and not in bedrooms.
  - A visitor is defined as any person not officially assigned to that bedroom or enrolled in a camp session.
- Staff and Volunteers will read and abide by the SNE Conference Sexual Harassment policy.

- When Staff and Volunteers are on site, even if on a day off, they will be prepared to help in an emergency.
- Staff and Volunteers agree to work in this community to lift one another up and hold one another accountable.

Failure to comply could result in dismissal.

## **The Silver Lake No's**

The “Silver Lake No’s” apply to everyone on site:

- No fireworks
- No alcohol or illegal drugs
- No sexual misconduct
- No aggressive behavior or bullying
- No weapons
- No smoking
- No pets

Not only are you expected to abide by these rules, but you are also expected to enforce them. Anyone breaking a Silver Lake No will be sent home. Report any rule breaking to the Director immediately.

No alcohol, illegal drugs, or use of weapons will be tolerated on site. A Silver Lake Director may search the living space of Staff and Volunteers if there is a reasonable suspicion of possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, or weapons. Those of age (and even when returning from days off) must return to duty on site in an appropriate and sober manner.

Smoking, vapes, Juul or similar, nor other tobacco use is not allowed anywhere on Silver Lake property.

Appropriate and suitable clothing for a church-based camp is expected. Images or ads for alcohol or illegal substances are not suitable at SLCRC. Be aware of the image you present and that you represent Silver Lake as a Staff member or volunteer. Proper footwear—closed-toed shoes (not Crocs) for challenge courses, hiking, games, dishroom, etc.—is required. In addition, facilities/maintenance requires boots for working outside.

Choose appropriate movies to watch on site. Staff cannot watch R-rated movies with minors (anyone under 17 years of age) in the room unless their parents have signed a permission form.

Headphones (MP3 players, phones, etc.) may not be used in spaces where Campers are allowed, even on break. That means walking from building to building, working, etc. Love your music out of sight of Campers in your down time. Saturdays, when Campers are off-site, headphones may be worn, with one headphone, so you can be safe, provided the work environment is safe.

## **Amorous Relationship Policy**

### A. Purpose

The Amorous Relationship Policy outlines the requirements and expectations of employees, volunteers, campers, and other persons who are participating in an Amorous Relationship (a consensual romantic, sexual, or dating relationship) with other SNEUCC employees, volunteers, campers, and other persons.

The project of our work together is in community, and in building a place of welcome and connection for all guests. Therefore, we expect that any romantic relationships will be private, and maintained off site of Silver Lake Camp and Retreat Center (SLCRC). The exception to this is for long-term-committed partnerships.

This policy is intended to go side-by-side with the SNEUCC Sexual Harassment Policy found in the SNEUCC Employee Handbook. All questions, concerns, or reports should be shared to the Director of Human Resources in the SNEUCC Conference Office.

### B. Policy

1. **Amorous Relationships between SLCRC Employees, Volunteers, Campers, or other SLCRC persons:** SLCRC prohibits any dating, romantic, or sexual relationship between Employees, Volunteers, Campers, or other SLCRC persons who have, or are reasonably likely to have, direct supervisory, advisory, or evaluative responsibility over the other party.
2. **Amorous Relationships between minors (staff, volunteers, or campers) and Staff, Volunteers, Campers 18+, or other SNEUCC persons:** SNEUCC prohibits any consensual dating, romantic, or sexual relationship.

### C. Reporting Requirements

1. Persons who are involved or were formerly involved in amorous relationships under B.1 or B.2 must bring those relationships to the timely attention of the Director of Human Resources. Involvement in consensual relationships under B.1 or B.2 will likely result in the removal of the individual from supervisory, advising, or evaluative responsibilities, removal of the other party from being supervised or evaluated by the individual with whom they have established a consensual relationship, or disciplinary action up to and including termination.

#### D. Disciplinary Action for Violation of Policy

1. Staff (Employees or Volunteers) who violate policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. This policy strives to provide an environment that is free from sexual harassment. This policy is rooted in the recognition that Staff and Volunteer relationships may be inherently unequal and contain an element of superiority or power.

#### **Staff and Volunteer Phone Usage**

You may use your cell phone, but only out of sight of Campers, and only on breaks. Wi-Fi is available in the staff and volunteer lounge, located in the basement of the Health and Welcome Center (HWC), to be used during break times. The official SLCRC phones in the office are available for emergency or work purposes.

#### **Internet & Office Use**

Computers in the offices are to be used for Silver Lake business only, and only with the permission of the Program Director, Director, or by approved Staff members. Staff and Volunteers may not use SLCRC computers or Internet to view or download inappropriate material, including but not limited to: pornography, bootlegged software, illegal video or copyrighted music files, etc.

The SLCRC office spaces and lobby are for official business only. They are not places to hang out. The year-round Staff need their space to be respected and appreciate not being distracted. Please respect these work spaces and don't leave garbage or a mess. The Conference Room is an office, and not to be used without permission from office Staff. If you need to have copies made for program purposes, please see an office Staff person.

#### **Social Media Policy**

Silver Lake maintains several official social media accounts where we occasionally post photos of Campers. All families must sign a photo/video release as part of their registration. That release covers official Silver Lake use of photos/videos of Campers; it does not cover Staff and Volunteers' personal social media accounts.

As a representative of Silver Lake, our Staff and Volunteers are expected to present an appropriate presence on social media (no images of illegal activity; no images of the Silver Lake logo while engaged in any Silver Lake "No's", even when off-site and of age) and may not post photos or videos of minors on their personal social media or other Internet sites. In

addition, Staff and Volunteers may not initiate social media relationships (“friending”, “following”, “messaging”, etc.) with minors and should not accept such requests from minors.

## **Vehicle Usage**

We ask that you walk, not drive, around camp throughout the week. Please park your personal vehicle in the parking lot, not near your building. Please walk up and down the hill unless you have a medical condition. We have vehicles available for those with mobility challenges. We are ultimately looking out for the safety of the entire community. When you are walking around the roads in camp, please move to the right side of the road when you see a camp vehicle and stop until it has passed you.

No personal vehicle usage is allowed within the camp grounds unless special permission has been granted or there are special circumstances. The owner of any vehicle at camp must have signed a Vehicle Information form giving the Staff member permission to have the vehicle at camp. The owner must also give permission for the Staff member to use the vehicle for Silver Lake business (i.e., running errands off-site, moving things around on-site). Personal vehicles may only be used to transport fellow Staff members for Silver Lake business if the owner of the vehicle has given permission, and the driver is authorized by a Silver Lake Director. Silver Lake highly discourages loaning personal vehicles to other Staff members for personal reasons.

### Silver Lake Vehicles – car, truck, golf cart, lawn mower

Any person driving a vehicle belonging to Silver Lake Camp and Retreat Center will be 21 or older, have a valid US Driver’s License, or International License, and a clean driving record, as reported by a driving record check done by Praesidium. A photocopy of the driver’s license must be on file in the Silver Lake Camp and Retreat Center Office. They must also be on the approved list of drivers.

All SLCRC owned vehicles must be treated with respect and care to keep them in the best shape possible for as long as possible. They are valuable camp equipment and should be taken care of for the future. If there are things that are broken or need to be repaired on a vehicle, please let Staff know as soon as possible. The vehicle may have to be taken out of service until repairs are done.

When entering, leaving, or driving around camp in approved vehicles, please remember to drive carefully and obey God Speed of 10mph and “Beep” turning the blind corners on the waterfront hill.

Pickup trucks shall not be used to transport people in the bed of the truck during camp. Trained Staff must maintain a fully seated position in the bottom of the bed where 4 points of contact can be maintained, leaning against the cab of the truck.

The golf carts are primarily to provide transportation for mobility-impaired persons to get around camp. There will be training required for those Staff members the Directors choose.

There will be nighttime activities throughout the camp, so be mindful if driving with headlights. Please also be mindful of the programs in Circle and Hillside when driving up and down the hill. No vehicles should be driven up and down the hill after 9:30pm, except for emergencies.

Staff members who drive recklessly may lose their on-site driving privileges at the discretion of the Director and Program Director.

Only State approved vehicles may be used for emergency transportation offsite and may only be driven by appropriate personnel. Also, Low Road is a curving residential road, and you must drive slowly and cautiously.

