

SUMMER 2023

FAMILY HANDBOOK

Please Read!
This document contains updated
and important information.



WELCOME TO CAMP RAMAH IN THE POCONOS



We look forward to sharing an incredible summer with you and your children. Ramah, as a movement, is committed to creating a happy, safe, memorable, and joyfully Jewish experience for your children. There are many summer program options available to families, and we value and appreciate that you have chosen Ramah. Our policies and procedures, which reflect the values and mission of Camp Ramah in the Poconos, are designed to ensure a safe, healthy and exciting experience. We ask for your cooperation in adhering to the regulations in this handbook, that allow for our mission to manifest:

**Creating lifelong Jewish connections,
one happy camper at a time.**

WINTER OFFICE

7 Bala Avenue
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004
215.885.8556

SUMMER OFFICE

2618 Upper Woods Road
Lakewood, PA 18439
570.798.2504

**Please carefully read this handbook and
review the policies with your family.**

FAMILY HANDBOOK

CONTENTS

SESSION DATES	4
REGISTRATION & REFUND POLICY	4
CAMP FORM CHECKLIST	5
LUGGAGE	6
FEES & TRIPS	7
MEDICAL INFORMATION	8
PARENT LOGISTICS	15
CAMPER CARE	16
COMMUNICATION	17
ADDITIONAL FORMS	19
CLOTHING AT CAMP	20
PACKING LIST	22
RULES & REGULATIONS	20
DIRECTIONS TO CAMP	25
ADDENDUM	26
Supporting the Emotional, Social, and Behavioral Needs of Campers	

GENERAL INFORMATION

	Start Date:	End Date:
Full Summer	June 27, 2023	August 13, 2023
1st Session	June 27, 2023	July 23, 2023
Visiting Day	July 23, 2023	
2nd Session	July 25, 2023	August 13, 2023
Taste of Ramah	July 31, 2023	August 6, 2023

REGISTRATION AND TUITION

All Tuition and Fees Must be Paid in Full by May 1.

Registration is not complete, and additional information (including bussing and bunk information) will not be sent until the full tuition has been paid and medical forms are submitted. Please check that any synagogue scholarships are sent to the Ramah office by **May 1**.

REFUND POLICY

An administrative fee is charged on all applications withdrawn after November 1 according to the following schedule:

Withdrawal after November 1	\$500.00
Withdrawal after January 1	\$1,000.00
Withdrawal after March 1	\$1,250.00
Withdrawal after April 1	\$2,000.00

No tuition refund will be made for withdrawals AFTER May 1st.

No tuition refund will be made during the summer for any reason.

CAMP FORM CHECKLIST

DUE MAY 1st:

Bunk Requests

Does NOT need to be completed for Yedidim/Tochnit Avodah

Camper Intake Form

DUE MAY 15th:

Online Health History

Completed by Parent or Guardian

Immunization

Signed by a Doctor

Physician's Exam

Signed by a Doctor

Authorization/Insurance

Completed by Parent or Guardian

Immunization Record

Completed by Parent or Guardian

Camper Photo

Please upload a CURRENT photo of your camper

Memorandum of Understanding (Brit)

Review with your camper and sign

Luggage Form

Synagogue Skills

Completed by Parent or Guardian

Bar/Bat Mitzvah

For camper's with Bnai Mitzvah in the upcoming school year.

CAMP FORMS:

All Forms should be filled out online through your [CampInTouch](#) account.

ALL CAMPERS

SPECIFIC CAMPERS

LUGGAGE

Please note: Families are responsible for coordinating transportation of luggage to and from camp.

If you are driving your child to camp, please drop your child's luggage at the maintenance building, located on the main road, opposite the Front Office. Our camp staff will take it to your child's *tzrif* (bunk). In order to keep our campers safe, the road to camp is closed to vehicles.

SHIPPING LUGGAGE

OPTION

1

Camp Trucking

Camp Trucking will be providing camp trunk delivery service from your home to Camp Ramah in the Poconos and back. Camp Trucking has been serving camps in the eastern part of the country for over 40 years. All luggage will be delivered to camp via Camp Trucking per camp's guidance and readiness.

If you elect this service, you will need to make your own arrangements with Camp Trucking directly. Please register at <https://www.camptrucking.com/register.php>

OPTION

2

UPS/FEDEX

To ship luggage **via UPS**, call 800-PICK-UPS (742-5877) or use their web site, www.UPS.com for UPS luggage shipping requirements.

To ship luggage **via FedEx**, visit their website: www.fedex.com.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Luggage arrangement must be made directly by the family.
- **NO LUGGAGE CAN BE SENT UNDER THE BUS - NO EXCEPTIONS.**
You must make alternative luggage arrangements if you are not using Camp Trucking.
- Campers are only permitted to bring 2 hand-held pieces of luggage on the bus.
- Additionally, no matter how luggage arrives at camp, each child may bring/ship **ONLY TWO** pieces of luggage to allow for ample space in the bunks.

FEES & TRIPS

Camp tuition includes the following fees:

HANUTIAH (CANTEEN)

Each *edah* (division) has several scheduled visits to the canteen per week. It is well stocked with a variety of snack items. This year, we will also provide one snack per day as a part of our afternoon schedule.

Additionally, each child will receive a special ice cream/frozen treat during the summer.

DIRECTORY AND TZRIF PICTURE

Each child will receive an electronic Ramah directory, as well as a digital copy of a *tzrif* (bunk) or *edah* (division) picture in the fall.

CAMP T-SHIRT

All campers receive a Camp Ramah t-shirt upon arrival at camp. Campers in *Yedidim*, *Machon*, *Shoafim*, and *Gesher* will also receive a piece of swag designed by their *tzrif* (bunk) or *edah* (division).

OUT-OF-CAMP TRIPS

One of our goals in planning for Kayitz 2022 is to safely plan for trips in and out of camp as part of our camp program. We believe that enriching experiences outside of the bubble of Machaneh Ramah are important parts of the camp experience and we are hopeful that they can once again be part of our program again this summer. View the [Trip Updates](#) page for up-to-date information.

The following is a list of *edot* (divisions) and recommended maximum amounts of money to bring to Camp for OPTIONAL SPENDING on day trips:

YEDIDIM	\$25 /summer
NOTZITZIM	\$25 /summer
TZE'ERIM	\$25 /summer
HALUTZIM	\$25 /summer

BOGRIM	\$75 /summer
MACHON	\$40 /summer
SHOAFIM	\$75 /summer
GESHER	\$100 /summer

All money not spent will be sent home with campers on the last day of camp.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

HEALTH CENTER 101

The “Marp” is the Health Center at Camp Ramah in the Poconos. The Marp is staffed 24/7 for emergencies and includes an onsite physician, 3-5 nurses and two health center assistants. The Health Center works closely with the camper care team, kitchen staff, specialty staff and camp directors to ensure the health and safety of everyone in our camp community. The Marp provides care for illnesses, injuries, and administers medications five times a day. We administer allergy shots, assist with other prescribed injections & treatments and offer daily sick call.

Parents are contacted when the camp physician prescribes antibiotics or when there is a significant medical issue, the camper is taken out of camp for consultation or x-ray, or the camper spends the night in the Marp. In such cases, campers are permitted to speak to their parents although some campers do not feel the need. In such cases, we will touch base upon their return and when we have results. All campers leaving camp are accompanied by a Marp assistant, or other adult staff member, and are transported by a dedicated camp driver. If your camper stays in the Marp over *Shabbat* for a non-urgent issue, we will call *Motzei Shabbat* or Sunday. While campers who are in the Marp for illness are permitted to speak to their parents, there are some who will decline.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY: In 2007, the National Ramah Commission approved a universal vaccination policy that has since been adopted by all Ramah Camps. With only specific verified medical exceptions, all campers, staff, and family members of staff who attend any Ramah Camp must be appropriately vaccinated, per the standards of the Advisory Committee on Immunizations Practices (ACIP) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) or the Canadian Pediatric Society (CPS).

Note: Not all states have the same requirements, but ALL vaccinations recommended by the ACIP and AAP are required at camp. Camp Ramah in the Poconos does not accept Religious Exemption from vaccination.

COVID-19 UPDATE - SUMMER 2023 Camp Ramah in the Poconos requires that all eligible campers and staff receive the primary Covid vaccine series. We strongly recommend that all eligible campers and staff receive the bivalent booster, though it will not be required.

HEALTH FORM INFORMATION- DUE MAY 15TH

Please note that a **CURRENT EXAM** and up to date immunizations are mandatory for every camper. If your child is exposed to a contagious disease within two weeks prior to camp opening, please notify us immediately.

