

YMCA Camp Northern Lights

Family Handbook

YMCA of the North

Administrative Office
651 Nicollet Mall, Suite 500
Minneapolis, MN 55402
Phone: 612-822-2267

Camp Office
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Babbitt, MN 55706
Phone: 218-503-9600
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campnorthernlights.org



Camp Northern Lights

Mission Statement

The mission of YMCA Camp Northern Lights is to nurture our need for belonging and connection, to each other and to the outdoors.

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CAMP NORTHERN LIGHTS CULTURE

The beautiful Northwoods location of YMCA Camp Northern Lights beckons families to explore and enjoy the outdoors. The beauty of the setting, with the vast sky at night and the towering pines on the shores of Bear Island Lake, provide an atmosphere ideal for a connection to family and nature, as well as personal reflection and spiritual growth.

We seek to:

- Enrich family life and develop new insights and understanding between family members;
- Develop a sense of belonging with the larger camp community and encourage inter-family relationships;
- Enhance outdoor skills and strengthen appreciation for wilderness;
- Encourage a deeper connection to nature and a desire to advocate for wild places.

All Belong!

YMCA Camp Northern Lights seeks to promote an atmosphere where all persons feel welcome, included, and respected. At Northern Lights, we pride ourselves in appreciating the value of diverse populations and welcome all! Our programs are designed to enhance the relationships of any and all those that you consider a part of your family.

Scholarship/Financial Assistance

The YMCA raises funds annually to help make camp more accessible and affordable for all. We all deserve a family camp experience, and our Financial Assistance is supported by contributions from our Annual Fund and provides scholarships and subsidies for families in need of financial support to attend camp. Please let us know if we may serve you or your family in this way. If the Financial Assistance could help a family visit Camp Northern Lights, please have them apply online on our website at:

<https://www.ymcanorth.org/adventure/scholarships>

WHAT TO BRING

Careful planning will make your stay at camp more enjoyable. We suggest taking a look at our packing list on our Forms and Publications tab - <https://www.ymcanorth.org/adventure/paperwork-family-camp>. We have highlighted a few important things to consider when packing.

Each cabin/bungalow has the following contents included, outside of standard kitchenware:

- Coffee Filters
- Matches
- Salt & Pepper
- Paper Towels
- Green Scrubby
- Bar of hand soap *1 per sink
- Dish Soap

Toilet

Paper

Additionally:

- Many essential grocery items are available at our Anna Marie's Snack Shack, find the whole list [here](#).

Towels: Bring your own hand, bath, beach, and dish towels. Camp Northern Lights does not provide towels.

Bedding: Please bring your own sheet sets, blankets, pillows and pillowcases. Camp Northern Lights does not provide any bedding. If you are interested in purchasing a flat and fitted sheet for your stay, please reach out to:.

Toiletries: Be sure to bring your own toiletries such as Shampoo, Toothpaste, Brushes, etc...

PLANNING FOR YOUR SESSION

Communication at Camp

Mail may be addressed to you at:

Your Name (and Cabin/Tent site)
YMCA Camp Northern Lights
9089 Highway 21 N
Babbitt, MN 55706

Phone

If you need to supply a phone number for folks staying back home, the Camp Northern Lights office does have a phone. Should an emergency arise at home, the caller should contact the Camp Northern Lights Office at 218-503-9600.

Cell Phones & Laptop Use

It is our intention to create a place where families can unplug and be removed from the technology elements of our daily lives, allowing for a simple, peaceful and quiet family vacation in the woods. A huge part of what makes Camp Northern Lights such a special place for families is the absence of these things. Out of respect for others, please keep your screens in your cabins. Thank you!

Wi-Fi

We do understand the need to check-in with work, family and friends. Wi-Fi is available at Laurentian Lodge and tables are provided outside for your use.

Emergencies & First Aid Equipment

Camp Office (Laurentian Lodge)

Information and key staff may be located here. Here you can also find:

- Automatic Defibrillator (AED unit)
- First Aid Kit
- Access to the camp radio and phones – for emergencies

Camp Office (Anna Marie's - Beach Store)

Information and key staff may be located here. Here you can also find:

- Automatic Defibrillator (AED unit)
- First Aid Kit
- Oxygen Tank
- Access to the camp radio and phones – for emergencies

*See hours of operation on entrance doors, Laurentian Lodge is unlocked at all times for access to emergency radio use.

Find Camp Northern Lights on Facebook and Instagram

Want to stay in touch with Camp Northern Lights throughout the year? Find us on Facebook by searching for YMCA Camp Northern Lights in your Facebook search bar. You can see and share photos and videos from your time at camp, stay connected with the people you meet, and get the latest information on what's happening during all four seasons at the best place in the world! Also, take a peek before and after you come to camp to stay updated on any changes and modifications to our programs.

