

Connecticut Camping Association – DPH Meeting Notes

March 8, 2012

Electronic Licensing

The department is transitioning into an electronic licensing format. The plan will allow new technology, including a fully integrated database, to increase efficiency of the licensing process. The database will include an online camp search tool.

At the moment, some website changes have been implemented and eventually the entire licensing process will be able to be completed online (except for visits of course!). Information that will be available online will include common complaints, violations and other license related info.

This will not be in place this summer, and the DPH is not sure of the time frame for full implementation.

WHAT'S NEW

Over the past couple of years, two work groups looked at the current youth camp regulations (which were formed in the 1960's). They looked at what was problematic and what needed updating. The results of the findings and recommendations of these work groups are now in the process to become legislation. DPH Representatives discussed some of the changes that have been submitted to become legislation over the next few months. This entire section discusses some of the changes that we can expect. Please see the end of this section for a time frame on change.

Health Care and & Emergency Medical Care Section

DPH realizes that many camps have difficulty finding a camp physician. A change in legislation will permit camps having the additional option of also having an Advance Practice RN who would be considered the on call physician.

Current legislation requires that all camp health care personnel shall present current CPR competency as evidence by a certification from the American Heart Association or American Red Cross. A change in legislation would allow other certifying organizations to provide the required evidence.

Records Section

Current legislation requires that all campers and staff should be immunized. The change in legislation will reference back to the list of immunizations established by the commissioner & as

this list is updated, will be the required list that camps must follow.

Lifeguarding Section

A change in legislation will read that a lifeguard must be certified in CPR and will make a reference back to the regulation for Lifeguards.

Excursions off Camp

Any waterfront areas or watercrafts that are being utilized while on an excursion shall be supervised by a person with applicable credentials. Camps can either take their own staff or have assurance that this requirement is met by the facility that is being used. Although this has always been a guideline, it will now be a regulation. Proof of assurance could include documentation of certifications, of a written statement from an authority at the facility attesting to proper certification. Camps can expect that this will be enforced this year and that it will be included in the regulations and not just interpreted.

Challenge Courses

Information that was previously just guidelines will become legislation. This legislation will be listed in the staff certification section.

Activities Director

For activities that need a specialist director, such as horseback, archery etc., the new legislation clarifies staff age & training requirements and specifies that the director is on site at the activity, not just on the property (this does not apply to challenge courses).

Arrangements for Camp Inspections

Either the camp director or their designee must make arrangements and be prepared for inspections. For camps that run multiple programs (or camps) such as college campus camps, the person who is the director is responsible to have access to and knowledge of every camp program and must be able to provide information on all of them.

General Report of Change Form

The Commissioner shall be notified in writing as soon as possible, but no longer than five days, to any operational change as listed on a camp license. This includes location, dates, hours and change of director. If a field trip is cancelled and rescheduled the commissioner would be

required to be notified. This is now a regulation.

Incident Reports

In the future camps will not be required to report everything that we are currently reporting, such as a day camper who goes home early (they would be going home anyway) or a positive diagnosis such as an x-ray or lab report. Camps will not have to report positive diagnosis because DPH will consider that these have been effectively dealt with by the diagnosing physician. Camps will still need to report things such as fatality, a resident camper who goes home for illness (non-diagnosed) or an outbreak of disease.

Emergency Medication (e.g. inhalers/gluco-gun/epi-pen)

Right now it is only a guideline that these do not have to be locked and that they can be carried by individuals with a permission to self-administer form. This will now become a regulation. The responsibility is still with the camp director that these meds are being carried safely and without access to other campers. Camps must still have a self-administer & parent permission.

Petition for Special Medication Authorizations

Currently, after training an unlicensed person may administer medications that are topical, oral, inhaled or pre-measured injectable. Camps can petition the state to administer meds other than these. In the future, the proposal would be that camps do not have to send a petition to the state, which should expedite everything. However, individuals would still need training and a medication order will still need to be on file.

TIME LINE FOR NEW REGULATION IMPLEMENTATION

Regulations that we currently have will still be in effect for this summer.

The draft regulations (of which DPH highlighted the above reg's at the meeting) are now at the governor's office and awaiting approval. If they are approved the next step is that the proposed regulations will be published in the CT Law Journal. DPH representatives are hoping for the end of March for this publication. When this happens, the proposal will be posted on the DPH website under "what's new" and a 30-business day public comment period will begin.

After this period comments of opposition and support will be addressed and the proposal will go to the office of the Attorney General and to a Regulation Review Committee. Once these steps are cleared they will become law. **THE DPH DOES NOT ANTICIPATE THIS WILL HAPPEN BEFORE THIS SUMMER.**

QUESTION & ANSWERS

The following section was the Q & A part of the meeting, including responses from the DPH to the pre-submitted questions. The underlined headings are the subject of the questions that were asked.

Criminal Background Checks

There is currently a proposal that came from a group of Norwalk Students, which would require all volunteers and paid staff have a criminal background check.

The DPH did not propose this so they don't have too much knowledge on it, however the DPH will have a chance to comment on the proposal if it moves towards becoming legislation.

CCA is forming a committee to give guidance on behalf of camps.

Licensing Applications

Camps are no longer required to include a copy of insurance showing that a camp has workers comp coverage. There is a place on the license application where an owner/director signs to their status. If the answer is no, then no further action is required. If it is yes, then details of who you are insured with, effective dates and a signature attesting to this will be required (this will be on page #2).

On page #3 of the application, the contact person is not necessarily the camp director. If the contact person is the camp director they must also complete page #5.

If an individual is not a new applicant for director or alternate, do not send page #6.

Permission forms for excursions/trips

A question was raised asking "do we need specific permission forms for a trip or is a generic trip form ok?"

Advanced info shall be kept on file including the purpose of a trip and the itinerary. A parent must sign a permission form that includes this info. DPH believes that camps would need specific trip permission. For camps with multiple trips it was suggested to work on a way to make a permission form adapted for all of these trips.

Reviews process of approving certifying bodies for activities (e.g. Ropes course/Boating etc.)

The Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council, in conjunction with the DPH extensively reviews

all certifying bodies. If a new agency/certifying body is recommended then anybody can submit them for review to Valerie at DPH

Training of Administration of Medication

Anyone who is not licensed can be trained in the administration of medication. DPH said that directors must make sure that this person is at least 18 years of age, and is considered thoughtful and responsible. The training can be provided by a licensed physician, a physician's assistant, APRN, RN or licensed pharmacist.

Waterfront Directors

Waterfront Directors are needed at each separate waterfront area that is being used. If a camp has a separate pool and boating area that are being used at the same time, then two waterfront directors would be required.

Vehicle Inspections

There was some confusion as to whether or not DPH will accept a vehicle inspection sticker from another state.

DPH response: "we have been told by DMV that if it comes from another state that requires inspecting it will be ok."

DPH further commented that a call was made to LT. Green from Wethersfield DMV and he stated that if the vehicle is being used in CT for the purpose of youth camp transportation then it must be inspected in CT.

More discussion was entertained about out-of-state registered vehicles and getting them inspected. Some camps had had a tough time getting out-of-state registered vehicles inspected at DMV and also had problems with staff that were holders of a CT Driver's license.

DPH said that the best person to talk to is LT. Green at DMV Wethersfield.

Bunk Bed Regulations

State of CT does not have any regulations on bunk beds. In general just make sure that manufacturer instructions and guidelines are followed and that they are well maintained.

Health forms

There is no required DPH specific health form, although they do have a sample form. If your

camp is ACA accredited, be sure to check their guidelines for health form content. Camps can accept school physical exams.