Authorized personnel may use a Silver Lake vehicle to go off-site to get materials/run errands, with notice.

Helmets must be always worn by all bicycle riders.

Please remember you are important in the world and to us at Silver Lake. On days off or off-site trips, please obey all rules of the road. We want you all back safely! Be mindful of our neighbors and drive carefully on Low Road

## **Pranks**

Practical jokes that are wholesome and fun may be a part of the tradition – as long as no one is hurt, no personal belongings are damaged, there is no impact on Silver Lake in any way, and they do not set a poor example for the Campers.

- The Director or Program Director must approve pranks.
- Coordinators must be notified or consulted if a prank involves their team member, living space, or working space.

Absolutely no malicious, or “spirit breaking,” pranks, or those that single out an individual, will be tolerated. Such activities may result in dismissal.

## **Staff and Volunteer Housing, Lights Out, and Noise Curfew**

Staff and Volunteers are required to live on site in their assigned quarters. Please be considerate of others living in your space and respect the lights out and curfew guidelines.

Please be aware of how noise travels in the buildings and at night: Waking hours for you may be sleeping hours for others.

There is an all-camp noise curfew of 10:00 pm out of respect for the entire Silver Lake community and our neighbors. All activities must cease by this hour. Camp-wide, it is expected that lights will be out by 11:00 pm, including seasonal Staff.

In-Building/Bunkroom Time: the time when a group is required to be in their assigned sleeping areas. This should be a half-hour before Lights Out Time.

Lights Out Time: a step closer to sleep with the shutting off of all lights. Recommended times for lights out vary by age group as follows:

- 4th – 6th 9:30 pm Lights out
- 7th – 9th 10:00 pm Lights out
- 10th – 12<sup>th</sup> 10:30 pm Lights out

## **Personal Property and Equipment at Camp**

You may bring personal sports equipment, musical instruments, and/or electronics with you to camp.

Sports equipment must be inspected by a Director and confirmed to be in good working order and not a danger to anyone.

Electronics are the responsibility of the owner; Silver Lake is not responsible for any damage or loss. Electronic devices must be used in a manner that is respectful of the privacy of others and that supports the community building aspect of the program. Silver Lake highly discourages loaning personal electronic devices to other Staff or Volunteers.

When playing music, please monitor the language in lyrics and make sure that it's appropriate for youth at camp to be heard.

## **Conservation**

As stewards of God's creation, it is our responsibility to assure that we are using our natural resources wisely and that we reduce waste as much as possible. To this end, we seek to conserve paper and paper products (towels, plates, cups), water, electricity, and food. We also recycle metal, plastic, paper, and glass, as well as redeemable cans. There are waste and recycling receptacles throughout camp. Please encourage Campers to take only what they need and use all that they take. Please shut off all lights if you are the last to leave a room or building. Every little bit helps!

## **On Duty, Off Duty, Time Off**

When you are on site, you are considered on-call 24/7, with the understanding there will be free time on site during each day. Places to relax, hang out, and be with friends will be designated.

Each paid Summer Staff member will get a 24-hour day off each week. The schedule is determined by the Coordinators and approved by the Directors in order to ensure proper Staff coverage.

## **Volunteer Break Times**

Counselors and Deans should have daily breaks for at least one hour when they are not responsible for supervision of Campers. These are scheduled with the Dean. Counselors and Deans may use the lounge in the basement of the Health and Welcome Center and use the Wi-Fi when on break.

## **Signing In and Out**

Everyone on site (Counselors, Deans, and Staff) is required to sign in and out when they are leaving site. In case of emergency, we need to know who is on site and who is not.

Volunteers do not need the Staff's permission to leave; that is up to the Deans of individual programs.

Each Summer Staff member must get the approval of their Coordinator and then check out with one of the Directors.

The sign out book is in the Main Office at the Health and Welcome Center. Please sign back in once you return to site.



## **Guest Policy**

Guest visits must be approved by the Director. The Director should be notified in advance. Guests should be directed to check in and out in the Health and Welcome Center. They will be given a Guest badge to wear during the time they are at Silver Lake.

If a Guest will be here for meals, or overnight, we ask for contribution to cover the cost of their meals and lodging.

Any Guest who is staying overnight must have completed all of the required paperwork and trainings, including a background check and the Safe Camp online trainings.

## **Specialized Activity Areas**

Campers, Volunteers, Staff, and guests are to stay out of the Challenge Courses (Low and High Ropes) and Waterfront areas except with an authorized qualified adult present. Volunteers may swim/climb during their program swim/A-Team time. At the waterfront, all Staff and Volunteers must use the buddy system along with the Campers.

## **Challenge Courses**

At times, summer Staff may have the opportunity to use the low or high ropes courses as part of programming. No staff or anyone on Silver Lake property are to use any challenge course elements outside of scheduled program times. Even those Staff who are trained to operate the challenge course elements may not use them without a qualified Challenge Course Coordinator or Director present. All safety rules and regulations must be followed during approved use, including the use of helmets.

## Swimming and Boating

### Swim Tests

Silver Lake provides two swimming areas at the waterfront. There is a shallow area for swimmers who do not wish to take or who do not complete the swim test, or who are beginner swimmers. The deeper swimming area is available for those who have successfully completed the swim test.

Everyone under the age of 18 must pass a swim test to swim in the deep end or to take out a boat unsupervised (summer Staff only.)

The swim test is optional and can be taken at most swim times.

The swim test consists of the following:

- Swimming 6 lengths between the docks, any front stroke above water, nonstop. (1 length is approximately 25 feet.) Total is approximately 50 yards.
- Treading water for 60 seconds.

Summer Staff are welcome to swim at the waterfront during designated swim times on their days off or on a break. All waterfront rules apply, including the use of the Buddy System. **No one is allowed in the waterfront without a lifeguard who has been approved to open the waterfront.**

Summer Staff may use Silver Lake boats on their day off or on a break at the discretion of the Waterfront Coordinator or a Director. Staff who are 18 or older must have shown competency in handling the boat. They must notify the Waterfront Coordinator when they leave and when they return. The Waterfront Coordinator has the right to deny Staff the use of boats due to scheduling, lack of skill, weather conditions, disrepair, or any other safety concern. Staff under 18 may boat during a designated boating time at the discretion of the Waterfront Coordinator. **All boaters must wear lifejackets at all times.** Staff are responsible for returning the equipment they use in the same condition they found it.

## CARE OF CAMPERS

### **Camper Reports**

Coordinators and Deans will be provided with appropriate reports for Campers, including Special Needs, Allergies, and Plan of Care. These reports are confidential and should be shared with Staff and Volunteers with direct supervision. All information provided on Campers should be treated with discretion; gossiping about a Camper's confidential information is grounds for dismissal.

### **Camper Care**

Silver Lake requires that Staff and Volunteers maintain a ratio of 1 adult for every 8 Campers (if Campers are 6-8 years, it is 1:6; under 5 is 1:5). If there are more than 8 Campers in a cabin, there must be 2 adults. During program times, Deans and Silver Lake Staff count toward the ratio.

Set clear standards of behavior and keep your boundaries clear. If you are engaging in questionable conversation, offensive jokes, language or subject matter, ask yourself this, "Would I want my grandparent or theirs to hear this conversation?" If you hear something of concern from a camper, ask follow-up questions and pass on what you've learned to your Dean, Coordinator, the Program Director, or the Director. No one is allowed to threaten, scare, or harm another, and campers should be urged to tell you immediately if anyone tries.

### Rule of 3

**At no time should a Staff member or Volunteer be alone, one on one, with a Camper.** If you must have a private conversation with a Camper, do it in a public location, within earshot of another adults – such as while sitting at a picnic table outside.

### **Counselor Care of Campers**

Counselors are responsible for knowing where Campers are at all times, especially your cabin of campers. This is especially important during unstructured times and transitions between activities. Large group activities require extra supervision. Mingle with the group and don't get distracted by other Counselors. With your Deans, identify high-risk Campers—socially awkward, potential victims of bullying or teasing—and make an effort to connect with them and watch out for them.

