



# Camp Lau-Ren

## CAMP STAFFING

### Volunteer Recruitment and Staff Hiring Policies

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Revised: June 2018

**CAMP LAU-REN** is a Christian Camp owned by Lau-Ren Camp Corporation of the United Church of Canada.

**THE PURPOSE** of the Camp is to provide an experience of Christian community in an outdoor setting wherein persons may have an opportunity for growth in personal relationships, a deepening awareness of God, and the development of personal faith and character.

**LAU-REN CAMP CORPORATION** owns the property and administers it in accordance with the purpose stated above as a non-profit enterprise, financed from campers' fees which are heavily subsidized by a grant from the Bay of Quinte Conference of the United Church and by gifts from individual congregations and United Church Women's groups in the Presbytery.

**THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS** is appointed by the Lau-Ren Camp Corporation to maintain the property and facilities, help plan the camping program and recruit volunteer leadership. Appointments endeavour to represent all areas of the Presbytery.

**THE CAMP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** is engaged by the Camp Corporation as executive director of the whole operation and is responsible to the Corporation through the Board of Directors.

#### **MISSION:**

Our Mission is to provide a Christian experience for campers by providing programs and services that foster Christian faith, provide opportunities for personal growth, develop skills to build community and relationships, foster an environment of inclusion of everyone, and provide opportunities to acquire new skills and knowledge.

#### **VISION:**

In Camp Lau-Ren's natural setting, there will be an opportunity to have fun, to gain a deepening awareness of others, a growing understanding of oneself, and a strengthening of personal faith as we meet God in Jesus Christ.

#### **VALUES:**

Respect, Collaboration, Community

## **JOB DESCRIPTIONS, Condensed**

See individual manuals for detailed job descriptions.

**Risk Assessment:** Any position which creates the opportunity for unsupervised access to children (or other vulnerable individuals) is given an assessment of the degree of risk in which that person could, on occasion, be placed. The “risk” refers to the vulnerability of that person to accusations of verbal, mental, physical, or sexual abuse. It is therefore incumbent on each staff person to be aware of such risks and to take care not to place themselves in a position such that a camper or other vulnerable person could feel threatened. Generally, this means do not be alone with a vulnerable person. General safety issues are not represented by this assessment, such as Waterfront Staff and drownings or Cooks and food poisoning. The risk assessments are made for the purposes of screening for character during the recruitment process.

The Board of Directors has assigned a risk assessment to each staff position. Risk assessments are given on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 indicates the possibility of being at greatest risk.

### **Executive Directors (Risk level – 3 on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is lowest.)**

The Executive Director(s) (ED) are the person(s), at least 30 years of age hired for the whole year to look after all Camp business not handled by the Board of Directors. The EDs serve on the personnel committee to hire paid staff, and establish their work schedules as they work under the ED’s direction. The EDs are involved with leadership recruitment and training. They work with volunteer staff to ensure that the Camp Director’s program meets with the Christian objectives of the Corporation, and approves the Camp Director’s choice of volunteers. The EDs work within the policy established by the Lau-Ren Camp Corporation and have authority to make on-the-spot decisions in consultation with the weekly Camp Director about any issue within the Camp. They are available during Camp for consultation and advice. The EDs are expected to attend meetings of the Board of Directors and prepare the Annual Report.

The emphasis is on co-ordinating rather than doing the thousand-and-one jobs that have to be done each year in order for the Camp to run smoothly and successfully.

### **Camp Director (Risk level – 6)**

The Camp Director (CD) is at least 25 years old. The main job is to plan, in conjunction with the chosen leaders, a weekly program which will both entertain and instruct the campers. The CD attends pre-camp Training Days and has training days of his/her own for the specific Camp. The CD is on hand during registration. The CD has a pre-Camp meeting with the EDs, and consults with the Cooks and Waterfront Staff to advise them how they are requested to integrate with the planned program. Camp Lau-Ren is a Christian Camp in which some form of Bible Study / Life Study forms a component. United Church theology is to be reflected in all aspects of the Christian training. The CD is responsible for all aspects of the weekly Camp, deferring only to the EDs on items of Board policy.