We cannot administer treatment or medication without completed health information, including signed consent to treat, which is at the end of the Online Health History; therefore, **no one can be admitted to camp without a completed Online Health History, Insurance Information, Immunization Record & current Physical Exam.**

When you sign onto your [CampInTouch](#) account, you will find the following medical items that have now been uploaded for your completion:

- 1 **ONLINE Health History**
- 2 **Authorization/Insurance Form**
- 3 **Immunization Record**
- 4 **Physician's Exam**

MEDICAL INFORMATION

We require that the exam is no older than one year from the date your child begins camp.

Please do not upload an invalid, outdated exam. If your scheduled exam is after the due date, please email the health center staff to inform them of the exam date and when to expect an uploaded copy of the exam.

Authorization/Insurance, COVID-19 Vaccination Card, and Immunization & Physician's Exam Forms must be completed and **uploaded in PDF format** to your [CampInTouch](#) account. If you are unable to upload forms, please either fax to 215.885.8905 or scan and email them to the Camp Ramah in the Poconos health center at marp@ramahpoconos.org. We will not send bunk information to anyone with outstanding medical forms.

MEDICATIONS AT CAMP

For the health and safety of everyone in our camp community, all camper medications must be kept in the Marp. The only exceptions include rescue inhalers (Max Air, Pro Air, Albuterol) and campers, *Bogrim* and older, who have parental permission: topical creams, eye drops, nasal sprays and maintenance inhalers. Campers requiring an Epi-Pen for anaphylactic reactions may keep one with them. **No pills, vitamins, gummies or oral liquid medications can be in camper bunks.** All daily medications – including over the counter items, supplements, and prescriptions must be included in the medication section of the Online Health History.

MEDICATION AND PACKMYRX

Ramah Poconos uses PackMyRx, a dispensing and packaging company that helps us safely administer medications during the summer. Camp Ramah in the Poconos requires ALL campers who take medications (prescription and non-prescription), vitamins or supplements to use the services provided by PackMyRx.

Using PackMyRx ensures that all medication arrives at Camp before the start of each session, minimizes the potential for medication errors, reduces waiting times for children during medication call and assures that daily and “as needed” medications are dosed accurately and administered in a timely and safe manner. The PackMyRx program also allows more time for our nursing staff to devote to our campers’ other healthcare needs.

DO I NEED TO USE Pack My Rx?

Please note: campers enrolled in Taste of Ramah do NOT use Pack My Rx

Medications **REQUIRED** to be filled by Pack My Rx:

Tablets • Capsules • CHEWABLE tablets
Softgels • Allergy pills

Nearly anything in **PILL FORM**, over the counter or prescription, except meds listed below

100% Participation Required



Medications that **CANNOT** be filled by Pack My Rx:

NO gummy vitamins or gummy supplements in any form, including gummy melatonin

Birth Control Pills • LACTAID • Accutane • Insulin • Growth Hormone • Allergy Serum • Orally Disintegrating Tablets

Medications you **CAN CHOOSE** to be filled by Pack My Rx:

Inhalers • Liquids • Powders
Ointments/Creams • Nasal Sprays • Eye Drops
Suppositories • Rectal Diazepam • Injectable epinephrine (Epi pen, Auvi Q)

MEDICAL INFORMATION

REGISTRATION WITH PACKMYRX

Pack My Rx works with Direct Meds of Florida Pharmacy to dispense your child's medications in convenient multi-dose strip pouches, labeled with your child's name, medication, and instructions. This helps our nurses be better organized and helps avoid potential errors.

Our policy for dispensing and administering medication requires camp families to have all of your child's medications that are in PILL FORM dispensed, prepackaged and sent to camp through Pack My Rx prior to the camper's arrival.

Registration Fees:

- \$60 per child, for a 30-day supply
- \$70 per child, for a 60-day supply

30 days before camp starts, Direct Meds of Florida must have:

- A completed registration
- All prescriptions for 30 days plus a refill or additional script
- Copy of insurance card if necessary

The following Late Fees will apply if any of the above requirements arrives late:

- \$30 Fee: if less than 30 days before camp starts
- \$85 Fee: if less than 14 days before camp starts
This covers 2-day UPS shipping.
This fee will also be charged if there are any medication changes that require a special rush shipment.

CAMPERS WITH ASTHMA AND ALLERGIES

Guidelines for campers who use an inhaler:

1. Ramah Poconos Health Professionals strongly recommend your child utilize an Aerochamber (spacer) with their MDI inhaler to allow for most effective treatment.
2. Campers who use a rescue inhaler should bring two inhalers & spacers to camp. One to keep with them (either in bunk or they may carry them if needed) and one in the marp.
3. Campers should turn one inhaler into the bus captain with any other medications that are not being sent to camp via CampMeds. The other may be in their carry-on & they should tell the health center staff when they are checked in upon arrival, that they have a rescue inhaler with them.
4. Do not pack the inhaler (on other medications) in your child's Camp Trucking duffle.

CAMPERS WITH ALLERGIES

1. Make sure that all allergies are listed on the online Health History and indicate if your child carries an Epi-Pen for emergency treatment of a life threatening allergic reaction and whether or not they know how to use it.
2. **TWO** unexpired epinephrine auto-injectors are required for your child if they have a life threatening allergy.
3. Campers with life threatening allergies may self carry epinephrine, if they know how to use their epi-pen, however, there are stock epinephrine auto-injectors in key places in camp, such as the dining hall, pool, activity kitchen, sports complex and health center.
4. Do not pack the epi pen in your child's large luggage bags. Please have both auto-injectors in carry-on luggage, and let a staff member know upon arrival that the camper has Epi-Pens.

MEDICATION "VACATIONS"

Camp is often assumed to be a less structured, stress-free environment. As a result, parents are sometimes encouraged by prescribing physicians to allow their campers to take a "vacation" from their regular, school-year dose of medication during the summer. Although summer camp provides an environment for relaxed fun, there is structure to the days, and a level of independence is required.

There are many different challenges campers face: new social situations, changes in routine, very structured experiences, and less structured experiences. For these reasons, we strongly encourage you to maintain your child's routine medication regimen. If you are considering a "vacation" from medication for your child, a consult is required so that we can adequately prepare to work with your child in the most positive way.

Please contact marp@ramahpoconos.org to discuss any medication vacations.

HEAD LICE

Help us prevent the spread of head lice by checking your child for lice and nits (lice eggs) no more than 2 weeks prior to departure, and again immediately before camp begins. If your child is found to have head lice or nits during the MARP Health Check-In, on the first day, he/she must be treated before moving into their bunk. We partner with Lice Treatment and Prevention Centers, a professional company to conduct lice checks on arrival day and before departure to help facilitate a more expedited check-in and thorough screening. You will be contacted if your child requires treatment and charged a fee for lice removal and treatment. Single session campers get two checks, full summer campers have three.

If any positive cases of lice or nits are found on opening day, Lice Treatment and Prevention Centers professionals will treat the camper on-site for a fee to you of \$300. We begin treatment immediately so that campers can return to their bunk activities as soon as possible. Anything brought with the camper on opening day (not including luggage sent ahead of time) is placed in a hot dryer for 20 minutes. Items that cannot be placed in the dryer will be bagged for two weeks. We require that a lice treatment waiver is signed prior to camp. This document can be found in your [CampInTouch account](#).

If your child had head lice or was exposed to lice within four weeks of their arrival to camp, please notify us. We are committed to keeping lice out of our camp community so that everyone may have a happy, healthy, and safe summer. **For more information on head lice:** <http://www.cdc.gov/lice/head/index.html>

MEDICAL INFORMATION

MEDICAL CONSULTATIONS/OUT OF CAMP CARE

Our camp medical team will make every effort to reach and consult with parents in advance, should special medical consultations, x-rays or emergency care be required.

HEALTH PRECAUTIONS

Camp Ramah in the Poconos utilizes a system of universal health precautions in the interest of lessening the risk of blood-borne infections. Every *tzrif* (bunk) and building has several sets of vinyl disposable gloves available for camper and staff use in the event that skin is broken and blood may be present.

Our medical committee advises that campers should not share earrings, toothbrushes, hairbrushes, razors or shaving supplies. While the counselors will review these policies with the campers, we ask that you discuss this with your child as well.

