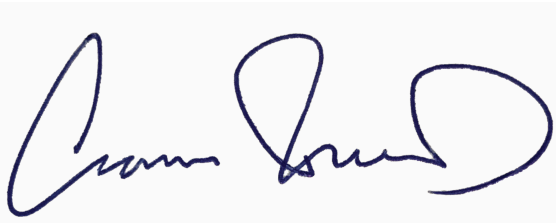


PREFACE

This manual contains the policies and code of conduct for Damascus. The policies are directives for discretionary action approved by the Damascus Board of Directors and are based on the policies and guidelines set forth by the Bishop of Columbus for use in Diocesan youth ministry programs, as well as policies for safe practice as recommended by The Redwoods Group and the American Camping Association. These policies apply to the staff members, volunteers, and participants who act in the service of, or participate in activities sponsored by Damascus.



Aaron Richards

Executive Director

Damascus Catholic Mission Campus Catholic Youth Summer Camp

DAMASCUS POLICY MANUAL

Revised February 1, 2024

Preface

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VISION AND MISSION

VISION: Bringing revival to the Catholic Church

MISSION: To awaken, empower, and equip a generation to live the adventure of the Catholic faith through world-class programs and an environment of encounter

CORE VALUES AND MISSIONARY MINDSETS

The Missionary Mindsets are a summary of what the life of a Damascus missionary should reflect. The following are a good examination of what it means to embrace these core values.

Missionary Mindset

How To Embrace	Mindset	How Not to Embrace
Identify as sons and daughters of the Father Find Jesus in all things Faithful to daily personal prayer & sacraments There is more - bold and expectant in prayer	JESUS-CENTERED "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." Gal 2:20	Duplicity of heart/double life Ministering out of woundedness Self-reliance/orphan spirit What I get out vs Why I pour in
Love is our motivation Radically consumed for the salvation of souls Do the works of Jesus and greater works Excellence in the ordinary	MISSION-FOCUSED "Without cost you have received, Without cost you are to give." Mt 10:8	Division. Making silos Allow relationships to negatively impact mission Lazy/comfort-seeking/Imprudent in decisions Fail to be on time and on schedule
Confident, warm, welcoming, energetic, charismatic Thermostat > thermometer Affirmation and honor Praise and thanksgiving	JOY-FILLED "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say: Rejoice!" Phil 4:4	Complaining, negativity, gossip, sarcasm Allowing emotions to dominate you Placing yourself or others in a box Failure to take care of yourself
Faithfully listen to God's voice and church teaching Committed to policy and house rules Docile, coachable, welcome correction and feedback Embrace your place	OBEDIENT "As a prisoner of the Lord, I urge you to live a life worthy of the call that you have received." Eph 4:1	Give excuses instead of accountability Inconsistency, failure to thrive Maintain dissenting opinion publicly Violate safety protocol - no strikes
Seek what needs done and finish it Now is the time. You are the one If you have to walk away, communicate Fill your pockets (with trash)	TOILET PLUNGER "Do nothing out of selfish ambition, rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourself." Phil 2:3	Incomplete cleanup of tasks/activities/dishes/etc Let work / conflict / diving deep fall to someone else Victim mentality Fail to maintain kingdom environment

RISK MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

Damascus policies and procedures are developed and reviewed annually by Executive and Program staff in consultation with the organization's Board of Directors. Organizational policies and procedures have been crafted through careful consultation with four organizations:

1. The policies and procedures of our local diocese, the Catholic Diocese of Columbus Ohio.
2. The policies and procedures of the American Camping Association.
3. The policies and procedures of the Association or Challenge Course Technology (ACCT).
4. Great American Insurance.

Implementation of all policies and procedures is made possible by thorough individual staff oversight and management, a strict adherence to proper training, certification and licensing, and the intentional establishment of an organizational culture of safety and accountability. Missionaries are trained in the observance and implementation of these policies from the day of their application through their interview weekend, 10 days of dedicated staff training prior to camp, and through ongoing supervision.

Third-Party Risk Management

Third Party risk management is provided in consultation with the following primary sources:

1. Great American Insurance

Specializing in providing insurance for faith-based high adventure camps, Great American analyzes, educates, provides risk prevention measures, and insures their camps from a partnership perspective. All waterfront policies and procedures have been created in collaboration with Great Americans, and they provide an annual review and audit of safe environment policies and procedures through an annual onsite audit and risk assessment process by a credentialed Great American consultant. Great American is also available 24/7 to provide program, safety, and emergency consultative support.

2. Signature Research - Signature, headquartered in North Carolina, is a professional vendor for the Association for Challenge Course Technology, the world's leading and largest American National Standards Institute Accredited Standards Developer focused specifically and solely on the challenge course industry. Signature was responsible for the



design and construction of all high adventure activities, and provides ongoing third party operational and emergency rescue training as well as annual facility recertification. All high adventure activity policies and procedures have been created in collaboration with Signature.

3. Roman Catholic Diocese of Columbus Ohio - Damascus voluntarily opens itself to an annual Diocesan Safe Environment Audit for all programs and facilities to ensure an ongoing focus on child safety and Diocesan Safe Environment Standards compliance. Additionally, all safe environment policies and procedures in place at Damascus have been derived from the best practices and policies at use in the Diocese of Columbus Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry. These policies and procedures ensure safe ratios of chaperones, that due diligence is used in the selection of staff and volunteers, and that procedures are in place to create the safest environment possible for campers and program participants.

4. American Camping Association - Additionally, Catholic Youth Summer Camp and Damascus maintains membership in the American Camping Association. The ACA provides its members with best practices in forming policies and procedures regarding camp activities and other aspects specific to outdoor ministries as well as ongoing support and consultation.

Insurance Coverage and Annual Review

Damascus is committed to maintaining appropriate limits of insurance coverage to support a high adventure ministry philosophy while at the same time preserving an atmosphere free of any risk to personal safety.

Insurance coverages are reviewed annually by Operations Subcommittee and presented to Board of Directors for approval.

Great American Insurance

Damascus has chosen Great American as its insurance provider. More information about Great American can be found on their website at

<https://www.greatamericaninsurancegroup.com/about-us/business-operations/subproduct/specialty-human-services/organizations-we-serve/youth-programs-summer-camps>

Asset Summary, and Equipment Maintenance

Ongoing log of assets is maintained by Finance Subcommittee, and is reviewed annually to determine any necessary additions, deletions, or changes. Equipment maintenance logs are developed and maintained by Facilities Manager in coordination with Operations subcommittee, and are reviewed annually. Sample Equipment log is attached at the end of this policy.



Risk Reporting, and Documentation

All Damascus staff and volunteers operate under the expectation that any risk to personal safety or equipment will be reported as quickly as possible to their supervisor. During times of heavy activity on campus, especially during use of high adventure activity program elements, safety checks should be a regular part of all routine staff meetings. Records of potential risks reported must be documented and corrected by leadership staff, and are reviewed annually by Operations Subcommittee. Sample Risk reporting log is attached at the end of this policy.

If risky situation resulted in physical or emotional injury, an incident report should be filed. (400.61)

Personnel Training, Certification, and Assessment

All Damascus staff and volunteers operate under the expectation of excellent performance in activity and program leadership. All staff submit a full application, are interviewed, and undergo a basic missionary staff training/orientation. Certain activities require additional training and certification. Record of these certifications will be maintained in employee file and record will be required before leading associated activities. Sample employee certification checklist is attached at the end of this policy.

Activities requiring advanced certification

High Ropes Adventure Course

Activity Leader - Training and Rescue Certification by Signature Research trainer
Activity Facilitator - Orientation by certified activity leader

Giant Swing

Activity Leader - Training and Rescue Certification by Signature Research trainer
Activity Facilitator - Orientation by certified activity leader

Vertical Playpen

Activity Leader - Training and Rescue Certification by Signature Research trainer
Activity Facilitator - Orientation by certified activity leader

Rock Climbing Wall

Activity Leader - Consistent operation and effective communication and leadership shown to Director of Activities or Director of Operations after a minimum of 3 hours of shadowing certified activity leader

Activity Facilitator - Orientation by certified activity leader in accord with Activity Policy



Zip-line

Activity Leader - Training and Rescue Certification by Signature Research trainer

Activity Facilitator - Orientation by certified activity leader

Swimming (lifeguarding)

Lifeguard - Certification through recognized certifying body (American Red Cross, Boy Scouts of America, YMCA, Lifeguard Pro etc.) and orientation by waterfront director

Blobbering

Activity Leader - Consistent operation and effective communication and leadership shown to Director of Activities or Director of Operations after a minimum of 6 hours of shadowing certified activity leader

Activity Facilitator - Orientation by certified activity leader in accord with Activity Policy

Paintball

Activity Leader - Consistent operation and effective communication and leadership shown to Director of Activities or Director of Operations after a minimum of 12 hours of shadowing certified activity leader

Activity Facilitator - Orientation by certified activity leader in accord with Activity Policy

Safe Environment Records

All Damascus staff – age 18 and over – are required to complete a civilian criminal background check and participate in a Protecting God's Children training session as outlined in policy 200.11.

DOCUMENT RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION

The Document Retention and Destruction Policy identifies the record retention responsibilities of leaders and members of the board of directors, and outsiders for maintaining and documenting the storage and destruction of Damascus's documents and records.

Document Destruction

Missionaries, volunteers, members of the board of directors, committee members and outsiders (independent contractors via agreements with them) are required to honor the following rules:

Paper or electronic documents indicated under the terms for retention in the following section will be transferred and maintained by Directors.

All other paper documents will be destroyed after three years.

All other electronic documents will be deleted from all individual computers, databases, networks, and back-up storage after one year.

No paper or electronic documents will be destroyed or deleted if pertinent to any ongoing or anticipated government investigation or proceeding or private litigation (check with legal counsel for any current or foreseen litigation if employees have not been notified.)

No paper or electronic documents will be destroyed or deleted as required to comply with government auditing standards (Single Audit Act.)

Record Retention

Type of Document	Minimum Requirement
Accounts payable ledgers and schedules	7 years
Audit reports	Permanently
Bank reconciliations	2 years
Bank statements	3 years
Checks (for important payments and purchases)	Permanently
Contracts, mortgages, notes, and leases (expired)	7 years
Contracts (still in effect)	Contract period



Correspondence (general)	2 years
Correspondence (legal and important matters)	Permanently
Correspondence (with customers and vendors)	2 years
Deeds, mortgages, and bills of sale	Permanently
Depreciation schedules	Permanently
Duplicate deposit slips	2 years
Employment applications	3 years
Expense analyses/expense distribution schedules	7 years
Year-end financial statements	Permanently
Insurance records, current accident reports, claims, policies, and so on (active and expired)	Permanently
Internal audit reports	3 years
Inventory records for products, materials, and supplies	3 years
Invoices (to customers, from vendors)	7 years
Minute books, bylaws, and charter	Permanently
Patents and related papers	Permanently
Payroll records and summaries	7 years
Personnel files (terminated employees)	7 years
Retirement and pension records	Permanently
Tax returns and worksheets	Permanently
Timesheets	7 years
Trademark registrations and copyrights	Permanently
Withholding tax statements	7 years

CANCELLATION OF INDIVIDUAL RESERVATIONS

All cancellations of individual reservations must be submitted in writing via email or managed through an individual's Ultracamp account online. We are sorry, but this policy also applies to cancellations that may arise as a result of illness, injury or other unforeseen circumstances as our contracted expenses are also binding.

If possible, transfers to another session within the same season can be made without charge.

- **Cancellations up to 30 days prior to the first day of event:** Payments refundable except for non-refundable deposit
 - *The amount of the non-refundable deposit is determined by event and will be indicated at the time of reservation.*
- **Cancellations less than 30 days prior to the first day of event:** Entire payment non-refundable

Exceptions:

Parish sponsorships and Damascus campership funds are exempt from this policy and will always be refunded.

Gift certificates will be allowed to remain on the recipient's account for one additional season in the event of cancellation.

Special consideration may be given in circumstances of serious medical need or personal tragedy.

ADVANCED GROUP RESERVATIONS FOR CYSC

Damascus believes that young people are the greatest hope for the Church. We partner with parishes, schools, and families to bring young people into a personal encounter with Jesus that leads to a life filled with the Holy Spirit. Our flagship program, Catholic Youth Summer Camp, transforms the lives of young people and sets them on a trajectory for a life of prayer, Christian community, and mission. While at camp, these youth are equipped to bring their zeal for God and love for souls back into their parish, school and family.

When students experience a week of camp together, it immediately provides them with support and accountability as they continue to grow in their Catholic faith. Through Advanced Group Reservation, parishes and dioceses are able to ensure that their youth experience the power and love of God together, and maximize the potential for that transformation to be a catalyst for the entire community.

Making a Group Reservation

- Reservations are specific to age and gender (High School Boys, High School Girls, Middle School Boys and Middle School Girls). Future additions to the number of reserved spots in a particular category of age and gender are subject to availability within that category, and may not be possible.
- Groups attending CYSC Ohio must reserve a minimum of 25 total spots.
- Contracts must be received by deadline to complete an advanced group reservation for CYSC Main Campus.

Registering Group Members

- Each group will have a unique code and/or link to access the reserved spots, which the coordinator will share with group members to indicate their membership with the group when registering.
- Groups have access to their spots until May 1st.
- The group coordinator will be able to monitor the status of their group's registrations through their group's ultracamp account.
- If a group member cancels before May 1, the group coordinator should serve as the point of contact to communicate the cancellation to Damascus. Group members who contact Damascus directly may be asked to provide proof that they have communicated with their group coordinator before proceeding with the cancellation.



Financial Responsibility and Payment

- By signing an Advanced Group Reservation contract, the group affirms their intent to fill the indicated number of spots and agrees to be financially responsible for the cost of any of their spots that remain unfilled on May 1st, minus any reductions as outlined below.
- No payment or deposit is required from the group at the time of reservation.
- Group members will be subject to the standard fees and policies for reservations.
- On May 1st, the group's registration window will close, and any unfilled spots will be released to the public, beginning with a waitlist if it exists.
- The group will be invoiced after the week of camp ends. The group will be responsible for the cost of any spots that remain unfilled at that time, calculated by taking the total cost of the group's unfilled spots on May 1 minus any spots that were filled by the public. (If multiple groups had open spots in that week, the reduction will be split proportionally between the groups based on their number of open spots on May 1).
- If a group member cancels after May 1, the group will not be charged for that spot and it will be made available to the general public according to the normal waitlist procedure.
- Many parishes choose to subsidize the cost for their members with a full or partial sponsorship. Groups are encouraged to pursue this through fundraising or other opportunities of involving the community. Invoices for sponsorships are sent separately from invoices for unfilled spots.

Adult Chaperone Participation

- The number of adult chaperones in attendance for the group may not exceed 1 chaperone per 10 participants, or 25 chaperones in total.
- The cost for each adult chaperone is equal to the full cost of a camper spot.
- Adult chaperones are invited to participate in activities, meals, and other programming elements with campers from their group. Chaperones are expected to follow the direction of camp leadership regarding their participation and involvement.
- Lodging for chaperones may be at an off-campus location, with transportation to camp available.
- Group Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that all adult chaperones are certified in Safe Environment and meet all other requirements for volunteering with youth as established by their parish and diocese.

ADVANCED GROUP RESERVATIONS FOR CONFIRMATION RETREATS

Damascus believes that young people are the greatest hope for the Church. We partner with parishes, schools, and families to bring young people into a personal encounter with Jesus that leads to a life filled with the Holy Spirit. Damascus Confirmation Retreats exist to invite young people to discover the adventure of the Catholic faith and to prepare them to receive the sacrament of Confirmation not merely as a “graduation” from religious education, but rather as a deepening of their relationship with God that continues to grow throughout their lifetime. While on retreat, these youth are equipped to bring their zeal for God and love for souls back into their parish, school and families as they live out that relationship through the mission of the Church.

When students experience a retreat together with their parish community, it immediately provides them with support and accountability as they continue to grow in their Catholic faith. Through a Group Reservation, parishes are able to ensure that their youth experience the power and love of God together, and maximize the potential for that transformation to be a catalyst for the entire community.

Making a Group Reservation

- Group reservations are subject to availability.
- Groups must reserve a minimum of 9 total spots.
- The number of boys and girls spots must be indicated at the time of reservation.
- Future additions to the number of reserved spots are subject to availability, and may be restricted by gender or not be possible.
- Students attending the retreat should be Confirmandi preparing to receive the sacrament. Participants are typically in 8th grade, but other Confirmandi up to age 16 are eligible to attend.
- 2023-24 retreat dates, information, and request form are available at <https://damascus.net/programs/parishschoolretreats/>

Registering Group Members

- Group members will register for the retreat through Damascus’s online registration platform.
- Each group will have a unique code and/or link to access the reserved spots, which the coordinator will share with group members to indicate their membership with the group when registering.
- Groups have access to their spots until 4 weeks prior to the start date of the group’s session. At that time, the group reservation will end, and any unfilled spots will be



returned to Damascus to be made available to the general public, starting with any waitlist that has developed for that session.

Financial Responsibility and Payment

- By signing a Group Reservation contract, the group affirms their intent to fill the indicated number of spots and agrees to be financially responsible for the cost of any of their spots that remain unfilled at the deadline of 4 weeks prior to their session.
 - No payment or deposit is required from the group at the time of reservation.
 - Group members will be subject to the standard fees and policies for reservations.
 - 4 weeks prior to the start date of the session, the group's registration window will close, and the group will be invoiced for the cost of the total number of spots reserved minus the number of spots filled on that date.
 - If a group member cancels within 4 weeks of the session (after the group has been invoiced), the group coordinator will not be charged for that spot. At that time the group coordinator will be offered an opportunity to fill the spot with another member of their group, or to release the spot to Damascus to be made available to the general public.
- Parishes may choose to subsidize the cost for their members with a full or partial sponsorship. Invoices for sponsorships are sent separately from invoices for unfilled spots.

Adult Chaperone Participation

- All groups may bring one chaperone; two chaperones are allowed for groups of 20-30 students, and a third chaperone is allowed if bringing more than 30 students.
- Adult chaperones are invited to participate in activities, meals, and other programming elements with campers from their group. Chaperones are expected to follow the direction of camp leadership regarding their participation and involvement.
- Lodging at campus will be provided.
- The Group Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that all adult chaperones are certified in Safe Environment and meet all other requirements for volunteering with youth as established by their parish and diocese.

REVENUE COLLECTION

Damascus runs many programs both onsite and offsite with different levels of contractual agreements and payment models, but all invoices carry the same collection enforcement policy. All invoices sent are based on a Net 30 structure, except for Middle School, High School, and Hospitality Retreat deposits, which are based on a Net 15 structure.

Damascus Sales Liaison or similar contact will submit a request for an invoice to be sent to a given party primarily by creating an invoice in Hubspot, which is then sent for approval by the Finance department through Quickbooks. If not on Hubspot, the Liaison or similar contact will email the Finance department with a detailed breakdown of the invoice to be sent. Damascus will communicate on the following timeline to receive payment:

10 days prior to due date - Quickbooks reminder to pay invoice

0-30 days overdue - email from finance team requesting payment

30-60 days overdue - Finance department contacts liaison or similar contact. The contact calls to collect funds. If invoiced for a personal registration event, the finance team will call.

60-90 days overdue - Finance team makes a second call to reiterate that the given party will not be able to book again if no payment is received by 90 days overdue.

90+ days overdue - Revenue is deemed uncollectible and participants are unable to attend Damascus events until prior retreat is paid.

In the circumstance that a party is on the indefinite no-attendance list, they will have to pay the balance of the prior retreat plus 50% of the total anticipated retreat cost as a deposit for the next retreat.

FINANCIAL AID

Application and Distribution

When a registered party desires to receive financial aid for CYSC in any location, they apply within the registration software, Ultracamp. Different application forms are used for different camp locations. Financial aid is disbursed based on criteria set by federal poverty guidelines (chart below). Registrants are asked for number of individuals in household and gross household income. Extenuating circumstances are evaluated per case basis. Data is input into master campership spreadsheet, where financial aid amounts are determined and then applied to registrant's account. Income verification is requested from every 20th person applying for aid. After the aid is applied, registrants are asked permission to be put on a semi-monthly payment plan for any remainder. If a camper receives financial aid and cancels their reservation, those funds will be removed from their account and be able to be applied to another registrant.

Criteria for 2022-23 Fiscal Year

Household Income compared to Federal Poverty Guidelines	Amount
<100%	Full
100-200%	50%
200-300%	20%
300%+	0%
Extenuating circumstances	(+)10%

Internal Tracking

Every year, staff will create an account on Ultracamp for financial aid called "Camperships (fiscal year)". This singular account will hold financial aid for CYSC in all camp locations, with different codes used for each location. Donations will be received through DonorPerfect and will be credited to the Ultracamp account monthly by the Registration Manager based on verified reports received from Advancement, and reviewed by Finance. The monthly campership reconciliation spreadsheet accounts for the camperships allotted as well as camperships earned. At any point in time, Damascus will not give out in financial aid more than \$135,000 beyond the amount that has been raised for CYSC and other individual signup events. If more than \$135,000 has been allotted than received, we will cease distributing camperships until more funds are raised. At the end of the fiscal year, the



account will be closed and we will balance out the financial aid by either attributing the remainder to next fiscal year's account (if the amount raised is greater than the amount given) or applying unraised camperships as a discount, or internal organizational tithe (if the amount raised is less than the amount given). Internal tithe will never exceed \$150,000 for financial aid, including both individual registrations and group retreats.

For group registration retreats, Damascus will donate up \$15,000 a year to assist low-income schools, parishes, or other groups in paying for retreats. This would be an internal discount as opposed to an external payment.

All gifts are recorded as unrestricted. Any request for a specific camper to attend camp can be paid for as a sponsorship. Any gift with the intent for being used for a general population will be discussed with the donor by relationship manager to assure donor intent is captured under the designation of unrestricted.