**Leaders (Risk level – 7)**

A leader is defined as one who has responsibility for a period of instruction at Camp. Leaders can teach crafts, nature study, music, life study, canoeing, archery etc. Leaders are adults (age 18 and up) and do not have any counselling duties. Leaders are responsible to the Camp Director and work under the CD's authority. Leaders require the co-operation of counsellors in carrying out their program.

**Counsellors (Risk level – 10)**

The counsellor is the closest link the camper has with the program and activities during his/her stay at Camp. Therefore, the counsellor should at all times be aware of the whereabouts and activities of all of the campers under her/his care, unless involved in other assigned duties. The well-being of the camper must be a constant concern, especially with regard to personal safety. Any illness or injury of a camper must be brought to the attention of the Health Care Provider immediately.

**Cooks (Risk level – 4)**

Cooks must have the proper qualifications and be able to prepare food in an efficient and timely manner following a set menu for 60 – 90 persons, including one cook-out. The cooks order the kitchen supplies, prepare the meals, ensure sanitary conditions in the kitchen. The Cooks are responsible to the ED but consult with the CD with regard to serving procedures. Any problems with volunteer leaders are to be taken up with the CD. The Kitchen is off limits for campers, leaders, and counsellors at all times (with the exception of Leaders serving evening snack).

**Waterfront (Risk level – 9)**

The Waterfront Director (WD) must be at least 18 and hold the equivalent of the National Lifeguard Service's Registered Lifeguard Certificate. Before Camp, prepares a complete set of waterfront safety rules, prepares the beach, becomes familiar with the Camp's equipment and ensures safety items are in place and in satisfactory condition. The WD assumes responsibility and authority for the safety of everyone involved with swimming or waterfront activities, and, in conjunction with the Assistant, provides swimming activities and instruction in water safety. Co-ordinates with the CD to establish that Camp's program. Confirms with the CD that counsellors are available to assist at the beach as required.

The WD has full authority over everyone with regard to the beach and any waterfront activity, including the use of canoes or boats. The Assistant Waterfront has similar authority. The Assistant Waterfront is responsible to the WD and may be appointed Tuck Supervisor.

**Caretaker (Risk level – 5)**

The Caretaker (CT) is a general handyperson 18 or over who is familiar with the basics of carpentry, plumbing, and small gasoline engines. The main duty of the CT is to ensure the safe and sanitary condition of the grounds, the cabins and the washrooms. The CT ensures the ready availability of all sanitary consumables. Garbage pails are emptied on a regular basis. The CT looks after cutting grass, maintaining the lawnmower and

outboard motors, and making small repairs. The CT looks after the campfires and fireplace fires. The CT can require anyone on Camp property to immediately stop any action that is destructive to property, or endangers personal safety. Tools in the Service Centre are for the use of the CT and are available for use by camp staff only with permission. Tools are not for use by campers. The CT instructs the Camp on the Emergency Drill, and carries one out at the beginning of the Camp week.

### From the United Church Camping Standards Manual

#### Section E: Camp Staffing Standards

**Note:** *Unless otherwise indicated, camp staffing standards apply to camp staff\* and not to occasional resource people\*.*

*(From Glossary of Terms, edited version, from UCC Camping Standards Manual:*

**\*Camp Staff:** *Paid or unpaid people in the service of the Camp, with ongoing responsibility for one or more aspects of Camp life.*

**\* Occasional resource person:** *A person with particular skills or knowledge needed by the Camp on a short-term basis. Occasional resource people may do such things as: help in the kitchen for a short amount of time, come in for a day to teach a particular craft or skill, or help with some maintenance work around the Camp. Occasional resource people may be paid or unpaid.)*

Volunteer Camp Staff are accountable to the Camp Director. Paid Camp Staff are accountable to the Executive Directors.