LIFE THREATENING FOOD ALLERGIES AT CAMP

Camp Ramah in the Poconos will not knowingly serve food items containing **PEANUTS OR TREE NUTS**. We consider ourselves to be an **ALLERGY AWARE** camp and have procedures in place to keep campers with life threatening food allergies safe. We cannot ever guarantee there will not be any peanut products or tree nuts in camp, but we continually educate staff and campers about the dangers of allergen exposure. We are prepared to treat allergic reactions at camp but work hard to ensure that children with known allergies are not exposed. There may be food items in the *hanutiah* (canteen) that state they “may contain traces of peanuts or tree nuts” and these items are clearly identified and we do not offer items that have peanuts, peanut butter or tree nuts in the list of ingredients. We direct staff to follow the same policy on out of camp trips. Staff and campers may not bring peanuts, tree nuts or their butters into camp.

If you have any specific concerns regarding food allergies, please reach out to marp@ramahpoconos.org.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

Camp Ramah carries secondary health insurance coverage only. It pays for those expenses, or portions of expenses, not covered by the camper family’s health insurance policy. Your primary health insurance company will be billed first, before presentation to the secondary insurance company. There is no dental insurance. It is your responsibility to submit any claim for payment from the secondary insurance to the camp office before November 1st. The secondary insurance has a maximum limit.

DENTAL WORK, ORTHODONTICS, EYE CARE

Please attend to your child’s dental and orthodontia needs before the start of camp. Camp does not have an onsite dentist or orthodontist. In the event that dental care is required, treatment will be sought and charged to the parents. Local dentists require credit card payment at the time of treatment and you will be asked to provide credit card information to the treating office. Most orthodontic issues can be handled in camp with the assistance of your child’s orthodontist, who we will contact in case of an issue.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

EYE GLASSES AND CONTACT LENSES

Children who wear eyeglasses or contact lenses should bring an extra pair and necessary supplies to camp, as it is extremely difficult to repair or replace broken or lost eyeglasses. Please label all glasses. Camp's secondary health insurance does not cover normal eye care or maintenance. In the event that your child requires the services of an ophthalmologist or optometrist, Camp will make arrangements for the visit, transport and accompany your child to the appointment. You will be billed for all doctors fees. Any necessary repairs will be charged to the parents.

SPECIAL CONCERNS

In order to aid us in the proper care of your child, please complete the Camper Intake Form form to advise us of behavioral, social, emotional or wellness conditions that affect your child. The Director of Camper Care reviews all information and works closely with the Marp to support all campers. This important information will be shared in a confidential manner with appropriate staff members in the effort to best help your child.

Our Tikvah Director reviews forms for Tikvah campers in regards to Tikvah special concerns forms.

BEDWETTING

Bedwetting is a common experience for many children. We recognize that accidents do happen. If they do happen occasionally for your child, please describe your experience in our special concerns form so that we can best position your child and our staff for a successful summer. We have many strategies for helping to keep accidents rare and discreet. If accidents should occur with such frequency that our camper care staff can no longer attend to that individual child's needs, or if a child is concealing a pattern of accidents, we may ask that you take your child home for a medical consult

In situations where bedwetting cannot be successfully managed at camp, we will speak with you about whether or not camp is the best fit at this time.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

IMPORTANT HEALTH PRACTICE REMINDERS

Before the start of Camp, please have discussions with your children about the following health practices:



Do not share anything that touches the head (hats, kippot, scarves, combs, brushes, hair clips/ornaments, pillows, sheets, or towels), drinks, food, water bottles, or personal hygiene items such as razors.



Wash hands before and after meals and after using the restroom.



Use the hand sanitizers, located throughout Camp, when washing with soap and water is not readily available.



Showers should be taken daily along with changing into clean underwear and clothing daily.



Brush teeth **at least** twice a day.



Stay Hydrated. Drinking plenty of water throughout the day is extremely important. Campers must arrive with two reusable water bottles labeled with his or her name. A limited number of replacement water bottles will be available for a fee charged to the camper.



Use Sunblock and bug repellent. Please teach your children how to use these items. Counselors will remind campers to drink and apply sunblock regularly, but it is important that the campers also take responsibility.



Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet! This is critical to good health at Camp. We will provide a healthy variety of food choices at every meal including snacks.



Wear **CLOSED TOE FOOTWEAR.** Open toed shoes should have an ankle strap. Even acceptable sandals are not permitted for most camp activities. Many injuries seen in the MARP are due to improper footwear.

PARENT LOGISTICS

FAMILY EMERGENCIES DURING CAMP

If a family emergency occurs while your child is at camp, please inform the Camp office by calling 570.798.2504. Please communicate that you are calling regarding an emergency so your call can be directed properly.

Decisions regarding how to handle the specific situation will be made in partnership with camp administration and the parent(s) or guardians. Once Camp is notified, arrangements can be considered for parents and children to talk. This approach prepares Camp to support your children through the difficult situation.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

It is important that parents notify the Camp office of any change in their permanent or summer address, telephone number, or email addresses by updating your profile on [CampInTouch](#). You may also contact the Registrar, Debbie Lacks, at DebbieL@ramahpoconos.org or 215.885.8556 to update your contact information.

PARENT VACATIONS

If you will be away from home when your child is at Camp, or if your summer address is different from your address during the rest of the year, please email this information to Deb Srulevich at debs@ramahpoconos.org so we that we know how to reach you should the need arise.

CAMP TIME

During the summer, on the first night of each session, Camp sets its clocks to Eastern Standard Time.

For example:

12:00 NOON in Philadelphia (which is Eastern Daylight Time – EDT, or Real World Time),
it is only **11:00 AM at Camp**.

“Camp Time” allows younger campers an opportunity for programming on Saturday nights after Shabbat. In addition, the sun has an extra hour each morning to dry dew off of the playing fields.

CAMPER CARE

YOETZIM (PARENT LIAISONS/ADVISORS)

Yoetzim (parent liaisons/advisors) are part of our camper care team, overseen by our Director of Camper Care and Staff Development, Rachael Abrams, LCSW-C, CT. These adult staff members, equipped with diverse skills and counseling backgrounds, are hired to handle a wide spectrum of issues with campers and staff. The yoetzim is your primary contact person to share information, ask questions, or share any concerns you have regarding your child. In early June, you will receive the name of your child's Yoetzim.

CONTACTING YOUR CHILD'S YOETZIM

If you wish to speak to your child's Yoetzim, please call 570.798.2504. Aside from emergencies, please allow 24-36 hours for returned calls. The Yoetzim will contact the parents/guardians of all first time campers during the first few days of camp to report on their child's adjustment. Please note: unless it is an emergency, campers do not speak to their parents on the phone.

If you need to contact your child's Yoetzim regarding an item that your child requires (see page 19) or, regarding pick up/drop off logistics, you can email your child's Yoetzim through the email addresses listed below. During the day, Yoetzim are busy working with our campers and staff and emails are not always checked immediately. The most timely way to reach your child's Yoetzim is by calling camp. Please note that phone calls should always be used to address camper specific issues and behaviors.

The following emails are only checked **WHILE CAMP IS IN SESSION**. If you have any camper care concerns during the year, please contact Rachael Abrams at rachaela@ramahpoconos.org.

Yedidim	OrleeK@ramahpoconos.org
Notzitzim (current 3rd & 4th grade)	NotzitzimYoatzim@gmail.com
Tze'erim (current 5th grade)	TzeerimYoatzim@gmail.com
Halutzim (current 6th grade)	HalutzimYoatzim@gmail.com
Bogrim (current 7th grade)	BogrimYoatzim@gmail.com
Machon (current 8th grade)	MachonYoatzim@gmail.com
Shoafim (current 9th grade)	ShoafimYoatzim@gmail.com
Gesher (current 10th grade)	GesherYoatzim@gmail.com

COMMUNICATIONS

TELEPHONE CALLS The camp office is open:

Sunday -Thursday: from 9:00 AM—7:00 PM EDT (Real World Time)

8:00 AM—6:00 PM EST (Camp Time)

Friday: from 9:00 AM—6:00 PM EDT (Real World Time)

8:00 AM—5:00 PM EST (Camp Time)

We contract with an outside answering service to take incoming calls when the office is closed (including Shabbat). The answering service receives calls and transmits the messages the next morning. If the answering service determines that there is an emergency, they contact the Director immediately.

LETTERS FROM CAMPERS

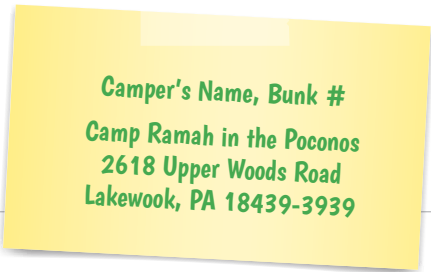
Campers are required to write home twice a week. Letters sent through the USPS may take some time to arrive home. As a result, when you read a letter from your camper, the news is old. To help ensure timely delivery of mail home, we suggest that you provide your child with self addressed, pre-stamped envelopes and/or postcards. Camp will provide a pre-stamped postcard on the first day of camp, knowing this is the quickest way for you to receive the first hello! If you receive a homesick letter from your child, or have any concerns, please call Camp and ask to speak to your child's *Yoetzet*.