Financial aid can be used for other individual registration events, such as adult retreats. Registrants for these events can receive financial aid through direct conversation with our registration team, with a default amount of \$50 of financial aid.

USE OF FACILITIES

Use of Damascus facilities will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the Catholic Church's faith or moral teachings, which are summarized in, among other places, the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Nor may Damascus facilities be used for activities or messages that contradict, or are deemed inconsistent with, the church's faith or moral teachings as described by the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. Damascus's Executive Directors, with the concurrence of its Board of Directors are the final decision-makers concerning use of Damascus facilities.

PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION ON CAMPUS

Parking during retreats is only allowed in designated parking areas: the parking lot behind the Main Lodge, or the gravel in front of the Lakeside Retreat Centers. Parking in front of Hillcrest or Woodland cabins is not permitted other than loading and unloading. A fire line must be left at all times in front of cabins and retreat centers.

Participants are typically discouraged from driving vehicles onsite. ATV, Golf Carts, and other forms of transportation are permitted only by special permission. Motorcycles are allowed only as primary transportation to and from Damascus.

The speed limit is 15 mph throughout Damascus.

APPLICATION, INTERVIEW, TRAINING, AND HIRING OF SUMMER AND FULL-TIME MISSIONARIES

Damascus depends on the work of many talented individuals to accomplish our mission. In order to maintain an ongoing commitment to our organizational Mission and Values, individuals interested in serving in the summer or full-time missionary program will be required to follow a standard process in order to serve with the organization.

The process of screening applicants for the full-time or summer missionary program typically includes, but may not be limited to:

- Prior to application, role expectations are clearly outlined in an available description.
- Individuals must complete an application process using the following general instructions:
 - Register with the provided online application form, completing all required questions.
 - First time applicants must request and secure three (3) personal references and invite them to fill out an online reference form. The following are suggested:
 - Parish Priest or Parish Youth Minister
 - School Teacher, Coach, Employer or other School Activity/Club Advisor/Leader (Not applicable to adults age 21 or over who are not college students.)
 - Adult (age 21+) who is not a relative (Adults age 21 or over who are not college students are requested to obtain 2 references in this category.)
 - All applicants are required to participate in a personal interview with members of the Damascus staff.
 - If accepted, individuals are informed as to expectations and requirements for background check and Protecting God's Children, to be completed before first day of service (see Policy 200.11)
 - All missionaries are required to participate in pre-summer training at the EQUIP Conference prior to service at CYSC. Full-time missionaries are required to participate in an additional training in the fall.

Individuals employed by Damascus and CYSC will be hired in accordance with appropriate Federal and State guidelines including:



- Collection of form I-9
- Maintaining a copy of Personal ID
- Collection of Direct Deposit information for electronic payment
- Filing of form W-4
- Filing of Ohio Tax Withholding form
- Filing of appropriate Payroll Information
- Distribution of Staff Manual
- Verification of receipt of current job description

SAFE ENVIRONMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR MISSIONARIES

All Damascus missionaries age 18 and over are required to complete a civilian criminal background check and participate in a Protecting God's Children training session.

Background Checks

Civilian criminal background checks are completed through the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCII) and must be completed by the first day of one's service with Damascus. Anyone who has not been a legal resident of Ohio for the past consecutive 5 years is required to complete a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) civilian criminal background check. An FBI civilian criminal background check must at least be in process by the first day of one's service with Damascus.

A new background check must be conducted if a Damascus staff person has a significant (more than 1.5 years) gap in their connection and service with Damascus.

Offenses that would prevent someone from serving Damascus include, but are not limited to:

- Abduction
- Aggravated assault
- Aggravated burglary
- Aggravated menacing
- Aggravated murder; specific intent to cause death
- Aggravated robbery
- Assault
- Burglary
- Carrying concealed weapons
- Child enticement
- Child stealing
- Compelling prostitution
- Contributing to the unruliness or delinquency of a child
- Corrupting another with drugs
- Corruption of a minor
- Disseminating matter harmful to juveniles
- Domestic violence
- Endangering children
- Failing to provide for functionally impaired person
- Felonious assault
- Felonious sexual penetration
- Funding of drug or marijuana trafficking



Gross sexual imposition
Having a weapon while under a disability
Illegal administration or distribution of anabolic steroids
Illegal manufacture of drugs or cultivation of marijuana
Illegal use of a minor in nudity orientated material or performance
Impositioning (now importuning)
Improperly discharging a weapon at or near a school or dwelling
Interference with custody
Involuntary manslaughter
Kidnapping
Murder
Pandering obscenity
Pandering obscenity involving a minor
Pandering sexually oriented matter involving a minor
Patient abuse, neglect
Placing harmful objects in food or confection
Possession of drugs (that is not a minor drug possession offense)
Procuring
Promoting prostitution (children)
Prostitution: after positive HIV test
Public indecency
Rape
Robbery
Sexual battery
Sexual imposition
Trafficking in drugs
Unlawful abortion
Voluntary manslaughter
Voyeurism

Protecting God's Children Training

All Damascus missionaries must attend a Protecting God's Children training session prior to their time of service.

The Protecting God's Children program includes not only information on the scope of child sexual abuse, but also contains a plan for its prevention. Damascus missionaries who have attended child sexual abuse awareness programs from other institutions are still required to attend a Protecting God's Children training session in the Diocese of Columbus.

Persons that have participated in a Protecting God's Children program in another diocese can request that their former diocese transfer their training record to the Diocese of Columbus.



Due to the sensitive nature of the Protecting God's Children program, some victims of child sexual abuse may not feel comfortable attending a Protecting God's Children training session. Anyone in this particular situation may request to receive the materials needed for child protection training in an alternate way. These requests are made through the Diocese of Columbus Safe Environment Office. All requests for alternate child protection training for victims of child sexual abuse are kept confidential.

Records and Administration

Records of all background checks and Protecting God's Children certificates will be electronically filed and maintained. The Operations Department will conduct an internal audit every summer and an annual Diocesan Safe Environment audit in the spring. Individual records will be shared with parishes which have missionaries assigned to their youth groups during the school year.

In order to ensure both of these requirements are completed for every missionary, the Missionary Program Department will gather information on the status of these requirements prior to camp, assist missionaries in scheduling trainings and/or transferring records where possible, and will provide on-site opportunities during pre-summer training that will be required for any incoming missionaries who have not yet fulfilled these requirements.

APPLICATION AND INTERVIEWING OF PRIESTS AND RELIGIOUS

Damascus programs are deeply rooted in the sacramental life of the Catholic Church through Mass, Reconciliation, and Eucharistic Adoration. Each aspect of our programs is designed to lead campers and staff into a deeper encounter with the person of Jesus Christ, and it is only in partnership with priests and religious that these encounters are made possible. We are grateful for the individual gifts and charisms that priests and religious bring to the experience of Damascus programs, and we highly value their witness as an encouragement both to personal holiness and to vocational discernment in the youth. It is the desire of Damascus to protect both the youth that attend and all involved priests and religious. It is for this reason that all priests and religious who have never served at a Damascus program before will be asked to participate in an interview process.

This process of interviewing a priest or religious newly involved with Damascus programs typically includes, but may not be limited to:

- Prior to interview, expectations are clearly outlined in an available role description.
- Individuals must participate in an in-person, or face-to-face video conference interview conversation (Skype, FaceTime, ZOOM, etc.) Audio only interviews are NOT permissible.
- Provide two (2) written references, along with phone numbers, with which Damascus personnel can follow up. These references should include:
 - A fellow priest or religious (someone in their diocese or community)
 - A ministry partner (someone who has seen them in active ministry)
- For priests and deacons: A letter of suitability from the Bishop of their diocese.

In continued service with Damascus, all priests who are not from the diocese where the program is being held must provide an annual letter of suitability.

ADULT AND SMALL GROUP RATIOS AND REQUIREMENTS

Adult Ratios and Requirements

An adult is defined as any person who is at least 18 years of age.

Damascus will maintain on site a maximum ratio of one (1) adult per ten (10) minors.

Damascus follows a strategy of “two-deep” ministry with minor participants, where at least two adults are present at all activities and situations, wherever possible.

Where a one-to-one activity is required (i.e. pastoral care), such activities should take place in an open environment. Special attention should be given to provide a safe and confidential forum while following standards of prudence.

If, at any time, a violation of this two-deep policy is reported or observed, except in the case of recognized exceptions such as healthcare or confession/spiritual direction, it should be treated as a cause for immediate disciplinary corrective action according to appropriate disciplinary protocol, and any possible video or testimony evidence should be collected and attached to the disciplinary report.

Adults must never share a bed or a private room with a minor. (Except where a parent is serving as an adult volunteer and there are no other persons sharing the room.)

No adult volunteer should ever enter a minor’s private room unless it is absolutely necessary. If circumstances require it, the adult volunteer must be accompanied by another adult and the door must remain open the entire time the adults are present. Both adults should be of the same sex as the minors in the room. If this is not possible, one male and one female adult may be used.

A minor must never be invited or instructed to enter the private room of an adult.

Small Group Leader Ratios and Requirements

A small group leader (or “counselor”) facilitates a small group of program participants, all of whom are the same gender.

Counselors serving high school participants (entering grades 9-12) should have graduated from high school (generally 18 years of age or older). Counselors serving middle school participants (entering grades 6-8) should have completed their junior year of high school (generally 17 years of age or older).



Damascus will maintain a maximum ratio of one (1) counselor or small group leader per ten (10) participants.

Counselors may never share a bed or a private room with a participant.

REPORTING ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Child abuse is any non-accidental action that harms a child – whether physical, emotional, verbal, sexual or by neglect. That includes, but is not limited to:

- Engaging in sexual activity with a child;
- Denial of proper or necessary subsistence, education, medical care, or other care necessary for the child's health;
- Use of restraint procedures on a child that cause injury or pain;
- Administration of prescription drugs or medication without the ongoing supervision of a licensed physician;
- Providing alcoholic beverages or controlled substances;
- Commission of any act, other than by accident that threatens or results in any injury or in death to the child.

It is the responsibility of each member of the Damascus staff to report immediately to the appropriate community agency any suspected case of child abuse and/or neglect.

Normally a director or appointed representative should make the referral.

ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS BY PRIESTS OR DEACONS

Damascus secures the services of seminarians, deacons, and priests from the Diocese of Columbus and other dioceses. The Diocese of Columbus has a written policy on the allegations of sexual abuse of minors by priests and deacons, as well as by other church personnel. This policy complies with and specifies in more detail, the steps taken in implementing the requirements of canon law, particularly CIC, canons 1717- 1719. A copy of this policy is filed with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Copies of this policy are available from the Chancery Office.

COMMUNICATION WITH MINORS

Interpersonal interaction among young people consists, in large part, of mobile and electronic communication and social media. In the midst of this contemporary reality, these modes of communication methods require new methodology when considered for the work of evangelization. In the context of evangelization, Damascus remains committed to creating and maintaining safe and supportive environments for all missionaries, volunteers and participants, and is particularly committed to create environments where sexual abuse and bullying are not tolerated. Damascus' safe environment policies exist to build a culture around these goals. Failure to comply with the policies listed below may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment and/or legal recourse.

One-on-one or private communication between a staff member or volunteer and a non-related minor is prohibited. All communication in person or online must follow the 2-deep strategy. All communication must be open, public, transparent, and appropriate. Sensitive conversations can happen between two individuals in a public place or with a third-party observer.

If, at any time, a violation of this two-deep policy is reported or observed, it should be treated as a cause for immediate disciplinary corrective action according to appropriate disciplinary protocol, and any possible video or testimony evidence should be collected and attached to the disciplinary report.

Any means or platform of communication must allow for accountability and the ability to retain records of interaction. Therefore, no "anonymous" apps, platforms, or anything with automatic delete function, can be used for private adult to minor interactions.

The USPS meets the criteria of open, public, and transparent for interactions with minors.

Missionaries or volunteers must not initiate one-on-one private communication with a minor. This includes private interactions on personal social media platforms, including, but not limited to "Friend Requests," "Follows", etc. However, it is appropriate to allow minors to engage with Damascus media accounts across official platforms.

If a minor initiates said communication, the adult must move the conversation to a public platform and retain a record of the communication. Specific exceptions to public communication at Damascus may include instances such as official communication regarding hiring/recruiting missionaries or employees and organization of pre-arranged transportation for minors. Both examples should include parent permission and approval.



Communication with minors should only be initiated from official Damascus accounts, emails, or phones. If a missionary is not given an official Damascus account or email address, then communication should happen in a public platform with a third-party present. One example could be a “Private” chatroom on a platform that is also viewable by a Damascus Admin.

Email is an acceptable form of electronic communication between Damascus employees and volunteers and minors. Communication should be initiated by the minor, and all responses should carbon copy discipleship@damascus.net to allow for third-party monitoring and record keeping.

See policy 200.41 for more information about relationships with minors beyond Damascus programs.

This communications policy also applies to any program participant who has not yet graduated from high school, but who is over the age of 18.

DISCIPLESHIP AND RELATIONSHIP DISCLOSURE

By nature of their missionary commitment, Damascus employees regularly meet and form relationships with families and minors who attend Damascus events. These events include any event or service that is being hosted by or coordinated by Damascus, as well as any event or service that is provided as a requirement of the staff member's position at Damascus.

Occasionally, staff members will form a relationship with a particular family or minor that may result in the expressed desire for continued communication and relationship. In order for continued relationship outside of Damascus programs to occur, a relationship disclosure form must be completed and on file with Damascus.

The relationship disclosure form serves three primary purposes:

- 1) It ensures an individual's parents/guardians are partnering with the individual missionary in providing discipleship care.
- 2) It enables a Damascus staff member to maintain contact with campers/students outside of Damascus settings in a way that protects both Damascus and the individual staff member under safe environment guidelines.
- 3) It separates liability from Damascus when contact with minors is continued by a Damascus staff member outside of his/her work setting.

There are several criteria that would necessitate the use of a relationship disclosure form:

- If the staff member formed a relationship with this camper/student as a result of his/her service at Damascus.
- If a camper/student has expressed a desire to pursue ongoing communication with a Damascus missionary outside of Damascus settings, including but not limited to:
- Frequent communication (more than 1-2 simple questions seeking program updates or communicating prayer requests) with a camper/student, which should be directed to email.
- In-person contact with a camper/student outside of a Damascus event.
- Being a Confirmation sponsor for a camper/student.
- If the staff member has been asked by a camp parent to invest in his/her child intentionally.
- If the staff member is uncertain about details. In these circumstances, a form will always be signed for precautionary reasons.



Sometimes, a staff member's relationship to a camper and/or family preceded their service at Damascus. If the camper/student and his/her family does not associate their relationship with the staff member as contingent upon his/her service at Damascus, then a relationship disclosure form is not necessary for further interaction. However, it is always good to establish healthy boundaries and expectations with these families.

If a Damascus staff member has interest in obtaining a relationship disclosure form, he/she should contact the respective persons for further information and guidance. For Summer and Full-Time Missionaries, contact the Missionary Life Coordinators. For Missionary Staff, contact the Staff Care Associate. These persons are responsible for keeping record of all relationship disclosure forms that have been submitted by Damascus missionaries and/or missionary staff members.

Missionaries in the 2-year Missionary Program/Summer Missionaries:

Missionaries in the 2-year Missionary Program and Summer Missionaries are prohibited from engaging in discipleship relationships with any campers/students they have met through their missionary work at Damascus. This is due primarily to lack of consistent time in their schedules during their seasons of service.

Similarly, missionaries are prohibited from babysitting for any families they have met through their missionary work at Damascus.

However, missionaries are permitted to fill the role of a Confirmation sponsor for a student/camper.

Missionaries should not pursue communication with campers/students at the conclusion of a program. If campers/students have occasional prayer requests or questions about Damascus public event information, they may email a Damascus missionary. However, no more than 2 emails should be exchanged between the missionary and the camper/student. Regardless of context, when emailing a camper/student, the staff member is required to either CC the email discipleship@damascus.net. The email may NOT be "forwarded," but rather, it should be CC'ed to ensure compliance with the two-deep policy of Damascus. Missionaries should draw attention to the inclusion of the discipleship email to ensure the minor's awareness of a third party.

If email communication sent to a missionary steps outside of the guidelines communicated above, either in content or quantity of messages, the missionary should report this to the Missionary Life Coordinator who will provide appropriate followup, typically consisting of a conversation with the minor's parents.

Missionary Staff Missionaries

Damascus Missionary Staff members should communicate with the Staff Care Associate before entering into a discipleship relationship with a camper/student outside of Damascus



work requirements. If the relationship is pursued, a relationship disclosure form will be required.

If Missionary Staff members want to continue to be in communication with campers/students after a Damascus event, this should take place primarily through email to establish the professional and intentional nature of the relationship. If the Missionary Staff member intends for this communication to be ongoing, he/she must get a discipleship form signed by the camper/student's parent or guardian before depth of conversation is pursued. If not pursuing a discipleship relationship, then no more than two emails should be exchanged between missionary and minor. Additionally, these emails should only involve the topics of prayer requests and/or questions around Damascus public events. When emailing with a camper/student, the staff member is required to either CC the email discipleship@damascus.net. The email may NOT be "forwarded," but rather, must be CC'ed to ensure compliance with two-deep policies. Missionaries should draw attention to the inclusion of the discipleship email to ensure the minor's awareness of a third party.

It is encouraged that missionary staff both communicate their intentions and receive preferences from the parents of the minor before discipling their child. Additionally, it would be in the best interest of the missionary member to:

- Use texting or direct messaging for brief check-ins and for planning phone calls/meetings, rather than using it as a primary source of interaction.
- Meet in public spaces, rather than private locations.
- Meet during morning or daytime hours, rather than late evening hours/dark spaces.
- Avoid driving a minor in his/her vehicle.

For additional guidelines, it would also be wise to visit the local Diocesan website and read about their specific Virtus/Safe Environment policies.

Deployed Missionaries:

If a summer missionary, 2-year full-time missionary, or Missionary Staff missionary knows that he/she has developed a strong relationship with a student throughout his/her time with Damascus, and he/she desires to pursue discipleship relationship with the student once he/she leaves Damascus, he/she should have a relationship disclosure form signed by the parents of the student before he/she officially deploys from Damascus.

Deployed missionaries, who have departed from Damascus after a summer commitment, full-time commitment, or Missionary Staff position, are encouraged to contact Damascus if they plan to disciple a student that they met through their missionary work. Damascus should encourage deployed missionaries to inform the family of the minor that they no longer are a missionary at Damascus. Therefore, Damascus is detached from the relationship between the minor and deployed missionary.



Deployed missionaries are encouraged to follow the same guidelines as missionary staff above.

PARTICIPANT CODE OF CONDUCT AND CORRECTIVE ACTION

For Minors

In addition to the published code of conduct presented to Damascus missionaries, youth program participants are also expected to maintain a level of appropriate behavior. This code of conduct specifies expectations for youth behavior. It also indicates procedures and corrective measures that should be taken in the case of a violation of these expectations.

The participant code of conduct is presented to students in such a way so as to build the effectiveness of Damascus programs. As such, it is usually presented to students by members of the program staff in an orientation skit or video. The content covered in this presentation includes but may not be limited to:

- Participants may not leave an event prior to conclusion unless Damascus has been given explicit permission from the parent/guardian or the participant is being accompanied by an adult leader or parent/guardian.
- The possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or weapons of any kind is not permitted.
- Participants must heed directions of missionaries, volunteers, or other appointed leadership.
- Unless otherwise specified, no activity elements are to be used when not in session.
- Participants must respect the rights and property of others. Damage to or defacing of property will be the financial responsibility of the participants involved and/or the participant's parents/legal guardians.
- Participants must uphold the dignity of others. Inappropriate jokes or language, dress, public display of intimate affection or attraction, and possession or use of pornographic materials or media is prohibited. Refer also to policy 200.52 on bullying.
- Participants will not act in any way, or promote, through language, dress, or materials, any message that contradicts the moral teachings of the Catholic Magisterium.

Since the essence of Christian discipline is self discipline, youth must be free to choose one form of behavior over another. In choosing to behave or misbehave a youth takes upon him/herself the consequences of that chosen behavior.

Damascus missionaries, in order to preserve a truly safe environment within the scope of our programs, have a responsibility to take corrective action if participant behavior



contradicts the expectations listed above. In correcting participant behavior, be sure to observe the following:

- No physical punishment will be enforced (running, push ups, sit ups, etc...)
- Never lay a disciplinary hand on any individual, in any way, for any reason. Since the Church supports the dignity of persons of all ages, corporal punishment in any form is never an acceptable form of punishment.
- A situation requiring correction is an opportunity to witness to an individual and as such should begin with a personal conversation. Address the observed or reported behavior, establish a plan for change, and be positive and affirming. The goal of interior conversion should be maintained in any corrective action.
- Encourage reconciliation with an offended party if applicable.

In any situation requiring correction of a participant, a Director of Counselors or other director should be notified in order to determine whether further action is necessary. Possible further action may include a parent conference, and/or suspension from activities.

Failure to abide by the Participant Code of Conduct may result in a request to parents/guardians to transport offending participants from the premises, and the parents/guardians shall immediately comply with the request.

A more detailed Behavior Management Policy is available from the Program Department to guide missionaries and leadership in addressing specific situations.