It is important that camps have clearly stated expectations for their paid camp staff and volunteers. Job clarity provides guidance for workers to meet a high standard of performance and provides a measure for performance appraisal during evaluation. (Lau-Ren policy is to have resource people, other than those providing maintenance duties, sign a Standards of Conduct form.) It is also essential that camps follow fair and equitable employment practices consistent with current labour laws in their respective jurisdictions. The following standards will help to provide a foundation for good employee and volunteer relations at camps.

#### Camp Screening Standards

All camp staff positions will be assessed for the degree of risk the position poses to vulnerable persons. A written job description will include the camp board's risk assessment of the position and the recommended level of screening. The degree of risk must also be assessed when involving an occasional resource person in camp life.

Any position, camp staff or resource, which creates the opportunity of unsupervised access to children (and other vulnerable individuals) will undergo a Police Records check (PRC) in accordance with the United Church Recommended Screening Procedures on the next page. PRCs for returning camp staff and volunteers must be renewed every three years. (It is Lau-Ren's understanding that we can request a PRC from those under 18, but cannot insist on it. Furthermore, refusal by the individual cannot be used as a reason for non-acceptance.)

The camp will maintain a personnel file for each camp staff person, containing confirmation of police records checks, where applicable, notes of interviews with references and/or reference letters, and copies of performance evaluations. Personnel files will be kept secure and confidential. It is the responsibility of the camp board or its designate to ensure that these files are maintained in a secure and confidential manner. Personnel files will be kept for a **minimum** of seven (7) years. Camps should consult with their lawyers and boards on length of time to keep personnel files.

### **Recruitment and Hiring policies**

*(All standards in this section refer to both paid camp staff and volunteer camp staff. They do not apply to occasional resource people\* who may be used by the Camp from time to time (\*See top of previous page.)*

The Camp staff at United Church camps will have knowledge of and appreciation for United Church theology, culture and traditions.

All camp staff have a written job description that includes the risk assessment of the position, level of screening and special qualifications/licensing.

The Camp has a leadership recruitment program that recruits and provides training to former campers, active church youth and qualified adults.

For all camp positions, the camp receives written applications and/or resumes that become part of the personnel file

The hiring process for all camp staff positions (paid and volunteer positions) will include an interview that may cover such things as work history, education, leisure activities, awareness of the United Church and relevant skills and training.

References will be checked before any position is offered to an applicant. All prospective staff are required to supply at least two references.

The camp will use a written contract with each staff person. The paid camp staff person will retain a copy of his/her contract, and one copy will be kept in the person's personnel file. For volunteer staff, his/her contract will be kept in their personnel file.

All hiring procedures must comply with the Provincial human rights code and employment/labour legislation.

### **Staff Discipline and Termination Policies**

All training sessions include an open discussion of how discipline issues for camp staff will be handled at camp and by whom.

The camp has a process for terminating an employee that complies with the employment/labour legislation and Provincial human rights code.

Grounds for dismissal are clearly stated in the Staff Manual. The Camp Staff manual contains written guidelines for dealing with camp staff or volunteer misconduct.

### **Camp Staff Responsibilities and Qualifications**

The status of a Counsellor in Training (CIT) shall be clearly defined as a camper, and not as a staff member, and this status shall be communicated to all camp participants

If a prospective staff member has been associated with another camp or children's organization, every effort must be made to obtain a written or verbal reference from that source.

#### **Trustworthy Care: Helping organizations provide safe service**

Recommended Screening Procedures for use in Camps,  
Residences, Service Organizations, Outreach ministries  
and other ministries associated with the  
United Church of Canada

#### **What is our duty toward those whom we serve?**

**The United Church of Canada** has a **legal, moral, and spiritual duty** to care for and protect all individuals who receive services in United Church related institutions or who participate in United Church programs. This is a legal principle called "**Duty of Care**" which identifies the obligations of organizations to take reasonable measures to care for and protect their participants.

This brochure is one of a series of resources produced by the United Church of Canada to help our institutions, organizations, ministries, camps and congregations understand the principles of screening, as one measure of our "Duty of Care", and to put these procedures into practice in the recruitment and selection of both staff and volunteers.

We need to be consistent and open about our screening practices when placing a person in a position of trust or authority working with any individual vulnerable due to age, illness, personal crisis, etc.