LETTERS TO CAMPERS

Please write your child often!

Receiving mail from home helps campers feel secure.

For prompt delivery, please address mail in the following way:



Camper's Name, Bunk #
Camp Ramah in the Poconos
2618 Upper Woods Road
Lakewood, PA 18439-3939

EMAIL TO CAMPERS

You may email your child, via one-way email, through [Bunk1](#). Returning parents should login using their email address and password. New families should use the [Bunk1](#) invitation code for Camp Ramah: **RAMAHPOCONOS23**

In addition to the use of Bunk1 for sending bunknotes to your camper, this summer we will be introducing bunknote scanning. You are now able to opt-in to the Bunk Reply systems, which is outlined below:

- Parents can attach bunk replies as often as you choose to send a bunk note. Any Bunk Reply that your child writes will ONLY be scanned twice a week, on Tuesday and Friday.
- We are piloting this new method of communication. Please understand power outages or wifi issues are out of our control and may cause delays. We will do our best to scan bunk replies as soon as possible whenever there is an issue.
- Staff will NOT enforce children to respond via a Bunk Reply. Please discuss with your child, prior to camp, your expectations for them with any Bunk Replies you send.
- Please remember that mail is not distributed on Shabbat. Bunk replies that you attached on Friday will not be given to your camper until Sunday. Delivery of Bunk Notes may also be delayed due to camper schedule or trips.

Questions about options available? Please contact Bunk1 directly at 212-974-9112 support@bunk1.com.

COMMUNICATIONS

PACKAGE POLICY

Starting summer 2023, CAMP RAMAH WILL ONLY DELIVER LETTERS/BUNKNOTES.

Packages, regardless of size, will no longer be accepted.

Any unauthorized packages received at camp will be donated. We do not have the personnel to deliver unnecessary packages. Please share this revised policy with any friends or family members who may consider sending a package to your camper.

If you determine that there is a critical necessity that your child requires during their time at camp, please email your child's yoetzet for assistance. Information for contacting your child's yoetzet will be available in June. It is camp's policy that pre-approved packages are opened by camp staff to ensure the health and safety of the camp community. All food items, including candy and gum, will be confiscated.

At Ramah, we strive to teach children that camp itself is a gift and to encourage them to spend their time enjoying and participating in the camp experience with their friends. We aim to cultivate a clean, healthy environment. This policy follows a nationwide trend among summer camps to prevent an inevitable sense of inequity or imbalance among the campers, to minimize our environmental footprint, and to reduce the emphasis on material objects in a community that emphasizes human connection and natural beauty.

BIRTHDAYS AT CAMP

At Camp Ramah in the Poconos, we recognize the importance of celebrating birthdays during the summer and are excited to be a part of this milestone for your child. It is our intention to make this day special for your child by ensuring the following:

- A prearranged birthday call to you from your child (the yoetzet will reach out to coordinate).
- A birthday cake, provided by camp, for your child to celebrate their birthday with their bunk.
- A birthday box "Mesiba B'kufsa" with decorations and balloons for your child to celebrate their special day with their bunk. Madrichim, counselors, always ensure that the day is special for your child.
- Singing Happy Birthday (in Hebrew!) to your child in the chadar ohel (dining hall) – a camp tradition!

As a part of our updated package policy, and with the above intentional additions to ensure a celebratory day for your child, campers are no longer permitted to receive "birthday packages."

Please plan to share any gifts with your child before or after their time at camp.

NEWS FROM CAMP

In addition to the letters parents receive from their child(ren), our online photo gallery, weekly videos and email updates help parents stay connected with all the fun happening at camp. Please remember that each of these provides a snapshot – a moment in time. We encourage families not to draw conclusions from a singular photo or lackthereof. The weekly news update will summarize the week and touch on intangible aspects of the Ramah Experience - the magical parts of Camp that photos and videos cannot capture.

Stay tuned for a detailed email before the summer about how frequently you should expect camp email and photo gallery communications.

ADDITIONAL FORMS

BUNKING PHILOSOPHY AND BUNK REQUESTS

Complete Bunk Request Form on [CampInTouch](#). DUE APRIL 30. LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Overnight camp presents a unique opportunity to meet campers from a variety of backgrounds and develop new connections through the experience of communal living. While the bunk is a place that allows campers to connect with old friends, we appreciate your partnership in reinforcing the core value that camp encourages children to widen their circle of friends. The bunk, the edah (unit), and greater camp community offer the opportunity to meet new lifelong friends. The camp friends you have now were strangers to you once!

There is a purposeful arc to our curriculum as campers move through the edot. The bunk is often at the center of the experience for young campers. As they grow, that experience shifts focus from the bunk to the larger edah. The addition of unit-wide plays, trips and programming build cohesiveness and connection across the members of the edah. This happens most successfully when campers maintain existing friendships while simultaneously seeking out and embracing opportunities to engage with new friends.

The bunking process of nearly five hundred campers is no small undertaking. Our staff devote many hours to this in the hopes of creating a positive environment for each individual camper. It is our policy that bunk requests are balanced with prior data/experience, staff feedback, and camp philosophy - the intention to build towards a comprehensive experience for each camper.

Bunk Request Process: While we cannot guarantee bunk requests will be fulfilled, we strive to honor at least one request. Please note that session length and physical bunk capacity may impact bunking. Bunking requests will be reviewed ONLY when ALL the following specifications are met:

1. The bunk request form is received by the due date via CampInTouch.
2. No more than 3 names are listed. (Gesher campers may ONLY LIST ONE NAME)
3. Requests are mutual.
4. There are no contra-indications from previous camp experience or staff feedback.
5. Campers are in the same year in secular school studies.
6. The completed Camper Intake is also submitted by the due date.
7. Tuition is paid in full or coordinated with our Registrar

If there is a concern with a camper that you feel is detrimental to your child's camp experience, please email Rachael Abrams. Please note that these requests supersede bunking requests. **All bunking is final.** No refunds will be offered for campers who choose not to attend due to bunking. We do not guarantee bed placement in the bunk. Campers will be notified of bunk assignments in June, provided that all mandatory forms have been submitted and financial commitments are current.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH PREPARATION/CELEBRATIONS

If your child will become a *B'nai Mitzvah* this fall (Sept-Dec), Camp will provide guided, scheduled review of their portion with a staff member, once a week. **We are not able to teach new material.** If your child desires additional tutoring, that coordination can be made by contacting your child's yoetzet. If your child is looking to connect with their tutor while at camp, we will make an effort to coordinate these, but cannot guarantee regular meetings.

Please ensure that your child brings a recording and a copy of the Torah portion to camp, along with any special instructions from their tutor. We like to send gifts to our *B'nai Mitzvah* campers (September - June), to be presented by your congregation's Rabbi on the Bar/Bat Mitzvah day. Please fill out the online form so that we can send a gift at the appropriate time. **Complete Form on [CampInTouch](#).**

CLOTHING AT CAMP

RULES FOR CLOTHING

At camp, campers and staff are expected to dress in ways which demonstrate respect for the community. Clothing should be comfortable and should allow campers to participate in the daily programmatic experience. Please take into consideration that the temperature at camp varies over the course of the day – it can be cool in the mornings and evenings and warm during the day. Recommendations are based on laundry being done on a 9 day cycle at camp.

Closed toes shoes should be worn for active camp programs, aside from time at the pool/lake, to help ensure safety.

Shirts should be worn at all times outside of the bunk when in public, unless campers are at the pool/lake.

The following swimwear is appropriate for camp:

- One-piece or tankini style swim wear that completely covers the midriff
- Board shorts or boxer style swim trunks
- Rash-guard/swim shirts

Clothing with alcohol, drugs, tobacco, sexual content and inappropriate language is not permitted.

Simple, modest, nicer-than-everyday clothing is appropriate dress for shabbat. We recommend nice pants, shorts, a skirt, a shirt or a dress. Jeans are not allowed for Shabbat. Shabbat clothing is worn on both Friday evening for Kabbalat Shabbat and on Shabbat morning.

There are limited electrical outlets in each bunk. Please limit the number of fans, lamps, and clocks. Hairdryers are allowed but must be unplugged after use.

PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING – each item of clothing should be labeled with the name of the camper.