For Adults

The above policy largely applies to adult participants with the following amendments:

- Adults may choose to leave an event at their own discretion
- Alcohol may be consumed by adults 21+ when offered as part of a program (e.g. wine at dinner on the women's retreat; cocktails at a special event or dinner, etc.). Personal possession of alcohol, and consumption outside of the designated times and spaces, is still prohibited.
- Failure to abide by the Participant Code of Conduct may result in a request for the adult participant to leave the premises

PARTICIPANT MODESTY AND DRESS CODE

“Purity requires modesty, an integral part of temperance. Modesty protects the intimate center of the person. It means refusing to unveil what should remain hidden. It is ordered to chastity to whose sensitivity it bears witness. It guides how one looks at others and behaves toward them in conformity with the dignity of persons and their solidarity.” - CCC 2521

At Damascus, we have the honor of forming adolescents from diverse backgrounds as they grow to better understand and respect the human person (CCC 2524) as created in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:27). One way this formation takes place is in modeling the virtue of modesty. As children of God, all are empowered in freedom to uphold and respect the dignity and purity of heart of ourselves and others through our behaviors and relationships, which includes choosing clothing that enables freedom and curbs curiosity, and that is appropriate to any specific environment. (See CCC 2521-2525; 1 Cor 10:31).

The following outline provides guidance on dignified and modest clothing choices that are appropriately suited to camp or program participation. If not in compliance with the points outlined above, participants will be asked to change, and if necessary, given something else to wear.

The following is expected of both ladies and gentlemen:

- Clothes that reveal the full body shape should be avoided. Tight form-fitted athletic apparel should not be worn as a normal clothing option.
- Shorts should be at fingertip length or longer when arms are held at the side. Pants may feature holes/rips only below fingertip length.
- It may be appropriate to wear compression shorts under loose-fitting shorts given the activities involved at camp.
- While indoors, shirts should be worn to cover swimsuits.
- Articles of clothing that display profanity, products or slogans that promote alcohol, drugs, sexuality, or indecency, or that communicates matters which contradict Church teaching are prohibited.
- Footwear is required at all times

For Ladies:

- Shirts should provide good coverage of chest and midriff (both front and back) throughout normal daily postures. Shirts should not be longer than shorts so as to give the appearance of not wearing shorts.



- Shirts that are considered undergarments are prohibited when worn as an outer layer. Spaghetti straps and bra straps must be covered. If sleeveless shirts are worn, they must not reveal undergarments.
- Leggings and similarly tight pants may not be worn unless a dress or top provides coverage of waist and butt.
- One-piece or tankini style suits are required for swimming activities. Suits should fully cover the chest and butt. If a swimsuit does not adequately cover either, shorts or a shirt will be required.

For Gentlemen:

- Shirts are to be worn by men at all times except when appropriate for activity participation
- Shirts should cover the full chest and should not be open at the sides, with arm-holes just below the collarbone or above.
- Trunks are required for swimming activities.

BULLYING

Damascus will not tolerate any bullying of participants, missionaries, or volunteers on campus grounds or at any other activity on or off site.

Bullying is a pattern of abuse over time that can include physical intimidation or assault; extortion; oral or written threats; teasing; putdowns; name-calling; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; cruel rumors; false accusations; and social isolation.

Damascus expects all missionaries and volunteers who observe or become aware of an act of bullying to take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene. If a missionary or volunteer believes that his/her intervention has not resolved the matter, or if the bullying persists, he/she shall report to a director for further investigation.

Damascus expects all persons who become aware of an act of bullying on camp grounds or at any other activity on or off site will report it to a director for further investigation. Directors may contact parents/legal guardians of the aggressor and the victim. This investigation may include interviews with participants or missionaries/volunteers and reviewing records.

Consequences for persons who bully others should include counselor intervention, parent conference, and/or suspension from activities depending on the results of the investigation.

CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONICS

All youth programs at Damascus operate in accordance with a strict “no cell phone/electronics” policy. The reason this policy is in place is primarily twofold:

1. It allows the youth to be more present to the retreat/camp and receive more of what the Lord has for them without distraction.
2. It allows for other Damascus policies to be held in place, such as requiring individual parent permission before photographing/social media exposure or communication with parents/guardians going through the care and assistance of adult personnel.

If youth are found to still have their cell phones/electronics while at Damascus, the missionary counselor and/or Counseling Lead has permission to confiscate the cell phone/electronic device until the conclusion of the retreat/camp. This protocol is outlined to parents in the registration process.

Exceptions to this policy include, but are not limited to, medical needs (such as diabetes). However, even in these cases, it is preferable for the minor’s missionary counselor (and not the camper) to be the one carrying the device for the sake of monitoring its use.

INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Damascus, in alignment with its organizational mission and values, is committed to working to establish a faith-filled experience for all program participants, particularly those with special needs. Special Needs include, but are not limited to,

- Physical Disabilities (hearing impaired, leg brace, wheel chair, blindness, etc.)
- Mental Disabilities (down syndrome, autism spectrum disorder, aspergers, etc.)
- Learning Disabilities (use of an aide at school, attends a special needs school, etc.)

We believe individuals with special needs should, in the words of St. John Paul II, “be welcomed by society, and according to their abilities, integrated into it as full members.”(1) In order to facilitate this process, the following procedure should be followed to assist families in communicating their needs, desires, and concerns for their future camper or volunteer, as well as understanding their potential financial obligations. Even if a family has communicated a plan for service in past years, it will be helpful to re-engage in this process annually to be sure that appropriate opportunity is provided.

1. Parents or caregivers inform Damascus of the individual’s interest in participation and describe the individual’s special need. We are best able to provide accommodations and services if we know about your child’s special need prior to coming to camp. The sooner this communication begins, the better prepared we will be. This may be indicated on your registration or reach out to registration@cysc.com to initiate a conversation.

2. Connect with a Director of Counselors or Pastoral Associate. While Damascus works to meet the needs of all potential participants, our organization is limited with regard to the scope of supportive services we are able to provide. A meeting or phone call with the interested individual and a family member is needed to determine whether Damascus is able to provide an environment that is well suited for his/her participation. Accommodating for the physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of this individual is our primary goal.

In preparation for this meeting, the parent should also provide an IEP and Behavioral Plan if one has been developed. After this preliminary meeting has taken place, Damascus reserves the right to refrain from accepting the individual’s registration if the individual’s needs are unable to be met in a way that is determined best serves both the ministry of Damascus and the individual.

3. The Director of Counselors will prepare an individualized camp plan. If the family and/or the organization believe an aide is needed to help facilitate the individual’s experience at Damascus, the family will be responsible to arrange an aide to accompany the individual at



the camp or program. Depending on the nature of the disability, Damascus may require that the aide be certified and may request a meeting with the aide prior to camp. All aides will be required to have filed a BCI background check, and have record of having attended a Protecting God's Children class.

If information regarding special needs is withheld or a requested aide is not supplied, Damascus reserves the right to either deny a camper stay or request the family to pick up the camper early.

4. During the retreat or camp week, the Director of Counselors will have daily check-ins with the camper/volunteer and/or the camper's/volunteer's aide.

Financial considerations for special needs campers/volunteers

Participants/volunteers will be charged the standard participant fee. There is no additional fee for an aide. Damascus provides no formal compensation to aides, as they do not serve as Damascus employees. Any compensation to the aide must come from the family of the individual and/or any employing agency in coordination with the hiring family. For a camper or volunteer with special needs, in most cases, total cost to the family would be the standard participant fee plus any aide compensation arrangement.

Recognizing that the cost of participating in CYSC in combination with the services of an aide may be challenging to some families, we would like to offer the following suggestions for financial support:

First, families are encouraged to apply for financial assistance through our campership fund when registering for camp.

Additional funding may be available through your local children and families first council or through Arch, a national organization.

<https://archrespite.org/caregiver-resources/respitelocator/>

Often local parish or charitable organizations (e.g. Knights of Columbus, women's clubs, lions, Rotary, Kiwanis) may be willing to provide additional assistance.

(1) John Paul II. (1999, December 4). Address of the Holy Father to the congress on integration of dis-abled children. Retrieved December 12, 2005, from http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/speeches/1999/december/documents/hf_jp-ij_spe_04121999_cong-pc-family_en.html

PREGNANCY OF MINOR PARTICIPANTS

Any determination concerning the continuing participation in Damascus activities by a pregnant individual under the age of 18 shall be made by the individual and her parents in consultation with Directors.

The religious instruction given at Damascus programs should make clear that any act involving procreation is the exclusive right of those who are married. Likewise, catechesis on the Church's consistent stand in defense of human life must also be incorporated.

If, in the case of an unmarried individual, Damascus missionaries have an attitude of compassion rather than approval, and if appropriate religious instruction is offered, there is every reasonable hope that the attitude of participants will, likewise, be a rational and Christian one.

At this time in their lives, individuals involved in an unexpected pregnancy need Christian acceptance, compassion and counsel. It is the Christian community's responsibility to give support and aid to those involved. Professional counseling for the expectant parents is strongly recommended.

PASTORAL CARE FOR PERSONS QUESTIONING GENDER OR SEXUALITY

As a Private Association of the Catholic Church, Damascus is *radically consumed for the salvation of souls*. It is of the utmost importance that each individual involved in a Damascus program or event be given the opportunity to enter into an environment of encounter with the person of Jesus Christ. This is a key to the New Evangelization. It is in and through Jesus that all of the teachings of the Church come together and their full meaning can be understood. It is for this reason that any pastoral discussion about Church teaching should be centered in the love of Jesus Christ.

Damascus seeks to be uncompromising in following Church teaching while carrying Jesus' heart of compassion for every person. It is from this foundation that Damascus employees or volunteers are called to respond to the very sensitive issues of sexual identity. In accord with the Catholic Church, Damascus asserts that men and women are made in the image and likeness of God, and that God made humans male and female (Genesis 1:27). God thus created the two sexual identities of man and woman. It is from these identities that gender emerges. As a result, "It needs to be emphasized that 'biological sex and the socio-cultural role of sex (gender) can be distinguished but not separated.'...It is one thing to be understanding of human weakness and the complexities of life, and another to accept ideologies that attempt to sunder what are inseparable aspects of reality" (Amoris Laetitia 56). It is by accepting God's gift of the body, and therefore, sex and gender, that an individual can attain lasting happiness and "find mutual enrichment" (ibid. 285). It is the belief of Damascus that attempts should be made to understand the particular situations and complexities of a person's life who questions his or her personal sexual identity, but not conform to an "Ideology of Gender Fluidity." Further resources on these topics can be found in the USCCB document, "Gender theory"/"Gender ideology" – Select Teaching Resources.

(<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/marriage/promotion-and-defense-of-marriage/index.cfm>)

With this being said, due to the complexity of each individual's circumstances, a "cookie-cutter" response is unattainable. In order to help each employee and volunteer of Damascus best love and serve any potential participant who questions his or her sexual identity, the following Guidelines are suggested. These are not designed to provide an exact response to every situation. Rather, this list will help the employee or volunteer to develop a way of responding to persons, not situations.



Guidelines:

Ensure, first and foremost, that all individuals are treated with compassion, dignity, and respect, as is due to them as human persons.

On a case-by-case basis, evaluate the specific needs and desires of each individual physically, psychologically, and spiritually. The following questions are meant to guide this evaluation:

What is the specific request of the participant and/or parent/guardian?

What is the motivation behind the specific request?

Is this request in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church?

Is Damascus reasonably able to accommodate the desired request, especially considering the nature of existing lodging which is restricted to members of the same biological sex?

Does this request restrict the freedom of other participants to engage in the program or event?

Due to the evangelistic nature of Damascus programs, if the desired request does not oppose the teachings of the Catholic Church, is reasonable, and does not restrict others, every effort will be made to allow for individuals to enter into programs and events, which are always designed to provide an encounter with the life-changing love of Jesus Christ.

PASTORAL CARE OF STUDENTS ON RETREAT

The details of this policy are specific to three-day retreats with school or parish groups.

Retreats provide an opportunity for students to “retreat” from their everyday routine and open up to the Lord in new ways. Because of that, students will occasionally share things on retreat that they have never shared before or have scarcely talked about. We usually find this to be true because invitation to relationship with Jesus brings about vulnerability.

At Damascus, we recognize the honor and privilege it is to be trusted by parents and schools with the students they care for each day, and therefore, we have systems in place to best steward the pastoral care of each student - including, but not limited to, what we call “red flags”.

What is a red flag?

The term “red flag” can mean many different things according to different ministries and organizations. At Damascus, we define a red flag as “anything that catches our attention and could affect a camper’s experience of retreat and/or the camper’s experience of the Lord.” Therefore, red flags can range from parent conflict all the way to abuse or suicidal ideation.

Who handles red flags?

All of our missionaries are trained to pastor red flags in their most basic form, meaning the raw content of the red flag and the initial pastoring of the situation. Our missionaries are required to report all red flags to our Counseling Leads and/or Counseling Directors. Our Counseling Directors are staff members with the specific responsibility to oversee the pastoral care of students on retreat, and therefore, are involved in all red flags that arise. Counseling Directors are specifically trained in dealing with and navigating these topics and questions. If a question arises regarding these matters, the Counseling Director will be the individual who handles the situation.

What it looks like:

At Damascus, we have the responsibility to create a space for students to be honest and vulnerable, while also prioritizing their safety. Therefore, we are careful to respect each student’s privacy by not revealing information they’ve shared in confidence except when it is necessary to assure care for their safety. Students are told by their small group leaders that we will uphold their privacy unless they need further support.



When a student brings up a red flag that is of greater severity, meaning our staff has assessed that more support would be beneficial for the child in his/her return home, we first ask the student if any adult has ever been welcomed into this situation before.

- If they say yes, great! Often in these situations the students are either actively receiving counseling or have family members heavily involved in their situation. Therefore, we, as Damascus, uphold their privacy, in confidence that people are caring closely for their safety at home.
- If they say no, our goal becomes to help them identify an adult back home who could provide further support to them.
 - If they mention an adult chaperone that is on retreat, then Damascus will help facilitate a conversation between the student and that chaperone before the end of retreat.
 - If they mention someone from home, Damascus will help facilitate a phone call between the student and that adult before the end of retreat.
 - In these circumstances, the student's privacy is still upheld by Damascus, in trust that the student has support from that chosen adult going home. A chaperone could be invited into this process, depending on the student's request.
 - If the student fails to name a trusted adult, Damascus will have him/her choose one of the chaperones on retreat. If the camper refuses, Damascus will enforce with the student that someone must know, and the student will be empowered to choose which chaperone they would like to be welcomed in.

If a child reports imminent risk to self or others, the Counseling Director will ensure all people are safe prior to the student leaving Damascus. Examples could include calling home, calling the school, or involving authorities.

Lastly, as an organization that works closely with minors, all Damascus employees are Mandatory Reporters. In cases of abuse or neglect, authorities, such as Child Protective Services, will be called by the missionary with which the information was shared, in conjunction with the Counseling Director. If the camper shared the information in a group setting, then the Counseling Director will bring the school and/or parish into this knowing. However, if the camper shares this information with one of the missionaries one-on-one then the Counseling Director will ask the child if this information can be shared with the parish and/or school. The Counseling Director will speak about the benefits of having someone in the parish and/or school knowing this information so that they could be a source of support going home, however, if the child does not want them brought into the situation, the Counseling Director will respect this request.

USE OF IMAGES

For events where Damascus captures photo or video footage, the following notice will be shared with participants either by being posted in the event location or incorporated into a release form that is signed by participants or their parent/guardians:

All individuals participating in this Damascus event, grant Damascus, and its assignees, the right to photograph them, record their voice, and to use their likeness, actions and voice in recordings. Whether these recordings be audio or video in nature, Damascus maintains the right to their distribution and use in advertising in all current and future media, which may also include the name, city, parish, or other personal information of the individual(s) recorded. Individuals will not receive any payment for such use and waive any right to bring any action in law or equity against Damascus, its successors, assignees or licensees, for such use.

LOST AND FOUND

On-site events will include a lost and found table near the main program space. Participants are encouraged to check before departure. Personal items should be labeled with participant name to assist with identification.

Items of value (i.e. phone, wallet) will be held and the owner contacted if possible. The owner will be responsible for pickup or the cost of shipping. Other items will be disposed of following the event.

GROUP CODE OF CONDUCT

These expectations apply to all participants who are using Damascus facilities. Group leaders are expected to communicate these to all participants.

Parking and Transportation On Campus

See policy 100.72.

Activities and Safety

Guests must wear footwear at all times while on the grounds, inside and outside.

The High and Low Ropes Courses and Climbing Wall are for use only with certified instructors from Damascus. For safety reasons, unauthorized use may result in dismissal from the grounds.

Water Activity Rules and Regulations must be observed for all water activities, including the presence of certified life guards arranged through Damascus in advance.

Modest swimwear is required by anyone using water activities.

Adult Supervision of Youth

Damascus is not required to provide supervision for any facilities, equipment, or recreational activities (except those requiring certified instructors), engaged in or used by me or individuals under my care. Adequate adult leadership will accompany all youth groups at a ratio of at least one adult per 10 young people.

Adult leaders will closely and actively supervise the behavior of their charges. Other groups have a right to expect peace and quiet late at night, a pleasant atmosphere in the dining hall, and a trash-free environment.

Adult leaders are responsible for ensuring that property is neither destroyed nor defaced.

Adult leaders are responsible for the safety of their youth groups. Adults are required to sleep in the cabin with their group, to supervise them in recreation, to make certain that they are not in areas where they should not be or roaming the grounds late at night.

Food and Drink

Cooking of meals is not permitted unless arranged in advance.



Because Damascus is a commercial facility, public health codes require that all snacks brought in by groups are to be commercially prepared, pre-packaged and ready-to-eat.

Food containing or processed with nuts is prohibited (see policy 400.14)

Damage to Facilities

Charges will be assessed for any damages incurred during a retreat. Proper care of equipment, rooms, and facilities is extremely important.

The use of tape, push pins, etc. is prohibited for affixing items to walls, doors, ceiling, etc. if you have items to post or hand out, please consult with Damascus.

Use of sports balls inside buildings will result in fines and/or damage fees.

Red, purple or orange beverages are not permitted in any of the buildings, due to the possibility of staining.

Damascus is a smoke and alcohol-free environment unless arranged in advance.

“Smoking In-Room” Infractions: A \$200 cleaning charge shall be assessed per room.

Due to the sensitivity of Damascus’ fire suppression system, no candles, pyrotechnics, smoke or fog machines are permitted unless arranged in advance.

Campfires are permitted in designated areas only. Please contact Damascus prior to your event to request a campfire. We will provide firewood and a “match-ready fire.”

Miscellaneous

The accompaniment of a guide dog may be requested in advance and determined on a case by case basis.

Any lost and found items will be held for pick up for 3 days. Most items can be shipped with a pre-paid fee.

VISITORS

All visitors on site will sign in at the camp office, sign a liability release, wear a “visitor” lanyard or other identifier, and be accompanied by an appointed staff member at all times.

Visitor will be welcomed, provided with a hospitable environment throughout the time of the visit or observation, and signed out at time of departure.

Any adult that is seen on premises without a visitor badge or lanyard or staff accompaniment should be approached and directed or escorted to the main office by an available staff member or volunteer.

Touring and Observation

Parents, Pastors, Youth Ministry Coordinators, and other visitors are always welcomed to tour or observe an activity sponsored by Damascus. Although the right to observe programs will never be denied, efforts will be made to create an environment where young people are safe and comfortable fully engaging in the program at hand.

In the case that a visitor intends to tour or observe during a program, advance notice should be given to the program director on site if a program is happening. At least 24 hours of advance notice will allow staff to coordinate schedules of any individual or group on site in such a way so as to minimize negative impact to investment in programming, to respect group dynamics, and to facilitate a positive experience for the visitor(s).

Non-Disclosure

While on-site, visitors may have access to specific information related to the operation of Damascus and its programs, whether through observation, written documents, or verbal statements from staff, which may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Program content and schedule (skits, dramas, talks, themes, etc.)
- Names of programs or program elements
- Missionary formation structure and content
- Organizational structure

Visitors must understand that this information is shared in a spirit of cooperation and a desire for the advancement of the Great Commission across the Church, and in the same spirit must agree to treat such information as confidential, and will not disclose to others, nor appropriate to another context, any specific operational information that they have



received without express permission from Damascus. Visitors may be asked to sign an agreement to this effect.

Visiting Students

Pastors, youth ministers, or other parish staff who are coming to spend time with campers from their parish during a day of CYSC should contact the Chaperone Coordinator to make arrangements. If staying overnight to accompany campers, please refer to policy 200.82 on chaperone guidelines.

Visiting Missionaries During CYSC

Visitors for missionaries are normally welcome during the “Sabbath” period, after Formation on Fridays through Saturday, with the permission of the Missionary Program Department. Outside of this time, missionaries are not typically able to host visitors; in special circumstances permission can be sought from the Staff Director. Visitors are always welcome to attend Closing Mass, but may not be invited to staff meetings and formation on Fridays (see Policy 300.24 for specific direction on visitors at Formation).

Visiting Missionaries During the Full-Time Year

If family members or friends wish to visit, permission should be sought from the household leader. At least 24 hours of advance notice will allow household leader to coordinate schedules of any individual or group on site in such a way so as to minimize negative impact to investment in programming, to respect household dynamics, and to facilitate a positive experience for the visitor(s). See Policy 300.24 for specific direction on visitors at Formation.

Damascus is typically not able to provide on-site accommodations for visitors.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND CAMPERS

Damascus honors the role that parents have as the primary faith formators in their children's lives. The programs we offer do not replace this role, but can only be a supplement.

Parent to Camper Communication

During CYSC, parents may utilize a third party service to send notes to their campers to be delivered at lunch. This is a great way to stay in touch with campers and let them know you are thinking of them while they are gone. This service is not offered during 3 day retreats.

If there is an urgent need for the parent to contact a participant during a program, parents may call the Camper Care line at Damascus to connect with a staff member and request to speak to their child.