**When screening procedures are followed as a matter of policy, this tells our communities that we take seriously our responsibility to offer a safe and nurturing environment for study, service, worship and personal growth.**

#### **Where does Screening fit?**

The policies for screening are set before there is ever a candidate in mind. It begins with a clear position description and ends when the position is no longer needed. Screening is not about individuals; it is about creating and maintaining a safe environment through careful matching of tasks and skills.

**Screening Steps:**

1. Define the nature of the position and write a job description.
2. Determine the nature of the risk: Participants, Activity, Setting, Supervision, and Relationship
3. Recruit based on the job description and skills needed.
4. Use formal application forms to keep track of important information about the applicants.
5. Interview prospective candidates, preferably with more than one interviewer.
6. Check written references with follow-up phone calls.
7. For highest risk positions involving significant trust and vulnerable individuals, conduct a police records check. Advise the applicant that this is required and obtain their consent to the check. Know ahead of time what types of Offences would be relevant to the job under consideration.
8. Provide orientation and training to new workers and volunteers.
9. Provide supervision and feedback regularly and formally.
10. Conduct regular performance evaluations, including feedback from program participants.

**Understanding Risk:**

Employee and volunteer positions have different levels of risk attached to them, depending on several factors - the participants, the setting, the activity itself, the supervision provided and the nature of the relationship between participant and worker.

Understanding the nature of the risk will help organizations to determine the kind of screening, training and supervision needed to make programs and services as safe as possible for those who are involved. The higher the risk to vulnerable individuals, the more stringent the screening measures should be.

**An example will help:**

Personal assistance with dressing and bathing for young children or elderly persons in a non-family residential setting, such as a camp or a nursing home, would be considered an activity with a high degree of risk. Why?

- The participant is vulnerable due to age and lack of independence.
- The setting is fairly private.
- The activity involves physical contact
- There is no immediate supervision of the worker.
- The relationship is one of trust, where the service provider has power (physical)

Screening for a position of this type would need to be stringent, including personal and professional references, Police checks for a history of abuse or assault charges, Child Abuse registry checks if available in your area, and a plan for regular supervision and evaluation.

An activity director's position could be a fairly low risk position if all activities occurred in a group context, in a public place, with additional adult helpers.

**Sound Human Resources and Volunteer Management Practices.**

Appropriate screening procedures are just a part of sound Human Resources and Volunteer Management Practices. If your organization has a volunteer coordinator, or a Human Resources Manager, that person would be your primary resource for screening. However, it is shocking to discover that often, written references are not followed up with phone calls, credentials are not checked, and background information is not authenticated.

Screening policies offer protection only if they are followed consistently. **Have your Board of Directors adopt a comprehensive screening policy and ensure that those on selection committees follow it well.**

**Hope and Faith, but no guarantees!**

There is no way to absolutely guarantee that no harm will ever come to any participant, staff or volunteer in a program or service. But your organization exists and serves because there is a human need, and in faith you step in to offer support and service.

**Thanks be to God!**

Organizations need to guard against charges of negligence by diligent screening and other safety policies. Adequate insurance is needed to safeguard the future of your organization. These things are necessary. What is essential is that United Church related organizations minister in a spirit of faith and hope, responding to the gospel call to love and serve others.

**Statement of Commitment:**

The United Church of Canada is committed to providing a safe environment for worship work and study in all Pastoral Charges, Congregations institutions, agencies and organizations, or other bodies which operate under its name. The United Church of Canada seeks to ensure that all staff volunteers and ministry personnel who work with vulnerable individuals in United Church settings share this commitment. This commitment will be demonstrated by staff, volunteers and ministry personnel showing respect for personal boundaries, protecting others from harm and abuse, and enabling those in their care to learn and grow without fear of exploitation.

As we work together to create this community of trust and safety, God's vision of Shalom sustains and guides us. We will experience the presence of the Spirit, nurturing and prodding us to be a people of compassion and grace.