### Activity transitions, swim times, and bedtimes are high-risk time

These high-risk times involve taking showers, changing clothes, and lights out. Campers should not be left alone after they fall asleep. It's the counselor's responsibility to be there if problems or concerns arise. Station yourself within earshot of shower activity, changing, etc. and let Campers know you are there.

## SUMMER PROGRAM DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

### **Drop-Off**

Drop-off is Sunday afternoon and is completed in a "drive-through" style with staggered arrival times. Campers who arrive early will be directed to return to Silver Lake at their scheduled time.

### Drop-Off Day Schedule

Campers arrive at camp on Sunday afternoon. Deans will help greet families while Counselors will be stationed in their living areas to help Campers move in and to help them get acclimated. Be sure to learn everyone's preferred names; if they don't like nicknames, don't shorten their name! If they love their nickname, be sure to use it! Some Campers may also introduce themselves differently than how they appear on Deans' rosters. Work with Campers to learn names and pronouns. For younger Campers, get on their eye level and talk with them directly. It is important to connect with Campers immediately. Be upbeat, positive, and reassuring. Answer any questions you are confident in; if you are not sure of an answer, refer them to the Dean or Director. Don't make things up!

Once registration is over and everyone is here, each program will gather on their own for introductions as a program. Deans and Counselors will be introduced, and the Campers will introduce themselves to each other. **Each program should take their campers on a tour of camp.**

Dinner is at 6pm, when the bell rings, proceed into the Social Hall and find your tables. Programs will sit together, and the Counselors will perform waiter duty and be a role model for what the Campers will do later in the week. The Chaplain will be introduced and lead grace.

At 7:00 p.m., the entire camp will gather at the amphitheater for Staff Introductions and Opening Campfire. The Summer Staff will introduce themselves to Campers and go over Silver Lake rules, policies, and procedures, including the boundaries of camp, areas that are off-limits to Campers, and safety information about special activities. We'll create a general all camp covenant. We'll sing a few songs to get everyone in the spirit of camp and the chaplain will lead a closing.

After intros, each program will gather again in their living spaces to create a covenant for the week. The Campers, with the guidance of their Deans and Counselors, will agree on rules, expectations, and appropriate behavior for the week, and sign the final covenant. This process not only makes it clear to the Campers what is expected of them; it also gives Deans and

Counselors a behavior management tool. If a Camper engages in covenant-breaking behavior, redirect them to the covenant and remind them of the promise they made.

## **Pick-Up**

Pick-up is Saturday morning and will provide an opportunity to visit the camp store for any final purchases. Upon arrival, Staff will direct vehicles where to park and greet the Campers.

A Director will verify the pick-up person is authorized before directing them to park. Unauthorized people will park in the parking lot and go into the office for follow up.

## Check-out Reports

Deans will receive an exit ticket from the authorized person listing the name(s) of the camper(s) and the authorized person. **Keep the Camper on site until Silver Lake Staff verify this person is authorized to pick up the Camper.**

Deans will also have flyers or postcards as well as the program group photo to send home with Campers. We recommend these are handed out during Quite Time on Friday. Please make sure each Camper gets one!

## Medications

All medications will stay with the Nurse, and families will need to pick them up at the Health and Welcome Center.

## **Housing and Bunking Assignments**

Silver Lake Staff will create bunk assignments before camp begins. If changes need to be made, please let the program director know in writing.

Silver Lake offers all-gender bunkrooms. During registration, you will be asked to indicate your preference to be placed in an all-gender or single gender bunkroom. All-gender bunkrooms will be supervised by trained Counselors. All members of the bunkroom will be provided with private changing areas.

If a Camper requests to be assigned to a bunkroom better matching their gender expression, Silver Lake will honor that request.

If you have questions about all-gender bunkrooms, please contact us at [slcrc@silverlakeect.org](mailto:slcrc@silverlakeect.org).

## CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

### **Guidelines for the Discipline of Children**

- Staff and Volunteers may NOT hit a child.
- Staff and Volunteers may not use abusive or derogatory language with Campers.
- Staff and Volunteers who encounter a particularly difficult child will seek the assistance of supervisory or administrative Staff.
- In all dealings with Campers, Staff and Volunteers should strive to respond and not to react.

### **Guidelines for Camper and Staff/Volunteer Contact**

- Never against a Camper's will (unless in the case of clear and present danger of the Camper);
- Never against a Camper's discomfort, whether expressed verbally or non-verbally;
- Never when it would have the effect of over-stimulating the Camper;
- On the hand, shoulder, or upper back;
- Never in a place on a Camper's body that is normally covered by a bathing suit, unless for a clear medical necessity, and then only with supervision from another adult.
- Staff/Volunteers will maintain appropriate boundaries and recognize their role as an authority figure and role model.
- Staff/Volunteers will never touch, grab, or physically interact with Campers in any inappropriate or threatening manner.
- Staff/Volunteers will not engage in "horseplay" with Campers.
- Staff/Volunteers will ask before giving a Camper a hug, putting their arm around their shoulder, etc.

The physical size and strength of Staff members and Volunteers necessitates that you use discretion and restraint in all physical contact activities with Campers. Games that encourage intense competitive activities with physical contact that potentially could cause injury must be eliminated or supervised very closely by non-participating Staff members/Volunteers.

### **Zero Tolerance Policy**

Silver Lake Camp & Retreat Center will not tolerate any sexual harassment, or any form of sexual abuse between any staff, volunteer, or anyone, including between a child and adult.

Child sexual abuse includes, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult or of a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced, whether or not the child has consented.

Any Silver Lake Staff or Volunteer alleged to have abused or neglected a child will be immediately suspended and removed from the site pending an investigation. Report any suspicion of abuse to the Director. More information on Silver Lake's policies and procedures on Child Abuse will be covered in on-site training.

### **Guidelines for Staff and Volunteers**

- Staff/Volunteers will not allow themselves to be alone with a single Camper in a secluded area or closed room. Rule of 3
- There is no "hazing" of Campers by anyone
- Campers will not be subjected to "initiation"
- There will be double coverage of Campers by adults during changing times;
- Younger children should be encouraged to change their own clothes as much as possible
- A Staff member will under no circumstances share a bed or sleeping bag with a Camper
- Staff or Volunteers will not exchange phone numbers, email addresses, mailing addresses, or social media handles with any campers, staff, or volunteers under the age of 18 years old.
- Any correspondence with folks under the age of 18 should be facilitated by the year-round staff at Silver Lake through the minor's parents/guardians.

## MANDATED REPORTER PROCEDURES

All information is from the Connecticut Department of Children and Families page found here:  
<https://portal.ct.gov/DCF/1-DCF/Reporting-Child-Abuse-and-Neglect#MR>

To make a child abuse or neglect report, call **1-800-842-2288**  
(TDD: 1-800-624-5518)

To file a report, you may use the fillable pdf found here:  
<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DCF/Policy/NEW-fillin-Forms/dcf-136-Fillin-O.pdf>

### **What are child abuse and neglect?**

Child abuse and neglect are anything a parent, caretaker, or other person does or fails to do that results in harm or potential harm to a child.

Child abuse occurs where a child has had physical injury inflicted upon them other than by accidental means, has injuries at variance with history given of them, or is in a condition resulting in maltreatment, such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation or exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment, or cruel punishment. (Connecticut General Statutes §46b-120)

Child neglect occurs where a child has been abandoned, is being denied proper care and attention physically, emotionally, or morally, or is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances, or associations injurious to his well-being. (Connecticut General Statutes §46b-120)

[https://portal.ct.gov/dcf/knowledge-base/articles/supports-for-children-and-families/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-abuse-definition?language=en\\_US](https://portal.ct.gov/dcf/knowledge-base/articles/supports-for-children-and-families/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-abuse-definition?language=en_US)

### **Who must report suspected child abuse or neglect?**

[https://portal.ct.gov/dcf/knowledge-base/articles/supports-for-children-and-families/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-abuse-mandated-reporters?language=en\\_US](https://portal.ct.gov/dcf/knowledge-base/articles/supports-for-children-and-families/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-abuse-mandated-reporters?language=en_US)

All Staff, Deans, Chaplains, Nurses, and Counselors aged 21 and up are considered mandated reporters by the Department of Children and Families in the state of Connecticut.