Camper to Parent Communication

Often when a child is having a difficult time at camp or on retreat, they will want to communicate with home. Damascus staff will work with parents in the mutual goal of helping campers to stay engaged through the completion of their time with Damascus. Staff members will facilitate requests in the following way:

- Encourage the camper to enter into the activities at hand
- If persistent, contact the parent to let them know of the request
- If determined necessary and helpful, establish a time for the camper to call the parent. Phone calls of this type will not be made after dinner.

The following are good pointers to communicate to parents prior to a phone call with their child:

Remember that speaking to someone from home can be the best way to both encourage or discourage a child. As a parent, you have the unique opportunity to help soothe and reassure your child. Remain newsy, upbeat, and encouraging. Keep in mind that hearing your voice can be hard, so don't be caught off guard if your camper sounds a little teary.

Campers will know that phone calls are 10 minutes long. Campers have timers next to their phones, and when their time is ending, they will give you verbal cues that they need to wrap up the conversation. Fighting the timer by starting new threads of conversation will only make your camper stressed at the end of the phone call. Instead, set up your own timer so that you can encourage your child to spend the time wisely.



If you detect some homesickness, ask your child to talk about all the fun activities that camp offers, and encourage him/her to get out there and do them. ("I remember you were very excited about swimming at camp. When will you swim next?")

Avoid mentioning sad things that your child can't do anything about. Save any bad news until you can talk to your child face to face.

Always encourage your camper to share with a counselor or leader or whatever staff member or director they trust most what they seem to be saving for you. It's important to make your child's camp support system and home support system seamless. This mastery is an important part of camp; you can't—and shouldn't—try to manage your child's life from 100 miles away. Their sense of accomplishment for faring on their own will be enormous.

Combine statements of missing your child with news about your life to prevent your camper from developing a sad mental picture of you at home, bored and lonely without him/her. Tell your camper that you miss him/her, and then tell him/her about pursuing your own projects during time apart. ("I miss you, and when you get home I can show you all of the flowers that I have been planting in the garden.")

Understand that hearing a parent's voice while away brings all kinds of emotions bubbling to the surface. Your camper wants to tell you all of the highs and the lows and is counting on you to be a calm and fair sounding board on which to bounce his/her ideas. If you experience a tense or difficult (sometimes, yes, even hysterical-sounding) moment in a phone call, it is most likely the best way that your child knows to ask you for reassurance and advice. He/she wants to know that you are confident that he/she can handle being away (especially in those moments when he/she is not so sure of him/herself). Tell your child that you love him/her and that you are confident in his/her ability to cope.

The most common mistake parents make is the "pick-up deal." It's normal for children to ask, "What if I want to come home?" Tell your child that some feelings of homesickness are normal. Try to brainstorm ideas together of what your camper can do to feel better. Never ever say, "If you want to come home, I'll come and get you." This conveys a message of doubt and pity that undermines children's confidence and independence. Pick-up deals become mental crutches and self-fulfilling prophecies.

While talking, think of suggestions that might be helpful to our staff in working with your child, and let us know in a follow-up phone call to the office.

At the end of your phone call, let your camper know the general time frame that you will be writing or speaking to him/her again. Try to avoid setting exact times or dates, to keep your child from becoming unnecessarily anxious over delayed mail or a rescheduled phone call.

CHAPERONES

“Chaperone” refers to any adult (youth minister, teacher, priest, or parent volunteer) accompanying their students to a program at Damascus. Damascus honors the role these individuals have in stewarding the growth of their students before and after their time on retreat, and recognizes that spending time with kids in a camp or retreat environment is a great way to build relationship and can bear great fruit in future ministry. Where possible, we want to facilitate chaperone involvement in such a way that it allows these relationships to be built within the context of the established program.

Where applicable, chaperones will be asked to register online and pay the appropriate registration fee for their events. Lodging and personnel may limit the number of chaperones that can be accommodated at a given event.

During Retreat or Camp

There will be a meeting early in the retreat or camp week to orient chaperones to the schedule and campus, introduce program leadership, and outline expectations. A missionary will be designated as the host or point of contact for chaperones during the retreat.

Chaperones are expected to cooperate with program leadership and to comply with and support the following Damascus policies for the sake of a safe and enjoyable experience for all, most importantly the youth:

Participant Cell Phone/Electronics: Damascus holds a strong “no cell phones/electronics” policy for all participants of a given retreat. This policy exists for 2 primary reasons: to help participants be present to the retreat without distraction, and to ensure that any communication or photos being taken during the retreat are under the knowledge and permission of leadership. Exceptions to this policy are limited, but the most common usually involve medical needs, such as diabetes. Questions about particular participants should be forwarded to the Pastoral Manager.

Phone Calls to Parents/Guardians: With the aforementioned policy on cell phones, participants may ask a chaperone or missionary if they can call home, especially if they are experiencing homesickness. However, a phone call should not be guaranteed to the attendee at that present moment. Instead, a Damascus representative will make a call to the parents/guardians of the participant to discuss the request before promising a phone call to the participant. Sometimes, parents/guardians know that talking to their child will make homesickness worse, and/or they may have ideas on how to best support the child, which may or may not include the phone call. For this reason, a phone call will never be



promised to the child in the moment. Additionally, the child will not know that a call is being made by Damascus to their parents/guardians, for if the parent/guardian decides they do not think a phone call would be best, we do not want the child to become hurt or resentful toward his/her parent/guardian. Any phone calls made are encouraged to happen no later than dinner, for phone calls late at night tend to exacerbate any emotion a child is experiencing, rather than helping soothe it.

Medical Awareness and Sickness: While on retreats, Damascus will have a medical staff present that will be responsible for the primary medical needs of any retreat participants. Depending on the severity of illness/injury, Damascus may ask for a participant to be picked up by their parent or guardian. Any time a significant illness/injury arises, parents/guardians will be contacted by the medical staff. Chaperones will be updated if they have a participant that will be leaving the retreat and/or receiving advanced medical care (i.e. urgent care).

Early Pick-Ups and/or Late Drop-Offs: Due to shared liability, it is important that both chaperones and Damascus are aware of and participate in any early pick-ups or late drop-offs. Chaperones should make Damascus aware of these situations prior to the retreat (unless, of course, it is decided during the retreat - in which case, chaperones and Damascus will already be partnering in decision-making). During the early pick-up process, both a chaperone and a Damascus representative should witness the handoff between the parent/legal guardian and the retreat team. If a high schooler will be handling the departure or late arrival on their own, via driving themselves, Damascus must receive some form of documentation from the parent/legal guardian giving permission.

Times for Involvement vs. Times for Small Groups: Damascus missionaries are trained to invest in participants throughout all moments of a retreat. This includes times of play and times of casual conversation, along with more serious times, to both build trust and show genuine interest in the lives of the participants. To help with this process, chaperones should allow space for small groups to interact as units during meals, programmed sessions, and formal times of small group, including times of prayer. Chaperones will have their own table for meals, their own section during programmed sessions, and their own time for small group that they are to attend in order to process their own experience and how the experience is going for their students. Great times for chaperones to interact with the participants are serving meals at mealtimes and going around to activities with the various groups from their parish or school!

Redirection to Counselors: Sometimes, when participants are feeling emotional, struggling with an aspect of retreat, or withdrawing, it is easier for them to approach a chaperone than their missionary, especially early on in the retreat. Our missionaries are trained to help students dealing with a variety of struggles, so Damascus asks that chaperones redirect participants to missionary counselors as much as possible. The missionary counselor can only help with what they know about, and if a participant continuously withdraws, the missionaries will not be able to assist. If a participant shares



something with a chaperone that necessitates more specific attention, the chaperone should seek guidance from the Chaperone Host on how to proceed.

No Drugs or Alcohol: Damascus holds a strong no drugs or alcohol policy on campus, for both participants and adults alike. No drugs or alcohol should be consumed on campus throughout the duration of the retreat.

Two-Deep Policy for Safe Environment: For the sake of providing a safe environment for all retreat attendees, Damascus abides by a two-deep policy. In other words, a minor should never be found one on one with an adult in a closed space, meaning closed doors, isolated, etc. Rather, there will always be either two minors with one adult, two adults with one minor, or a one on one conversation in an open space. Both Damascus missionaries and chaperones must abide by this policy while on retreat.

Nut-Free: Damascus has a commitment to being a nut-free campus. In order to uphold this standard for the safety of every individual on campus, signing this document indicates that you acknowledge and agree to abstain from bringing any food with nuts or any food made in a facility with nuts onto campus.

For an understanding of the pastoral care of students on retreat and how chaperones or parish/school representatives may be involved, see Policy 200.57.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PERSONNEL

In order to best protect and affirm the dignity of others the following activities are prohibited for Damascus personnel:

- Any degree of physical, sexual, or romantic relationship or behavior between a missionary or volunteer and a minor.
- Smoking, smokeless tobacco, tobacco products, and possession or use of alcohol (for exceptions see 200.45) or illegal drugs.
- Gambling.
- Possession or use firearms, fireworks or knives over 3 inches in length. Knives should only be utilized by staff members or volunteers (not counselors) and only as necessary to aid in their work.
- Profanity or sexual humor.
- Public displays of intimate affection as well as any relationship or behavior among missionaries or volunteers that might impact mission, witness, and focus.
- Possession or use of pornographic materials or media.
- Use of or reference to inappropriate music, movies, videos, shows, lifestyles, habits, etc. Avoid entertainment that stands contrary to Christian moral life.
- Acting in any way, or promoting, through language, dress, or materials, any message that contradicts the moral teachings of the Catholic Magisterium.
- Littering or defacing campus property.
- Driving of personal automobile on premises when participants are present
- Taking any minor in personal vehicle or away from group alone.
- Procuring, providing, or using alcohol and/or controlled substances for or with minors.
- Unauthorized use of campus activities, facilities, and vehicles.
- Leaving campus without express permission from Directors.
- Pranks.
- Violation of Modesty Policy (refer to policy 300.02)

The following guidelines are to be observed by Damascus missionaries and volunteers:

- Work collaboratively with directors and other leadership staff.
- Faithfully represent and practice the teachings of the Catholic Church with integrity in word and action.
- Are competent and receive training commensurate with their role(s) and responsibilities.
- Respect the diversity of spiritualities among campers and will not make their own personal form of spirituality normative.



- Recognize the dignity of each person and refrain from behaviors or words that are disrespectful of anyone or any group.
- Serve all people without discrimination.
- Act to ensure all persons have access to the resources, services and opportunities they require particularly with regard to special needs or disabilities.
- Exercise responsible stewardship of resources while holding themselves to the highest standards of integrity regarding fiscal matters placed in their trust.
- Respect confidentiality.
- Adhere to civil and ecclesial law, policy and procedure concerning the reporting of neglect, suspected abuse or when physical harm could come to the person or to a third party.
- Support the rights and roles of parents while ministering to the needs and concerns of minors.
- Are aware they have considerable personal power because of their ministerial position. Therefore, they will sustain respectful ministerial relationships, avoiding manipulation and other abuses of power.
- Model healthy and positive behaviors with minors.
- Are to be aware of the signs of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse and neglect.
- Are to be aware of their limitations with respect to paraprofessional counseling and make appropriate referrals to the Director of Counselors or to Directors.
- Because participants share same-sex lodging and restroom facilities and regularly engage in intimate sharing with small group leaders, leaders who publicly identify with same-sex attraction, or who have recently publicly identified as such, will not be permitted to lodge with minors, and will be subject to a personalized plan prior to any potential integration into small group leadership.
- Are aware of and comply with all applicable policies with special attention to sexual misconduct, safety, transportation, parental permission, and medical emergency policies.

While this code of conduct applies specifically to the period of service of a missionary or volunteer with Damascus, it can stand as an effective foundation for professional behavior following their time of service. Inappropriate and immoral conduct in any context not only diminishes the ministry of witness and introduces opportunity for scandal, but it could also result in forfeiture of opportunity for future involvement with Damascus. Special attention should be given to:

- Avoid procuring, providing, or using alcohol and/or controlled substances for or with minors, or as a minor.
- Avoid immoral public behavior.
- Avoid behavior on social media that would be considered inappropriate during your time on mission.



- Avoid acting in any way, or promoting, through language, dress, or materials, any message that contradicts the moral teachings of the Catholic Magisterium.
- Maintaining faithfulness to the sacramental life of the Catholic Church.
- Maintaining a committed prayer life.

ADHERENCE TO CHURCH TEACHING

All individuals who serve as a missionary or volunteer with Damascus are expected to be examples of Catholic moral behavior and professionalism. All individuals, regardless of religious affiliation, are therefore required to abide by the moral values advanced by the teachings of Christ, the tenets of the Catholic Church, and the policies and regulations of Damascus. Individuals may be disciplined or terminated for violations of these standards, or any conduct which appears to reject or offend the teachings, doctrines, or principles of the Catholic Church. While there may be others not mentioned below, examples of conduct that may result in termination of employment include:

- Public support of activities or publicly espousing beliefs contrary to Catholic Church teaching;
- Public statements disparaging or causing contempt against religion in general or the Catholic Church in particular;
- Entry into a marriage which is not recognized by the Catholic Church;
- Having an abortion or publicly supporting abortion rights;
- Sexual relations (same or opposite sex) outside the institution of marriage as recognized by the Catholic Church;
- Pursuing or publicly supporting in vitro fertilization.

The teachings of the Catholic Church can be found in “The Catechism of the Catholic Church” which is available online at http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM.

MODESTY POLICY FOR MISSIONARIES

“Purity requires modesty, an integral part of temperance. Modesty protects the intimate center of the person. It means refusing to unveil what should remain hidden. It is ordered to chastity to whose sensitivity it bears witness. It guides how one looks at others and behaves toward them in conformity with the dignity of persons and their solidarity.” - CCC 2521

At Damascus, we have the honor of forming adolescents from diverse backgrounds as they grow to better understand and respect the human person (CCC 2524) as created in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:27). One way this formation takes place is in modeling the virtue of modesty. As children of God, all are empowered in freedom to uphold and respect the dignity and purity of heart of ourselves and others through our behaviors and relationships, which includes choosing clothing that enables freedom and curbs curiosity, and that is appropriate to any specific environment. (See CCC 2521-2525; 1 Cor 10:31).

The following outline provides guidance on appropriate and modest clothing choices for anyone who may be representing Damascus.

1. Cleanliness: Appropriate maintenance of personal hygiene includes: Regularly showering, brushing teeth daily, presenting clean and brushed/combed hair, use of body deodorant, trimmed nails, clean-shaven faces or neatly trimmed facial hair, light perfume or cologne is also acceptable, and makeup can be worn to depict a fresh appearance.
2. Name tags: Damascus name tags should be worn for all on-site events. Name tag should be visible, readable and professional (i.e. the name written on the name tag should be your name and should only be worn by its owner). Name tags may be removed during all lake time activities. If damaged or lost, inform your staff lead or supervisor.
3. Footwear: Footwear should be worn at all times at Damascus, and should be appropriate to the requirements of the particular event. Closed toed shoes are required at Damascus activities and in the kitchen to prevent cuts and injury.
4. Clothing: Clothing is to be modest, dignified, and appropriately suited.
 - a. WOMEN AND MEN
 - i. If sleeveless (i.e. cutoffs, etc.) shirts are worn, they must not reveal the chest or bra.
 - ii. It may be appropriate to wear compression shorts under loose fitting shorts given our active lives at camp or on retreats.
 - iii. When participating in water/aquatic activities:
 1. One-piece or tankini style suits are required for ladies. Suit should fully cover the chest and the butt. If a swimsuit does not adequately cover either, shorts or a shirt will be required.



2. Trunks are required for men.
 3. While indoors, shirts should be worn to cover swimsuits.
- iv. Articles of clothing that display profanity, products or slogans that promote alcohol, drugs, sexuality, or indecency, or that communicates matters which contradict Church teaching are prohibited.
 - v. Articles of clothing choice should not lead to confusion of masculine or feminine identity especially as may be commonplace in LGBTQ+ culture.
 1. Any use of makeup for men should only be used when included in official programming.
 2. Nail polish should only be worn by women.
 3. Additionally, special attention to clothing should be given when choosing uncommon ethnically or culturally based apparel or costumes.
 - a. Men should not wear kilts.
 - b. On-stage costumes should only be worn with intentional purposes.
- b. WOMEN
- i. Spaghetti straps or visible bra straps can only be worn when covered by a cardigan or sweater.
 - ii. Shirts that are considered undergarments are prohibited when worn as an outer layer.
 - iii. Midriff should not be visible in the front or back, noting potential posture during activities, or during times of worship.
 - iv. No shirts that show cleavage whether standing normally or bending over should be worn.
 - v. Clothes that reveal the full body shape should be avoided. Tight form-fitted athletic apparel should not be worn as a normal clothing option.
 - vi. Shirts should not be longer than shorts so as to give the appearance of not wearing shorts.
 - vii. Leggings, yoga pants, and similarly tight pants should be worn with special attention paid to modest and dignified presentation and may not be worn unless a dress or top provides coverage below the butt and waist line.
 - viii. Shorts/skirts should be at fingertip length or longer when arms are held at the side.
 - ix. Pants may feature holes/rips only below fingertip length.
- c. MEN
- i. Shirts are to be worn by men at all times except when appropriate for activity participation. (paint/mud/water...)
 - ii. Tightness of clothing should be taken into consideration. Shirts or pants should not be form-fitting so as to reveal the outline of the body, especially in private areas.



- iii. Shirts should cover your full chest and should not be open at the sides. Just below the collarbone or above is a good standard.
 - iv. Pants may feature holes/rips only below fingertip length.
 - v. Shorts should be at fingertip length or longer when arms are held at the side.
5. Onstage Presentation: When leading on-stage programming of any kind, outside of specific programmed roles, dress style should be considered “casual” or higher. Presenters are ideally “clean casual”. Special consideration should be given to whether the visual angle of standing on stage may further influence clothing decisions, particularly as it pertains to skirts, shorts, dresses and shirts.

Appropriate Dress for Specific Occasions

The following “standards” demonstrate various potential applications of the previously outlined policy, making distinction, from least to most formal for particular occasions.

In-House Dress: The kinds of clothing that missionaries should expect to wear inside their own homes, living in community with one another. Other locations on campus do not count as “in-house,” even during recreational or sabbath times.

- Undergarments are not considered lounge wear. As such, individuals should make sure to provide clothing over these items even in the houses.
- When changing clothing, it is important to respect and honor where other people are at in their walk with purity. Individuals are encouraged to change in bathrooms or in bedrooms discreetly.
- While sleeping, private areas should be covered by clothing.
- Shoes should not be worn in the house. House shoes (i.e. slippers) are acceptable.

Casual: Casual clothing can be worn on the 1st and 2nd day of retreats (Wednesday and Thursday for weekday retreats and Friday and Saturday for weekend retreats), during the weeks of CYSC, and on Sabbath days.

During the first day of retreat, missionaries should wear clothing with a Damascus and/or CYSC top. The brand Damascus and/or CYSC should be showing. For instance, a missionary cannot wear a non branded sweatshirt over their branded Damascus and/or CYSC t-shirt. The exception to this would be high school and the second day of our adult retreats.

This type of clothing will consist of things that can get muddy/ dirty, something that a missionary is warm enough or cool enough in depending on the season seeing as they will be outside a lot.



Athletic wear is encouraged and often the best attire to engage in high adventure activities. Some examples of this would be:

- Gym shorts
- T-shirts
- Sweat pants
- Sweat shirts
- Knit hats
- Baggy clothes
- Ponchos
- Gloves
- Toe Socks

Clean Casual: Clean Casual describes clothing that a missionary will wear on most opening days during which we are receiving people for an event. This type of clothing would also be appropriate for the duration of an adult retreat, outpourings, youth group, empower, CYSC open and closing day, and worship/songwriting conferences.

This dress is meant to enable meeting and receiving people for the first time while representing Damascus. We want to put forward an intentional appearance that shows that we are happy and ready to receive our guests. This dress is also used for events where we will have a more adult audience and so a little nicer presentation is desired. Some examples of dress for Clean Casual would be:

- Khaki or denim bottoms, a clean shirt that is appropriate for the event, clean shaven, appropriate shoes (no slides).
- Leggings are permitted with dressier shirts or sweaters

Mission staff, outside of specific retreat roles, should always be clean casual or above in their daily attire for work.

Business Casual: Business Casual dress is most comparable to a work environment attire and will be worn for events such as Terrific Tuesdays when the whole apostolate commits to a “nicer dress day” or advancement events that missionaries would possibly be invited to attend. Attire for these events would consist of:

- For women: Dresses or skirts with nicer shirts, nice pants (black, khaki, or nice jeans)
- For men: Nice pants (black, khaki, or nice jeans), a button or collared shirt for men.

Business Formal: Business formal will be the nicest form of dress that our missionaries will ever be asked to wear. It will be worn for specific events like our appreciation dinner. Attire for this kind of event could consist of:

- For women: Nice dress or skirt
- For men: Dress pants with a nice dress shirt. Consideration of tie and suit jacket.

HARASSMENT

Harassment can take many forms. Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that embarrasses, denigrates, or shows hostility toward a person because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, age or disability or other protected characteristics. It does not include compliments of a socially acceptable nature.

It is the policy of Damascus to maintain a spiritually enriching environment, in all programs and activities, free of all forms of harassment and intimidation. No program participant, leader, or volunteer should be subject to unlawful harassment in any form, and specifically not to unsolicited and/or unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical.

Conduct which constitutes sexual harassment is prohibited. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Unwelcomed and/or offensive sexual flirtation, advances, propositions;
- Continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual or gender-based nature;
- Explicit or degrading sexual or gender-based comments about another individual or his/her appearance;
- The display or circulation of sexually explicit or suggestive writing, pictures or objects;
- Any offensive or physical conduct which shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of gender or sex;
- Graffiti of sexual nature;
- Touching oneself sexually or talking about one's sexual activity in front of others;
- Spreading rumors about or categorizing others as to sexual activity.

