PARENT & CAMPER HANDBOOK

SUMMER 2027



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Spencer, Massachusetts | campmarshallcenter.org

START HERE

Welcome to camp

Welcome to Camp Marshall. Please review this handbook with your camper, including returning campers. It explains how to prepare, what to bring, and the rules that help everyone have a safe, supportive camp experience.

Main office: 508-885-4891 Camper messages: campers@campmarshallcenter.org Questions or concerns for the Director: kristi@campmarshallcenter.org Program expectations and FAQs: www.campmarshallcenter.org/frequently-asked-questions

Before you arrive

- Submit registration paperwork through CampBrain and complete the health forms using the link emailed after registration. Incomplete registration or medical paperwork may prevent your camper from entering camp.
- Complete the Photo Release Form. Review the Successful Campers information on our website to help determine whether the selected program is a good fit.
- Label all belongings, pack for the weather, and bring all medications directly to the healthcare team at check-in. Tell the Health Supervisor about any recent health changes.

Arrival at a glance

Program	When and where
Overnight and Mini Camp	Sunday, beginning at 2:00 p.m., Andrews Hall. No early camper check-ins.
Traditional and Horse Day Camp	Monday, 7:00-8:00 a.m., Andrews Hall. Flag is at 8:00 a.m.; horse campers must arrive by 8:00 a.m. for riding evaluations.

Overnight check-in

Start at the Welcome to Camp table for cabin and counselor assignments. Visit the remaining tables in order for paperwork and information review, health screening and medication drop-off, then choose classes with program staff. Take belongings to the assigned cabin; counselors can help with luggage at the parking lots and cabin. Please unload promptly and leave after helping your camper move in.

Day camp check-in

Report to Andrews Hall, complete any remaining forms, and meet the healthcare team for a health-form and medication review. Campers receive group assignments, meet staff, and have breakfast. Day campers choose their activities and classes with program staff at check-in. Activities and classes cannot be selected online for either day or overnight campers.

Swim testing

Overnight campers test Sunday afternoon, weather permitting; day campers test during Monday swim. A swim test is required to enter the waterfront. Overnight tests are not offered later in the week unless rescheduled because of weather. Parents do not accompany campers to swim testing or other camp areas after move-in.

AT CAMP

Pickup and camp life

Pickup times and locations

Pickup	Time and place
Day Camp, Monday-Thursday	3:30-5:00 p.m., Andrews Hall.
Extended Day, Monday-Thursday	7:00 p.m., Andrews Hall. No extended day on Friday.
Mini Camp departure	Tuesday, 7:00 p.m., after dinner.
All campers on Friday	Closing ceremonies begin at 2:00 p.m., lower grounds amphitheater. Every camper must be picked up by 3:30 p.m.

Photo ID is required. Only people listed on the Authorized to Pick Up form may take a camper. Submit any changes to the office in writing in advance. All campers, including CITs, must be checked in and out by a parent, guardian, or authorized person.

Friday closing ceremonies

Families are encouraged to attend. The ceremony lasts approximately 30-60 minutes and includes awards, weekly highlights, and camper accomplishments. Day campers participate too. Afterward, collect belongings with your camper and sign out at the lower grounds table leading to the cabin area before leaving. If you cannot attend, pickup is still required by 3:30 p.m.

Equestrian demonstrations take place Friday morning and are filmed for families to watch on Camp Marshall's YouTube channel. These demonstrations are not open to parents.

Mini Camp extensions

Mini campers follow overnight check-in. If a full-week stay is an option, tell staff at check-in and pack for the full week. Staff ask campers before Tuesday lunch whether they would like to stay, then call parents Tuesday between 1:00 and 2:00 p.m. to confirm plans. An approved extension is invoiced; pay the balance within 24 hours. Campers leaving Tuesday are picked up at 7:00 p.m.; those staying follow Friday pickup.

Cabins and cabin mate requests

Rustic cabins have no electricity and have at least one staff member assigned to each cabin. Assignments are made in advance by age and program, considering the needs of the camp and campers. Requests are not guaranteed; families will be notified as soon as possible if a request cannot be accommodated.

Submit cabin mate requests with applications. All campers involved must request each other, be no more than one year apart in age, and be in the same program. If a friend registers later, both families must call the office to approve the request. CITs cannot request cabin mates because living with different age groups is part of their training.

Helping with homesickness

Talk about the schedule, meals, activities, and cabin life before camp. Attend an open house or call to arrange a tour. Pack a familiar pillow, blanket, or stuffed animal. Avoid promising immediate pickup if your child feels homesick, as this can make it harder to settle in.