If a staff or volunteer member under 21 years of age serving Silver Lake receives a report that fits the criteria they should invite, but not force, the individual who shared that initial abuse to



share with the Dean, Nurse, Chaplain, or Director, or another trusted person over the age of 21 on site to create a report for DCF (Department of Children and Families). If the individual who shared abuse does not wish to share, then it is appropriate to encourage a Dean, Nurse, Chaplain, or Director, or another trusted person over the age of 21 on site to take some time to talk with the person who shared their abuse without revealing the abuse for them, but it is okay to share your observations.

If you are over 21 and hear of, or suspect abuse to someone under 18, or from a vulnerable population (senior citizens, others of mental or physical disability) from a direct sharing to you, or your eyewitness observation, then you will need to follow these steps.

The Department has a single point of contact statewide for the reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect. The Child Abuse and Neglect Careline operates 24 hours a day and seven days a week. Anyone who suspects that a child has been abused or neglected or is in danger of abuse or neglect is strongly encouraged to call the Careline.

**To make a child abuse or neglect report, call 1-800-842-2288  
(TDD: 1-800-624-5518)**

### **How soon do I have to report?**

Emergent situation: **Call the Careline as soon as practicable but within 12 hours** after you have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused or neglected or placed in imminent risk.

Non-emergent: File a CPS report from the Mandated Reporter Portal within 48 hours.

<https://portal.dcf.ct.gov/Portal/CPSOR#home>

### **What child abuse information should I report?**

Provide as much of the following as possible:

- Names and addresses of the child and his parents or responsible caregiver(s)
- Child's age and gender
- Name of the suspected abuser
- A description of the injury, maltreatment, or neglect
- Approximate date and time of the abuse
- How you learned of the suspected abuse

- Any previous abuse of the child or their sibling(s)
- Any action taken to treat or help the child
- Any other information you think will be helpful

### **Do I have to tell the Deans, the Directors, Parents, or anyone else I made the report to DCF?**

No. The state of Connecticut allows you to report directly to DCF. However, if the incident happened at camp, or with another person who is currently at camp, the Nurse, or Directors should be notified that a report has been made as quickly as possible, once the safety of the person who has been abused is confirmed, and to assure no one else is harmed. Steps will then need to be taken with DCF, and possibly law enforcement, to keep all safe.

When you do feel it is safe to do so, we request that you share with Year-Round Staff that a report has been made to DCF, though details need not be shared.

### **Will my report be Confidential?**

Mandated reporters are required to give their name when they make a report to DCF, however, reporters may request anonymity to protect their privacy. This means that DCF would not disclose their name or identity unless mandated to do so by law (Connecticut General Statutes, Sections 17a-28 and 17a-101). Unless a reporter gives written consent, their name will not be disclosed except to:

- a DCF employee
- a law enforcement officer
- an appropriate state's attorney
- an appropriate assistant attorney general
- a judge and all necessary parties in a court proceeding
- a state child care licensing agency
- an executive director of any institution, school or facility or superintendent of schools

If DCF suspects or knows that the reporter knowingly makes a false report, his or her identity shall be disclosed to the appropriate law enforcement agency and the person may be subject to penalty.

[https://portal.ct.gov/dcf/knowledge-base/articles/supports-for-children-and-families/child-abuse-and-neglect/confidential-child-abuse-report?language=en\\_US](https://portal.ct.gov/dcf/knowledge-base/articles/supports-for-children-and-families/child-abuse-and-neglect/confidential-child-abuse-report?language=en_US)

Additionally, the state of Connecticut reminds us that when we are employed in the capacity of providing oversight for minors that requires Mandated Reporter status, all who have that status retain that responsibility even for those who are not Campers. This means that if you are a Mandated Reporter for camp, and are away from camp on your day off, and are witness to something that fits the criteria for mandated reporting, you are to report that, just as if it happened at camp.

### **What happens after I report suspected child abuse?**

DCF makes its best effort to begin an investigation:

- Within two hours if there is an imminent risk of physical harm to a child or another emergency
- Within three days for all other reports

In all cases:

- DCF must complete its investigation in 45 calendar days.
- DCF and law enforcement must minimize the number of interviews with any child.
- DCF must obtain consent from the parent, guardian, or person responsible for the child's care for any interview unless DCF believes that person or a member of the child's household is the alleged perpetrator.
  - When consent is not required, the interview must be conducted in the presence of a 'disinterested adult' (someone who is impartial and has no self-interest in the case).
  - If a disinterested adult isn't available and immediate access is necessary to protect the child, DCF or law enforcement will still interview the child.

If the investigation determines serious physical abuse or sexual abuse occurred, DCF must:

- Notify the local police
- Notify the Chief State's Attorney or their designee or a state's attorney in the judicial district where the child lives or in which the abuse occurred
- Send them both a copy of the investigation report

[https://portal.ct.gov/dcf/knowledge-base/articles/supports-for-children-and-families/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-abuse-investigation-process?language=en\\_US](https://portal.ct.gov/dcf/knowledge-base/articles/supports-for-children-and-families/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-abuse-investigation-process?language=en_US)

### **What if someone tells me they are abusing another child under 18?**

These are all items that fall under Mandated Reporter standards. Reports made about children under 18 will go to DCF.

## **Southern New England Conference (SNEUCC) Mandated Reporting**

When Camp Directors are made aware of a report to DCF they will then send notice to Southern New England United Church of Christ Senior Staff (Executive Directors) that a report has been made. If a hard copy is made at camp, it should be sent immediately to SNEUCC (Southern New England Conference, United Church of Christ) Human Resources for filing.

## **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

As a Ministry of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ, Silver Lake Camp and Retreat Center will make every effort to ensure its Campers have a safe and successful week.

It is all our job to give the Campers the best week of their lives. If you have any problems, questions, concerns, etc. talk to your Deans, Coordinator, Program Director, Director, or Chaplain.

We like to try to handle any problem using three simple steps:

1. prevention
2. early intervention
3. action (not reaction)

Behavioral incidents, problem situations, or problem adult contact must be reported immediately. There are incident report forms available that are submitted to the Director.

### **Behavior Challenges Guidelines**

- Staff/Volunteers will redirect Campers' behavior in a positive way.
- Staff/Volunteers may speak to the Camper separately to ask them how they can help the Camper maintain more successful behavior. This will help take ownership in the process. The Camper may have a behavior plan used at home/school that we can use here.
- For continual, minor behavior problems Staff/Volunteers may want to use a 3 Strike system such as Strike 1 (warning), Strike 2 (firm warning), and Strike 3 (they're out – sit out on one activity).
- Staff/Volunteers will ask for help if they are struggling with Camper behavior or feel overwhelmed.
- Staff/Volunteers will ask for help from the following individuals (Each individual must be informed of the situation before bringing the child to meet with them.):
  - Other Counselors
  - Dean

- Nurse
- Chaplain
- Camper Care Coordinator
- Program Director
- Director
- If a physical fight should occur, please inform the Director immediately. Avoid letting a crowd gather. Send somebody to get help from a Dean or the Director. Do not put yourself in harm's way to stop a fight.

## **Wet Beds**

Should a Camper wet their bedding, or soil it in any other way, please discreetly contact a Summer Staff member, who will replace the bedding. We will also take the soiled bedding to our laundry and return the cleaned items as soon as possible.

## **Homesickness Guidelines**

Homesickness is not uncommon, but it is also not life threatening. There are many things you can do to make your Campers feel welcome. Be certain to learn their names, as well as something unique about them. Talk to them! Encourage them to engage fully in activities, help them take their minds off home. Homesickness is often an indication that there is something good at home to miss; help Campers share and celebrate what is so good at home.

**Do not make any promises about being able to go home or even call home.** This sets you up for a sensitive situation if that promise cannot be honored. In difficult cases, try to set hourly milestones to get through the day: “OK, get through dinner and then we’ll talk about it. Alright, now get through worship, etc.” Before you know it, Saturday morning will be here.

Staff/Volunteers will make every effort to keep the Camper involved in the program.

## **Camper Call Home Procedure**

Cell phones do not work at camp due to lack of network coverage and are not permitted for Campers. Camper cell phones should be collected and held in the office until the end of the program.