Sexual harassment is not limited to conduct that is sexual in nature – it also includes harassment that is based on gender. Gender-based harassment, which is also prohibited, is conduct that would not occur except for the sex of the person involved. An example would be referring to an individual by or as a body part or a demeaning sex-based term, or treating people differently because of their gender. The same prohibitions apply with regard to inflammatory or offensive comments or conduct which is based upon other personal differences. In short, working relationships between all individuals must be based on mutual respect.

Sexual harassment also includes the taking of, or refusal to take, any personal or other action on the basis of a person's submission to or refusal of sexual overtures. No person should so much as imply that an individual's "cooperation" or submission to unwelcome



sexual activity will have any effect on the individual's standing, service to or participation with Damascus.

A sexually hostile environment can be created by a participant, leader, volunteer or visitor. Peer-based sexual harassment is a form of prohibited conduct where the harassing conduct creates a hostile environment.

Not all physical conduct is necessarily considered sexual in nature. (For example, a leader hugging a participant after an accomplishment or consoling a person with an injury would not be considered sexual conduct.)

Any person who believes he/she has been subject to unlawful harassment or intimidation must contact the director of Staff Care. A complaint must be filed in writing. All complaints will be promptly investigated, and the person initiating the complaint will be advised of the outcome of the investigation.

Where it is determined that harassment has occurred, the appropriate authority will take immediate disciplinary action against any individual engaging in harassment. The response shall take into account the affected individuals and circumstances. Such action may include, depending on the circumstances, disciplinary measures up to and including termination of services.

No retaliation against anyone who reports harassment will be tolerated. Damascus prohibits such retaliation and will take appropriate responsive action if retaliation occurs.

Directors' Responsibilities

During training, all missionaries and volunteers will receive a copy of this Harassment Policy which will be reviewed and agreed to in its entirety.

Directors shall follow established procedures for timely investigation and response to all complaints, shall annually, as a function of the camp personnel training session, provide training for all leaders and volunteers to ensure that they understand which types of behavior constitute harassment, the prevention of harassment, and how they should respond in the event of experiencing such behavior.

ACCOUNTABILITY OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

All Damascus missionaries and volunteers are accountable to the Executive Directors and to the Damascus Board of Directors in implementing the policies established in this manual.

In the case of violation of the policies established in this manual, directors will have authority to take corrective action, with possible consequences up to and including termination of employment or dismissal from the volunteer position. Such conduct may also give rise to other actions, including civil lawsuits.

WHISTLE-BLOWER TRACKING

The Damascus Code of Conduct requires directors, leaders and volunteers to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. Employees and representatives of Damascus must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling their responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

The objectives of the Whistle-Blower Policy are to establish policies and procedures for the following:

- The submission of concerns regarding questionable accounting or audit matters by employees, directors, officers, volunteers, and other stakeholders of the organization, on a confidential and anonymous basis
- The receipt, retention, and treatment of complaints received by the organization regarding accounting, internal controls, or auditing matters
- The protection of directors, volunteers, and employees reporting concerns from retaliatory actions

Reporting Responsibility

Each director, missionary, or volunteer of Damascus has an obligation to report in accordance with this whistle-blower policy (a) questionable or improper accounting or auditing matters, and (b) violations and suspected violations of the code of conduct.

Acting in Good Faith

Anyone reporting a concern must act in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates an improper accounting or auditing practice, or a violation of the code of conduct. The act of making allegations that prove to be unsubstantiated, and that prove to have been made maliciously, recklessly, or with the foreknowledge that the allegations are false, will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense. It may also result in discipline, up to and including dismissal from the volunteer position or termination of employment. Such conduct may also give rise to other actions, including civil lawsuits.

Confidentiality

Reports of concerns, and investigation pertaining thereto, shall be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.



Disclosure of reports of concerns to individuals not involved in the investigation will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense and may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment. Such conduct may also give rise to other actions, including civil lawsuits.

Authority of Board Operations Committee

All reported concerns will be forwarded to the operations committee in accordance with the procedures set forth herein. The operations committee shall be responsible for investigating and making appropriate recommendations to the board of directors, with respect to all reported concerns.

No Retaliation

This whistle-blower policy is intended to encourage and enable directors, employees and volunteers to raise concerns within the organization for investigation and appropriate action. With this goal in mind, no one who, in good faith, reports a concern shall be subject to retaliation or, in the case of an employee, adverse employment consequences. Moreover, a volunteer or employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a concern in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including dismissal from the volunteer position or termination of employment.

Encouragement of Reporting

The organization encourages complaints, reports, or inquiries about illegal practices or serious violations of the code, including illegal or improper conduct by the organization itself, by its leadership, or by others on its behalf. Appropriate subjects to raise under this policy would include financial improprieties, accounting or audit matters, ethical violations, or other similar illegal or improper practices or policies. Other subjects on which the organization has existing complaint mechanisms should be addressed under those mechanisms, such as raising matters of alleged discrimination or harassment through the organization's human resources channels, unless those channels are themselves implicated in the wrongdoing. This policy is not intended to provide a means of appeal from outcomes in those other mechanisms.

Employees

Employees should first discuss their concern with their immediate supervisor. If, after speaking with his or her supervisor, the individual continues to have reasonable grounds to believe the concern is valid, the individual should report the concern to a director. However, if the individual is uncomfortable speaking with his or her supervisor, or the supervisor is a subject of the concern, the individual should report his or her concern directly to the director or a level above the supervisor. In addition, suspected fraud should



be reported directly to the chair of the operations committee, Matthew Schlater who may be contacted by phone at (614) 207-7966 or by e-mail at mattschlater@gmail.com.

If the concern was reported verbally to the director of staff care, the reporting individual, with assistance from the director of staff care, shall reduce the concern to writing. The director of staff care is required to promptly report the concern to the chair of the operations committee, which has specific and exclusive responsibility to investigate all concerns. If the director of staff care, for any reason, does not promptly forward the concern to the operations committee, the reporting individual should directly report the concern to the chair of the operations committee. Concerns may also be submitted anonymously. Such anonymous concerns should be in writing and sent directly to the chair of the operations committee.

Directors and Other Volunteers

Directors and other volunteers should submit concerns in writing directly to the chair of the operations committee.

Handling of Reported Violations

The operations committee shall address all reported concerns. The chair of the operations committee shall immediately notify the operations committee, the board chair, and the directors. The chair of the operations committee will notify the sender and acknowledge receipt of the concern within five business days, if possible. It will not be possible to acknowledge receipt of anonymously submitted concerns.

All reports will be promptly investigated by the operations committee, and appropriate corrective action will be recommended to the board of directors, if warranted by the investigation. In addition, action taken must include a conclusion or follow-up, or both, with the complainant for complete closure of the concern.

The operations committee has the authority to retain outside legal counsel, accountants, private investigators, or any other resource deemed necessary to conduct a full and complete investigation of the allegations.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Damascus is committed to maintaining high standards of confidentiality that protect the integrity of our operations and safeguard our missionaries, volunteers, participants, and stakeholders.

Personal and Organizational Information

Some Damascus personnel, as a result of their role, may have access to personal information of participants and/or other missionaries and volunteers, including but not limited to contact information, health data, financial records, testimonies, and other personal circumstances; and/or to private information related to the finances, relationships, internal discussions, and other operations of the organization of Damascus.

By default, information of this kind should be kept confidential and not shared with anyone in an identifiable way without the consent of the individual or of Damascus.

Missionaries shall not use, or permit the use of, any confidential information for any purpose other than in the conduct of their responsibilities.

If necessary, this information should only be shared with individuals whose roles and responsibilities require it. All reasonable effort should be taken to avoid handling or discussing sensitive information where it can be easily overheard, seen, or otherwise accessed by others who should not be privy to it.

Intellectual Property

Missionaries may not improperly use or disclose to others outside Damascus any confidential information or trade secrets of Damascus, including but not limited to scripts, programming elements, missionary formation and other teachings, without express permission from Damascus leadership.

Missionaries are expected to abide by this policy at all times during and after their service with Damascus.

LOSS OF OR DAMAGE TO PERSONAL PROPERTY

If a volunteer or employee's personal property is lost or damaged during the course of assigned work with Damascus, the owner may be entitled to compensation.

It is recommended that within the time of volunteer service or employment, individuals take care not to expose themselves to personal property losses. As a rule, there is no liability on Damascus to prevent theft, damage or losses to personal property.

If you suffer a loss while working with Damascus, report it as soon as you are aware.

While Damascus is not obliged to make payments for losses of personal property, due to the specialized nature of many assignments, and the potential need or desire to utilize personal belongings, it may do so subject to a number of conditions:

1. Property was lost or sustained damage in the course of its use on official assignment.
2. Prior to having been used, the value of this property was communicated with a director or supervisor.
3. Loss or damage is not covered by insurance or any provision for free or discounted replacement.
4. The property owner has not been negligent.

The amount of payment should be calculated as the current cost of replacing the articles less an amount representing depreciation or, if less, the full cost of repair. Compensation may similarly be paid for articles lost or damaged through the negligence of a colleague.

The application of this policy extends, but is not limited to the use of personal computers, cameras, phones, electronics, props, and vehicles for Damascus business (excluding personal transportation to and from activities.)

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

It is understood that the internet and social media platforms are constantly changing, but there are certain principles that remain constant. While it is the right of all Damascus missionaries to use social media (Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram etc.), everything posted and shared can be viewed by others and is a reflection of Damascus. To ensure that Damascus remains an emotionally safe and supportive environment for all missionaries, volunteers and participants—and specifically to create an environment where sexual abuse and bullying are not tolerated—the following policies are in place. Failure to comply with the policies listed below may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment and/or legal recourse.

Appropriate Conduct

Everything is Public

Missionaries should keep in mind that whatever is published on their social media sites is public, regardless of privacy settings. The opportunity for followers to take screenshots makes even private accounts—or deleted posts—susceptible to being shared publicly. Parents, participants and applicants will often search online for affiliated profiles, so be mindful of how your online presence may be perceived.

Staff Represent Us

All content included on a missionary's social media profile is a reflection of Damascus and should align with the organization's policies and expectations, regardless of whether or not the missionary identifies themselves as a Damascus employee on their profile. Missionaries are personally responsible for editing and managing their social media profiles to ensure that they do not contain inappropriate content. This includes posts made prior to employment.

Inappropriate Content

Examples of inappropriate content include (but are not limited to):

- Photos/content that could be considered violent or threatening.
- References to/photos of illegal use of alcohol, illegal drugs/illicit substances.
- Photos/content that is sexually suggestive or revealing, or could be considered objectionable.
- Photos/content that may be considered insulting, offensive, defamatory to individuals/organizations.



- Participant/employee/guests' confidential or private information.
- Comments or communications that could be considered to be bullying or demeaning of any individual or group.
- Content that opposes or contradicts the teaching of the Catholic Church.
- Any other content that is inconsistent with Damascus policies, code of conduct, or mission statement.

Factual Content

Information can spread quickly online, and can easily be misinterpreted or taken out of context. Any posts that reference Damascus or include a link to the organization's website, should reflect the organization in a positive light and include only accurate, public information. Obtain prior written approval before citing/referencing missionaries, participants, partners or suppliers. Do not use social media to expose the organization's internal policies, programs, strategies, financials, products, etc. Missionaries must specify, when necessary, that any content they post is their own view/belief, and not the stance of Damascus.

Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

Public Communication Only

We know from several investigations into real-world child sexual abuse that predators will often use social media to gain access to or groom children prior to abuse. That's why connecting with children on any of your social media platforms is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes private messaging, the sharing of social media accounts, the exchange of cell phone numbers, e-mail addresses, as well as physical mailing addresses. "Good intentions" and "harmless gestures" do not excuse private communication with underage children, as such actions can be misinterpreted.

Report Communication/Connections/Contact

If you already have an outside connection with a child within the organization, or a child tries to initiate an outside connection, report this to your supervisor immediately and discuss appropriate next steps, (e.g. block the request, parent communication, or privatizing account settings).

Photo Use

Taking unauthorized photographs/videos of missionaries or participants, guests, volunteers, or children is prohibited, regardless of whether or not missionaries choose to share those photos/videos to personal social media platforms. If pictures are needed for Damascus's website, flyers, social media etc., they are to be taken by designated/approved missionaries only, and must be accompanied by a signed photo release form to be kept on file.

VEHICLE OPERATION AND TRANSPORTATION

Automobiles

It is essential that adequate, safe, and responsible transportation be used for all Damascus activities. Generally, there is no need for participants to use vehicles while on campus. In the case that an activity requires use of a vehicle, or if a vehicle/trailer is being used for transportation between events, the following guidelines are to be observed:

- Seat belts are required for all occupants.
- All drivers must have a valid driver's license that has not been suspended or revoked for any reason.
- All vehicles must be covered by automobile liability insurance with limits that meet or exceed requirements of the state in which the vehicle is licensed. It is recommended that coverage limits are at least \$50,000/\$100,000/\$50,000.
- All vehicles should be provided by a credible vehicle provider delivering some sense of an expectation of safe performance.
- Obey all laws, including the speed limit.
- Driving time should be limited to a maximum of 10 hours and should be interrupted by frequent rest, food, and recreation stops. If there is only one driver, the driving time should be reduced and stops should be made more frequently.
- Travel and rest time should be limited to a maximum of 10 hours in one 24-hour period, regardless of the number of drivers available. The intention is to include sleep and thorough rest breaks while traveling long distances.
- Drivers should refrain from using cell phones, text messaging devices, and other distractions while driving.
- Don't drive drowsy. Stop for rest and stretch breaks as needed. Fatigue is a major cause of highway accident fatalities.

Campers, Trailers, and Trucks

Trucks are designed and constructed to transport materials and equipment, not people. Under no circumstances are passengers to be carried in the bed of or towed behind a pickup truck. Trailers must never be used for carrying passengers. Use caution in towing trailers or campers, as a vehicle's performance, steering, and braking abilities will be altered. Consider these safety tips:

- Get the correct trailer for the vehicle and the correct hitch for the trailer. Distribute and anchor the load.
- Allow extra time to brake. Changing lanes while braking can jackknife the trailer.



- Add safety equipment as dictated by common sense and state laws (mirrors, lights, safety chains, brakes for heavy trailers, etc.).
- Park in designated areas.

Buses

A driver of a bus or any vehicle designed to carry more than 15 people (including driver; more than 10 people, including the driver, in California) is required to have a commercial driver's license. A person shall not drive a commercial motor vehicle unless he/she is qualified to drive a commercial motor vehicle. Possession of a license, however, does not mean that a person is capable of driving a bus safely. It is essential that missionaries and volunteers be thoroughly familiar with the bus or vehicle they will be driving, including knowing the location of emergency exits and fire extinguishers and how to operate them. A driver must be prepared to handle and brake a full bus, which weighs significantly more than an empty bus. Other safety tips are:

- Regular and thorough maintenance program
- No more passengers than there are seating locations
- Luggage and equipment fastened securely to prevent being thrown around in case of sudden stop
- Emergency exits clear of people or things
- Pre-trip inspection of critical systems (signals, fuel, tires, windshield wipers, horn, etc.)

The safety rules for automobiles apply to bus travel, with the exception of seat belts. In special cases, chartered buses may travel more than nine hours a day. On certain occasions, night travel by public carrier bus is appropriate—it should be considered permissible when conditions are such that rest and sleep for passengers are possible with a reasonable degree of comfort. However, night travel on buses should not be planned for two successive nights.

INCLEMENT WEATHER GUIDELINES FOR OFFSITE PROGRAMS

In the event of inclement weather affecting our ability to execute off-site ministry commitments, guidelines have been created to help guide the process for determining whether to proceed or cancel any off-site ministry commitment. Damascus' decision to cancel or proceed is always with the consideration of both the safety of our missionaries and the attendees commuting to the ministry event.

- Off-site ministry commitments will always be canceled if there is a Storm Warning (either in Morrow County or the county of the off-site ministry commitment) in place during the time that the commitment would take place.
- Off-site ministry commitments will be discerned being canceled by the Youth Outreach Manager overseeing the commitment if a Storm Advisory or Watch is in place. This discernment will take place using the decision-making factors listed in the next section below.
 - If it is determined that the off-site ministry commitment will still be happening, missionaries should be given at least 50% more travel time based on their destination.
 - The director overseeing the commitment should have a plan in place in the case that missionaries need to stay in the local area after the commitment that night.

Decision-Making Factors:

- Amount of snow and ice on the roads
- Projected amount of snow to fall in the window of the off-site ministry commitment will start/end, including travel time.
- Visibility when driving
- Conversation with the local contact at the location of the commitment
- Local conditions and conditions at the location of the commitment

Stipulations

- A decision will be made by the Youth Outreach Manager of the off-site ministry commitment three hours prior on the day of to ensure enough notice before missionaries would need to leave, and to inform the parish.
 - Level 1's: noon the day of
 - Travel Teams: noon the day of
 - Level 3's: 3pm the day of



- Damascus can consult with the local contact prior to making a decision, but will have the final say in whether or not to cancel or move forward with the commitment.
- Damascus will then communicate this decision to all necessary contacts. The person who handles communication to parents should share the update once a decision has been made.
- If weather conditions do not permit missionaries to drive to the commitment, all missionaries must remain on-site for the duration of the winter-weather notice.
- Damascus is not responsible for scheduling a “make-up date” if a commitment is canceled due to weather. It is up to the decision of the youth minister which night to pick up on the next week so as to best serve their parish. The following week should then continue on track with the scheduled calendar year.
- If missionaries feel unsafe driving, they should reach out to the direct supervisor overseeing the commitment individually to discuss their options, including asking another member of their team to drive or allocating additional drive time.
- If an Advisory or Watch is in place, missionaries should assume that the commitment is still happening, unless communicated otherwise.
 - Resource for definitions of watch, warning, and advisory:
weathersafety.ohio.gov

HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PARTICIPANTS AND EMERGENCY PROTOCOL

Maintaining the health and safety of all participants is of the utmost importance to the Damascus Mission and Values. Accordingly, great effort is taken to be certain that dangers to health and safety are able to be easily identified and that aid is able to be coordinated through internal health resources, and also through the local community.

Copies of Emergency Procedures are posted in the medical clinic policy manual and are included in the staff handbook. Emergency phone numbers and directions are posted in the medical clinic manual.

Prior to the participation of any individual in any programs, the participant, or parent or guardian in the case of a participant under the age of 18, will be required to complete a medical information form and medical insurance form, and agree to a Permission, Indemnification and Release, and Medical Power of Attorney.

Damascus utilizes missionary medical assistants and volunteer health professionals under the direction of a full-time Medical Services Manager, holding a registered nursing license, during all camp sessions and many retreat programs. In the case of any emergency, injury should be reported to the Medical Assistant, Nurse, or Doctor on site as well as Directors on site.

In cases of specific emergency, the following procedures should be followed:

Accidents and Injuries

1. If a person is injured and cannot walk or feels pain when walking, is bleeding badly or, cannot move arms or legs or feels numb or paralyzed or is unconscious, a staff member or, if necessary, a pair of responsible campers should be sent to summon the medical personnel or nurse first followed by the most senior administrator currently on campus. Do not move the individual.
2. A leader should remain with the injured party and should keep the victim calm and lying down. Leadership should administer basic first aid or if necessary, CPR.
3. On arrival the medical personnel, nurse, or most senior administrator should assume control and take any steps felt necessary to care for the injured including calling 911 if necessary.
4. The leader present when the injury occurred should complete an incident report form as soon after the incident as possible and submit it to the Director.
5. Director will attempt to make contact with parents of injured individual.



For a detailed policy on Communication in Medical Emergency, see [Policy 400.31](#).

Inclement Weather

See [Inclement Weather Policy 400.11](#)

Fire

1. If an uncontrolled fire is spotted a runner should immediately be sent to notify the most senior administrator currently on camp. That staff member will be considered the person in charge.
2. The person in charge should then:
 - a. Instruct leaders to gather and account for participants.
 - b. If anyone is missing, the person in charge should be notified immediately.
3. At the same time the person in charge should:
 - a. Dial 911, if a participant is missing be sure to notify
 - b. Direct that all participants move to an area away from the fire where a leader will be assigned to provide some quiet programming
 - c. Send a runner to the campus entrance to direct the emergency personnel
4. If a person is missing, the person in charge should assign any available leaders to search areas of the camp such as housing areas, bathrooms, etc...
5. Everyone should remain in the designated area until the person in charge gives further instructions.
6. In order to communicate the safety of individuals to their parents, it may be appropriate to send emergency updates by email or social media.

Missing Swimmer Plan for Waterfront

See [Waterfront Safety Policy 400.12](#)

Missing Person Search and Rescue (non-waterfront)

1. A routine search usually turns up most missing persons.
2. If after a routine search of one's living or activity area a person is determined to be still missing and unaccounted for, that fact should immediately be reported to the most senior leader currently on campus who will then be considered the person in charge. The person in charge will want to know the details concerning any unusual circumstances at the time of that person's disappearance (e.g., was upset, was chasing frogs, went for a walk in the woods, etc.).
3. The person in charge will mobilize any necessary search and rescue procedure. Group leaders should remain with their assigned groups and engage in normal activities unless the person in charge requests their help and arranges for alternate supervision of their group. Normally, initial search and rescue procedures will be conducted by leaders not having direct responsibility for supervision of participants according to the procedures outlined below:



- a. Interviewing those who last saw the missing person.
- b. Searching the area where person was last seen.
- c. Covering the search area and calling the person's name.
- d. Searchers should pause and be silent periodically to listen for possible response.
- e. If missing person is not located within 1/2 hour, searchers should return to office.
- f. If it is determined that all areas have been sufficiently searched and the person has not been located, dial 911.
- g. The Director on site will assume primary contact with the authorities, notify the parents, Board of Directors, and insurance representative.

For a detailed Crisis Response Guide, see [Policy 400.30](#).