**Theological Statement:**

Jesus came into the world to bring life in all its fullness. As followers of Jesus we are called to show love to one another, and to the world (John 13:34-35), to share our gifts and resources, and to build a community of mutuality and respect (Acts 3: 44-47). As a church, we have a primary duty to care for those who are marginalized, less powerful or more vulnerable in our community (Deuteronomy 10:17-19, Isaiah 61:1 & 2)



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God intends that all people enjoy a life free from exploitation and abuse. Created in the image of God, all persons have a right to be treated with respect and protected from harm.

Our church is blessed with the gifts of many that, offer leadership, as volunteers, staff and ministry personnel. These people have a special calling to offer their time and talents in congregations, Sunday Schools, programs for children and youth, home visiting and many other ministries of the church. These people also are called to act with integrity and discipline as they teach and care for the people of God. The church and all its workers are called to honour the dignity of each person, as created in the image of God.

Jesus teaches that we must love one another. Love does not insist upon its own way (Corinthians 13:5). Where manipulation and exploitation exist in a relationship, love is violated.

The principle which supports this statement on “Screening Procedures for Positions of Trust and Authority in the United Church of Canada” is that followers of Jesus must demonstrate love, respect and honour for one another as members of the body of Christ: for Jesus reminds us that as we do to the most vulnerable among us, we do unto him (Matthew 25: 35-40).

**Recommended Next Steps:**

Read “Faithful Footsteps: Screening Procedures for Positions of Trust and Authority in the United Church of Canada: A Handbook”, available through your Conference Office.

Contact the Volunteer Bureau in your area and ask about a workshop on "Screening for non profit organizations".

Get a copy of “Screening in Faith: A National Education Campaign on Screening Resource” through Volunteer Canada, 430 Gilmour St. Ottawa, Ontario, K2P OR8

Contact the Police force(s) in your area for information on the particular steps in conducting Police checks in that jurisdiction (The process is determined by the local police force.)

Be mindful of how Human Rights Legislation affects what can be asked in job interviews and on application forms (The Human Rights Code differs in various provincial and territorial jurisdictions).

Find out if there is a Child Abuse Registry in your area and how to conduct checks if deemed necessary to the position.

Offer support and thanks to those workers in your organization who demonstrate loving service, trustworthy care, and compassion your program participants.

For more information, contact the United Church conference office in your area.

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## **Volunteer Recruitment and Summer Staff Hiring Procedures**

### **Volunteers:**

A Counsellor is of age 16 or over and a Counsellor-in-Training (CIT) is at least 14 years of age. The primary role of Camp Counsellors is to be actively involved in the care, custody, and programming of children in age groupings. There are two counsellors with each group of campers. It is expected that they will work co-operatively and creatively in providing for the needs of the children. Where necessary, counsellors with the qualifications and interest may be asked to assist in program areas.

An applicant which is considered for placement will be interviewed, and references will be checked. It is expected that all counsellors will be available for all pre-camp training sessions organized by the Board; one being held early in the year, and another before camp starts in July at the Camp site. All Counsellors, both volunteer and paid, will sign a contract, which will also be signed by the Camp Director.

Leaders will be recruited by the Camp Director and must submit an application and obtain two written references which contain contact information of reference and address issues of personal skill, knowledge, attitude and character of the applicant. The references cannot be relatives or personal friends, but rather people who are knowledgeable of their growth and development as a volunteer or employee.

Following the offer of as a volunteer Counsellor or CIT, the Personnel Committee may request a Criminal Record Search Statement from the Provincial Police in regard to any possible convictions related to assault against adults or children. The volunteer's signature on the application provides the Camp with permission to contact references and previous employers requesting information concerning job history and personal character information. All volunteer staff will be required to sign a contract, which will also be signed by the Camp Director.

### **Paid Staff:**

Summer Staff and Paid Counsellors are recruited by the Executive Director. All selected applicants will go through an interview process. Verbal telephone references will be performed for selected candidates. Successful candidates will be required to sign a contract, which will also be signed by the Executive Directors. Staff over the age of 19 years will be required to provide a satisfactory Criminal Records Check.