We discourage calling home while at Silver Lake. In the case of homesickness, it may make the Camper feel more homesick. Phone calls home should be deferred until Wednesday, with consultation from Directors and/or Camper Care Coordinator.

Explain (in a reassuring way) that you need to discuss it with the Dean and come up with a plan. If there is a problem with a Camper, the Dean, Director, and Nurse will discuss how to best deal with it. The Director or Nurse will first call the parent/guardian with any concerns that arise regarding their Camper.

Directors may call home for a child who insists they must call home and give a message. Please notify Director through a written incident/behavior report. The Director will then follow-up with the Dean to keep them apprised of the situation. The child should not be present.

If a phone call is approved by the Directors , campers must go with a counselor to the phone in the Health and Welcome Center with the Dean, Directors, Camper Care Coordinator, or Nurse nearby.

## **Incident Reports**

Staff and Volunteers must document any injuries, incidents, accidents, “near misses” and emergencies.

### A Near Miss Definition

- The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)'s near-miss definition is “a potential hazard or incident in which no property was damaged, and no personal injury was sustained, but where, given a slight shift in time or position, damage or injury easily could have occurred.”

Incidents include times when a Camper, Volunteer, or Staff member is injured or nearly injured, as well as fights, emotional outbursts, threatening of others, or serious or repeated rule breaking.

If you are unsure of whether to fill out an Incident Report, check with your Coordinator, Dean, Program Director or the Director. Incident Reports and Injury Reports are available from the Program Director or the Director.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

### **Communicable Disease Plan**

Together with our Medical Director and our team of Camp Nurses, we have put together a comprehensive Communicable Disease Plan that will allow us to respond to any communicable disease that appears at camp. The most current policies can be found on our website at <https://www.silverlakect.org/health>

As basis, we are following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), American Camp Association (ACA), and CT Office of Early Childhood (OEC) guidance which may change, so please refer to the website for the most up-to-date information.

To ensure the safest environment for everyone, please follow all applicable CDC guidelines and monitor your health in the weeks before camp. If a situation arises at camp, Silver Lake will follow best practices for disease mitigation, which may include testing, cohorting and masking.

Campers who become ill, begin showing symptoms or who test positive for a communicable disease after arriving at Silver Lake will need to be picked up within 6 hours (unless parents are notified after 6 p.m. and live 3 hours or further away, in which case the Camper will be isolated overnight). Campers will be housed separately until they are picked up by a parent/guardian or Authorized Pickup.

In the event of an outbreak of a communicable disease, the Nurse may require an exposed Staff member/Volunteer to leave camp. The Staff member/Volunteer must make arrangements to leave camp as soon as possible and obtain any necessary follow-up care. Documentation from a health care provider may be required before the Staff member/Volunteer can return to site and to work.

### **Immunizations**

The safety of our campers, guests, staff, and volunteers is always the first priority of Silver Lake. We are continually reviewing our policies and procedures to ensure we are following the best practices of the camping and retreat industry, as well as applicable state and federal guidelines.

- 1. We are strongly recommending persons who come to Silver Lake to be fully vaccinated, which includes a COVID vaccination in the last 12 months.**
2. We continue to recognize the merit of ensuring the health of all of our visitors, guests, and friends of Silver Lake, and so we do ask that any person who is experiencing

symptoms of unhealth, including things like fever, vomiting, diarrhea to stay home and recover.

3. These guidelines recognize that with the fluctuations in COVID cases nationwide, we will need to look at our plan often, and we may need to make feasible adjustments along the way, especially if things get worse across the nation.

In addition, Silver Lake follows the immunization requirements for students and staff in Connecticut schools. If your camper has a medical exemption, please contact us for more information.

## **Mental Health**

Mental health is as important to a Camper's success as physical health. Staff and Volunteers are trained to recognize signs of Campers needing support and to refer them to the Camp Nurse, Director, or another appropriate Staff person.

## **Medical Care at Silver Lake**

During Summer Camp, a full-time Nurse is on site for medication administration and minor medical needs. In addition, Silver Lake Staff are certified in First Aid/CPR/AED. If there is a medical emergency, every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian immediately.

The individual's medical insurance will be used first by the physician or emergency medical service. Silver Lake provides limited medical coverage for accidental injury, subject to the group policy terms and conditions. Pre-existing conditions must be covered by the individual's medical plan.

Campers, Staff, and Volunteers who are not medically restricted are expected to participate fully in all activities, programs, meals, worship, and recreation.

## **Accidents and Illness**

Please report all accidents and illnesses to the Nurse and complete an Injury/Accident/Near Miss Report.

The Nurse will determine whether someone needs more care than the Health and Welcome Center can provide and will refer them to an appropriate provider. All expenses occurred at an outside provider are the responsibility of the individual. In the event of an emergency, the individual will be taken to Sharon Hospital.



Sharon Hospital is the closest health care provider. Staff and Volunteers have the option to choose a different provider in non-emergency situations, and will be separately responsible for their transportation.

### Workers Compensation

If a Staff member needs to be taken to Sharon Hospital for medical attention for a work-related incident, please be sure to indicate this is a Workers Compensation issue. There is also paperwork that must be filed with SLCRC Insurance Company within 48 hours. Please see the Director if you have any questions or problems regarding paperwork.

### **Trips to the Nurse**

If any person gets hurt and needs to see the Nurse, send them with a buddy and a counselor to the Health Center. If the Nurse is not at the Health and Welcome Center, there is a sign that will tell you where they are. If you cannot locate the Nurse, please ask a summer Staff member with a radio to call the Nurse for you.

Use common sense triage when it comes to late night hours or mealtimes with Campers and trips to the Health Center. Remember the Nurse will be eating in the Social Hall with all of the camp during meals.

### **Insects and Ticks**

Our programs are held outside as much as possible, which brings us into contact with various biting insects. We recommend bringing a non-aerosol insect repellent that works against ticks.

Ticks can be found at Silver Lake. Please instruct your Campers how to do a tick check and encourage them to do a tick check daily. We have mirrors with posted reminders in every bathroom.

If you or a Camper find a tick, please go to the Health and Welcome Center, and let the Nurse remove it. If you remove a tick from your person, please notify the Nurse so they can log it in your health record. We send out “tick letters” to parents/guardians notifying them of the symptoms of Lyme disease.

## HEALTH FORMS

Everyone who comes to Silver Lake during the summer must have a complete health record. The health record includes the following forms: Health History (HH), Doctor Signature Page, and a signed Medication Authorization form (if under 18, for any medications kept on site). All forms can be accessed through your online registration account.

Connecticut Law prohibits Silver Lake Camp & Retreat Center from admitting any Camper, Staff member, or Volunteer without a current health record signed by a physician. Please make sure that the health record is updated with proper emergency contacts, allergies, immunizations, etc. As well as any additional information you are willing to share about your medical needs including, but not limited to, disabilities or special health care needs such as allergies, special dietary needs, dental problems, hearing or visual impairments, chronic illness, developmental variations or history of contagious disease.

### **Health History (HH)**

This American Camp Association-approved health form can be filled out through your online account. If you have completed it before, review and update it with new information. Have insurance card and immunization dates\* ready. Your online signature on this form gives permission for our camp Nurse to treat you.

**Note:** Copies of Insurance Cards are not required. If you must see a doctor while at camp, you may be contacted to provide a copy of your insurance card.

\*Silver Lake follows the immunization requirements for students and Staff in Connecticut schools. If you have a medical exemption, please contact us for more information.

### **Doctor Signature page**

All Staff and Volunteers will need to be examined by a physician, who must sign a form indicating an exam has been performed. You may download Silver Lake's form while logged into your registration account, or you may substitute another form (school form, state form, doctor's office form). In accordance with American Camp Association standards, **a signed physical is current for two (2) years from the date of the exam.**

## Medication

Medication for anyone under 18 is scheduled by program, at the discretion of the Nurse, before or after meals and at evening snack time at the Health and Welcome Center. Please have a Counselor accompany Campers to the Health and Welcome Center for their medications.

Adults (18 and older) also must store their medications in the Health and Welcome Center in a separate locked cabinet which they will always have access to; these meds do not require paperwork.

First aid kits/band aids, etc. are in each building/cabin group, and can manage the minor needs with the resources provided. Let the Nurse know at med times if there are any health issues that need to be noted or watched.