The full Damascus Medical Policies and Standing Orders can be found here:

[☰ Damascus Medical Policies](#)

ADMINISTERING MEDICATIONS TO MINORS

All participants who are under the age of 18 must have on file a medical form completed in the course of online registration or application, or an equivalent paper replacement. If medications are to be administered, the following requirements must have been met:

1. Permission from parent(s) or legal guardian(s).
2. Verification of the necessity for the medication; name of medication; dosage; times or intervals at which it is to be taken; duration; and possible side effects.
3. Medication must be in the original container and have affixed labels including the minor's name.
4. Accurate records of the medication given must be kept on file by the medical personnel.
5. A statement releasing and holding Damascus personnel harmless from any and all liability for damages or injury resulting directly or indirectly from the presence of the medication during camp or its use by the minor.
6. The possession of or use of non-prescription, over-the-counter medication during camp is discouraged. Administration of these medications (i.e. throat lozenges, acetaminophen drugs) should be determined by the medical personnel, or in the absence of medical personnel, delegated leader, provided the appropriate permission from parents or legal guardians is on file. Damascus and Catholic Youth Summer Camp leadership will not administer aspirin to minors because of its connection to Reye's Syndrome, unless deemed appropriate by the minor's physician or parent/guardian.

Only licensed nursing personnel or, in the absence of nurse, delegated staff member, are permitted to administer prescribed medication to minors when conditions exist, which in the judgment of the assigned individual, merit giving assistance to the minor (i.e. immaturity of the minor, nature of the medication).

As a matter of policy, no minors shall possess any medications on their person with the exception of asthma inhalers and EpiPens. All medications – both prescription and over-the-counter – are to be given to and remain with the medical personnel or delegated staff member, for the duration of the program. All medications may be claimed by the minor from the medical personnel or representative on the last day of programming.

THREATS TO WELFARE AND SAFETY

No missionary, volunteer, or participant will use, possess, handle, transmit or conceal any object which is or can be considered a weapon or instrument of violence. Objects which are explosive or incendiary in nature, or any object reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety or security of any person, are prohibited at Damascus.

INCLEMENT WEATHER DURING PROGRAMS

To ensure safety for participants and leaders in the midst of inclement weather, the following guidelines should be observed. These guidelines vary based on the danger of lightning strike, as well as the difficulty of performing effective and efficient activity evacuation.

Rain

- Light Rain - Continue at activity leader discretion.
- Heavy Rain - Pack up (excepting paintball).

Wind

In the case of strong winds, activity leader may choose to discontinue activity. Ropes Activities and Blob Tower are the most likely to be impacted by winds over 20mph.

Lightning/Storm

- Water Activities - Within 30 miles, close water activities. Wait until 30 minutes after last lightning to re-engage at leader discretion.
- Ropes Activities - Within 15 miles, close ropes activities. Wait until 15 minutes after last lightning to re-engage at leader discretion.
- Walking Activities/Ground - Within 5 miles, move to shelter. Wait until 15 minutes after last lightning to re-engage at leader discretion.

Snow/Ice

Care must be taken not to expose leaders or participants to risk of injury due to ice/snow. All steps and walking paths should be appropriately cleared prior to use, and if ice is present, individuals should walk through snow rather than on icy walkways. If ice/snow prevents safe driving conditions, driving should be restricted, even if this means event must be delayed/cancelled.

Tornado

In the case that inclement weather is anticipated, one staff member will be identified as the individual responsible for storm progress tracking and for lightning proximity notification. This tracking should be performed using a lightning tracker that is capable of alerting the user to lightning strikes in real time and at a specified distance. This individual is the one



responsible for making the call to evacuate, and communicating that information to all affected activity leaders via radio, mobile phone, or "runner."

If at any point an activity leader suspects impending danger of a storm, and has not prepared adequately, or a responsible party has not been assigned, the responsibility for action falls on that particular activity leader.

In most cases, at water activities, the head lifeguard will serve as the responsible party who will determine lightning and storm direction and proximity, as well as any necessary plan for evacuation.

Plans have been developed in consultation with American Red Cross, The National Lightning Safety Institute, and Phoenix Experiential Design.

WATERFRONT SAFETY

Waterfront Guidelines

- The beach supervisor will maintain the “buddy system” making sure each swimmer is matched up with 1 or 2 buddies.
- The beach supervisor will ensure all swimmers are aware of the waterfront safety rules.
- Each group leader will make sure his/her group stays together at one waterfront activity (moving as a group from one activity to another.)
- Each group leader will ensure his/her group is correctly outfitted with proper life jackets for the designated waterfront activities.
- Each group leader will complete continuous visual checks making sure all participants are safe.
- Each group leader will know the location of each of his/her participants at all times.
- The head lifeguard will conduct a group check every 15 minutes.

Lifeguard Guidelines

- The Head Lifeguard will set guard rotation schedules and provide regular practices.
- Following their lifeguard training, all lifeguards will be vigilant in their constant attentiveness to their assigned duties, thus preventing accidents and emergencies.
- All lifeguards will carry the rescue tube or other designated life saving equipment, along with their whistle and pack containing their rescue breathing mask.
- All lifeguards will consistently utilize the following designated signals: 1 short whistle to gain attention of campers or staff; 1 long megaphone siren for group check; 3 long whistles to activate the EAP and clearing of the water. 4 Long whistles to clear the swim zone to begin a search and rescue.

Waterfront Safety Rules for Participants

- Always stay as a group at each activity.
- Always wear a life jacket at designated activities and have your group leader make sure it is the right size and is secured properly.
- Always be within ten feet of your “buddy.”
- If you ever lose sight of your buddy, IMMEDIATELY TELL YOUR LEADER OR LIFEGUARD
- Wherever you are when the Group Check Siren blows, you have 5 seconds to find your group leader and remain silent.



Waterfront Emergency Action Plan (No additional Resuscitative Care is Needed)

Rescuer Action:

1. Signal (3 long whistles)
2. Rescue
3. Victim okay – No additional care needed
 - a. Report (incident report), advise, release
 - b. Equipment check and corrective action
4. Return to duty
5. Other Lifeguard(s) assist with back-up surveillance coverage
6. Additional leadership assist with clearing the zone area if no additional lifeguards are available for surveillance

EAP (Additional Resuscitative Care is Needed)

Rescuer Action :

1. Signal (3 long whistles)
2. Rescue
3. Victim needs emergency care
 - a. Provide emergency care
 - b. Report, advise, release
 - c. Equipment check and corrective action
4. Head Lifeguard will delegate:
 - a. One lifeguard to call EMS.
 - b. One lifeguard to retrieve the AED
 - c. One Lifeguard to notify the Nurse on site
5. Other Lifeguard(s) assist with back-up surveillance coverage, the water or land rescue and providing emergency care, back-up zone coverage or clearing the area
6. Additional leadership assist with meeting and directing EMS, bringing additional equipment, clearing the area, controlling the crowd

If the victim was treated for serious injuries or illness one of the camp directors or next in command will be notified and direct the following:

1. Deciding to close the waterfront
2. Contacting family members
3. Contacting Board of Directors and Insurance representative
4. Handling the informing of other participants
5. Reviewing and reporting the incident details
6. Operational debriefings



Missing Swimmer Plan for Waterfront

If it is suspected that a swimmer is missing, the head lifeguard should take the following steps immediately.

1. Signal (4 long whistles.) All leaders help clear the water.
2. Group leaders gather their participants to verify if anyone is missing

If the missing swimmer is accounted for, waterfront activities can begin.

If the missing swimmer is not accounted for, the head lifeguard takes the following actions immediately:

1. Instruct 4 lifeguards to quickly put on fins and goggles and begin Deep-water line search.
2. Instruct two lifeguards to check under water recreation floats.
3. Instruct other lifeguards and other staff to perform shallow-water search.
4. Instruct other staff to check bathrooms, cabins and other possible areas the swimmer may have wandered.
5. Instruct group leaders to take participants away from the water and sit quietly.
6. Instruct staff person to call one of Directors or designee.
7. Instruct staff person to call the camp nurse.
8. If the missing person is not found quickly, instruct leader to call EMS and this person meets EMS at the campus entrance, keeping in touch with waterfront by cell phone or walkie talkie so that if there is any change in status, they can immediately notify EMS.
9. If missing person is found and resuscitative care is needed the closest lifeguard will provide emergency care until EMS arrives and takes over.

If the individual is treated for serious injuries or if injuries result in death at the waterfront, a Director or designee will direct the following:

1. Closing of the waterfront
2. Contacting family members
3. Contacting the Board of Directors and Insurance representative
4. Handling the informing of other leaders and participants
5. Reviewing and reporting the incident details
6. Operational debriefings

Missing Person Search and Rescue (non-waterfront)

See Health and Safety Policy 400.00



BED BUGS

Bed bugs are reddish-brown, oval, and flat — about the size of an apple seed. Bed bugs are insects; more specifically, they are "true bugs," which have piercing mouthparts that in most species are used for feeding on plants. Unfortunately, there are some species of bugs with mouthparts that have been adapted to feed on human blood while inflicting very little pain (most never feel the bed bug feeding). The eggs are white and about 1 mm long. The nymphs look like adults but are smaller. Complete development from egg to adult takes from four weeks to several months depending on the temperature and amount of food available.

Prevention

Mattresses will be sanitized at the end of every retreat/camp session in order to deter breeding space. Additionally, "bed bug proof" mattresses are used in all campus buildings.

Inspection

In the case of suspicion that someone at Damascus has been bitten by bed bugs, a staff member will thoroughly examine crevices in walls, mattresses, and furniture. They will perform inspections during the day and at night when bed bugs are active. Examining during the day most likely will not be useful. They will look for:

- Dark specks. Typically found along mattress seams, these specks could be bedbug excrement.
- Empty exoskeletons. Bed bugs molt five times before becoming adults. These empty skins are light brown.
- Bloody smears. You may find small smears of blood on the sheets/sleeping bags where an engorged bed bug might have been accidentally crushed.

Since bed bugs can disperse throughout a building, the entire cabin will be searched.

Treatment

Bed bug treatment will be initiated through a professional pest control company.

Communication

Communication will be made to parents and families as soon as infestation is identified. This will be communicated using the following example letter:



Date

Dear Camper Parent,

Your child's health and safety is our number one concern here at Damascus. In an effort to keep you well informed and continue to foster good communication between us and our camper families, I am writing to make you aware that we have recently discovered the existence of bed bugs in <CABIN OR OTHER BUILDING NAME> on campus.

Corrective measures were immediately conducted in accordance with our camp policy 400.13, including extermination by a professional pest control company. <OR EXPLAIN THE MEASURES THAT WERE TAKEN>

It is important that you also be aware of what to watch for and what to do in case any bed bugs were carried back home. An adult bed bug is very small (1/4" long) and reddish-brown with an oval flattened body. They are parasites and can be found in bird nests, on bats and other mammals, and can occasionally be found in firewood. They also may be found in bedding or in the cracks or crevices of a bed frame. They prefer dark places. They can be spread through direct and indirect contact. Their bite may be confused with that of a mosquito; they have a tendency to last longer than a normal mosquito bite but are usually no more serious.

It is recommended as a precautionary measure that you hot-water wash and carefully inspect all of your child's bedding and clothing that were brought home from camp. Another excellent prevention method is to place all your child's bedding & clothing into a black plastic garbage bag, then put it out in the hot sun for a day as heat can kill this pest. Examine your child for any bites that have a white-appearance with a red dot. Also watch for complaints of intense itching. If any of these symptoms occur, there is no need for alarm, but you might want to contact your family physician. For more information about the symptoms, abatement measures, and prevention techniques regarding bed bugs, the American Camp Association has an excellent resource at <http://www.acacamps.org/knowledge/health/diseases/bedbugs>

Please know that health and safety are always the number one priority of Catholic Youth Summer Camp. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me directly at <Phone> or <email>.

Sincerely yours,



Camp Director

MAINTAINING A NUT-FREE ENVIRONMENT

For the safety of all our guests and staff, Damascus adheres to the following processes to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction to nuts.

1. All food prepared in the kitchen is nut-free.
2. No food items that contain nuts, may contain nuts, or were processed in a facility that also processes nuts are permitted to be consumed in program areas, including especially the main lodge and lodging areas.
 - a. All program participants are informed of this in advance
 - b. Participant snacks may be screened at check-in and any items that violate this policy will be confiscated

Items with nuts may be consumed in the Office and in Missionary Households.

CRISIS RESPONSE GUIDE

Damascus is committed to maintaining the highest possible standard of safety in safe operation of activities and facilities, with a focus on both personnel hiring, training, and review, as well as equipment maintenance.

In the unforeseen case that a crisis or emergency would happen, Damascus is committed to maintaining a high degree of excellence in action and communication in order to best serve participants, parents, staff, and local and church community.

Ten Crisis Communications Essentials

The fallout from a crisis, regardless of where it rests on the continuum from minor to severe, can be mitigated with a thoughtful and well-planned communications strategy that becomes the underpinning for people's confidence in the camp leaders—whether those individuals are staff, camp families, or the public. All plans for crisis response include the following aspects:

1. Lock down communications
2. Consult experts
3. Designate one spokesperson
4. Formulate key messages
5. Bring staff into the loop
6. Share the message with campers
7. Contact parents
8. Be proactive with the public—including the media
9. Partner with experts
10. Translate lessons learned into action

Utilizing the Crisis Response Guide, direction can be established as to what proper protocol should be in a time of crisis.



	Everyone is safe	Injuries unknown, assuming none	Injuries, extent unknown	Injuries/deaths, extent is known	Property has been damaged
Gather Information	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Stabilize Situation	Attendance; supervision of all; verbal reassurance; isolate perpetrator and/or call police?	Attendance; supervision of all; verbal reassurance; isolate perpetrator and/or call police?	Contact camp nurse/doctor/EMT	EMS, maybe local health dept., police, etc.	Fire dept or hazardous materials agency if needed
Mobilize Crisis Team	Crisis manager, directors, key staff	Board Member? Therapist?	Medical director, insurance agent, therapist	Insurance, lawyer, PR specialist	Maintenance supervisor, insurance agent
Find out More	Case by case	Yes	Yes	Yes	Only if suspicious
Determine Additional Steps	Incident report	Photos?	Photos	Photos	Photos
Create Key Messages	Brief	Brief, circle back	Brief, circle back	Yes	Brief
Contact Community Resources	On-site staff	Therapist, insurance, EMS? Children's services?	Therapist	Grief counselor	Vendors as needed
Establish Crisis HQ	No	Yes, lightly	Yes	Yes	Set up power, phones, computers as needed
Contact Parents (Part 1)	No	Not yet	Yes, if involved	Yes	Yes, if it affects campers
Lead Staff Meeting	Case by case	Case by case	Yes, small group	Yes	Case by case
Inform Campers	No	Case by case	Yes	Yes	Case by case
Get Back on Track	Yes	Yes, some changes	Case by case	Not yet; ceremony	Case by case
Contact Parents (Part 2)	Yes, brief	Yes, once known	Yes, once known	Yes	Yes, brief



Connect with the Media	No	Not yet	Yes, brief	Yes	Maybe
Circle Back	Emotional stress, incident report	Gather supporting materials	Begin to file claims and reports	Finalize w health dept, police, insurance, etc.	Insurance

Communicating to Staff

Strategies for communicating to staff must be handled so as to directly address the situation while at the same time not hurting morale and staff function.

1. Use key messages.
2. Tell what happened, objectively, without placing blame.
3. Review rules that were in place to prevent this situation.
4. Describe the response; praise staff, if appropriate.
5. Explain how things stand at this point.
6. Remind them, "We care about you."
7. Show them, "We trust you and appreciate the work you've done so far."
8. Ask for what you need them to do, immediately and in the longer term.
9. Have continued vigilance.
10. Lock down communications; follow confidentiality guidelines.
11. Rally as a team/community; name and explain that the ability to recover from a setback is resilience.
12. Troubleshoot/problem-solve the situation together; pitch in to the recovery.
13. Talk to campers; provide tips on how to do so effectively.
14. Address concerns about the future.
15. Talk about how changes being made will affect staff.
16. Describe policies that will be updated; ask for input.
17. Reiterate safety nets, government compliance, and why you have rules.
18. Provide support for grief, guilt, or just feeling bad or not right.
19. Give opportunities for talking or writing.
20. Create a ritual or ceremony (suggest that staff design it).
21. Offer resources—books, websites, professionals.
22. Share the silver lining or lessons learned; find humor, if possible.
23. Identify a call to action (if appropriate) to help the staff feel a part of the solution.

Sample Communication to Parents

Thank you for your continued confidence in us during recent days when [explain situation]. We were able to implement our [situation] policy immediately, and we are pleased to report that the circumstances are resolved; in fact, we are already back to our regular programming. Everyone in our camp community is feeling safe, as they have throughout



the experience, thanks to the quick reaction and support of our great staff. While you will hear personally from your child about this event, we wanted to give you advance notice of the status and resolution for your immediate peace of mind.

[Depending on the situation, this next paragraph should include:

- Prevention protocols that were in place when the incident occurred
- How the response plan was implemented (including partnering with your local law enforcement agency)
- Assurance of campers' safety and their feeling of safety, that things are back to normal
- Lessons learned and changes to policies as a result; also a call to action if appropriate]

Even with camp in full swing, we are, as always, available to answer any remaining questions you may have. Our additional security measures are a comfort to both campers and staff, as well as to us. Above all, our campers know they are belonging, learning, and contributing in a safe environment, and they continue to thrive here at Catholic Youth Summer Camp.

Social Media Releases

Use plain language (so people can search for this topic and find your page), and avoid spin. While you can include your side of the story, these releases should be fact-based. You don't want readers to think they are being led; rather, you want them to seek you out as the primary source of information on the subject.

Conversations should be ongoing. Keep your information up to date, and post regularly. Be sure to include the following information in each release:"

1. Headline
2. Intro paragraph, rich with key words, relevance, and context (summary)
3. Supporting facts
4. Quote(s) from authoritative resources
5. Embeddable multimedia: video, audio, and images
6. Your (camp's) contact information including relevant social networking addresses
7. Relevant links
8. Online area or mailing address for comments

Particular Notes in the case of the Death of a Camper

In addition to intense grief, the death of a child engenders an overwhelming sense of injustice. The death occurred in a setting specifically designed to keep children safe, so feelings of insecurity among surviving children and families may increase. The death occurred under the supervision of surrogate caregivers, not parents, resulting in intense



guilt among directors and staff and in intense helplessness among parents. As one director put it, "No director or staff member signs up for this experience, but it's a risk you take when you walk out the door."

The camp community is strong and resilient, perhaps uniquely suited for healthy coping. The personal example of healthy coping among leadership is what staff and campers need to follow."

Immediately After a Death: Caring for the Deceased and Establishing "Tracks"

1. Care for the Deceased

The director will contact the individual's parents as soon as possible. This contact, typically a phone call, will be intense. Director will communicate facts, emphasize how sorry we are, how much the child was loved, and what we will do next to support the family, such as facilitate their transportation and lodging as they travel to camp or the hospital. If possible and realistic, consider visiting the parents in person.

At some point, report must be made to Knox County Health Department. Check with insurance agency and legal counsel to find out about other obligations.

Damascus will provide continuity of care from on-site first aid until parents join their child at the hospital. The representative who is with the child's body provides a critical communication link to the organization and the family. Be sure this person has a cell phone and charger. Consider being present with the body in shifts at the hospital if the parents' travel time is lengthy.

2. Gather Your Crisis Team or Caring Committee and Establish Tracks

This team, probably composed of the camp directors, camp nurse or doctor, and other senior staff members, will convene right away to assign responsibilities.

One person, most likely the director, should have the primary responsibility of contacting and being with the family, including siblings, cousins, or other family members in camp, and possibly talking with the media.

Another senior-level person has the primary responsibility of running the camp and attending to campers' and staff members' needs.

A third person will be in charge of contacting all the other camper parents. First priority is to the parents of the other children in the deceased camper's bunk, cabin, or small group. Second priority is to the other children in the deceased camper's parish/school. Third priority is to the other campers in camp. The contacts should be phone calls, rather than e-mails. A hard-copy letter can follow. Later, Damascus may wish to also send informational letters to campers from previous and subsequent sessions and even to alumni.



Keep in mind that these are three parallel tracks, each of which has its own “director”: working with the family, running the camp, and communicating with other parents and the media. The “directors” of these three parallel tracks must coordinate efforts but also take responsibility for their own track.

3. Stages of Helping the Community Heal

Mourning and Remembrance, Stage 1: Begin to Understand the Trauma

Key: Connection with others.

Expect and allow a wide range of grief reactions, including denial, numbness, shock, regressive behavior, bargaining, sadness, depression, anger, anxiety, guilt, remorse, and acceptance. If the camper who died was unpopular, expect some ambivalence about the death. All of these reactions are normal, and they do not happen in any predictable order. Repeat, “However you feel right now and in the coming days is okay.”

Most people’s biggest need will be for information. They will wonder, “How did this happen?” or “How could this have happened?” Providing factual information, when you have it, and when you have the family’s permission to share it, will help people understand and cope.

Be aware that some campers and staff are at greater risk than others: those who directly witnessed the death, saw the body, or were involved in administering first aid; those who were personally close to the deceased; and those for whom this loss rekindles grief from a previous death of someone they were close to.

Monitor the possibility of unhealthy coping, especially among staff, including the use of alcohol or other drugs, overworking to avoid feelings, isolation, and blaming themselves or others. Some staff will not want to take scheduled time off, but it is important they do for two reasons: they need to recharge their batteries, and it is part of reestablishing a normal routine.

4. Begin mourning and remembrance in a multifaceted, flexible way:

Allow campers and staff to participate or not in activities, as they feel ready.