You can also follow us on Instagram @ymca_camp_northern_lights. If you have photos to share of your stay at camp add it to our Google photo album <https://photos.app.goo.gl/pD25TuvFT44b2Bb78>

PROGRAM AREA VILLAGE LOCATIONS

- North Point Village
 - Laurentian Lodge (camp store serving coffee and apparel)
 - Nursery (for ages 0 – 3)
 - Electric Sauna (first come, first serve)
 - Activity Areas (gaga pit and shuffleboard)
 - Playground
 - Lawn Games (badminton, ladder golf, ping pong)
 - North Point Beach & Swim Platform ('The Cheese')
 - Boating Area (canoes, kayaks and stand-up paddleboards)
 - Fishing Docks (located on north side of Peninsula near the boating area)
- Buena Vista Village
 - Trail Center (bike rentals and staff led bike rides)
 - Pump Track
 - Play Field
 - Yoga Field
 - Wood-Burning Finnish Sauna (available to sign up for)
 - Family Art Barn (FAB)
 - Garden & Compost Headquarters
 - Buena Vista Beach & Water Trampoline
 - Community Tent
 - Orion (Headquarters for kitchen program and LDP's)
- Back of Beyond Village
 - Bear Island Stage

- Community Bathhouse (Has bathrooms and showers for anyone to use)
- Anna Marie's (camp store serving ice cream and cold beverages)
- The C.O.V.E. (Center for Outdoor Ventures and Exploration)
 - Programs related to cookouts/overnight, motorized watercraft rentals and other outdoor activities
- Playground
- Massage Therapy Cabin

A SUMMER SESSION AT NORTHERN LIGHTS

The following is a general outline of activities. A specific schedule with times and locations will be at your cabin or campsite when you arrive and are posted in public areas.

Arrival

Campers may arrive between 3:00 – 6:00pm on the first day of camp. Please do not arrive early, as our staff needs ample time to get the facility ready for the next session of campers. As you drive into camp, staff will check your family in at the check-in tent. Other staff will be spread around camp to help you find your cabin/site. If your family arrives after 6 p.m., you may go directly to your cabin/site. A map of camp can be found on the check-in table located at the camp entrance. Information on how to locate staff at other times and other important information for the week will be available at your cabin or campsite.

6 Night Sample Schedule

Sunday

3:00-6:00 p.m. 7:00	Campers arrive and move into cabins/sites Opening Celebration
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Monday - Friday

7:45-8:00 a.m.	Big and Little Dippers
8:15-8:45 a.m.	Yoga
9:00-9:20 a.m.	Northern Nature
9:30-12:00 p.m.	Age Group activities
9:30-10:00	Activity Sign ups (Monday only)
2:00-4:30 p.m.	Afternoon activities
7:00 p.m.	Evening activities

3 Night Sample Schedule

Day 1

3:00-6:00 p.m.	Campers arrive and move into cabins/sites
6:00-7:00 p.m.	Opening Celebration & Activity Sign Ups

Day 2 and 3

7:30-8:00 a.m.	Big and Little Dippers
8:15-8:45 a.m.	Yoga
9:00-9:20 a.m.	Northern Nature
9:30-12:00 p.m.	Age Group activities
2:00-4:30 p.m.	Afternoon activities
7:00 p.m.	Evening activities

Departure for 3 and 6 Night Sessions

A cleaning checklist will be provided in your cabin/site.

On your way out, coffee, juice and muffins will be available at the check in/out tent from 8-10 a.m.

An online evaluation of the week will be emailed to you after your stay. Please take the time to offer feedback, it is essential in helping us improve each year!

Camp Store

Camp Northern Lights has two camp store locations: Laurentian Lodge is located in North Point Village, and Anna Marie's is located at the beachfront patio in Back of Beyond Village. Store hours will be posted at both locations and listed in the schedule you receive at your cabin/site.

To make things easy for your family and our team, please bring a credit/debit card to either camp store location the first time.

***Camp Northern Lights does not accept cash**

Items available at each location

Laurentian Lodge

- Espresso drinks, cold brew, hot chocolate, local root beer
- Camp Northern Lights merchandise: apparel stuffed animals, hats, postcards, stickers, coffee mugs, water bottles and more!

Anna Marie's

- Ice cream
- [Essential Grocery Items List](#)
- Snacks
- Fishing bait (availability based on local supply)
- Insect repellent, sunscreen and other essential toiletries

Your camp store bill will be charged to your credit/debit card at the end of your session - this debit should be processed within 7 days of your departure. A receipt of your store bill will be sent to you upon request.