### Medication Authorization form

***If you are under age 18 & will need medications at camp***, this form must be downloaded, printed, completed, and signed by your doctor. A Medication Authorization form will be needed to administer any medications. **We will need one form for each medication.**

Medications include prescriptions, vitamins, supplements, and over the counter (A full list of the medications the Nurse will have stocked can be found on the online Health History form under the heading “Medication.”) **The Medication Authorization form must be updated annually.**

State law requires that all medication be properly labeled in its **original container** with only the amount of medication needed for the week.

***If you are completing a Medication Authorization Form***, please enter the medication information into your online record. Our camp Nurse must keep an e-log of the medications administered.

### **To enter/update medications:**

- From My Account, click on your Camper’s name to get to their Detail page.
- Under Medications, click “Manage Medications.”
- Enter each medication; click “Save Medication” after each addition.
- Click “Done Entering Medications” when complete.

***Remember to bring all medications to check-in in their original bottles. Bring only enough medication for the week.***

## **Privacy**

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC) requires that all health information is to be kept confidential and in a secured location with password or lock. The Nurse on duty for the week will review health forms for information needed to keep everyone safe. In the event of an accident/illness, the Nurse and Director will review the health forms, and if off-site medical care is necessary, the forms will be sent with the Staff member transporting the person.

Program Director, Nurse, and/or Director will handle Staff paperwork. Health forms for Volunteers may be accessed by additional Staff members, including but not limited to the Administrator or Camper Care Coordinator. Confidentiality is required for these positions; only those over 18 will have access to the online system.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Staff and Volunteers are expected to respond quickly and calmly to emergency situations. All Staff will receive training in first aid and CPR. Staff and Volunteers should respond to situations they have been trained to handle and defer to the person on the scene with the highest level of training.

All Staff and Volunteers are expected to help prevent emergency situations. Silver Lake relies on Staff and Volunteers to alert supervisors and Directors to potentially hazardous situations. This could include spotting maintenance issues; identifying dangerous working conditions; monitoring self and others (including Volunteers and Campers) for signs of illness, dehydration, sunburn, fatigue, ticks, and intoxication.

When alerting Staff of any emergency by radio please do the following

- Remain calm
- Say: “Please switch to Channel 2 for a Private Conversation”. This will alert Coordinators to step away from Campers, Counselors, Deans, and visitors, and that an Emergency is happening. Say this on both Channel 1 and Channel 2, then go to Channel 2 and make sure all are there.
- Explain calmly the emergency and then listen for Director to direct who is to do what.
- Designated Admin Team (Director/Alternate Director) member will be point person, using Channel 2 to hear directives.

## **Media Communication**

Only the Director may speak with the media. The Executive Conference Minister of the Southern New England Conference, United Church of Christ may/will also communicate with the media. Summer Staff, Volunteers, and Year-Round Staff are encouraged NOT to post on any social media platform about any emergencies at Silver Lake.

## **Communication to Families**

The Director will determine who will contact parents or guardians of minors directly supervised by the camp. Normally, this will be assigned to the Nurse, Year-Round Silver Lake Staff, or the Dean of the Camper.

## **Accident or Injury**

- Give immediate first aid to victim. Send someone to call Nurse, Channel 2 on radio. Use “Private Conversation” for code of emergency.
  - Only call 911 if the injury is life threatening: severe bleeding, or requiring CPR or Rescue Breathing.
- Contact Director/Office or anyone with a radio to get Nurse/Director who will determine if injury requires EMTs and or emergency transport.
- If an ambulance is summoned, someone wearing a safety vest will be sent to top of the entrance hill to direct the ambulance quietly to location, with sirens off.

## **Bear on Site**

- If you encounter a bear on site, first safely and calmly remove Campers
- Follow procedure for private conversation on Channel 2 to notify Staff.
- Use noise makers to scare the bears away. Pots and pans are one option, also a car horn may work. Air horns are an effective, but last resort option to scare the bear away. If using the Air horns, you MUST use short blasts as a scare tactic. DO NOT HOLD DOWN AIR HORN TRIGGER. Air horns can be found in the following locations: HWC Office, Summer Office, both Waterfront sheds, Woodshop, Nature Hut, Low Ropes, High Ropes, and Summer Kitchen.
- Notify by radio the direction the bear has run off if it is toward another area of camp. Notify Deans, discreetly, in person who might be in the area the bear visited or ran.
- Notify Director in writing of the incident and actions taken.

### **Downed Power Line**

- Stay at least 20-feet away
- Do not try to move it
  - If power line is in a public area, stay by it until others find you, then send for the Director
  - If it is in a remote location, leave and find the Director
- Keep others away
- Call Director
- They will assess the need to call 911 or repair service

### **Tornado**

- Announcement over the radio and building phones, and/or Car horn or bell ringing continuously
- Admin Team assigns Response Leader
- Move to basements in Glen, HWC, or Cedars
- Staff will cover windows to keep glass from blowing into the room

### **Lost Person**

- First ask their Counselor or Dean to check the bathroom, bunk room, shower. Is there a sibling in another program? Are they with them? Do they know where their missing sibling is?
- If a person on site is really missing, please notify the Director on Duty immediately
- All Staff will meet at the Summer Office and be assigned to search teams
  - The Silver Lake map will be marked off in grids
  - Each search team will have a radio and will search a specific area of the camp, including the woods, assigned to them by the Director
- Please notify the Director in charge as soon as the person is found.
- The Director will work with the Dean, Camper, and family
- The Director will determine if and when the police are called
- The Director will contact the camper's family if necessary

### **Lost Swimmer (LBD-Lost Bather Drill)**

- Lifeguards clear the water
- Campers and Counselors sit on the beach
- Buddy Board person locks the gate so no one enters or leaves
- Alert Staff by radio –Use code word: “Private Conversation”, to alert Coordinators to Emergency,
  - use both Channel 1 and alert Channel 2, then go to Channel 2.

- Designated Admin Team member will be focus point, using Channel 2 to hear particular directives.
- Call HWC office, then Nurse (on Channel 2)
- Lifeguards begin lost swimmer search
- HWC office sends someone to check camp store for individual
  - Locate other designated Lifeguards and strong swimmers (staff members) to report to the waterfront
  - A designated staff driver will meet strong swimmers at top of hill to transport them down hill quickly.
  - Send someone to check at the individual's program building
    - check bedroom
    - locate Dean
  - Send someone to check Program Areas
- Other Staff should continue their work, and help keep Campers, Deans, Counselors, and each other calm. If more Staff are needed, you will be assigned by the Director/Alternate Director/Site Manager
- Do not panic! No one is to increase the concern by running, yelling, speeding in vehicles. Be a role model so this procedure can be seamless and responsibly executed.

### **Major Crisis: Explosion, Multiple Victims, Huge fire, Evacuation needed**

- Let the Director on Duty know to call 911
- Announcement over the Radio, building phones, and/or Car horn or bell ringing continuously
- Staff meet at summer office or Health & Welcome Center

### **Lock Down Due to a Shooter On Site**

- If you become aware of someone onsite with a gun who you believe is going to shoot someone, if possible, go to one of the air horns and set it off, holding down the button, and keep blaring it until it has run out of air.
- Air horns can be found in the following locations:
  - HWC Office, Summer Office, both Waterfront sheds, Woodshop, Nature Hut, Low Ropes, High Ropes, and Summer Kitchen.
  - While sounding the air horn, hold the radio button over the radio for greater coverage.
- Announcement over the radio and building phones should also be made
- If you are around Campers, take them away from the person and hide. Don't come out until a SLCRC Staff member or Volunteer, wearing a SLCRC Staff shirt comes to find you and calls out that it's safe.
- The consequence for setting off an air horn at any inappropriate time is dismissal.