Consult with a mental-health professional about remembrance activities, such as poems, murals, flags at half-mast, vespers or other spiritual/religious services. (Further along, you may have campers or staff members who would like to create or lead these ceremonies.)

Consult with a mental-health professional about designing support groups that are appropriate to individuals’ developmental levels, proximity to the death, and other specific needs.



Strike a balance between activities focused on the deceased camper and regular activities, remembering that both kinds of activity can be healthy ways of coping with loss.

5. Mourning and Remembrance, Stage 2: Continue Understanding and Healing

Ensure that counselors have time to themselves, to grieve and to recharge. Give them permission to grieve in healthy ways that feel right to them.

Expect that campers and staff will begin generating ideas for how best to commemorate the life of the deceased camper. This process is normal and healthy. At first, you should simply listen and compile suggestions. Do not make hasty decisions about the most meaningful and sensitive way to commemorate the camper until a few days have passed and you have had the chance yourself to reflect and to consult with your senior staff and the camper's family.

Encourage healthy staff efforts to support campers. Being supported in the job they were hired to do will feel empowering. Do not allow staff to overstep appropriate boundaries with children. Sometimes adults' rescue fantasies overwhelm their good judgment when working with vulnerable children."

6. Enlist the help of mental-health professionals to assist you, the staff, and the campers.

Professionals can be helpful, but always give people a choice of resources. Some campers and staff would rather talk with each other or the camp director, so the grief counselor, psychologist, or social worker may become a low-profile consultant.

Plan some structured grieving led by a professional (e.g., circle time, balloon releases, memory boards) and some unstructured grieving, where counselors walk around camp and talk informally with whomever wants to talk.

Some delayed stress reactions to the camper's death may occur. Remember, not everyone grieves.

Thoughtfully consider camper and staff participation in out-of-camp funerals or memorials.

Design an in-camp service to remember the camper. Allow staff and camper participation.

Hold regular meetings with your senior staff, and be present in daily activities so that campers and staff feel cared for and so you understand the mental-health needs of the camp first hand.

Give yourself time to grieve. This process is personally painful and professionally demanding. You can run on adrenaline for a limited time only. Eat, sleep, and breathe. Enlist the support of another trusted camp professional who can give you perspective, guidance, and support. Connect.



7. Reconnecting With Ordinary Life, Stage 3: The “Reestablishment of Self”

The core experiences of trauma are disempowerment and disconnection from others. Recovery and healing require empowerment and connection.

Do what you do best: Run a nurturing, energetic, fun-filled camp. Share the responsibility of taking care of your staff and campers.

Talk with and be with others in order to integrate, over time, this event with your own sense of who you are, what you can do, and what your core values are.

Talk with parents about referrals to professionals for one-on-one treatment if specific campers seem to be in chronic distress or if they are functioning in unhealthy ways.”

COMMUNICATION IN MEDICAL EMERGENCY

Preserving the personal health and safety of every camper, missionary, and visitor to Damascus is a sacred responsibility, and one that is deeply rooted in the heart of this organization. In times when injury or illness, especially if resulting from a failure of Damascus leadership or protocol, might require medical attention, it is absolutely critical that an environment of care, attention, accountability, and transparency be fostered. Communicating quickly, consistently, and accurately to all parties involved allows members within this organization to learn from their mistakes, the organization itself to develop stronger operating principles, and for affected parties to receive the utmost level of care and customer service.

The following protocol should be observed in any injury resulting in the need for emergency care:

1. Immediate emergency first response should be provided at the scene of injury or accident. If there is any indication that the emergency will require care beyond what might be adequately provided by on-site medical staff, first responder should call 911.
2. If determined appropriate, individual may be moved to health clinic to receive care.
3. If advanced medical attention is required, immediate effort to contact parent/guardian of the individual should be made to determine an appropriate course of action.
4. In the case that contact is unable to be established, a message should be left calmly describing the details of the situation, and describing the course of action that has been pursued to provide care.
5. Within 30 minutes of initial call, if appropriate, a member of the Damascus leadership staff will be identified and established as the primary parent contact for the remainder of the incident. This person will initiate a second call to the parent/guardian updating on any additional known information and attempt to reassure and provide personal encouragement and support.
6. Whenever possible, especially when the individual must be transported by ambulance to the hospital, a member of the Damascus medical/leadership staff should accompany the individual to the hospital to make a personal handoff to the parent/guardian upon arrival.
7. Within 24 hours of the injury, the primary parent contact will reach out to the parent/guardian of the individual for additional followup, sharing any additional information as appropriate, and to provide encouragement to the family.



8. Within 48 hours of the injury, the primary parent contact will arrange for the assigned lead of the Damascus counseling staff to either reach out personally to the parent/guardian or to establish contact with the individual's small group counselor to provide personal encouragement and consolation as it relates to the relationship established with this leader while at Damascus.
9. If the individual is unable to return to the scheduled event at Damascus, the assigned lead of the Damascus counseling staff will take responsibility to pack up the belongings of the individual and reach out to the parent/guardian to arrange for their collection.
10. If it is appropriate, the primary parent contact should work to see whether program participation might be encouraged in the future by transferring the individual to a future session or even providing a full or partial refund of registration fees.
11. Within two weeks of the injury, the primary parent contact should establish at least one final outreach effort to the parent/guardian of the individual.

Determining Primary Parent Contact

The site **Camp Director** should contact parents via phone call in follow-up for the following:

- An injury at camp that required an ambulance to transport the child to the hospital.
- An injury at camp that resulted in a broken bone.
- An injury at camp that required stitches.
- An injury at camp as a result of an equipment/activity malfunction requiring an urgent care or ER visit.
- Any injury at camp in which the Medical Staff communicates that a phone call from the Camp Director would be appropriate.

The site **Camp Director, Executive Director and/or Local Board Member/Board Chair** should meet the family at the hospital for the following:

- An injury at camp that results in the need for surgical intervention.
- An injury at camp that results in a child's loss of limb.
- An injury at camp that required a life-safety flight transportation.
- An injury at camp that results in death.

When a child is sent home from camp early due to illness that does not require the level of emergency care described above, the site **Counseling Director and/or Counseling Leads** should contact parents to follow up. In these cases follow-up consists of checking on the wellbeing of the child and assessing the parent satisfaction of communication and general



handling of the situation. This follow-up call should be completed within 1 week of session ending.

INCIDENT REPORTING

In the event of any incident resulting in injury, potential injury, damage or potential damage to personal or Damascus property, or for behavior requiring supervisor intervention, the leader or volunteer present when the incident occurred should complete an incident report form as soon after the incident as possible and submit it to a Director.

What Occasions Warrant an Incident Report?

- If an ambulance is called
- If someone goes to Urgent Care
- If any other "severe injury" occurs: resulting in crutches, sling, etc.
- If mental/psychological state is greatly affected: if we have to call a parent or need EMS to help calm students down
- If there is a notable malfunction/error at any activity that impacts the continued facilitation of the activity, even if for a short period of time
- If any Damascus property breaks, resulting in the injury of a person (i.e. a bunk bed)
- If a fight takes place
- If any Protect the Faith Situations take place

Incident reports should be filled out no more than 24 hours after an incident, assuming the mental and emotional state of the witness is capable. Ideally, the incident report would be filled out right after an event happens.

Steps for Incident Reporting

1. Evaluate situation
2. Stabilize individual/environment
3. Assess
4. Document on incident report form as close to "realtime" as possible
5. Implement necessary interventions
6. Notify Directors
7. Notify appropriate people as necessary i.e parents, group leader
8. Complete follow-up evaluation

Tips for Documenting Incident

1. Describe in detail when/where
2. Document objective information, chronologically.
3. Use quotes when writing witness statements, participant's report of incident etc.



4. Be accurate, concise, and clear
5. Avoid opinions
6. Physically sign documents
7. Document medication name, dose, route, date/time as applicable
8. Document all communication with staff, parents, participant

On retreats

As the primary leaders on any Damascus retreat, the Pastoral and Program Retreat Directors are the main facilitators of any incident reporting. Depending on who witnesses the incident determines whether the Pastoral or Program Director will be the point person for the form (i.e. if the incident occurred in the context of a small group with the missionary counselor as the primary witness, the Pastoral Director would assist the missionary in filling out the form. If the incident occurred at an activity with the program missionary as the primary witness, the Program Director would assist the missionary in filling out the form).

ROPES ACTIVITIES EQUIPMENT

All Damascus Catholic Mission Campus ropes activities follow maintenance and operations guidelines presented by Phoenix Experiential Designs. Damascus utilizes a variety of operational and safety equipment selected to help ensure the safety of staff and participants and ease of use. Every challenge course comes with a standard set of equipment. All operational and safety equipment will need to be replaced periodically based on manufacture recommendations, wear, and use. During the annual structural inspection equipment is inspected and retired if necessary.

However, if there is any doubt about the integrity of a piece of equipment between inspections, the equipment must be removed from service immediately and marked for further examination during the next annual inspection. Any equipment that is retired should be replaced with the same make and model.

Harness

- proper fitting (orientation on body, two-finger tightness, tie in points, quick release buckles)
- care (cleaning with non-detergent soap)
- inspection (stitching, buckles, tie in points)
- retirement criteria
 - manufacturer's recommendation for Misty Mountain harnesses is 5 years
 - significant wear, discoloration, or stiffness
 - worn or broken stitching
 - broken or defective buckles or other fasteners

Chest Harness

- proper fitting (orientation on body, carabineer connected to seat harness and locked, straps out of the way)
- care (cleaning with non-detergent soap)
- inspection (stitching, buckles, tie in points)
- retirement criteria
 - manufacturer's recommendation for Misty Mountain chest harnesses is 5 years
 - significant wear, discoloration, or stiffness
 - worn or broken stitching
 - broken or defective buckles or other fasteners

Helmet



- proper fitting (dials, chin straps, and orientation on head)
- care (disinfecting after usage)
- inspection (shell integrity, stress points, suspension systems, dials, etc.)
- worn while in the fall zone under any structure
- retirement criteria
 - manufacturer's recommendation for retirement is 10 years in service
 - fractures
 - defective suspension system
 - corrosion on metal rivets
 - broken or defective buckles or other fasteners

Phoenix Claws

- proper fitting (attached to tie in point, adjustments to legs)
- care (cleaning with non-detergent soap, clean and lubricate clips)
- inspection (knots: figure eight and Blake's Hitch, clips, rope)
- retirement criteria
 - manufacturer's recommendation is 10 years for the rope
 - significant wear, discoloration, glazing
 - change in bend radius
 - broken or defective buckles or other fasteners

Tethers

- proper fitting (attached to tie in point, proper length for participant)
- care (cleaning with non-detergent soap)
- inspection (bar tacks, fraying, clips)
- retirement criteria
 - manufacturer's recommendation is 5 years
 - significant wear, discoloration, or stiffness
 - worn or broken stitching
 - broken or defective buckles or other fasteners

Carabiners

- care (aluminum vs. steel, metal to metal contact, kilo-newtons, locking styles, tri-axle loading)
- inspection (gate, barrel, pins on gate, wear points)
- retirement criteria
 - manufacturer's recommendation is 10 years
 - significant wear or scoring
 - distortion or cracks in metal
 - defective gate or locking mechanism
 - damaging corrosion



Snap Hooks

- inspection (gate, hinges, hook, wear points)
- retirement criteria
 - manufacturer's recommendation is 10 years
 - significant wear or scoring
 - distortion or cracks in metal
 - defective gate or locking mechanism
 - damaging corrosion

Pulleys / Zip Trolleys

- care (proper clipping points and back-up ears)
- inspection (wear points, bearing mobility, side plates)
- retirement criteria
 - manufacturer's recommendation is 10 years
 - significant wear or scoring
 - distortion or cracks in metal
 - damaging corrosion
 - improper operation of moving parts
 - When sheave develops excessive wobble or play of 1/32" or more. Measurement is taken from the outside of the sheave to the inside of the side plate.

Ropes

- care
 - avoid stepping on or dragging across the ground
 - store in cool, dry, rodent free place
 - avoid exposure to chemicals; bleach, acid, chlorine, fuels, deet
 - minimize shear; the angle or bend of the rope with a load exerted
 - wash ropes periodically
- inspection
 - discoloration
 - fraying/abrasion/cuts
 - irregular shape
 - glazing
- retirement criteria
 - manufacturer's recommendation is 10 years maximum
 - significant wear or fraying
 - exposure to chemicals
 - cuts or severe distortion in sheath
 - overloaded by unauthorized uses

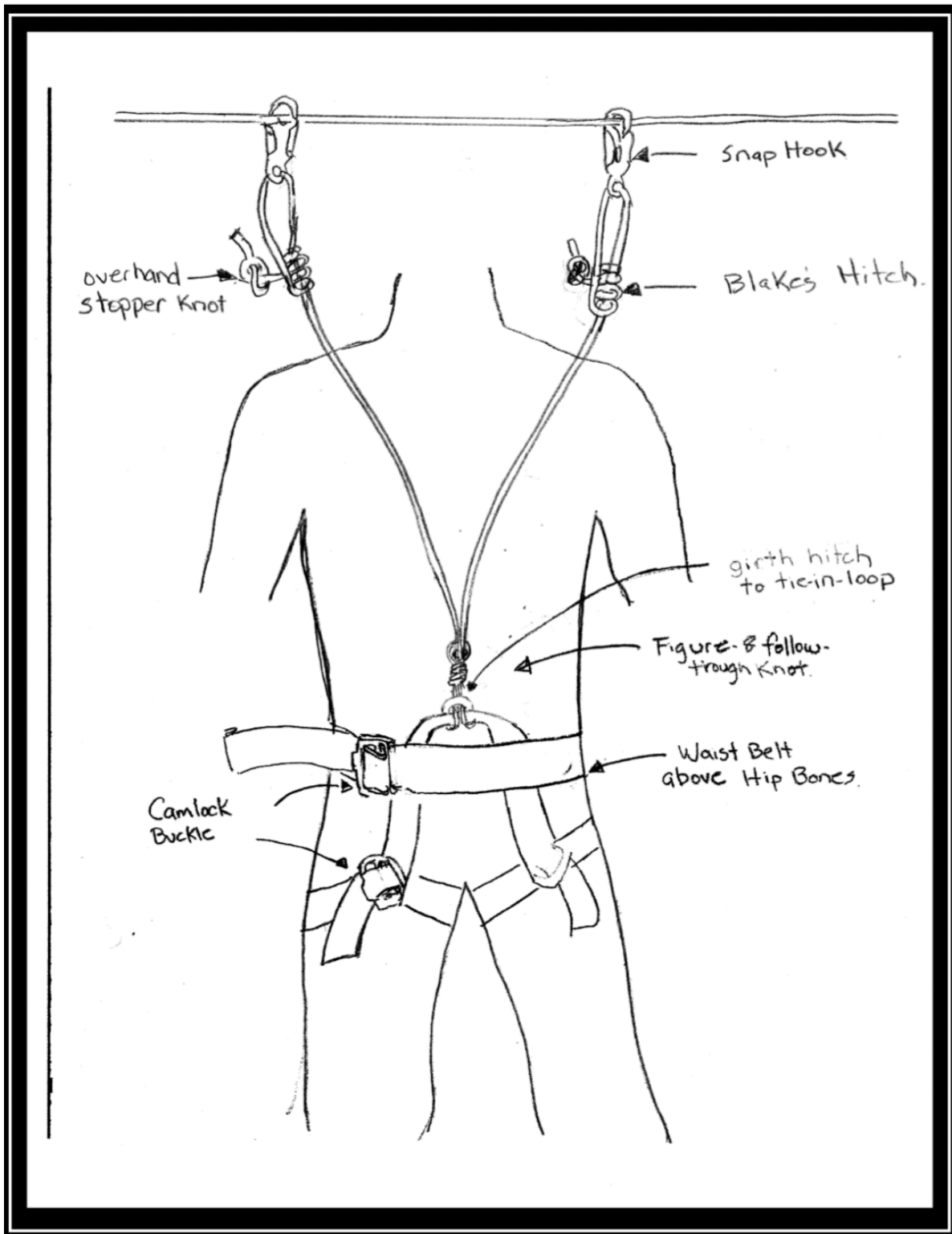
Belay Devices / Figure-8s

- care (proper clipping points and back-up ears)



- inspection (wear points, grooving)
- retirement criteria
 - manufacturer's recommendation is 10 years
 - significant wear or grooving
 - distortion or cracks in metal
 - damaging corrosion

Proper Connection of Phoenix Claw and harness



ACTIVITY GUIDELINES: HIGH ROPES

Summary of a Typical Session for Activity:

- Names and Introductions
- Safety Instructions:
 - Review safety rules
 - Teach about course
 - Teach How to Use the Equipment
- Distribution fitting and check of Equipment
- Activity Begins

Typical pre-activity safety instructions communicated to all participants:

- Equipment must be appropriately fitted at all times.
 - Helmet should be tight around head, but loosely strapped to allow head movement
 - Harness should be tight to the point where two fingers inserted by participant between body and strap, when rotated, are twisted instead of staying side by side.
 - Phoenix claw devices must be attached properly to harness.
- Closed toed shoes should be worn by all participants and leaders.
- A maximum of 2 individuals may climb lower level entry, 3 on upper level entry.
- Clearly communicate clipping method to be employed.
 - All transfers are performed by staff. Hands off snap clips by participants
 - Participants perform transfers with permission and direct observation from staff.
 - Participants perform transfers with permission and direct observation from another participant or transfer partner.
 - Participants perform transfers on their own. This is usually reserved for staff working the course, but occasionally there is a valid program rationale to do so.

Typical in-activity instruction:

- Staffing - two distinct approaches
 - The first is the most common – positioning staff throughout the course to either observe the transfers or perform them.
 - The second choice is for staff to move with or alongside the group. Staff can closely observe the group interaction and guide and support the reflection



based on those observations. Alternatively, staff members can cross the team events ahead of the group and observe them from the next portal. This staffing option allows for more comprehensive observation of the group and provides more opportunities for insightful debriefing

- When transferring participants, staff members should use only one pre-assigned hand. This hand can be marked with a glove.
- A maximum of two participants should be loaded onto each belay cable.
- One rescue bag must be located on each level of the course being utilized.
- Staff leader should be first on and last off of each level of the course being utilized.

Additional Safety Protocol:

- Before participants arrive, course safety check must be performed and recorded. Out! In! Up!
- Before participants arrive, equipment visual check must be performed and recorded.
- Before participants arrive, cargo nets must be lowered into location and appropriately secured.
- When the activity is not in session: cargo nets must be raised and secured, and equipment stored in equipment shed.

Equipment:

- Family Rec Course Equipment
 - 1 – TrueBlue and Quick Jump operations manual
 - 58 – Misty Mountain harnesses (52 medium, 6 small)
 - 9 – Misty Mountain chest harnesses
 - 36 – Petzl Elios helmets
 - 54 - phoenix claws
 - 3 - rescue bags

Maintenance and Care for Equipment - Policy 400.40

Emergency Procedures:

- In the case of an emergency, all participants must be moved to treehouse at start or end of course and clipped to belay, or instructed to exit course.
- Course leader will communicate emergency by radio, confirming whether to call 911.
- Course leader will communicate with support, initiating emergency rescue procedure with lowering equipment from rescue bag.
- EMS should be directed to course location by additional staff if necessary.
- Incident must be reported and filed with supervisor

ROPES RESCUE PROCEDURES

Training and periodic refresher sessions will enable staff to effectively perform rescues from any portion of the course. The following techniques are simple and may be used for the majority of the situations staff may encounter.

Reasons for rescues

- health (fainting, heart attack)
- equipment failure
- weather related
- psychological freeze up; immobilized by fear

Prevention

- adequate time in the practice area
- identification of potential issues before on course
- front loading the events/experience prior to program
- reviewing and discussing assumption of risk in the release forms

Equipment (rescue bag)

- Rope Bag, Sherrill Tree
- 100' x 7/16" Rope, ABC
- Rescue Figure 8, CMI
- Five Step Etrier, CMI
- Daisy Chain
- Rescue Scissors
- 3 - Steel Locking Carabiners, Liberty Mt
- 2 - 6mm Prussic, New England
- 2 -Non locking aluminum, Liberty Mt

Rescue procedure (from platform)

- all activity stops and participants are directed to platforms
- staff checks the rescue bag
- staff moves into position next to subject
- attach figure 8/rescue rope to belay cable, use prussic loop to position if necessary
- connect rescue rope to participant with auto locking carabiner
- tighten up rope and place participant on belay (participants on platform can act as a back-up or have a ground person assist as a backup belayer)



- staff unclips Phoenix Claws one at a time and attaches them to lowering rope
- staff lowers participant from platform, guiding them away from the edge

Rescue procedure (from course event cable or zip line with a ground belay)

- All activity stops and participants are directed to platforms
- Staff checks the rescue bag and attaches it to the belay
- Staff removes etrier and attaches to cable with steel carabiner
- Staff moves into position next to subject
- Attach figure 8/rescue rope to belay cable, use prussic loop to position if necessary
- Connect rescue rope to participant's belay/tie in loop with an auto locking carabiner
- Tighten up rope and place participant on ground belay, confirm with ground staff or belay team
- Release tension on Phoenix Claws and disconnect one at a time
- If Claws are fully extended, staff may direct participant to step up into etrier to release tension, belay team then takes up any slack to allow staff to disconnect Phoenix Claws (staff maintains a hands-on back up belay to the ground belay, never taking hands off brake strand)
- In an emergency situation, Claws or tethers may be cut with Rescue Shears to facilitate lowering.
- Staff lowers participant to ground and instructs participant to unclip carabiner from belay loop
- If participant must be lowered into water, have a lifeguard or floating platform available to assist.