The C.O.V.E. (Center for Outdoor Ventures and Exploration)

The COVE is located at Anna Marie's near the Buena Vista Waterfront. Hours will be posted in your schedule. The COVE provides a variety of activities, classes, and games throughout the week. The staff will offer help and guidance in planning your own family hike, paddle, overnight or cookout. Maps of the immediate area, camping and fishing gear, canoe vehicle straps and other equipment are available.

The COVE provides fun activities to draw attention to the natural beauty around us at Northern Lights. Get ready for an adventure! Nature scavenger hunts, orienteering, fishing equipment, boat and pontoon rentals, hikes, paddles, and more!

We also have sunset cruises available! A staff will guide you on a tour around the lake, bring along chilled Dorothy's root beer and some assorted snacks for you to enjoy!

Fishing on Bear Island Lake

With more than 20 islands and over 20 miles of shoreline, Bear Island Lake has plenty of opportunities for a fishing experience.

Pontoons and boats are available to rent for an added fee. You can sign up for all these when you arrive at camp. A staff led orientation is required for anyone that reserved a motorized watercraft. Fishing poles and equipment are available for check-out and bait will be available for purchase at Anna Marie's.

Fishing is not allowed at, or near any swimming beach, or from any dock near swimming areas. You may fish off the community docks near Bass, Ash and North Point Boating area.

Fishing Boat Rental
\$50 for half day
\$100 for full day

Pontoon Rental
\$150 for half day

Staff Guided Sunset Pontoon Cruise
\$50

Cookouts and Overnights

Explore Bear Island Lake on a cookout or overnight! All equipment, with the exception of personal gear (i.e., rain gear, toiletries, etc.), is available in the COVE. Our staff will help with planning your lunch/dinner cookout or an overnight and assist you in packing out your equipment and food for your special family get-away. Groups are limited to a maximum of nine members, including one staff if you choose to have one accompany your family.

Cookout
\$10/person

Overnight
\$15/person

Children ages 0 – 3 are free.

You may sign up for these experiences once you arrive to camp.

The F.A.B. (Family Art Barn)

The Family Art Barn (FAB) is the center for art activities in camp. The FAB is located in Buena Vista Village. Campers 11 and under must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

Specific art classes are offered at the FAB and Art Tent some mornings and most afternoons from 2:00 – 4:30 p.m. depending on the day – see your schedule for more details. A sign-up may be required for some classes. All those who have signed up for a class are asked to come on time and plan on staying for the length of the class, as these classes are more technical in nature and require the entire period.

*There may be an additional fee for some art projects.

The FAB will also host “Open Art” during specific times in the afternoon - see your schedule for more details. Families can drop in at any time during open art for a wide variety of art projects to work on as a family.

The Trail Center

Trail System

Campers of all ages will have the opportunity to explore approximately three miles of trails that vary in difficulty. With three different trail loops, there is an option for riders of all abilities. [View trail map.](#)

Bike Fleet

Our fleet of bikes will now include sizes for kids, teens and adults. We have Fat Tire Bikes from Framed available for adults. For kids, we have a variety of sizes with our Trek Roscoe and Marlin bikes. Similar to our policy in the rest of camp, campers 11 and younger must be accompanied by an adult.

Programs & Bike Rentals

Campers will have the opportunity to go out for a ride in whichever way they prefer.

- Programs
 - Staff will be leading rides for all ages and ability levels. Tailored rides are offered for groups of adults, family groups and camper age groups.
- o Rentals
 - Campers will have the opportunity to bike at their own pace and rent a bike from the Trail Center.
 - Rental options will be offered during specific days and times during their session.
 - We offer half and full day bike rentals.
 - A morning rental is from 9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
 - An afternoon is from 2:30 – 7:00 p.m.
 - A full day rental is from 9:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
 - o Cost
 - Half Day: \$15 per bike
 - Full Day: \$30 per bike
- We encourage families to bring along their personal bikes. **Wearing a helmet is required for all campers when riding on Camp Northern Lights property.** The Trail Center is equipped with a wide array of different sized helmets for you to use!

Safety

To keep our community safe, we ask that all riders follow the guidelines below:

- Follow all bike trail signage (stop signs, directional arrows, etc.)
- Please do not ride on walking/hiking trails
- Always wear a helmet when riding
- Never ride alone – we encourage all ages to use the buddy system
- Give other trail users enough space when riding

[**View bike sizing chart**](#)

ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS FOR SUMMER 2025

Look for these programs at Northern Lights this summer! When you arrive at camp, you will find a site binder and paperwork pertinent to your session in your cabin or tent site that will include a schedule for your session. Please review it carefully and let us know if you have any questions.