Staff support campers who miss home. If that support does not help, the administrative team decides when to contact parents and discuss next steps. Late-night calls are made only for emergencies. If a camper poses a risk to themselves or others, administrators will contact the family to discuss whether they can remain. No refunds are issued for homesickness.

WHAT TO PACK

Packing and clothing

Label everything. Pack enough clothing and spares for outdoor activities in changing weather. Campers do not have regular laundry access. Items soiled by bedwetting or other accidents are washed discreetly at the nurse's station and returned.

Day camp checklist

Backpack; swimsuit; towel; refillable water bottle; extra clothing; raincoat; hat; jacket or sweatshirt; sunscreen and lip balm; non-aerosol insect repellent. Optional flip-flops are for the waterfront or showers only. Horse campers must also bring the riding gear listed on the next page.

Overnight camp checklist

- Personal care: four large towels; washcloth or loofah; comb or brush; toothbrush and toothpaste; soap or body wash; shampoo and conditioner; deodorant; non-aerosol insect repellent; sunscreen and lip balm.

- Daily essentials: labeled reusable water bottle; flashlight or lantern with extra batteries. Cabins have no electricity.
- Clothing: T-shirts; sweatshirts and light jacket; shorts; long pants; socks and extra socks; underwear; pajamas or nightshirt; swimsuit; hat or bandana; rain gear and umbrella. Theme-week clothing is optional.
- Footwear: closed-toe, closed-heel sneakers; rain boots; shower shoes for the waterfront and showers only.
- Bedding: twin sheets, including a bottom sheet even when using a sleeping bag; sleeping bag or blanket/comforter; pillow and pillowcase; extra blanket. Camp does not provide bedding. If your camper arrives without adequate bedding, you must purchase it from camp or a nearby store.
- Optional: writing paper, pen, envelopes and stamps; laundry bag; clothespins. Camp provides a clothesline.

Dress code

- Clothing must not show drugs, alcohol, offensive language, violence, demeaning messages, or other inappropriate content.
- Shirts must cover the torso and midriff and be worn except at the waterfront or during water games. Outside horse areas, tank tops are allowed with straps at least two finger widths wide.
- Shorts, pants, or skirts must fully cover the buttocks and be worn outside the waterfront.
- Swimwear must be suitable for active waterfront use. Bikinis are allowed; thong-style bottoms are not.
- Wear protective, weather-appropriate, closed-toe and closed-heel shoes. Crocs, flip-flops, and open sandals are allowed only at the waterfront and for showering.
- Wear sneakers or boots in farm barn areas. Horse areas have separate boot and helmet requirements; see the next page.

Medication packing reminder

Bring prescription and over-the-counter medications in original containers, with the camper's name and required medication directions. Do not use pill organizers, bags, or other containers. Give every medication to the healthcare team at check-in, not to your camper. See Health and safety for the full policy.

HORSE CAMP

Horse programs and weather

Riding groups and instruction

All horsemanship campers have a riding evaluation Monday after breakfast. Day campers must arrive by 8:00 a.m. Riders are assigned a group, instructor, and horse by riding ability, not age. Lessons are taught by Massachusetts-licensed riding instructors.

Required riding and barn gear

- Helmet: a properly fitted ASTM/SEI-approved helmet, within five years of its manufacture date and free of cracks or damage. Wear it in all horse areas and whenever mounted. The equestrian team inspects and approves helmets.
- Pants: riding pants or jeans. Leggings, sweatpants, and pajamas are not permitted for riding.
- Shirts: T-shirt or long-sleeve shirt. No tank tops or cutoffs for riding; pack extra T-shirts.
- Riding boots: appropriate boots with a 1/2- to 1-inch heel, made of leather or comparable durable, non-rubber-based material. Heels must not exceed 1 inch.
- Unmounted footwear: paddock or muck boots that fully cover the ankle. Muck boots are optional. Sneakers, flip-flops, and Crocs are never allowed in horse areas.
- Water bottle: a reusable water bottle is required to ride.

Do not pack private tack or equipment, including saddles, bridles, grooming tools, or crops, or any treats or feed. Camp supplies program and safety equipment; campers must bring riding boots. Campers may bring their own approved riding helmet.

Weather changes

Camp may adjust activities whenever weather creates a safety concern. Additional swim periods and water activities may be added based on the heat index.

No riding during thunder or lightning, when the heat index is greater than 90°F, or in other unsafe weather. Campers are not allowed at the barns during tornado or severe-weather watches or warnings.

When riding is canceled, staff provide unmounted instruction when conditions allow. A replacement lesson may not be possible when safety procedures require everyone to report to Andrews Hall.