- Year-Round Staff Only:
  - 911 must be called in the event of an active shooter on site.
  - Any Staff member in or near the HWC should call 911.
  - If Staff is together on site (i.e. at a meal) the decision should be made which Staff members will call 911.
  - It is acceptable to go to the upstairs Conference Room & take your cell phone, to use the conference room phone and lock yourself in the room, barricade the office door, and lock yourself in the closet to be on the phone with 911.
  - As the air horn ends and radio channels clear, attempts to communicate the emergency to the person on the phone with 911 are appropriate.
  - If possible, an emergency call to 860-364-4335 to notify onsite families of the emergency is appropriate so they may shelter in place.
  - Additionally, calling buildings to notify any groups that might have not heard the emergency horn. A phone directory is posted in the Conference Room Closet.
  - If possible, a 2nd person should join the Year-Round Staff member to begin making calls on-site, beginning with 860-364-4335 and then calling other buildings.

### **Rabid Animals**

- If you suspect an animal to be rabid (any mammal), stay at least 20 feet away.
- Notify the Director on Duty immediately.
  - If the animal is in a public area, wait where you are until others come.
  - If it is in a remote area, leave the area to find help.
- If a bat is found in a room that people have slept in, exposure must be assumed, and all who slept in the room need to be treated for rabies.
- Emergency numbers:
  - Human exposure: **860-509-7994**
  - Wildlife: **860-424-3011**
  - Domestic animal: **860-713-2506**

### **Strangers On Site**

- If you see someone on site that you do not recognize, and who does not have a visitor badge, approach them ask if there is anything you can help them with. Ask if they have checked in at the Health and Welcome Center/Main Office.
- Please direct all visitors to the Health and Welcome Center/Main Office for check-in and to wear a guest badge.
- If, for any reason, you are uncomfortable with anyone present on site, you feel that someone poses a threat to Campers or Staff, if there are any problems, or if you see



suspicious activity, **notify the Director on Duty immediately in person or via either radio or phone.**

- When using the radio, the code word “Owl” should be used for possible intruders.

## **Thunderstorms**

- Announcement over the radio, building phones, and/or Car horn or bell ringing continuously. Admin Team will ring bell or honk a car horn continuously to warn groups if a storm is reaching dangerous extremes. If you hear thunder or see lightning, please take shelter immediately.
- Waterfront and A-Team activities cannot be held when there is thunder. Activities can resume after 30 minutes without thunder. Groups will shelter in place if it is safe to do so.
- Move to the closest building. This may mean any one of the three waterfront buildings (the Boathouse, the CF Cabin, or the Silver Birch Lodge) if your group is down the hill, or any building close to where you are, even if it is not your own.
- Hillside Cabins and Cabin Circle stay in the building you are in. In the event of a storm when already in the Social Hall, then stay there.
- All available Staff will report to Social Hall to assist with leading songs and playing games to entertain and distract the Campers. Staff may not leave unless directed by a Director.
- Stay out of the kitchen & dish room
- Stay out of the shower and away from water.
- Phones should be used for emergency contact, or to briefly ensure everyone stays inside for duration of weather hazard.
- When storm has passed, the Admin Team will make the decision to let people leave buildings. Program Director, Director, or Director on Duty will be making the call.
- If storm hits at night and/or there is a lot of wind
  - Stay in the building you are in until you hear no thunder for 30 minutes.

## ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAM PLANNING

### **Deans' Meeting**

Directly after the Chaplain's Message, the Deans of all the programs will meet with the Director and designated summer Staff each morning to discuss scheduling and other issues important to the community. The meeting may be rescheduled if an offsite program is in session, so as to include that Dean.

### **Interest Groups & Programs**

Programs should send one counselor for every eight Campers to all programs provided by Silver Lake Staff. If a group does not plan to attend any scheduled program activity, or if timing has changed, please notify the Staff as soon as possible so other arrangements can be made.

### **Quiet Time**

Each day after lunch, each program is required to observe 60 minutes of quiet time. Campers are expected to be on their respective bunks, engaging in a restful activity that does not disturb others.

Counselors are expected to remain with their Campers in bunkrooms.

### **Camp Mail**

Mail is sorted in the office and delivered to the Summer Office, sorted by program. A Dean or Counselor should pick mail up daily after lunch. Outgoing mail goes in the "Pony Express" box outside the Summer Office. Messages for Deans and Counselors will be put in your program mail bucket.

### **Camp Store/Afternoon Snack**

Each day, Silver Lake will provide Campers, Staff, and Volunteers an afternoon snack of 1 drink and 1 frozen treat (ice cream or popsicle.)

In addition, Campers, Volunteers, and Staff will have a chance to visit the Camp Store to purchase Silver Lake memorabilia. On Missions Day, they will have the chance to donate camp store money to the summer missions.

The camp store is intended to help Campers practice faithful management of resources: spend some, donate some, save some. We encourage you to limit Campers amount of spending money during their week, and to help them plan for a Missions contribution.

We recommend setting aside \$5 for Missions and a total of \$25-\$40 per week. T-shirts are \$10-15, souvenirs are \$5-\$15, sweatshirts are \$30-40.

Staff and Volunteers can set up a Camp Store account online before you get to camp. You can replenish your Camp Store account during the session through your registration account or by talking with office Staff.

- Log into your account.
- Click the menu icon (3 horizontal lines) in the upper left.
- Select Camp Store.
- Select Store Deposits.
- Follow the directions from there.

The Camp Store account system is designed to prevent lost or stolen money during the week. Any money above \$10 left in the Camp Store will be returned, unless you indicate it should be donated. Remaining balances under \$10 will be considered a donation.

## **Missions Day**

Wednesday is Missions Day. This is a day to think about how our faith calls us to make a positive difference in the world through charity and social justice work.

On Missions Day, we do not serve meat during meals, and we limit the types of snacks provided. We do this to remind ourselves that not everyone has access to the most expensive kinds of foods (meat, sugar) and because reducing our consumption of meat is one of the ways we can reduce our impact on the environment and live more sustainably.

Each summer, Silver Lake supports up to three non-profit missions partners. Summer Staff members teach the Campers about each of the missions partners on Tuesday, and Campers are invited to make a donation to Missions from their Camp Store account on Wednesday. Missions partners will be announced before the camp season begins.

## **Worship**

All-camp worship is held nightly after dinner. We have two outdoor chapels (Waterfall and Hubbell) that help create a sacred atmosphere for worship. We ask that Counselors help their Campers remain quiet and respectful on the way to, and during, worship time. Under normal

circumstances, worship should last for 20- 30 minutes. If your worship service will be longer than 30 minutes, be sure to communicate with Staff and other Deans so that they can adjust their night programming accordingly.

### **Staff Show and Slide Show**

There are two camp-wide events held in the Social Hall each week:

**Staff Show – Tuesday evening:** This program begins with a short talk about Missions Day and typically lasts 40 minutes. Programs will be dismissed one at a time to go to snacks when the Staff Show is over. Your program is welcome to stay and dance with the Staff or leave and go off to your own programming. No additional Staff-led activities are offered on Tuesday night.

**Slide Show – Friday evening:** This program lasts approximately 20 minutes.

Please let the younger program groups sit in the front, closest to the stage, and leave an aisle through the center of the audience.

### **Use of the Social Hall**

If, at the Deans' meeting, you arrange to use the Social Hall for a group activity that is not part of an all-camp program (worship, presentation, etc.) it is your responsibility to break down and set up any tables and chairs that you have had to move during programming. Staff may be available to help with this, but the ultimate responsibility falls to the group using the space.

### **Campfires & Marshmallow Roasting**

Campfires are a high point of any camping experience, and s'mores make it even better! We provide materials for s'mores as a snack replacement during one campfire for each program. Please arrange this with Silver Lake Staff.

We encourage Campers to roast their own marshmallows, and Staff provides safety information and supervision. Additional programming for your campfire is available from Summer Staff members. Please arrange this with Silver Lake Staff ahead of time.

Please help your Campers observe safe behavior around the campfire area and be certain to listen to the ground rules explained by the Staff person leading the fire. All night activities, including campfires, **MUST** be finished by 9:30 PM.

## **Maintenance & Housekeeping Requests**

If you find something broken around camp, please alert the Silver Lake Staff by filling out a Maintenance Request Form (MRF). Forms are available in program common rooms and in the summer office. Please return completed forms to the designated mailbox in the Summer Office.

## **MEALS**

**Meals are 30 minutes long.** The Chaplain's Message (breakfast) and after meal singing (lunch and dinner) will begin 30 minutes from the start of the meal.