Program Options

When you arrive in camp, you will be informed about the program possibilities for both family and individual participation. Other than our Chalk Talk and the Camp Orientation, participation is voluntary. It's your vacation, so don't over-program yourself!

Morning Activities

Individual Growth

Our morning activities are targeted towards individual growth through our age group activities. This can be found with both our kid and adult programming, letting folks meet new friends, adventure outside, and learn new skills! Feel free to also take the morning to yourself to relax, recharge, and explore on your own. The morning is for you!

Big and Little Dippers Big and Little Dippers swimmers take the early morning plunge into Bear Island Lake in order to officially end camp's quiet hours. Buena Vista Village dippers happen at 7:30 a.m. and North Point Village

dippers happen at 7:45 a.m. Feel free to jump in at both locations if you want to be a part of the prestigious group of double-dippers.

Age-Groups are held on all full program days (non-departure and arrival days) from 9:30a.m. - 12:00p.m. Children are divided by age into groups and the wonderful camp staff lead them in recreational and educational activities – crafts, hikes, outdoor skills, games, etc. There are age-groups for all ages- infants through adults!

Camper Supervision Ratios during age groups:

0-3 years 1 staff/3 campers

3-5 years 1 staff/6 campers

6-8 years 1 staff/8 campers

9-14 years 1 staff/10 campers

15-18 years 1 staff/12 campers

The Leadership Development Program, also referred to around camp as the LDPs, is a program for teens 14-18 who come up to camp for two weeks to help with age groups, afternoon programming, and participate in leadership programming with our staff. Look out for LDPs around camp and say hi. Also feel free to ask our staff about the LDP program if you are a teen/have a teen who may be interested.

Adult Age-Groups Kids aren't the only ones who get to have fun! Meet your neighbors, explore the outdoors, and learn something new. There will be at least two adult age-group programs per day.

Examples include: Bear Island River Paddle, Bike Ride, Sauna's, Art Project, Service Project, Hikes, etc.

Announcements At 12:00 p.m. each day, announcements will be read by staff at Bear Island Stage and then posted outside both camp store locations. This is a way for our staff to let campers know of any program changes or highlights for the day. This is the best way to keep in touch with all that is going on throughout camp.

Afternoon Activities

Family Growth

In the afternoons, families come together to experience all the fun family-oriented programming we have around camp.

Activities tentatively scheduled for this summer include:

Family Art Barn

Head over to the Family Art Barn in the afternoons from 2-4:30 p.m. for open art activities. Bring your own artistic inspiration or ask our staff what the craft of the day is! We also have art classes for all ages and families during the afternoon, so look out for those at sign-ups.

Family Oriented Games and Activities

Look out for fun games and activities happening around camp during the afternoon! This could include anything from kickball to ultimate frisbee.

Naturalist Programming

We have some fantastic naturalist programming throughout the summer to help folks learn more about the nature around camp. Keep an eye out for programs such as orienteering and botany hikes.

Trail Center

Head over to the trail center and we'll get you and/or your family set up with some mountain bikes to ride on our single-track mountain biking trails. We also have cross-country skis there during the wintertime.

C.O.V.E. Activities

At the Center for Outdoor Venture and Exploration, we have cookouts and overnights available for sign up that can be accompanied by a staff member or done solo. We also have a fleet of canoes, kayaks, and paddle boards that you can take out on the water whenever you'd like! If you'd like to rent one of our motorized boats (pontoon or fishing boat) you can sign-up for that at the beginning of your session or throughout your session.

Evening Activities

Community Growth

Time for all of camp to come together and celebrate our time with each other!

Activities tentatively scheduled for this summer include:

Opening Celebration & Orientation takes place on the first night of each session. This is a chance to get to know other families and hear about all that is happening during your session at camp.

Good Neighbor Night Come one, come all to a night filled with camp cheer during Good Neighbor Night! From games for the kids, to trivia and a silent auction at Anna Marie's patio - and did we mention SKITS? Donations to the silent auction of handmade items such as games and art/crafts or camping items and snacks are appreciated - creativity is encouraged!

Sunset Paddles Join our staff for a group led paddle during the twilight hours of summer. Canoe and kayaks will be available. Routes include a short paddle down Bear Island River or a quiet paddle around Hot Dog Island.

Saunas We will have programmed sauna times for specific groups that you can sign up for. We have two saunas at Camp Northern Lights. Our wood burning sauna is located near Revontulet. Our electric sauna, down from Laurentian Lodge, will be available for family use at any time. You can talk to staff about how to turn it on. Look out for our age group (kids, young adults, and adults) sauna times this summer.

Closing Celebration is the perfect ending to your time at camp. Closing celebration will include songs, and special recognition of campers that have braved Big and Little Dippers and other camp traditions!