Safety and participation

Camp Marshall may move a camper to a Traditional program or dismiss them from camp if behavior puts staff, campers, or horses at risk. Parents or guardians will be informed of incidents in a timely manner.

STAYING CONNECTED

What stays home and staying in touch

Items not allowed at camp

- Weapons: no weapons, including pocket knives. Camp may search and secure personal items if weapons are suspected. Counselors may carry pocket knives under specific camp rules for activities; they may not share or give them to campers or others.

- Illegal drugs, alcohol, nicotine, and tobacco: prohibited, including e-cigarettes and vaping devices. Possession or use by any camper, including CITs, results in immediate dismissal and notification of appropriate authorities. Camp may search and secure items when these substances are suspected. Weapons also constitute grounds for immediate dismissal.
- Technology: no phones, game consoles, laptops, tablets, music devices, walkie-talkies, or similar devices. Confiscated devices are stored securely; parents are notified, and devices are returned to them at checkout.
- Vehicles and personal sports equipment: campers and CITs may not bring cars, dirt bikes, ATVs, bicycles, skateboards, roller skates, archery or riflery equipment, or other sports equipment. Camp supplies program equipment; horse gear is addressed on the previous page.
- Cash and valuables: campers should not carry or store money. Use a camp store account instead. Leave expensive jewelry, sunglasses, and other valuables home. Camp is not responsible for lost, broken, or damaged valuables or technology.
- Age-inappropriate materials: items such as pornography are secured in the office until departure, and parents are notified immediately.

Pets

Do not bring pets to camp. If a family pet accompanies drop-off or pickup, it must stay in the vehicle with a person at all times. If it must leave the vehicle, keep it leashed in designated areas, away from other families and campers, and clean up after it. Pets are prohibited in cabins, camp buildings, and on lower grounds.

Messages and mail

Email campers@campmarshallcenter.org with your camper's name. Messages are delivered with daily mail. Campers do not have technology access and cannot email back. They may write home at least once during the week; pack paper, pens, stamped envelopes or postcards, preferably addressed in advance. Counselors and office staff help send outgoing mail.

Because postal mail may be delayed, leave letters or care packages at Sunday check-in or use camper email. Label items with the camper's name, cabin number once assigned, and the day you would like them delivered. Contact the office if a letter raises concerns; several days may have passed since it was written.

Calls and visits

Camper telephone use requires permission from the Camp Operations Director or Health Supervisor/Nurse. Routine parent calls are strongly discouraged because they can worsen homesickness. Visits during the camp week are not permitted. For urgent matters, call 508-885-4891; after hours, use the emergency number provided at check-in and in the Office Manager's newsletter. If emergency pickup is needed, call with your estimated arrival time so staff can prepare your camper.

WELLNESS & CARE

Health and safety

Health forms and check-in

Camp uses CampDocs for online health forms; families receive a link after registration. Complete all forms before arrival. Missing or incomplete medical forms may prevent admission. The healthcare team reviews health information and medications at check-in. Day campers do not receive head checks. Tell staff about recent health changes or other information needed for care.

Medications

Give all prescription and over-the-counter medications to the healthcare team at check-in. Medications must be in their original containers with the child's name, medication name, correct dosage, and physician's orders as required by camp. Pill organizers, bags, and substitute containers are not accepted. Campers may not keep any medications in cabins.

Care at camp

Camp employs a full-time Health Supervisor. The infirmary in Andrews Hall is staffed 24 hours a day. A Healthcare Consultant provides guidance and reviews the Health Care Plan annually. Staff have current First Aid and CPR certifications; staff beginning at the start of training are also CPR/First Aid/AED certified.

For illness or injury requiring family notification, staff explain the camper's condition and care by phone. They call the first parent or guardian, then the second, then the emergency contact, continuing until someone is reached personally. Routine minor issues, such as a small scrape or brief stomachache, do not normally prompt a call.

Illness requiring pickup

If a camper is too ill to remain, a parent or guardian must pick them up as quickly as possible. The camper waits in the infirmary's isolation room. A doctor's note may be required before returning to camp.

Emergencies

Staff call 911. Spencer Rescue Squad transports campers for emergency care. Possible destinations include UMass Medical, UMass Memorial, St. Vincent's Hospital, and Harrington Hospital. The Health Supervisor or a Camp Director notifies parents as soon as possible after an incident requiring ambulance transport. A senior staff member accompanies the camper and stays until a parent or guardian arrives.

Sun protection

Camp encourages reduced sun exposure through hats, long-sleeve shirts, long pants, sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher, and lip balm. Staff or volunteers may assist with sunscreen when needed with parental permission. Families are asked to acknowledge that permission as part of camp paperwork.