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES: VERTICAL PLAYPEN

Summary of a Typical Session for Activity:

- Names and Introductions
- Safety Instructions:
 - Review safety rules
 - Teach about activity
 - Teach How to Use the Equipment
- Distribution fitting and check of Equipment
- Activity Begins

Setup:

- Before participants arrive, course safety check must be performed and recorded. Out! In! Up!
- Before participants arrive, equipment visual check must be performed and recorded.
- Before participants arrive, activity elements must be lowered into location and appropriately secured.
- When the activity is not in session: activity elements must be raised and secured, and equipment stored in equipment bin
- Raise ropes through belay eyebolts using parachute cord haul lines
 - Attach haul lines with Clove Hitch (minimum 2, recommended 3)
 - Bundle haul lines and set aside
 - One end of rope is tied into Figure-8-on-a-Bight and gets a locking aluminum carabiner attached to the bight
 - Thread the other end of the rope through the drilled hole in the belay post (one belay post for each climb) and tie off the end with a Fisherman's Knot.
- Tie Figure-8-on-a-Bight into the threaded side of the rope on the outside of the post, with 2-3 feet of slack between the belay post and the knot.
- Add additional Figure-8s to allow multiple belayers to attach themselves. Minimum of 2 belayers attached to the rope.
- Connect locking carabiners to each belayer knot.

Operation:

- Climber and belayers clip into carabiners
- Belayer closest to belay post is Primary Belayer
- Other belayers act as Backup Belayers



- Last belayer in line is responsible for managing excess rope
- Climber must perform 6-point Safety Check
 - 1 – Anchor/Rope: ensure rope is not wrapped or twisted
 - 2 – Helmet: check that helmet is tight
 - 3 – Knot/Carabiner: make sure knot is tied properly and carabiner is closed/locked with gate facing away from climber
 - 4 – Harness: check that harness is properly fitted, adjusted, and tightened
 - 5 – Belayer: confirm that Primary Belayer is clipped in and ready
 - 6 – Backup Belayers: make sure backup belayers are clipped in and ready, and that extra rope is managed to avoid tripping hazards
- Climber and Primary Belayer perform Belay Contract
 - Climber: “On belay?”
 - Primary Belayer: walk backwards to tighten rope “Belay is on”
 - Climber: “[Name] climbing.”
 - Belayer: “Climb on, [name]”
- Once contract is spoken, climber may begin climbing up the structure
- As climber moves up the Playpen, belayers should walk backwards to maintain tension in the system
- Climber may continue until they reach the belay spar at the top
- Once at the top, climber should weight their harness by sitting back.
- Belayers lower by walking forward towards the belay post. Belayers should walk slowly and controlled to avoid tripping or dropping climber.
- Once the climber is back on the ground, they must close out the belay contract
 - Climber: “Off belay.”
 - Primary Belayer: walks forward to release tension on system “Belay is off.”
- Climber and belayers can then unclip themselves and a new climber can clip in.

Maintenance and Care for Equipment - Policy 400.40

Emergency Procedures:

- Due to the design of the Vertical Playpen, any emergency involving the climber can be handled by lowering them to the ground via the process described above.
- If one of the belayers has an emergency arise, they can be removed from the system by simply unclipping their attachment carabiner. HOWEVER, if removing one belayer leaves less than 2 other belayers in the system then an additional belayer should be added to the rope before anyone is removed.
- Course leader will communicate emergency by radio, confirming whether to call 911.
- EMS should be directed to course location by additional staff if necessary.
- Incident must be reported and filed with supervisor

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES: GIANT SWING

Summary of a Typical Session for Activity:

- Names and Introductions
- Safety Instructions:
 - Review safety rules
 - Teach about activity
 - Teach How to Use the Equipment
- Distribution fitting and check of Equipment
- Activity Begins

Setup:

- Before participants arrive, course safety check must be performed and recorded. Out! In! Up!
- Before participants arrive, equipment visual check must be performed and recorded.
- Use the parachute cord to raise haul lines on the Haul Pole and down through the pulleys at the base. Tie off the tail of the rope with a Fisherman's Knot. On the haul side of each rope, tie a Figure-8-on-a-Bight. One rope should have a tail approximately 25' long. Attach both knots to a single locking steel carabiner.
- Assess the Sea Catch release and check to make sure the release is functional, P-cord attachment and haul ropes are all secure and ready for operation.
- Check ladder area.
- Lower the swing bar from its stored height, and attach 4 Omega steel locking carabiners to each welded eye that are attached uniformly to the bar. Ensure the carabiners are installed and locked.
- Attach one Omni-Sling to each of the Omega carabiners. Attach an Aluminum Petzl Triact carabiner to each of the Omni-Slings so the participants hang approximately 3' below the steel bar.
- Attach the Sea-Catch release device to the release eye on the steel bar using a locking carabiner. Ensure that the parachute release cord is draped over the steel bar and within reach of participants.
- Set up ladder beneath the steel bar.

Operation:

- Swing Operation



- If attaching 1 person, use the middle two eyes. If attaching 2 people, use all four welded eyes.
- Have first participant mount the ladder with a staff member.
- Two other participants should hold the ladder to keep it steady
- All other participants should “spot” the people on the ladder
 - One foot forward, one back
 - Hands up, elbows slightly bent, fingers together (in “spoons”)
 - If someone falls off the ladder, spotters cushion their head and neck
- Staff member hooks participant to two tethers with aluminum carabiners, so that gates face away from the participant.
- Second participant should then climb ladder and get hooked in to the remaining tethers
- Staff member should attach the haul lines to the SeaCatch release and ensure that the release is latched closed (there is a click you can feel and hear)
- Once participants are attached and staff member is down, the participants holding the ladder should place it on the ground, well away from the swing area.
- All other participants should take hold of the haul lines and begin hauling the swing up. Participants should pull tension slowly and smoothly. Additionally, participants should walk away from the swing area.
- Staff member should monitor the long tail of the Figure-8. Swing should not be hauled higher than the tail length. At any point during the haul, participants on the swing can request that it be halted. Otherwise, staff should halt the haul when the knot tail is just barely touching the ground.
- Once the haul is complete, participants must go through the commands to swing
 - Swingers: “Permission to swing?”
 - Staff member: check to ensure no impact risk exists “Area is clear.”
 - Swingers: “[Name] swinging!”
 - Hauling participants: “Swing on!”
- After commands have been said, swing participants may pull straight down on the parachute cord to release the SeaCatch.
- Once the swing has slowed, staff can ask permission to “catch” participants by tapping the backs of their heels to slow down the swing further. When swing has been sufficiently slowed, staff may use participant’s feet to bring them to a stop. CAUTION: DO NOT ATTEMPT TO GRAB PARTICIPANTS FEET WHILE STILL SWINGING
- Participants may drop the haul rope. Two people should retrieve the ladder and set it up beneath the swing
- Staff can then unhook the swingers one at a time and send them down the ladder. Other participants should spot anyone on the ladder.
- Once the activity has concluded, replace the haul lines with parachute cords and remove all equipment from the steel swing bar. Swing should be locked up with the access prevention cable at the end of the day.



Maintenance and Care for Equipment - Policy 400.40

Emergency Procedures:

- In the case of an emergency prior to swinging, participants can be lowered by slowly having haul team walk back toward pulley.
- In the case of an emergency during swinging, participants should be slowed when safely appropriate and removed from swing bar utilizing normal procedure.
- Course leader will communicate emergency by radio, confirming whether to call 911.
- EMS should be directed to course location by additional staff if necessary.
- Incident must be reported and filed with supervisor

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES: CLIMBING WALL

Summary of a Typical Session for Activity:

- Names and Introductions
- Safety Instructions:
 - Review safety rules
 - Teach about activity
 - Teach How to Use the Equipment
- Distribution fitting and check of Equipment
- Activity Begins

Setup:

- Before participants arrive, course safety check must be performed and recorded. Out! In! Up!
- Before participants arrive, equipment visual check must be performed and recorded.
- Pull down and secure tru-blu devices utilizing storage tie. Bundle and store tie.
- Moderator should wear harness and rescue tether for duration of activity.
- At conclusion of activity, secure storage tie to 4th lane tru-blu clip, loop through 3rd, 2nd, and 1st, and allow tru-blu's to raise to full height.

Operation:

- When participant steps up to be locked in, leader should check proper fit and security of climbing harness.
- Participants, once oriented to activity, are to be safely locked into tru-blue with gate facing away from participant and allowed to climb freely.
- While participant is climbing, area below participant should be kept clear to avoid possible collision.
- Encouragement should be offered to climbing participant, while maintaining a good group dynamic of support on the ground.
- When participant is finished climbing and lowered safely to the ground, leader should detach tru-blue and lock back into anchor at the base of the particular lane, prepared for next participant.
- Top rope belay may be performed only by staff leaders that have received appropriate top rope belay orientation from trained staff member as noted on staff certification log.



- Lead rope belay may be performed only by staff leaders that have received appropriate lead rope belay orientation from trained staff member as noted on staff certification log.

Maintenance and Care for Equipment - Policy 400.40

Emergency Procedures:

- In the case of an emergency during climbing, climber will likely be automatically lowered to ground.
- In the case that a climber were somehow caught on wall and unable to be released, all lanes of activity should be stopped and secured. Staff leader should attach into adjacent tru-blue and begin ascent parallel to injured climber. Staff member should then secure him/herself into anchor on wall, secure injured climber into anchor on wall, work to release climber, and then, if appropriate, remove tether on climber releasing to the ground.
- Course leader will communicate emergency by radio, confirming whether to call 911.
- EMS should be directed to course location by additional staff if necessary.
- Incident must be reported and filed with supervisor

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES: LOW ROPES

Summary of a Typical Session for Activity:

- Names and Introductions
- Safety Instructions:
 - Review safety rules
 - Teach about element
 - Teach How to Use any Equipment
- Activity Begins

Setup:

- Before participants arrive, course safety check must be performed and recorded.
Out! In! Up!
- Before participants arrive, equipment visual check must be performed and recorded.

Safety

- A competent staff member must supervise all low elements activities.
- Spotting will be utilized on all structures where participants are off the ground.
- When participants are required to spot for each other, proper spotting techniques must be taught and practiced beforehand.
- Discourage unusual and dangerous jumping or swinging positions.
- Discourage running or jumping for hanging ropes/cables
- Encourage participants to step off instead of falling if they are losing their balance.

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES: ZIP LINE

Summary of a Typical Session for Activity:

- Names and Introductions
- Safety Instructions:
 - Review safety rules
 - Teach about activity
 - Teach How to Use the Equipment
- Distribution fitting and check of Equipment
- Activity Begins

Setup:

- Before participants arrive, course safety check must be performed and recorded. Out! In! Up!
- Before participants arrive, equipment visual check must be performed and recorded.
- Lower and secure cargo net.
- Make sure that rescue bag is located in launch area.
- At conclusion of activity, raise and secure cargo net.

Operation:

- Participants should be geared up on the ground.
 - Harness, helmet, two tethers
 - One tether with a zip trolley (primary), the other tether with a steel locking Omega carabiner (backup)
 - Both tethers should be clipped to a single locking carabiner on the harness loop.
- Participants should decide when gearing up whether they want a water or ground landing, and select tethers accordingly.
- When participants reach the top of the cargo net, staff should clip them into an overhead belay cable with their backup tether.
- Staff hook up the participant's zip trolley to the zip cable while leaving their backup tether hooked to the platform belay cable.
- Staff should then clear the zip prior to sending the participant out on the line
 - Launch Staff: "Clear to zip [line 1 / line 2]?"
 - Landing Staff: ensure line is clear of participants "Zip [1 / 2] clear!"
 - May be accompanied by a flapping-arm motion



- IMPORTANT: If the line is not clear, landing staff should provide no response whatsoever. Calling out “Zip not clear” is easy to mistake for the clear command. Provide no response.
- Once cleared, launch staff transfers backup clip from belay cable to zip cable
- Backup is attached behind the zip trolley and hangs from the horn on the back.
- Participant may then zip away from the platform.
- Landings:
 - If participant is landing in water, lifeguard should be present to assist. Staff pulls down on tether to reach zip cable. Once the tether tension has been released, remove the backup first then the zip trolley from the cable and release the line.
 - If participant is landing on the bank (even if planning to skim lake surface,) staff should let the participant zip past them and then throw the brake line over the zip cable. If the participant can stand on the ground, have them walk toward the termination poles to release tension on the tethers. Otherwise, use the brake rope to pull them toward the poles until they can stand up. Remove the backup tether first, then the zip trolley.
- Retrievals:
 - Occasionally, a ground-landing participant may not make it all the way across the zip line. They will naturally slip back out over the lake to the lowest point on the line.
 - To retrieve stranded participants, staff should use the provided retrieval kit.
 - Attach the weighted zip trolley to the zip cable and remove all the line from the retrieval bag.
 - Ensure that the tail of the line has a non-locking carabiner attached.
 - Using the retrieval line, send the trolley out to the stranded participant
 - Instruct the participant to attach the non-locking carabiner to their harness
 - Once attached, pull the participant back over land using the retrieval line

Maintenance and Care for Equipment - Policy 400.40

Emergency Procedures:

- In the case of an emergency during zip, follow standard procedure for removal from line, or in the case of emergency over water, coordinate with lifeguard, and have rescue certified staff lower from cable using rescue bag.
- Course leader will communicate emergency by radio, confirming whether to call 911.



- EMS should be directed to course location by additional staff if necessary.
- Incident must be reported and filed with supervisor

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES: PAINTBALL

Summary of a Typical Session for Activity:

- Names and Introductions
- Safety Instructions:
 - Review safety rules
 - Teach Proper Ways to Play the Game
 - Teach How to Use the Equipment
 - Teach What safety equipment must be utilized and when
- Distribution of Safety Equipment
- Distribution of Paintball Markers

Activity Begins

Typical pre-activity safety instructions communicated to all participants:

- Masks **MUST** be worn at all times when games are in session. Even if a participant is out of play, masks must be worn until Referee says "Safety On... (Pause for 5 Seconds)... Barrel Covers On... (Pause for 10 Seconds)... Masks Off."
- Gloves and Chest Protectors are recommended but not required for High School or adult participants. Gloves and Chest Protectors are mandatory for Middle School participants.
- Barrel Guard must remain on the marker anytime game is not in play.
- Safety switch should be turned to the "on" position up until the Referee calls, "Safety Off." Once a participant is hit and out of the game, upon exiting the playing field, safety should be turned to the "on" position again.
- If and when a participant is out of play, he/she must immediately exit the playing field. Upon exiting field, mask must remain on and barrel guard should be put on the marker. Safety should also be turned to the "on" position.
- Shots should not be made at a distance closer than 10ft. If a participant has snuck up on another player, merely calling "you're out" a number of times will signal to the defensive player that he/she has been eliminated from play.
- Referees should not be targeted.
- Players who are 'out' should not be targeted.
- A player who has fallen or appears to be injured should not be targeted. In the event of an injury, participant should call for help from the Referee. Referee will stop the game if necessary. Even in the case of injury, masks should never be taken off



without first hearing the referee call, "Safety On... (Pause for 5 Seconds)... Barrel Covers On... (Pause for 10 Seconds)... Masks Off."

Typical in-activity instruction:

- All players receive their gear and markers remain in safety position with barrel cover.
- Players enter the playing field and take their positions. Masks are on.
- Referee calls "Barrel Covers Off... (pause 5 seconds)... Safety Off... (pause 5 seconds)... 3... 2... 1... START!"
- At the end of the game, Referee calls "Safety On... (Pause for 5 Seconds)... Barrel Covers On... (Pause for 10 Seconds)... Masks Off."
- Failure to abide by safety rules will result in immediate elimination from the activity.

Additional Safety Protocol:

- Before participants arrive, check to make sure all markers are in safety position.
- Before participants arrive, check to make sure all markers have a barrel cover.
- Verify that the velocity of the markers is at a consistent and appropriate speed for the participant age group. (Lower velocity for younger participants.)
- When the activity is not in session: All markers should be securely locked in the paintball trailer.

Maintenance and Care for Equipment:

- Safely maintain marker velocity
- Maintain safely operating markers
 - Check safety selector daily
 - Oil markers every two weeks
 - Check safety helmets daily
- Equipment Care and Maintenance:
 - Safety gear should be washed as needed
 - Paint excess should always be cleaned up and markers should be wiped down as often as needed

Filling Air Cylinders:

- Always wear proper safety gear. Safety goggles should be worn when filling
- Open all fill-cylinder valves and run air compressor up to final pressure of 3300 PSI
- Close all fill cylinder valves when not filling or in use
- To fill Marker Cylinder:
 - Attach marker cylinder to fill hose
 - Open fill valve slowly until cylinder reads a pressure of approximately 3000 PSI
 - Close fill valve completely



- Release marker cylinder from fill hose

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES: ARCHERY TAG

Summary of a Typical Session for Activity:

- Names and Introductions
- Safety Instructions:
 - Review safety rules
 - Teach Proper Ways to Play the Game
 - Teach How to Use the Equipment
- Distribution of Equipment
- Activity Begins

Setup:

- Goggles must be worn when game is in session.
- Before play, be sure that all bunkers are properly inflated and secured in location.
- Set up all equipment.
 - Jerseys
 - Bows
 - Arrows
 - Goggles
- Referee should communicate rules to players
 - Stay behind main bunker until play begins.
 - When play begins, run forward, grab arrows, and return to tag main bunker before firing.
 - If you are hit, you are out, move to the sidelines.
 - Once full opposing team is removed from play, match is finished and winning team receives 200 points.
 - If ball, kept at center of course hits opposing main bunker, team is awarded 50 points, and a 60 second break begins before another 50 points can be scored.
- Players who are 'out' should not be targeted.
- After match, all players should assist in recovering arrows and returning them to center bunker
- A player who has fallen or appears to be injured should not be targeted. In the event of an injury, participant should call for help from the Referee. Referee will stop the game if necessary.

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES: WATER BLOB

Summary of a Typical Session for Activity:

- Names and Introductions
- Distribution, fitting, and check of life jackets
- Safety Instructions:
 - Review safety rules
 - Teach about activity
 - Test appropriate landing technique
- Activity Begins

Setup:

- Before participants arrive, course safety check must be performed and recorded. Out! In! Up!
- Special attention must be paid to making sure blobs are appropriately secured, and are lined up parallel to one another and in line with openings on blob platform. If necessary, adjustments must be made prior to activity.
- Before participants arrive, equipment visual check must be performed and recorded.
- Lower and secure cargo net.
- At conclusion of activity, raise and secure cargo net.

Operation:

- Orientation begins on the ground, with special instruction being given to landing technique on blob - "Arms folded over chest. Land butt first!"
- Participants are tested for landing technique by jumping off of floating platform into water.
- Once participants display the ability to land appropriately, they are cleared to begin activity.
- At least one staff member is stationed on blob tower, one lifeguard stationed in the water, and one on the land at the base of the tower.
- Participants are instructed to jump onto blob, climb to the end of blob and cross arms over chest, feet toward lake, with ankles near the edge of the water.
- Jumper is instructed to approach edge of platform and calls:
 - "Blobber ready?"
 - Blobber responds "Ready!"
 - Jumper calls "Blobbing!"



- Jumper lands on blob, launching blobber into lake. Blobber must swim completely out of blobbing area before next jumper is given permission to approach edge of platform.

Emergency Procedures:

- In the case of an emergency during blobbing, assist lifeguards in whatever way possible.
- Activity leader should communicate emergency by radio, confirming whether to call 911.
- EMS should be directed to location by additional staff if necessary.
- Incident must be reported and filed with supervisor

WATERCRAFT MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION

In order to properly identify and reduce possible risk to Damascus participants as well as to the organization, watercraft safety is a high priority. Care is taken to assure proper and legal operating condition of watercraft as well as proper licensing and training of watercraft operators, whether they be staff or volunteers.

All Damascus watercraft will be kept in good repair, with regular seasonal maintenance, and will be used only for purposes intended. Watercraft are always equipped with appropriate required safety equipment on board. Seasonally, a general operating check is performed to assure that all watercraft are in good order. Additionally, prior to each day of use, watercraft are tested by the operator to assure good functionality before a participant is taken on board.

As required by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, adults over 18 or any person born before January 1, 1982 may operate or may supervise a child 12 to 15 if they have an education certificate. Young adults age 16 and older may operate without supervision if they have an education certificate.

Damascus's certification requirements are modeled after those of the ODNR. Any staff member or volunteer born on or after January 1, 1982 is required to complete and present a boating education certificate approved by the ODNR prior to operating watercraft. Those born before 1982 will be allowed to operate watercraft at the discretion of the waterfront director assigned to that particular day. Additionally, only those staff members or volunteers who are not tasked with the supervision of program participants on the day of watercraft operation will be permitted to operate watercraft at Damascus. No person under the age of 21 and no person who does not have a current drivers license that has not been suspended or revoked for any reason will be permitted to operate watercraft.

No individual is permitted to operate a watercraft without the express permission of the waterfront director assigned to that particular day. If no waterfront director has been assigned, this permission must be given by the Director on site. This limitation extends to non-program times.

All watercraft operators will follow rules and guidelines appropriate to the particular craft they are operating (maximum occupancy, weight limit, designated spotter for tubing/water skiing, general lake requirements, direction of traffic flow, etc.).

Additionally, prior to operating a watercraft, each operator will be required to participate in a brief orientation offered by the waterfront director assigned to that particular day. Only after being approved by waterfront director will an individual be permitted to operate



watercraft. The watercraft orientation offered by the waterfront director will cover, but may not be limited to, the following topics:

- Importance of avoiding damage to the boat from submerged or floating objects, overview of present lake status.
- Reality of risk of injury or death of participants/staff in boat, being pulled by the boat, or in the water.
- Proper watercraft operating techniques (turning, docking, recovering flipped PWC)
- Stressing importance of maintaining proper 200ft clearance.
- Stressing importance of defensive driving and awareness of passenger safety.
- Test drive and effective display of safe operating techniques.