NORTHERN LIGHTS FULL TIME STAFF TEAM

Kaarin Mantz – Administrative Supervisor
Sam Kujawa – Property Manager
Wyndham Greenlaw – Caretaker
Noah Roseen – Maintenance Staff
Luke Maccoy – Kitchen Manager
Kelsa McCormick – Program Coordinator
Jenessa Carlisle – Program Director
Isaac Patterson – Executive Director

CAMP POLICIES & PROCEDURES

We ask that you are familiar with our camp policies and procedures.

Our North Woods Environment

Camp Northern Lights summer programs often take our beautiful north woods environment into account. We aim to create a greater appreciation for, and understanding of, the outdoors. Program activities are continually being developed with emphasis on increasing camper awareness of the north woods environment and on family participation in activities that promote a connection with wilderness.

Firewood & Campfires

Although surrounded by woodland, our supply of wood is not unlimited. Our wood supply, for your use at no charge, is dependent upon volunteer efforts and donated woodcutting equipment. We ask that you use firewood conservatively for campfires and in the woodstoves.

Fires are only allowed in designated areas. Each cabin/site has an outdoor fire ring that is either private or shared by a community. It is possible that dry conditions will create a fire hazard. If this occurs, camp stoves for tent campers are necessary. Please plan for the possibility of this condition by bringing a camp stove; if you don't have one, camp has a few available for use.

Recycling and Trash

If you are taking out trash or recycling it should be delivered to the appropriate area before 4 p.m. each day. In keeping with our philosophy, Camp Northern Lights is proud to recycle glass, plastic (number 1 and 2 only), paper and metal. Recyclables must be separated from other waste and placed in the

appropriate containers. Please refer to your camp map for the closest recycling & trash location.

Wildlife

Camp Northern Lights shares the north woods with many amazing creatures. Bears do visit camp from time to time, looking for unattended food. Please help us prevent visits from bears by making sure that any food and garbage is properly put away at all times. If you are staying in a tent site, you can store food in the nearby food cache, in the bear boxes provided, or in your vehicle. While black bears are not usually dangerous to humans, remember that they are unpredictable wild animals and to keep a safe distance.

Dogs

Dogs are not allowed during the summer months. Please talk to our Fall/Winter/Spring Program Director if you want to learn about this policy change in the non-summer months. A number of full time staff do have dogs that live in camp so you may see them around!

Tobacco

Tobacco use inside any structure or near camper cabins or sites is not allowed. There are two designated smoking areas in camp – the North Point Village parking lot and the Buena Vista Village parking lot.

Lost and Found

Please keep track of all personal items brought to camp. If you lose an item, please connect with a staff member. Camp Northern Lights is not responsible for personal items that are lost, left behind, or misused by other campers. Lost and Found bins are located at Anna Marie's, the Family Art Barn and Laurentian Lodge. All items will be kept throughout the summer

Accessibility

If a family member has accessibility needs requiring an accommodation you would like us to be aware of, please let us know as soon as possible. This information enables us to better meet the needs of your family within available resources. Please contact the YMCA Customer Service Center at 612-230-9622 for more information.

CAMP NORTHERN LIGHTS POLICIES

1. Every attempt is made to encourage preservation of this unique wilderness setting. All campers are expected to respect the trees, land, buildings, equipment, and each other. Individuals, families or groups registered will be held responsible for any damage to the grounds, property, buildings and/or equipment.
2. If you choose to bring any personal recreation equipment, please keep it in your cabin or site when not in use. Camp Northern Lights will not be responsible for any damages or misuse of personal equipment by other campers.
3. To respect possible allergy issues of other campers, dogs belonging to campers and/or volunteers are only permitted in Cygnus, Callisto, Cassiopeia, Lyra, Jack Pine, Fir, Pegasus, Polaris and Red Pine
4. Use of alcoholic beverages at camp is limited to campers' immediate living area. The legal drinking age limit is 21 years and is adhered to at all times. Please be safe and responsible!
5. Tobacco use inside any structure or on the grounds around from camper cabins or sites is not allowed. Nearby smoking area is available.
6. Use of illegal drugs is prohibited.
7. The YMCA of the North bans guns and weapons of any kind on the premises of Camp Northern Lights. All firearms are prohibited on camp property.
8. Campers should park cars in established parking lots during their stay at camp. We ask that personal vehicles are only driven through camp for loading and unloading during arrival and departure.
9. Camp Northern Lights requires all youth groups, with youth 18 years and younger, should have chaperone ratios as follows:

Age	# Adults	# campers
0-3 years	1	3
3-5 years	1	6
6-8 years	1	8
9-14 years	1	10
15-18 years	1	12

That adult should be 21 years of age or older and at least five years older than the oldest participant in the group. Young adult groups, ages 19 and 20 years old, shall have one responsible adult chaperone to 15 campers. That adult should be 22 years of age or older and at least three years older than the oldest participant in the group. The responsible adult chaperone is the person signing the reservation agreement and is legally responsible for the group. Adult chaperones should have the health history, emergency contact information, and transportation permission for each participant. There should be two adults present, one with age-appropriate first aid, CPR, and AED certification and current lifeguard certification from a nationally recognized certifying body for waterfront activities.