We recommend using [Label Daddy](#) – use code RAMAH for 25% off!

While we implement systems to protect your child's possessions, Camp Ramah in the Poconos assumes no responsibility for wear and tear or loss of camper clothing, or other personal equipment. Should you desire insurance coverage for your child's clothing, luggage and other personal belongings, we suggest that you arrange with your insurance agent for a floater policy to cover possible loss or damage.

PARENTS OF 3RD, 4TH AND 5TH GRADERS

When packing your child's luggage for camp please place the following items at the top: one set of sheets (1 top, 1 fitted), pillowcase, pillow, blankets, pajamas, towel, soap, toothbrush and toothpaste. We hope to make your child's bed before their arrival. Please do not lock their luggage!

KIPPOT

All males are required, and Females are encouraged, to wear a kippah at mealtimes and during *t'fillot* (prayers). PLEASE MAKE SURE ALL KIPPOT ARE LABELED. We encourage campers to carry a kippah with them in their bag throughout the day. We suggest 7-10 kippot.

CLOTHING AT CAMP

TEFILLIN & TALLIT

All males of Bar Mitzvah age are required to wear *Tefillin*; females of Bat Mitzvah age are encouraged to wear *Tefillin*, but are not required to do so. If your son is of Bar Mitzvah age but does not have *Tefillin*, please acquire a set prior to camp. **PLEASE MAKE SURE ALL TALLIT, TALLIT BAGS AND TEFILLIN BAGS ARE LABELED.** A clear plastic zippered pouch labeled with the camper's name is helpful to keep these items protected and together.

Please note: Tefillin that are left behind at camp cannot easily be returned to a camper family unless they are well labeled, and that camper family informs camp immediately after camp concludes.

TWO (2) BAG ALLOWANCE

Each child is provided with a cubby of shelves and a small amount of closet space for clothing. There is no room for extra drawer units. Clothing must fit into the space provided. Problems arise when campers bring more clothing than they can manage. It becomes difficult to keep clothes off the floor, for children to find their belongings, and to keep the *tzrif* clean. Please help your child pack their bags with sufficient, **but minimal** clothing. ONLY TWO duffle bags are allowed — due to storage limitations, trunks are not permitted. Don't forget to **LABEL EVERYTHING!**

Please Note: If your camper accidentally leaves items behind at Camp, please contact our office as soon as possible. We do our best to locate and return lost items but we are only able to return items on which we can identify the camper's full name clearly marked on them. Items that are located that families wish to be returned will be mailed at the parent's expense.

LAUNDRY

Laundry is done once a week, outside of camp. Please keep this in mind when packing for your child. Laundry is collected Monday morning and returned Tuesday – we recommend that you pack enough clothing for 9 days. Additionally, we recommend sending your camper with 2 laundry bags – one for white/light clothing, and one for colors. Our laundry service is not intended to launder dry clean only clothing. Campers should not plan on washing their own clothing. Campers are expected to change their sheets weekly and participate in the laundry process. Throughout the summer, we make exhaustive attempts to return lost items to their owners. After the summer, we will return items deemed valuable, if they are labeled with your child's name to you by mail, at your expense.

On the following page, you will find a suggested clothing list. Adjust this list to fit your child's own needs.



The advertisement features a smartphone displaying a 'Your Camp Packing List' app. The app screen shows a checklist with items like 'Rolling Suit', 'Clip-On Fan', 'Nylon Laundry', 'Pillow Sheet', and 'Collapsible'. To the left of the phone is a blue banner with the text 'BUY EVERYTHING ON YOUR CAMP PACKING LIST' and the website 'www.packforcamp.com/ramahpoconos'. To the right is a green banner with the text: 'ORDER LABELS OR SHARPIE PENS FOR LABELING ALL ITEMS', 'GET A 25% DISCOUNT on Personalized, Washable Peel & Stick Labels through WWW.LABELDADDY.COM/RAMAH for Camp Ramah in the Poconos', and 'User code: RAMAH'.

PACKING LIST

Clothing and Shoes

- 12 t-shirts (plus one white t-shirt)
- 2 long sleeved t-shirts
- 3 sweatshirts
- 1 fleece/light jacket
- 4 pairs of pants/jeans/sweatpants
- 8-10 pairs of shorts
- 16 pairs of underwear
- 16 pairs of socks
- 1 hooded raincoat/poncho
- 4 bathing suits (*see rules for clothing at camp*)
- 4 pairs of pajamas (1 warm)
- 2 hats
- 1 pair of rainboots
- 2-3 pairs of sneakers
- 2 pair of flip flops/pool shoes
- 1 pair of sandals/shabbat shoes
- Bras/sports bras

*See next page for specific clothing needs for out-of-camp trips

Shabbat

The following is appropriate for Shabbat.

- 4 collared/dress shirts (*polo or button down*)
- 2 pairs of khakis or similar style pants
- 2 pairs of khakis or similar style shorts
- 3-4 skirts/dresses with sleeves (*no spaghetti straps*)
- 2 sweaters/cardigans

Bedding

- 2 sets of twin sheets
- 2 pillowcases
- 1 pillow
- 2 blankets (1 light, 1 heavy)
- 2 laundry bags
- 4 shower towels
- 4 pool towels
- 1 sleeping bag
- 2-3 washcloths/face towels

Toiletries

- 1 plastic basket for toiletries
- 1 brush/comb
- 1 set of shampoo/conditioner
- 2 bars of soap
- 1 soap dish
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Sunscreen
- Bugspray
- Deodorant
- Plastic drinking cup
- Stain stick

Miscellaneous

- Small box to store smaller items
- Sunglasses
- Individual fan (*battery operated/clip on*)
- 2 large water bottles
- 2 Flashlights with extra batteries
- Stationary, pens, stamps, addresses
- 10 kippot with clips (*optional for girls*)
- Tallit & Tefillin for B'nai Mitzvah (*optional for girls*)
- 1 small backpack
- Spending money: *All campers should bring \$25 for optional spending money for day trips. Bogrim, Shoafim and Gesher should bring an additional \$50 for spending money specific to their trips. All money not spent will be sent home with campers on the last day of camp.*
- Femenine hygiene products

Optional

- Mattress Cover
- Hanging Bag/Organizer
- Slippers, Bathrobe
- Pool Goggles, Bathing Cap
- Camera
- Musical Instrument
- Books
- Athletic Equipment
(Baseball Mitt, Basketball, Tennis Racket)

ADD'L. PACKING LIST

YOM SPORT

For Yom Sport, our July 4th celebration, it is customary to dress up in festive **Red, White** and **Blue** clothing.

MACCABIAH

Please send your camper with t-shirt/clothing options for *Maccabiah* (Color War). Campers are placed on one of the following teams: **Red, White, Yellow** or **Blue**.

ADDITIONAL PACKING LIST OF OUT-OF-CAMP TRIPS

Notzitzim: If your child is currently in 3rd or 4th grade, these items will be needed for trips:

- Sturdy sneakers for walking/hiking

Tze'erim & Halutzim: If your child is currently in 5th or 6th grade, these items will be needed for trips:

- Sturdy sneakers for walking/hiking
- Water shoes with backs (no flip-flops or Crocs)

Bogrim: If your child is currently in 7th grade, these items will need to be packed for their overnight hiking trip:

- Sturdy sneakers or hiking boots*

Machon: If your child is currently in 8th grade, these items will need to be packed for the *Kav Reches* (hiking) program:

- Lightweight high-top hiking-boots*
- Water shoes with backs or old sneakers (no flip flops or Crocs)
- Polypropylene long underwear (one top and bottom) — non-cotton is best; poly/cotton blend is OK
- 2 pair wool socks or synthetic hiking socks
- 1 pair nylon or mesh shorts
- Wind pants (nylon or lightweight cotton) — NO SWEATPANTS or JEANS!
- Sleeping bag (non-cotton!) — best if rolls tight or stuffs small

*Please make sure the boots are made for HIKING, not work boots or street shoes. Boots should be comfortable and have good ankle support. (Boots should be broken in before camp!)

Shoafim: If your child is currently in 9th grade this summer, these items will need to be packed for the kayak trip:

- Closed-toed water shoes with backs (no flip-flops or Crocs)
- Quick-dry shirt (NO tank tops)

Gesher: If your child is currently in 10th grade, we will be sending a separate packing list prior to the summer.