Health information and oversight

The Health and Medical Information page on our website provides information on handwashing, Lyme disease, rabies, ticks and tick bites, giardiasis, meningitis, and meningococcal disease.

Camp must comply with Massachusetts Department of Public Health camp regulations and be licensed by the local Board of Health. Camp receives annual health and fire inspections. Camp Marshall is accredited by the American Camp Association; its most recent accreditation visit was in summer 2023.

OUR COMMUNITY

Respect and behavior

Nondiscrimination

Camp Marshall's programs and employment operate in accordance with state and federal law. Discrimination is not tolerated. Campers and staff are expected to respect one another, camp policies and traditions, and the environment.

This applies to race, color, creed, religion, age, sex, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy, learning, physical or mental disabilities, genetic information or predisposing genetic characteristics, veteran or military status, domestic violence victim status, political affiliation, and any other status protected by law.

Employees must maintain high standards of conduct and performance, serve as positive role models, and behave professionally on and off camp property. Staff may not promote personal lifestyles, political views, or religious preferences to employees, participants, parents, campers, or volunteers. Campers must follow camp expectations for safe, respectful conduct. Failure to meet these expectations may lead to discipline.

Guidance and discipline

Staff work to maintain a healthy, safe community. Guidance is consistent and considers each child's needs and development, with the goal of supporting the child while protecting individuals and the group.

Staff use verbal coaching and plans for improvement. If behavior continues, they may establish a verbal behavior agreement with clear expectations and consequences, notify parents, and ask about strategies that work at home or school. Persistent problems may lead to dismissal.

After reviewing staff concerns, administrators may determine that a camper's conduct is unreasonably disruptive, cannot be controlled, threatens safety, or involves bullying, violence, inappropriate behavior, or threats. The Camp Director may send the camper home. Behavior-related dismissals are not refundable.

Offenses affecting camper or staff health and safety result in immediate dismissal for the week and/or the rest of the summer; the usual coaching steps may be bypassed.

Camp discipline procedures are subject to 105 CMR 430.191, including the prohibitions in subsection (B)(1)-(4). Families are asked to acknowledge review of the discipline policy as part of camp paperwork.

Staff screening

Camp staff and volunteers undergo CORI and SORI checks and National Sex Offender Registry screening.

Photographs

Complete the Photo Release Form before camp. The release authorizes use of camper photographs in Camp Marshall publicity. Camper names are never used.

Concerns and complaints

Report concerns promptly to the Summer Camp Director at kristi@campmarshallcenter.org or call 508-885-4891. Complaints are addressed individually. If the Director is unavailable, leave a message with office staff for a return call. Refunds are not guaranteed; the refund policy applies.

THE DETAILS

Payments and other practical details

Payments and camperships

An invoice is emailed after registration. Pay online or by card over the phone. Call 508-885-4891 to arrange another payment method.

Item	Deadline
Early bird payments	April 15, 2027
All payments	June 1, 2027
Campership applications	May 15, 2027

Limited campership assistance is available. Contact the office for an application or current application link.

Refunds

- Cancellations before June 1, 2027: refund less the $150 nonrefundable deposit and a $35 administration fee.
- Cancellations after June 1, 2027: no refund unless the child physically cannot participate and a physician's letter is provided. The medical exception is limited to 50% of tuition, minus the $150 nonrefundable deposit.
- No refunds for dismissal due to camp rule violations or departure due to homesickness.
- Refunds are mailed in September 2027 after summer programs and camp cleanup are complete.

Camp store and apparel

An optional camper store account can be created at registration or check-in. Check-in account deposits are cash only; families may also add funds through CampBrain during the week. Accounts are processed daily to avoid overdrafts. Campers do not need cash in their belongings.

The store opens daily during afternoon rest/free periods and offers a variety of peanut-free snacks. Snack shack proceeds support camperships. Camp apparel is available at check-in, payable by cash or Venmo only.

Staff appreciation and donations

Staff and volunteers may not accept tips. Notes and letters of appreciation are welcome. Families may donate to Camp Marshall in honor of a staff member or designate a program such as Waterfront, Horse Camp, or Arts and Crafts. Camp Marshall is a nonprofit; donations may be tax-deductible as allowed by law. Call the office for the current list of needed items for summer and year-round programs.

Keep these contacts handy

Office: 508-885-4891 Director: kristi@campmarshallcenter.org Camper email: campers@campmarshallcenter.org FAQs and camper expectations: www.campmarshallcenter.org/frequently-asked-questions

Please contact the office if anything is unclear or your family needs help preparing for camp.