10. For rental groups using the waterfront areas, we recommend at least two adults be present, one with lifeguard certification from a nationally recognized certifying body and an adult with experience and skill in paddling instruction.

11. Camper families or groups are responsible for their own emergency care and emergency transportation.
12. Camp Northern Lights advises group leaders to carry participant health information including name and address, emergency contact information, allergies or health conditions, and a signed permission to treat or religious waiver for any minors.
13. All campers should hike, ski, boat or canoe with a partner and communicate their route and estimated time of return to another responsible adult. All search and rescue effort expenses will be charged to the lost campers.
14. Any recreational activity carries with it normal levels of physical risk. Any injuries to campers while participating in activities at Camp Northern Lights are the responsibility of that camper or responsible adult. Camp Northern Lights does not carry accident insurance for campers.
15. All persons attending Camp Northern Lights must sign a YMCA waiver prior to or upon arrival. By submitting a waiver form, campers automatically grant permission to use photographs of individuals, families and/or groups in YMCA promotional materials.
16. ANY change(s) made to a summer reservation are subject to a \$25 service charge per change.
17. **No refunds are available after the payment-in-full date.**

Summer registration deposits are non-refundable and non-transferrable.

Non-Summer registrations and Book-Your-Own Getaway (BYOG) reservations will be assessed a \$50 cancellation fee when cancelled before payment-in-full date. Campers who do not show up to a session will not receive a refund.

No adjustment will be made for late arrival, early departure, or dismissal from camp. No adjustment to registration cost will be made for campers who are tardy, absent from camper days or are restricted due to disciplinary reasons, or inability to manage pre-existing conditions, current illness/injury*, or dismissal.

**If a camper is experiencing a physical/mental illness or injury prior to the session that prevents them from participating, a medical provider will need to provide proof of illness or injury to consider a partial refund.*

**Y Adventure Programs cannot refund payments when sessions are cut short or canceled due to circumstances beyond our control. These may include, but are not limited to, wilderness area closures, forest fires, flooding, or other climate and environmental hazards that would prevent us from providing a safe and meaningful experience for all participants.*

18. If a fall, winter, or spring reservation is cancelled more than 4 weeks in advance, \$50 is nonrefundable. Cancellations made within 30 days of the reservation are non-refundable.

19. If your cancellation is due to a camper's illness, medical reasons, or other uncontrollable circumstance, your camp fees will be refunded minus the deposit when cancellation is accompanied by a doctor or other official statement.

20. A \$20 service fee will be charged for all returned checks and credit card payment

Emergency Procedures

First aid kits are located in the camp office in Laurentian Lodge, Anna Marie's, the Trail Center, and the Family Art Barn. AED's are also located in Laurentian Lodge, Anna Marie's, and the Family Art Barn. Additionally, EpiPens (child & adult) are located in Laurentian Lodge and Anna Marie's.

Specific training and emergency procedures will be posted in your cabin/site and shared with you during orientation. The five types of emergency procedures are: severe weather, missing person, medical emergency, violent intruder and wildfire.

Procedures for Using Camp Equipment

You and your family members can use Camp Northern Lights equipment only after you attend an Equipment Demonstration. Staff will explain in detail, program options and camp operational procedures.

"Chalk Talk" will take place during camper orientation on the first night of your session. All are welcome but attendance of at least one adult per family is required. Campers will be separated into two groups, adults and kids. Staff will offer age-appropriate demonstrations. Adults, the kids will quiz you.

For safety reasons, please wear footwear at all times when on camp property!

Waterfront

- Swimming is only allowed in designated beach areas.
- Inflatable beach toys and glass items are not allowed at any beach area.
- Fishing is not allowed at, or near any swimming beach, or from any dock near swimming areas. You may fish off the community docks near cabin areas.
- Canoes, kayaks pedal boats and rowboats are available for use after waterfront orientation and equipment demonstrations.
- All watercrafts are to be used only during daylight hours.
- All Northern Lights watercraft must be properly put away after each use.
- A PFD (personal floatation device) must be worn correctly at all times on watercraft. Any staff member can help you if you are unsure of how a PFD is correctly worn.
- Minors must be accompanied by an adult at ALL times at the waterfront.
- Our waterfront areas are not programmed or monitored by a lifeguard. Please use our waterfront areas at your own risk and be vigilant about watching the children in your family/cabin group.