ITEMS NOT PERMITTED:

Camp Ramah in the Poconos cannot guarantee, and is not responsible for, the safe return of expensive or breakable items. Please leave such items at home. The following are NOT permitted at camp:

- Computers or tablets
- Cell phones
- Smart watches
- Video cameras
- Electronic gaming devices
- Bicycles, skateboards, and scooters
- Guns or knives (toy or real) of any kind
- Fireworks/sparklers
- Water pistols, water guns, laser pens
- Balloons/latex items
- Weapons, including knives of any size or purpose
- Alcohol, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, marijuana, or any marijuana paraphernalia, vaping equipment, illegal drugs or controlled substances.

RULES & REGULATIONS

TECHNOLOGY POLICY In order to promote healthy socialization amongst campers, teach communication skills, and enable children to make meaningful bonds with people face-to-face, Camp Ramah in the Poconos is a **screen free environment** for our campers. This policy enables our staff to build a stronger *tzrif* and *edah* community and to consciously “unplug to connect”. **Cellular phones, with or without a SIM card, are not permitted to campers.** They will be collected on the first day of camp and held in the office until the end of the session. Please consider leaving phones at home – they will not be provided to children during out of camp trips.

Thank you for your support and for reviewing our policy with your children. Here are a few suggestions for helping your children to adapt to this screen-free environment:

1. Talk to your children about the benefits of “unplugging.”
2. Encourage your children to write you letters.
3. Provide your children with address labels of friends and family along with postage.
4. Provide a basic screen-free MP3 player, including the original iPod, iPod Shuffle or Nano for your child. For example: [SanDisk Clip Jam MP3 Player](#)

Parents/Guardians of Tikvah participants should reach out directly to our Tikvah Director with questions regarding technology at camp.

DEVICES FOR MUSIC We recognize that some children want the ability to listen to music on a personal device. Campers are permitted to bring an iPod Shuffle or other screen-less mp3 players to enjoy their personal music at Camp. **DO NOT SEND ANY DEVICE WITH W-FI OR CELLULAR CAPABILITIES TO CAMP.** These devices will be removed and kept in the office. Please make sure that music is already uploaded onto your camper's mp3 device. Unfortunately we are not able to transfer music at Camp.

Please review the music recordings that your child wishes to bring to Camp to be certain that they are appropriate for the Ramah Poconos setting. Do NOT send your child to Camp with music that advocates drug use or violence, which degrades other human beings, that is sexually explicit, or that includes swearing, cursing or other inappropriate lyrics. Your assistance in this matter will help create a comfortable and positive environment for all of our campers and for our entire community and communicate the value of *Kedushat Halashon* (the sanctity of language) that Camp holds so dear.

CHANGING ONE'S APPEARANCE AT CAMP It is likely that campers will come home from camp a little taller, tanner, and with longer hair. When in camp, or out on trips, no camper may change their appearance. This includes, but is not limited to, body piercings of any kind, tattoos, haircuts, and the use of hair coloring.

MENTAL HEALTH There is important updated information that we strongly encourage you to review prior to camp and as you fill out the required forms. Please refer to the [Addendum: Supporting the Emotional, Social, and Behavioral Needs of Campers](#).

GRATUITIES Staff members at Camp Ramah in the Poconos are engaged in an important educational enterprise. They are dedicated to their task. As educators who do their utmost for each individual, they may not accept gratuities (money or gifts) under any circumstances. Appreciation may be shown by contributing in a staff member's name to the Staff Appreciation Fund, used to enhance staff life at camp in this and future summers. A card will be sent to the staff member in whose name the gift is made. Contributions may be made online or by contacting our Institutional Advancement Department at 215.885.8556.

DIRECTIONS TO CAMP

FROM PHILADELPHIA

(Approx. 2.5-3 hrs from Rte 476 in Plymouth Meeting (PA Turnpike NE Extension))



Follow **Route 476** (PA Turnpike Northeast Extension) for about 95 miles



Take **Exit 115 - Interstate 81 North** for about 10.5 miles



Exit at **Route 6 East** (Carbondale) for a total of 19 miles



After about 15 miles, the Route 6 East Expressway will end and turn into a regular 2 lane road. Stay straight until you arrive at the traffic light in Waymart with 2 gas stations on the corner.



Turn left here onto **Route 296 North** (Belmont Street) for about 8 miles



Turn right onto **Route 247 North** (Creamton Drive) at the stop sign (there is no left turn here — if you stay straight you are on Route 247 South for about 14 miles.)



Look for signs for Camp Weequahic and the New Jersey Y Camp. One mile past this point will be the turn-off onto the **Equinunk Creek Road**.



Turn right when you see the sign in the trees for “Ramah/Lavi.”



Follow the road and cross a “one lane bridge.” for about 1.5 miles.



At the second dirt road, turn right onto **Upper Woods Road** and continue up the hill for about 1 mile.



Go past Camp Lavi and proceed to the building marked “Office” and check in and get parking instructions.

FROM NEW YORK



Follow **New York State Thruway** to exit 16 (Harriman)



Take **Route 17 West** (Quickway) to the second Hancock exit (#87)



Make left turn off exit, go under the Quickway and make a left turn onto old **Route 17**. Follow signs to #97 and #191.



Go one block and make a right turn following the sign to **Route 191**.



Continue for one long block alongside the railroad track and make the right turn across the tracks to **#191**.



Cross the bridge into Pennsylvania, bear left and go 1.3 miles on **Route 191**.



Make a right turn onto route 370. Drive 6.3 miles and make a left turn onto **Route 247**.



Drive 4.3 miles (through the village of Lake Como). 2 miles past Lake Como a state directional sign will indicate a left turn to Equinunk.



Make that sharp left turn onto **Equinunk Creek Road**, (bearing right at the first fork in the road) and follow this unmarked blacktopped road for 1.6 miles and cross the bridge.



At the Second dirt road, turn right onto **Upper Woods Road** and continue up the hill for about 1 mile. Go past Camp Lavi on your left and proceed to the building marked “Office” and check in and get parking instructions.

SUPPORTING THE EMOTIONAL, SOCIAL, AND BEHAVIORAL NEEDS OF CAMPERS

It is our policy, to the best of our ability, to support campers with issues related to mental, emotional, social, and behavioral health, in order to promote a successful summer. We strive to create a camp community that is inclusive and welcoming. Compassion and kindness are qualities that are at the foundation of our Ramah community.

Our camper care team includes the Executive Director, our Director of Camper Care, senior staff, Yoatzot (Parent Liaisons) and outside professional consultation as needed. Our yoatzot are often educators or social workers who function as resources to support our campers and staff, helping to understand their needs, guiding them, and providing comfort to promote their well-being. Our Director of Camper Care works year-round and helps to evaluate and develop plans for campers, both before and during the summer. Our yoatzot help to implement these plans during the summer and provide relevant training to our staff. While yoatzot do not act as therapists, when appropriate, we facilitate connecting campers with therapists at home.

Our counselors are “our hero staff”. They are young adults who primarily grew up at camp or are emissaries from Israel between the ages of 18-21. They receive training during staff week as well as training each week throughout the summer. They are taught from day one that their primary responsibility is “taking care of other peoples’ children;” however, they are not trained as therapists and do not accompany campers at every moment of the day.

The physical and emotional safety and well-being of your children is our number one priority. With this priority in mind, we maintain:

- High standards of care for your children
- High expectations of ourselves and our staff and volunteers
- A value system explained to staff, campers, and families
- Boundaries clearly defined for our campers and staff
- A joyfully Jewish environment for our campers, staff, alumni, and guests

We strive to teach all members of our camp environment:

- To recognize that they have responsibility for themselves and those around them
- To learn to make choices which are good for themselves and others, and to take responsibility for the choices they make
- To respect and celebrate each others’ differences
- To accept accountability for their actions and the consequences for inappropriate behaviors

ADDENDUM

KEHILLAH K'DOSHAH - HOLY COMMUNITY

At Camp Ramah in the Poconos, we exemplify the qualities of Kavod (respect) and Hesed (kindness) in interactions with everyone both during the summer and during the school year.

- We respect the feelings and emotions of others when in Camp and when at home. We talk with kind words, invite others to join us in play, take care not to exclude, humiliate or show meanness to others and respect each others' bodies.
- We respect the property of others and of our camp. We do not take, deface, destroy, or alter property that does not belong to us.
- We follow Camp rules and behavior expectations at all times, including full and timely participation in the camp program. This includes on field trips, as we represent Camp Ramah in the Poconos and the Jewish community.
- We respect the requests and directions of staff members whose role is to keep us all safe and ensure an enjoyable time for all.
- We continue to treat members of our community with respect and kindness throughout the year, including respectful interactions while texting and using social media.