At Silver Lake, we have some expectations about how to behave during meals:

- Deans and Counselors should supervise their tables, and spread out evenly amongst tables, having a minimum of one adult per table.
- Make sure Campers eat something at each meal.
- Make sure no one is being wasteful or intentionally messy.
- Be mindful of water consumption. Use water at the end of meals to fill up reusable water bottles.
- If Campers do not like what is being served, we have several other options. Just ask a Kitchen Staff person and they will be glad to help.
- Before each meal, one program will be in charge of leading a grace or prayer.
- After breakfast, the Chaplain will lead a brief morning devotion. After lunch and after dinner, one program will lead singing. Dessert is served at dinner, after singing.

## **Dietary Needs**

If anyone in your program has a special diet, they need to tell the Kitchen Staff by Sunday night so that we can make sure they get what they need.

Anyone with a special diet should wait until the waiter has returned to the table with all the food before bringing their plate into the kitchen to receive their meal options. Campers take priority over Deans and Counselors. Please be patient and considerate when dealing with the Kitchen Staff.

Whenever specific food items may not be available, our Kitchen Staff will provide appropriate options, menus, and quantity. We ask that Volunteers manage their own dietary restrictions and food intake. You may need to provide options for the Kitchen Staff to successfully provide food for you.

## Waiter Responsibilities

### Before the Meal

- Waiters should report to the dining room 15 minutes before each meal.
- The kitchen staff will review the menu and table set up during the “waiter’s speech” 10 minutes before each meal.
- Use the appropriate “in” & “out “ doors to avoid collisions
- Start by setting your groups tables with the correct utensils and dishes.
- Pick up cold food and beverages from the kitchen before Grace.

### During the Meal

- Pick up all hot food after Grace. Only the waiter should go to the kitchen to pick up the hot food. Use the green service trays for carrying food to your table.
- If your table needs more food, have someone from your table bring the service dish to the kitchen. Tell the staff member what food item you need and how many people want more.

### After the Meal

- **Only one person from your table should take dirty dishes to the dish room window.**
- Scrape garbage from the plates into the trash can. Stack plates, bowls, cups and utensils bringing everything up to the window.
- All leftover food still in serving dishes should be brought back to the kitchen.
- The only items that should be left on your table should be the salt and pepper, hand sanitizer and the napkin dispenser.
- Wipe down your table with a towel found in the pink bucket by the dish room window.

## VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

### **Co-Dean / Assistant Dean**

We prefer to have two Deans working together on each program. Work with the Program Director to recruit a Co-Dean you can work with cooperatively for a whole week. This is not required but is highly recommended.

### **Counselors**

Per Connecticut State statutes, we must maintain a ratio of 1 counselor for every 8 Campers, including during sleeping/overnight times. We ask that Deans recruit a number of Counselors appropriate to their program enrollment (i.e., 9 Campers requires having 2 Counselors). Extra Counselors can be approved at the discretion of the Director and Program Director.

Counselors must be at least 18 years old and 2 years older than the oldest Camper in their program.

### **Younger Children**

**All children at Silver Lake must be registered** and we encourage them to participate in an age-appropriate program. Please bring an additional Volunteer responsible for providing childcare, if the child(ren) are too young for Silver Lake programming. They will also need to go through all Volunteer requirements.

### **Dean & Counselor Paperwork**

**Please be advised that all paperwork needs to be completed by June 1.** If you register to Volunteer after June 1, you will need to complete the paperwork within 5 days of registration. For questions about forms, please contact our office at [slcrc@silverlakect.org](mailto:slcrc@silverlakect.org)

Please refer to the Summer Camp Volunteer Guide to Silver Lake Forms. It includes details on all necessary forms and instructions for online completion.

### **Evaluations**

Late in the week, Deans will be given evaluations. All Campers and Volunteers are asked to complete an evaluation about their week. This is critical feedback for Silver Lake; please plan time for the Campers to complete their evaluations.

Volunteers will also be given the following evaluations:

- Dean Self-Evaluation
- Evaluation of Counselor (to be completed by the Dean)
- Evaluation of Dean (to be completed by Counselors)

These evaluations are confidential and will be read by the Program Director and the Director. Evaluations can be placed in a sealed envelope and given to the Program Director.

## RESOURCES

The next pages have resources including:

1. Behavior/Incident Response Chart
2. Behavior/Incident Report
3. Injury/Accident/Near Miss Report

The last page of this Handbook is the Signature Page to be completed and signed by each Volunteer and Staff Member.



## Silver Lake Camp and Retreat Center Behavior/Incident Response Chart

Tier	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Volunteer or Coordinator	Camper Care, Coordinator, Deans	Camper Care, Coordinator, Deans, Directors	Directors, Parents/Guardians	Crisis Response	All Mandated Reporters
Type of Issue	Typical behaviors of settling in to camp	Persistent problematic behavior	Persistent problematic behavior despite a plan	Breaking 'Silver Lake No's' or persistent problematic behavior	Serious illness, injury, or mental health crisis	Revelations of physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Homesickness</li> <li>Isolated incidents of unkind words or actions</li> <li>Non-compliance</li> <li>Cliques</li> <li>Microaggressions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Persistent unkind words or actions</li> <li>Persistent non-compliance</li> <li>Persistent microaggressions</li> </ul>	See examples from 1 and 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hate speech</li> <li>Physical altercations</li> <li>Behavior deemed unacceptable by directors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suicidal ideations</li> <li>Suicide Attempt</li> <li>Self-injurious behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revealed incident(s) of abuse or neglect</li> <li>Suspected abuse or neglect</li> </ul>
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond and redirect</li> </ul> <p>Fill out and submit <i>Behavior/ Incident Report</i> form to a Director.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observe camper</li> <li>Prepare a plan for success.</li> </ul> <p>Fill out and submit <i>Behavior/ Incident Report</i> form to a Director.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion with directors regarding consequences of not adjusting behavior.</li> </ul> <p>Fill out and submit <i>Behavior/ Incident Report</i> form to a Director.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shortened stay</li> </ul> <p>Fill out and submit <i>Behavior/ Incident Report</i> form to a Director.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call 911 or crisis line</li> <li>Call the camp nurse and director on duty.</li> </ul> <p>Fill out <i>Behavior/ Incident Report</i> form to a Director.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call DCF Hotline 1-800-842-2288</li> <li>Let the director know you need space to make that call.</li> </ul> <p>Fill out and submit DCF-136 Form to DCF within 48 hours of oral report.</p>

## **Behavior/Incident Report**

Silver Lake Camp and Retreat Center

Camper, Volunteer or Staff Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ (AM / PM)

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Location of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Other People Involved: \_\_\_\_\_

Witnesses: \_\_\_\_\_

Events Leading Up to the Behavior/Incident:

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Description of Behavior/Incident:

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Intervention and Follow Up (if any):

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Signature of Dean or Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Director: \_\_\_\_\_ Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents Notified? Y / N When: \_\_\_\_\_

**Silver Lake Camp and Retreat Center**  
**INJURY / ACCIDENT / NEAR MISS REPORT**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

**CIRCLE ONE:**

**CAMPER    VOLUNTEER    STAFF**

PROGRAM OR PART OF STAFF: \_\_\_\_\_

AGE: \_\_\_\_\_

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**WHEN DID THIS HAPPEN:**

DATE \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ DAY OF WEEK: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm

**WHAT HAPPENED?**

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**WHERE DID THIS HAPPEN:**

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**WHO SAW THIS HAPPEN? (WITNESSES):**

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**ACTION TAKEN OR RECOMMENDED: USE BACK PAGE FOR ADDITIONAL SPACE**

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DIRECTOR SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

DIRECTOR NAME PRINTED: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/GUARDIAN CALLED: YES\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_ N/A\_\_\_\_

DATE\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ DAY OF WEEK: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME:\_\_\_\_\_ am / pm

DESCRIPTION OF CALL:

FOR STAFF: DATE INJURY/ACCIDENT REPORT SENT TO HR \_\_\_\_\_

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

(Use Additional Pages if Needed—Date and Initial)

SIGNATURE PAGE

# Silver Lake Staff & Volunteer Handbook Signature Page

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the Silver Lake Staff & Volunteer Handbook.
- I have had an opportunity to review the handbook with a member of the year-round staff and to ask questions.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date