Canoe Standards

- Always transport canoe from rack to water with two people.
- When entering a canoe, keep one foot in the water, and place other foot in center of canoe.
- There should be no more than four people in a canoe.
- People who aren't paddling need to sit on the bottom of the canoe, not the wooden bars (thwarts). They break easily and would ruin the integrity of the canoe.
- Weather policy: no boating in rough water or when there is thunder or lightning is present.
- Always paddle on opposite sides to avoid swamping (flipping the boat).
- PFD's are required at all times. Must be appropriate size and buckled at all times.
- If you swamp/flip a canoe in open water, do not swim away. Lock your arms over the bottom of the canoe and don't worry about any of the gear.
- If you swamp/flip, point the canoe toward shore, and swim it in with you if possible.

Kayak Standards and Procedures

Exploring Bear Island Lake by kayak is a wonderful alternative to more traditional canoes. Kayaks offer a means of exploring the waters surrounding Northern Lights unlike any other craft. Kayaks are stable, draw little water, and are easy to learn to paddle. They're great for families, where children can experience the independence and fun of piloting their own boats (though not alone, of course).

Managing Risk:

While the lower center of gravity given to a paddler by the kayak's seat position makes the boat more stable, kayaking has the additional risk of a paddler becoming trapped if the kayak capsizes. Also, being a solo boat, a kayak offers a greater temptation for paddlers to venture off alone. The following standards have been developed to manage these risks:

- Kayakers must wear a securely fastened, properly-sized PFD at all times.
- We encourage kayakers to practice a "wet exit" before going out on the lake. This means that you should be able to exit and swim out & away from your kayak if you were to flip in the water.
- Kayakers must be in the company of other paddlers (canoeists or kayakers) at all times - no paddling alone.
- Campers who want to take a kayak on an outing without an adult must be at least 12 years old and have someone else 12 or older with them.

Paddleboard Standards

- Paddle-boarders must wear securely fastened, properly sized PFD at all times.
- Paddle-boarders should take the board a few feet into the water before boarding to avoid damage to the fins and to yourself.
- Paddle-boarders must stay within eyesight of either beach area in North Point Village or Buena Vista Village.
- Campers under the age of 12 must have an adult nearby on another paddleboard, canoe, or kayak.

Water Trampoline & Swim Platform

- These program areas are not monitored by a lifeguard.
- Do not dock or paddle any watercraft near these areas.
- You must wear a securely fastened, properly sized PFD at all times.
- You must have at least one buddy with you, you cannot swim solo.
- Ages 11 and under must have at least one adult in the water with them.
- Swimmers must be able to swim out under their own power.
- No diving or flipping off either platform.
- Please limit group size to 6 individuals on the trampoline or 4 on the swim platform.

Supervision Responsibility of Children

Camp is an incredibly safe environment, and as a community, we all agree to keep an eye on the children at camp. However, we do ask that you have awareness of where your kids are during your stay, and any **child 11 or under must be accompanied by an adult at all times.**

Child Protection Policy

We would like to make you aware of our YMCA's child protection policy. The intent of this policy is to protect your family, our staff, and the YMCA. It states (in part) that staff members and volunteers may not have contact with children who are YMCA program participants in non-YMCA activities (such as babysitting or weekend trips) without the knowledge of the Executive Director and the written consent of the family.

Some children wish to communicate with their counselors or other camp staff after their camp experience or during the school year. We ask that families send this communication directly to our Executive or Program Director who will ensure that the letter gets to the staff person. We do not allow our staff to give out personal addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, or social media information to children. Thank you for your understanding.

YMCA Member, Participant, and Guest Code of Conduct

We expect persons using YMCA programs and facilities to behave in a mature and responsible way, and to respect the rights and dignity of others. Our Code of Conduct does not permit language or any action that can hurt or frighten another person, or that falls below a generally accepted standard of conduct.