KAVOD HABRIYOT - RESPECT FOR ALL OF GOD'S CREATIONS

At Camp Ramah in the Poconos, our diverse community is an essential part of who we are because every member of the Ramah community is worthy.

- We respect that each of us is a unique individual. We offer compassion and help, without teasing or bullying those who may be different from ourselves.
- We each strive to be the best version of ourselves, focusing on our own growth and learning.
- We accept that we each may make mistakes, but that we can all learn from these experiences, and attempt to give each other the benefit of the doubt when there is a disagreement.
- We are part of an inclusive environment and we do not exclude others or make fun of another's challenges or of those who are different in any way.
- We choose our words carefully and refrain from using language that is offensive, profane or disrespectful in a sexual nature.
- We come to Camp with a positive attitude, we commit to being a role model and bring our curiosity for exploring our Judaism in the camp community.

PLANNING FOR SUMMER AND CAMPER SUPPORT

At Camp Ramah in the Poconos, safe and successful summers are built on truthful communication and partnership, developed collaboratively in advance of the summer by parents and the camp professionals who care for your children. It is difficult to appropriately support children who arrive at camp when critical information about their wellbeing is not disclosed. We value your collaboration, and ask you to please err on the side of over-disclosure with regard to information necessary to keep your child safe and promote success in the camp environment. Once camp is underway, and a significant undisclosed issue presents, it is highly unlikely that a camper can be accommodated in a successful manner without a plan in place.

ADDENDUM

Please do not withhold information about the following or other related issues:

- Connection with a therapist (or other mental health provider) to address mental, emotional or behavioral health concerns
- Serious medical problems
- An intention to stop medication for the summer
- Hospitalizations for physical, emotional or behavioral reasons since last summer
- Suicidal gestures or ideation
- History of self injurious behaviors/self harm
- Traumatic circumstances including but not limited to family issues, parental separation, divorce, illness or death
- Concerns regarding sexual or gender identity
- Bedwetting

When significant mental health or behavioral issues are disclosed before the summer, we will work with the camper's family, and their existing mental health team, to evaluate if camp is the right setting for this summer. Our focus will be on the safety of the camper, the impact on the broader community, and whether the parents, mental health team, camper and staff reasonably believe, given our resources, that we can develop a plan that will ensure a successful summer.

Camp Ramah in the Poconos reserves the right to ask that a child at risk to oneself, or the community, be picked up and removed from camp immediately.

CAMPER SUPPORT PLANS

There are many factors that we consider when evaluating if our resources can help campers succeed in the camp environment. Such factors include:

- Information shared by parents during the year, in conversation with the Director of Camper Care and through required forms, to best understand camper well-being as well as strengths and challenges
- Information shared by other professionals working closely with the camper
- Recent trends in camper mental or behavioral status, including overall improvement or decline
- Impact of significant events occurring within the past year
- If a camp setting is similar or dissimilar to other situations which may cause stress
- Impact of the broader community (tzrif, bunk and camp) including ensuring when possible that the amount of time counselors and other staff may need to provide to a camper is not more than reasonable of what to expect

Accommodations, such as connecting with an outside therapist or limited schedule modifications will be provided as appropriate and as our resources allow. We ask that you share information regarding current therapy in which your child participates. We will make every effort to continue therapy over the summer in cases where appropriate.

ADDENDUM

****IMPORTANT NOTE**** While camp is a naturally supportive and nurturing environment, it is important that campers and parents understand that mental health issues that campers present with at home do not suddenly disappear just because the child loves camp. Please share any and all information with the Director of Camper Care in order in an effort to create the safest plan for your child to succeed at camp.

POTENTIAL RESPONSE TO PARTICULAR SITUATIONS

When assessing if campers are prepared for camp, we look for indications that an individual camper will be successful in handling the vast majority of the camp's day to day programming. There is a significant level of independence required for success at camp and we expect campers to behave in safe and appropriate ways. We are unable to provide 1:1 support at camp in an ongoing way throughout the summer. If after consultation, it is determined that a camper cannot function in a majority of the camp program or needs intensive 1:1 support to navigate the basic day, our resources may be unable to accommodate a camper. Below are mental health situations we may see at camp as well as an explanation of how Camp Ramah in the Poconos might approach these situations. Please reach out, prior to camp, if you have concerns about the following, or other similar behaviors:

- **HOMESICKNESS:** When homesickness presents, more often than not, it passes within several days. We expect that some campers may need a lot of support in the first few days and hope to see a pattern of improvement. If homesickness is a concern, it is helpful for us to understand bedtime routine as well as strategies that work to comfort your child. Additionally, it can be helpful to prepare your child by letting them know that it is okay to have a great time at camp AND miss home at the same time. Consider talking with your child about what they can do in the moments when they are missing you and refrain from promising that you will pick up your child if they miss you too much. It is important that campers want to attend camp. Behaviors at sleepovers as well as how much you are needed to get your child to sleep are good indicators of homesickness.
- **BULLYING:** Bullying is defined as unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance and is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (stopbullying.org.) Bullying behavior is unacceptable at camp. Children can be mean, have arguments or fight without it being considered bullying. These behaviors will be addressed while keeping in mind that some "mean" behavior can also be age-appropriate misbehavior which will be handled through camper care channels.
- **CLIQUES:** Clique behavior is a common social pattern with children and we expect that they will want to spend more time with people whom they feel closest with. However, children need to understand that sometimes this can result in mean or exclusionary behavior. Cliques can never target one person for exclusion as that constitutes bullying.

We view bunk time as a time for everyone to be together rather than in smaller groups, whereas during "free time," smaller groups are acceptable. Please remind your child that camp is an inclusive environment and allows for the opportunity to meet new friends and widen social circles.

- **ANXIETY AND/ OR PANIC ATTACKS:** Many cases of campers with anxious behaviors can be successfully managed at camp. Disclosing these issues prior to the start of camp is necessary to enable our camper care team to work with our staff and prepare them to respond as successfully as possible. When a camper cannot function in the vast majority of our camp programs or needs intensive 1:1 support to navigate the basic day, our resources may be unable to accommodate this camper.

ADDENDUM

- **DEPRESSION:** When campers are successfully managing symptoms of depression prior to camp, they often have the potential to succeed in the camp environment. It is necessary to disclose these issues prior to the start of camp to allow our camper care team to work with our staff and prepare them to respond as successfully as possible. When a camper cannot function in the vast majority of our camp programs or needs intensive 1:1 support to navigate the basic day, our resources may be unable to accommodate this camper. In any circumstance where a camper's mental health team at home and/or the staff at camp do not feel that a camper will be safe in the least supervised of times, our resources will be unable to accommodate a camper.
- **SUICIDAL IDEATION:** Campers who express serious and active thoughts about hurting themselves cannot be accommodated at camp. The camper's mental health team at home and the staff at camp must feel that a camper will be safe in the least supervised of times, as our counselors do not have their "eyes" on each camper at all times nor are they equipped to provide this level of care. When a camper has history of suicidal ideation or an expression of more general thoughts, it is imperative that this information is shared in order to determine if the camper can be accommodated at camp. Our evaluation will include our resources and whether the camper is impacting the well-being of other campers in the tzrif or edah.
- **CUTTING:** Campers may not cut at camp. Disclosing any history of cutting is essential to the camper's success during the summer especially given the evidence that cutting may "spread" or otherwise impact the well-being of other campers in the tzrif or edah. Recognizing there are different types of cutting with different risks, close consultation between the camper's mental health team at home and the staff at camp is essential before camp to ensure that camp is a good choice for the camper.
- **DISORDERED EATING:** Disclosing a history of disordered eating is essential to help campers have a successful and healthy camp experience. While we are unable to monitor individual campers' food consumption on a meal-by-meal basis, we can provide weekly weigh-ins and some connection with outside support. We must consider the well-being of other campers in the tzrif or edah, since behaviors associated with disordered eating may at times "spread" to other campers. Our team works closely with our nutritionist to ensure that campers of concern have a plan in place prior to coming to camp.
- **ADHD:** Many cases of campers with ADHD can be managed at camp, particularly when successfully managed at home. Disclosing an ADHD diagnosis and discussing it with camp staff before the summer is essential and will enable us to work with you and your child's support team, to determine if camp is the right environment and plan for a successful summer at camp. Timely assessment will also allow us to decide what resources may be available to support your camper, including whether our inclusion program is indicated.
- **EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION:** Some children experience emotional reactions that are more intense and last longer than the typical or average emotional response to a situation. When campers are successfully managing emotional responses prior to camp, they often have the potential to succeed in the camp environment. It is necessary to disclose any behaviors prior to the start of camp to allow our camper care team to work with our staff and prepare them to respond as successfully as possible. When a camper cannot function in the vast majority of our camp programs or needs intensive 1:1 support to navigate the basic day, our resources may be unable to accommodate this camper. In any circumstance where a camper's mental health team at home and/or the staff at camp do not feel that a camper will be safe in the least supervised of times, our resources will be unable to accommodate a camper.

