



YMCA Camp Icaghowan

Counselor in Training Program 2026



SKILLS. SERVICE. STRIVE.

The Counselor in Training program is designed as a three-week, capstone learning and development program, meant to strengthen leadership skills used by current camping staff. CITs are coached on group facilitation, in camp behavioral management and leadership, technical camp facilitation skills, and collaboratively making consequential decisions. It is expected that, in addition to regularly assigned tasks, participants will keep their eyes open and look for opportunities to learn or improve necessary skills of meeting and serving campers.

Leadership

The progression from shadowing counselors and learning hard skills to being the primary leader of games and activities for younger Icaghowan campers constitutes a significant arc of development for CIT participants in camp. They learn to develop goals, plan activities, implement, then reflect and revise based on what worked well and what did not. To be able to effectively debrief and learn from their experiences, CITs will learn from the 545 Leadership Model. That framework conceptualizes leadership as a set of five values, four roles, and five skills.

THE 545 LEADERSHIP MODEL

Five Values (CHERR)	Four Roles	Five Skills
Caring	Self-Leader	Communication
Honesty	Peer Leader	Emotional Intelligence
Equity	Team Member	Grit
Respect	Team Leader	Initiative
Responsibility		Judgement

CIT Program Overview

A three-week session designed to challenge dedicated campers to improve their outdoor, leadership and group facilitation skills. During the first week CITs will go through a small staff training, similar to what our staff experience. They will develop their leadership skills, become CPR/First aid certified, learn the basics on leading programs at camp, practice leading activities, and learn more about camp operations. During their next 2 weeks, they will practice their skills by shadowing counselors in cabins. Each CIT will be assigned a cabin group and staff they will learn from. The first week they will start by leading smaller activities and transitions. The second week they will take more leadership and collaborate with the counselors. They will experience shadowing in 2 different cabins giving them experience with two different age groups. They will practice their leadership skills and feel comfortable leading by themselves by the end of their time. **CITs will go home on the weekends in-between their weeks. They will go home on Thursday and return to camp on Sunday.**

Qualifications

1. The Counselor in Training Program is for all persons who are 16 to 17 years old, who are willing to serve the needs of the camp and campers.
2. The applicant must be committed to personal and leadership growth.
3. All applicants must complete the application form by February 1st.

CIT Expectations:

1. Program Focus

- a. Assist staff with progressives, activities, cabin time and all camp games.
 - a. Learn the skills associated with each progressive and activity and be able to teach independently by week 3.
 - b. Participate in Counselor in Training Sessions facilitated by Support Staff and other professionals on Camp property.
 - c. Daily responsibilities include, but not limited to, the following activities: dining hall set-up and clean up, service projects, program responsibilities, assisting counselors with campers and creating a safe and inclusive camp community.

2. Weekend Expectations

- a. On the weekends it is **required** that CITs go home. **It is preferred that CITs ride the bus (to/from White Bear Lake Y)**, but parent drop off/pickup can be approved.

3. Personal Quarters

- a. Care and Maintenance. Quarters will be kept clean and neat on a regular basis.
- b. Your area should be thoroughly cleaned at the end of your CIT session as well as weekly.

4. Meal Procedures

- a. All CITs must attend every meal and rotate sitting with cabins, assisting with food as programming expectations and camper needs.

5. Quiet Time 10:00 P.M.

- a. All CIT's are to be in their assigned cabins by devos time. When not assigned to a cabin, by 10PM
- b. An individual's need for sleep varies from person to person. Because many of us are living under the same roof and some people would like to go to bed earlier than others, it must be quiet in camp after 10:00

The role of a CIT is to reflect the quality and standards of Camp Icaghowan. It is important to show enthusiasm for the program and philosophy; demonstrate a willingness to perform assigned tasks and when those are finished, seek out other things to become involved in, along with investing in the camper wellbeing.

Participation Requirements and Accessibility

Campers coming to a Y of the North overnight camp should be motivated and excited to experience residential summer camp, which involves working as a team, embracing physical and mental challenges, and embodying our five core values; Caring, Honesty, Equity, Respect and Responsibility. If your child has a disability or mental health concern requiring an accommodation, or a special need you would like us to be aware of, please let us know by filling out the accommodation request form (found in Forms & Publications on your camp's website) and submitting it to your camp's Director before your child comes to camp. This information enables us to better meet the needs of your child within available resources. Y of the North Camps reserve the right to send any camper home early who does not abide by our code of community, or whose behavior is disruptive, uncontrollable, illegal, dangerous, or disrespectful to other campers or the camp community. Our staff works within the scope of their training to support all campers. We do not issue refunds for campers that leave early due to code of community violations. Our Code of Community can be found in the [Camper Family Handbook](#).

Dates, Rates and Application Process

Our CIT program is for teens who are 16 to 17. We encourage campers that this be their last step at camp before being able to apply for staff. Please know that you must be 17 to be employed as a camp counselor at Camp Icaghowan. If you have not participated in WLC's (Work Leadership Campers) yet and are not going to be of age this summer we would encourage you to select one of those programs and then do the CIT Program the summer before being eligible to be considered for staff.

Session Dates (*CAMPERS GO HOME FRIDAY & SATURDAY*)

CIT A - Sunday, June 21 to Thursday, July 9 -> \$2,350

CIT B - Sunday, August 2 to Wednesday, August 19 -> \$2,190

****Financial Assistance is available.** The CIT program, like all Camp Icaghowan programs, is for all. Visit <https://www.ymcanorth.org/adventure/scholarships> for more information.

Application Process

Priority deadline for applications is February 1st, 2026, with rolling applications to follow. Space is not guaranteed for all applicants.

To apply for the CIT program, please fill out the online application -> [HERE](#) <-

We will begin reviewing applications as they come in, and scheduling interviews as early as mid-December, 2025. All CIT applicants will partake in an interview for the program.

As mentioned above, priority will be given to candidates that apply before February 1st, 2026. We will provide CIT approvals and confirmations to priority applicants by February 15th, 2026.

The application will remain live and available until all CIT spaces are filled.

Upon submission, you will receive an email noting that we have received your application. If you have any questions, please reach out to our Sr. Program Director, Gretchen Hoff, at gretchen.hoff@ymcamn.org.

Acceptance and Registration

If accepted to our CIT program, you will receive instructions from the Program Director on how to register for the program, payment processing plan, etc., to be fully enrolled and registered by April 15th.

Cancellation and Change Policy

Cancellations received on, or before May 15th will be refunded, however your deposit is non-refundable.

Additional cancellation information, including change fees and deadlines, can be found in our [Camp Icaghowan Family Handbook](#).

Conclusion

We hope that you'll consider applying to our Camp Icaghowan Counselor In Training program! If you have any questions, you can email our Sr. Program Director at gretchen.hoff@ymcamn.org, or our info email at info.icaghowan@ymcamn.org, see you this summer!