The following activities are prohibited in all YMCA facilities and programs

- Inappropriate attire. Appropriate attire must be worn at all times.
- Angry or vulgar language, including swearing, name-calling or shouting.
- Physical contact with another person in any angry or threatening way.
- Any demonstration of sexual activity or sexual contact with another person.
- Harassment or intimidation by words, gestures, body language or any menacing behavior.
- Theft or behavior that results in the destruction of property.
- Carrying or concealing any weapons or devices or objects that may be used as weapons.
- Using or possessing illegal chemicals on YMCA property, in YMCA vehicles, or at YMCA sponsored programs.
- Any other conduct of an inappropriate, threatening or offensive nature.
- Loitering is not permitted in or outside YMCA facilities or programs
- Smoking is not permitted in or outside YMCA facilities or programs, or on YMCA property or program sites. YMCA program areas are a vape/smoke-free environment.
- Members, participants, and guests are encouraged to be responsible for their personal comfort and safety, and to ask any person whose behavior threatens their comfort to refrain. If a member, participant or guest feels uncomfortable in confronting the person directly, they should report the behavior to a YMCA staff person.

A member, participant, or guest who is in violation of the Code of Conduct could be subject to consequences including removal from a program and/or termination of program privileges.

Cars at Camp

After unloading upon your arrival, **we ask that cars be parked in the parking lots.** For safety reasons, we do not allow cars to be driven through camp during camp sessions. The only exception is that cars may be kept in the Tent/RV sites. Parking lots are located behind the Timberwolf Pole Barn in Buena Vista Village and behind the lodge in North Point Village. Please let a staff member know if someone in your cabin family has limited mobility. We are happy to make appropriate accommodations. ***During Fall, Winter and Spring programming vehicles may remain at your cabin, however they must not block the roads, staff may ask you to move them for snow removal.**

Island Policy

Bear Island and many other islands are public lands available for your exploration. We encourage you to enjoy the island via paddles, hikes, swimming, picnics, and overnights.

*Please note the island (Hot Dog Island) located right off camp's shoreline is a private island. You may not access this island.

Quiet Hours

10:00 p.m. – 7:30 a.m.

On-Call Staff

If you have an emergency and need to reach a staff member at camp immediately, please use our emergency contact list in your cabin to reach a staff person by phone, or use one of our camp radios located in Laurentian Lodge or outside Anna Marie's.

LODGING – CABINS, BUNGALOWS RV & TENT SITES

CABINS

Please remember, care of sites and grounds is the responsibility of all campers. When you depart, please make sure the site is cleaned and ready for use by the next family. Leave it better than you found it!

Full-facility cabins are located in both North Point Village and Buena Vista Village.

All cabins have electricity, bathrooms, and kitchens with running water, appliances, cooking and eating utensils. In addition, all cabins have an outside fire ring and charcoal grill. Please see our website for a full list of [cabin contents](#).

BUNGALOWS

Bungalows are located in Back of Beyond Village and have a refrigerator, microwave, dual hot plate, and toaster and are fully stocked with silverware, kitchen knives, plates, bowls, cups, and a charcoal grill. Each bungalow has its own outdoor water spigot, picnic table, charcoal grill and outdoor fire ring. All water in camp is safe for drinking unless noted otherwise. These cabins are located near a bathhouse with individual toilets and showers. Please see our website for a full list of [bungalow contents](#).

TENT & RV SITES

Tent and RV camp sites are located in Back of Beyond Village. Each site has a picnic table and fire pit with a grate for cooking. There are electric hookups at all camp sites. A centrally located water spigot is provided at each camping area. All water in camp is safe for drinking unless noted otherwise. There is a food cache centrally located with refrigerators and freezers. There are shelves in the food cache for dry food storage. To prevent animals from disrupting your food supplies, food must be stored in the food cache, your vehicle or the bear box at your site (in a mouse-proof container). Please see our website for a full list of [tent site contents](#).

Outdoor biffies are situated nearby all camp site areas. Tent and RV campers can shower at the bath house.

Care of the Cabins, Tent Sites, Program Buildings and Grounds

Care of the cabins and grounds is the responsibility of all campers. Every Northern Lights camper is asked to clean their cabin or tent site before leaving. Final cleanup should include cleaning the appliances, sweeping and/or vacuuming floors, recycling glass, aluminum, plastic and tin, disposing of non-recyclable trash and compost.

To allow enough time to transition for the next session, please plan on leaving camp by 10 a.m. on your departure day. A cleaning checklist is located in your site binder. Each cabin and bungalow have a cleaning caddy. If there are any cleaning supplies you're missing, let staff know and they will replace it. Thank you ahead of time for helping us keep camp in good condition.



YMCA Camp Northern Lights – Fall, Winter & Spring

Programs, Getaways and Groups

Every season at camp is the best season! The trails are perfect for hiking in the fall and skiing and biking in the winter. Camp Northern Lights, an exceptional site for a family outing, retreat or fellowship with a group of friends, is open weekdays and weekends, for short- or long-term visits during these seasons. Talk to any of our full time staff or call the Camp Northern Lights Administrative Office at 612-822-2267. Reservations for current openings are being accepted now.

2025-2026 Fall, Winter and Spring reservations open mid May!