ADDENDUM

IN SUMMARY

It is difficult to cover every type of potential camper issue given that circumstances are unique. We take the care and safety of our campers very seriously and strongly encourage parents to discuss any issues with our Director of Camper Care. It is our goal to make camp successful for our campers. Situations that present at camp are personal, private and complicated. While you may hear rumors about a particular circumstance, please realize you may not be hearing an accurate or complete story. When a situation directly impacts your child, we will be in touch to share relevant information. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

The policies outlined above are not intended to replace any part of the Contract of Enrollment between a camper's parent(s) and Camp Ramah in the Poconos. Where the above policies conflict with the Contract of Enrollment, the latter shall govern. The policies outlined above should not be considered, in any way, to limit the sole discretion of the Executive Director regarding the enrollment status of any camper.

CAMPER BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

The discipline policy of Camp Ramah in the Poconos is designed to create a safe, healthy and secure environment at camp, to help children develop self control and to help children assume responsibility and understand the impact of their actions.

Clear and consistent, age appropriate rules and limits are established at camp. Any consequences used will relate to the child's specific actions and will be handled in a timely fashion. No physical or corporal punishment, or hitting of any kind, is allowed. No cruel punishment, verbal abuse or humiliation, scare tactics, or other controlling measures are allowed. No methods associated with the deprivation of food, water, or shelter, or extended isolation are allowed. No punishment of any kind for bedwetting is allowed.

If a child's behavior is chronically disruptive, even after reasonable measures have been made to assist the child in adjusting to the camp setting, parents are contacted by camp staff to determine if the child is able to continue at camp. Staff always work toward developing a cooperative plan of action to maximize a camper's chances of success at summer camp. If disruptive behavior continues, the camper may be dismissed from the camp program.

Camp Ramah reserves the right to immediately dismiss a camper from our program without prior warning. Participation in the following behaviors may result in **IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL** from the Camp Ramah in the Poconos community. Camp administration will immediately be in touch with families to discuss such behaviors. Camp administrative fees will not be refunded and future enrollment may be prohibited.

- Possession or consumption of alcohol
- Possession or consumption of illegal drugs
- Possession or consumption of non-prescribed legal drugs
- Possession or consumption of tobacco products
- Possession of illegal substances or related paraphernalia, including but not limited to marijuana in any form
- Possession or use of e-cigarettes, vape pens or similar devices with or without tobacco or marijuana products
- Possession of guns, knives or weapons of any kind
- Leaving Camp property without proper authorization

ADDENDUM

- Physical, sexual or verbal abuse
- Repeatedly and purposefully harming others at Camp, emotionally or physically
- Self injurious behaviors
- Sexual activity (including intercourse, oral sex, or other behavior for which the camp can not take responsibility)

In other behavioral circumstances, the following course of action is generally followed:

FIRST OFFENSE: Counselors will be the first line of intervention with camper behaviors. They will utilize collaborative problem solving to address camper misbehavior in consultation with senior staff and help the camper understand the impact of their actions.

SECOND OFFENSE: Rosh Edah (Unit Head) will meet with the camper and counselor to decide on appropriate logical consequences, such as cleaning an area of Camp or cleaning the dining hall, or writing an apology letter for missing an evening activity. Yoetz/et (advisor) will work with the Rosh Edah in development of the consequence and may also meet with the camper to develop a behavior plan for success with the camper. Parents will be called and informed of the misbehavior and behavioral plan.

THIRD OFFENSE: Camper and Rosh Edah will meet with the Director of Camper Care or Executive Director. Parents will be called and included in the consequence plan. Dismissal from Camp may occur by the discretion of the Director of Camper Care and the Executive Director. Some behaviors that put the camper or others at risk may result in immediate dismissal from Camp (see above). Campers who are dismissed from Camp due to behaviors or breaking of Camp rules, result in immediate expulsion from Camp with no refund of tuition or fees.

WHEN A CAMPER LEAVES CAMP EARLY

There may be circumstances where a camper will be asked to leave camp and events can occur that necessitate departure without prior process. Camp reserves the right to dismiss any camper whose actions or behavior we determine to be detrimental to the camp or to themselves. All dismissal decisions are at the discretion of the Director of Camper Care and the Executive Director. We recognize that leaving camp early is serious and will do everything we can to make it as comfortable and confidential as possible. Our protocol for sending a child home is designed to be as sensitive to the child impacted as possible and to also keep in mind the experience of the other campers and camp community.

- When a decision is made that a camper is leaving camp, we try to limit the amount of time for transition. We expect the parents to work with us to ensure that a camper can leave within a few hours.
- Once it is decided a camper is being dismissed from camp, the camper will no longer participate in camp activities. The camper will be supervised and cared for and will wait in the office or marp for pick up.
- After being informed that they are leaving, the camper will return to their bunk to pack with the help from a staff member.
- When possible and appropriate, we allow the camper a short amount of time to say goodbye to friends.

ADDENDUM

- We will do our best to have a senior staff member meet the parents when they arrive to pick up their camper. There are times when other events happening at camp may preclude this from happening.
- Within a week of the camper going home, camp will reach out by email to check on the camper and follow up as needed. Further communication may happen via phone or email. We care about each camper and recognize that some families want follow up and others prefer privacy.

REFUNDS

If a child is expelled due to violating any camp policies or protocols stipulated in this Family Handbook or due to inappropriate behavior, no refund will be provided. If a child is sent home for medical reasons, tuition will be refunded, pro-rated, for the number of days at camp minus administrative fees. Withdrawal due to a medical or mental health condition that was not disclosed may result in expulsion without a refund.

THERE ARE NO REFUNDS FOR VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWALS OF CAMPERS. Voluntary withdrawals include: child is homesick, parents are child sick, unhappy with bunking assignments, change in family plans, family vacations and promises made by parents to withdraw the child after a “trial period at camp”.

GRAFFITI & VANDALISM

All campers and staff are responsible for maintaining the physical condition of camp. Any vandalism or destruction of camp property by members of the camp community will result in damages assessed and charged to the camper’s family, and possible expulsion from camp. Any damage to the property, including graffiti, will be paid for by the campers’ families. (Repainting/repairing bunks, bathrooms and similar structures costs between \$200 – \$800.)

THE BOUNDARIES OF CAMP

Campers may not leave the camp grounds at any time except on supervised trips or programs. Violation of this rule is grounds for dismissal. Campers may not go beyond the basic boundaries of camp.

ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY

It is the goal of Camp Ramah in the Poconos to promote a camp that is free of child abuse and neglect. To achieve our goal, the conduct that is described in this policy will not be tolerated. We have provided a procedure by which inappropriate conduct will be dealt with if experienced or reported by campers and staff.

Because Camp takes allegations of child abuse and neglect seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of child abuse and neglect. Where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

ADDENDUM

DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The following are some examples of conduct that may constitute child abuse and neglect:

- Verbal abuse
- Physical abuse
- Psychological/emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

The striking or other physical or sexual abuse of campers is grounds for immediate dismissal. Verbal abuse or harassment of campers is also grounds for dismissal.

COMPLAINTS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

If a camper believes that they have been subjected to child abuse and neglect by staff or another camper, the camper has the right to file a complaint with our organization. This may be done in writing or orally.

State laws mandate that certain persons report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect to civil authorities. Ramah policy requires all Ramah staff to report any reasonable suspicion that a child is being abused or maltreated. Staff members must directly and immediately notify camp leadership of any suspected incident of child abuse. The Executive Director shall report suspected abuse or neglect to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Human Services.

All reports facilitated by camp leadership will be held in the strictest of confidence protecting the confidentiality of the information and the individuals involved. Additionally, this policy encourages reporting suspected historical events that are suspicious for child abuse or maltreatment.

If a child reports, or we suspect, abuse or neglect at home, the Executive Director would contact the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Human Services to determine our reporting responsibilities, and if necessary, the staff member to whom the report was made may have to serve as the official reporter, with proper support from our senior staff.

**EACH CAMPER AND PARENT/GUARDIAN IS REQUIRED TO SIGN THE
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING IN YOUR CAMP IN TOUCH
ACCOUNT TO INDICATE YOUR UNDERSTANDING AND ACCEPTANCE OF
OUR MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR POLICIES.**