

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Public Health and Health Planning Council by Section 225 of the Public Health Law, subject to the approval by the Commissioner of Health, Subpart 7-2 of the State Sanitary Code, as contained in Chapter 1 of Title 10 (Health) of the Official Compilation of Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York is amended as follows, to be effective upon publication of a Notice of Adoption in the State Register.

SUBPART 7-2

Children's Camps

**(Statutory Authority: Public Health Law §§ 201, 225, 1390, 1394, 1395, 1399-a;
L. 2012, ch. 501)**

Subdivision (o) of section 7-2.5 is amended to read as follows:

(o) The camp operator shall provide adequate supervision. *Adequate supervision* shall mean:

- (1) supervision such that a camper is protected from any unreasonable risk to his or her health or safety, including physical or sexual abuse or any public health hazard; [and]
- (2) as a minimum, there shall exist visual or verbal communications capabilities between camper and counselor during activities and a method of accounting for the camper's whereabouts at all times[.]; and

- (3) at camps required to comply with section 7-2.25 of this Subpart, protection from any unreasonable risk of experiencing an occurrence which would constitute a reportable incident as defined in section 7-2.25(h)(4) of this Subpart.

Section 7-2.24 is amended to read as follows:

Variance; waiver.

- (a) *Variance* - Except with regard to exemptions sought pursuant to section 7-2.25(1)(3)
(ii), i[I]n order to allow time to comply with certain provisions of this Subpart, an operator may submit a written request to the permit-issuing official for a variance from a specific provision(s) when the health and safety of the children attending the camp and the public will not be prejudiced by the variance, and where there are practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships in immediate compliance with the provision. An operator must meet all terms of an approved variance(s) including the effective date, the time period for which the variance is granted, the requirements being varied and any special conditions the permit-issuing official specifies. Where the permit-issuing official is not the State Department of Health, such official shall consult with a representative of the State Department of Health and shall obtain approval from the State Department of Health for the proposed decision, prior to granting or denying a variance request for requirements in section 7-2.25 of this Subpart.

- (b) *Waiver* – Except with regard to exemptions sought pursuant to section 7-2.25(1)(3)
(ii), i[I]n order to accept alternative arrangements that do not meet certain provisions of

this Subpart but do protect the safety and health of the campers and the public, an operator may submit a written request to the permit-issuing official for a waiver from a specific provision of this Subpart. Such request shall indicate justification that circumstances exist that are beyond the control of the operator, compliance with the provision would present unnecessary hardship and that the public and camper health and safety will not be endangered by granting such a waiver. The permit-issuing official shall consult with a representative of the State Department of Health prior to granting or denying a waiver request. An operator must meet all terms of an approved waiver(s), including the condition that it will remain in effect indefinitely unless revoked by the permit-issuing official or the facility changes operators. Where the permit-issuing official is not the State Department of Health, such official shall consult with a representative of the State Department of Health, and shall obtain the approval of the State Department of Health for the proposed decision, prior to granting or denying a exemption request related to the requirements in section 7-2.25 of this Subpart.

New subdivisions (h)-(m) of section 7-2.25 are added to read as follows:

(h) Definitions. The following definitions apply to Section 7-2.25 of this Subpart.

(1) *Camp Staff* shall mean a director, operator, employee or volunteer of a children's camp; or a consultant or an employee or volunteer of a corporation, partnership, organization or governmental entity which provides goods or services to a children's camp pursuant to contract or other arrangement that permits such

person to have regular and substantial contact with individuals who are cared for by the children's camp.

(2) *Department* shall mean the New York State Department of Health.

(3) *Justice Center* shall mean the Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs, as established pursuant to Section 551 of the Executive Law.

(4) *Reportable Incident* shall include those actions incorporated within the definitions of "physical abuse," "sexual abuse," "psychological abuse," "deliberate inappropriate use of restraints," "use of aversive conditioning," "obstruction of reports of reportable incidents," "unlawful use or administration of a controlled substance," "neglect," and "significant incident" all as defined in Section 488 of the Social Services Law.

(i) Reporting.

(1) In addition to the reporting requirements of section 7-2.8(d), a camp operator subject to section 7-2.25 of this Subpart and all camp staff falling within the definition of "mandated reporter" under section 488 of the Social Services Law shall immediately report any reportable incident as defined in section 7-2.25(h)(4) of this Subpart and Section 488 of the Social Services Law, where such incident involves a camper with a developmental disability, to the permit-issuing official and to the Justice Center's Vulnerable Persons' Central Register. Such report shall be provided in a form and manner as required by the Justice Center.

(j) Employee Screening, Training, and Code of Conduct

(1) Prior to hiring anyone who will or may have direct contact with campers, or approving credentials for any camp staff, the operator shall follow the procedures established by the Justice Center in regulations or policy, to verify that such person is not on the Justice Center's staff exclusion list established pursuant to section 495 of the Social Services Law. Such screening is in addition to the requirement that the operator similarly verify that a prospective camp staff is not on the sexual abuse registry, as required by section 7-2.5(l) of this Subpart.

(2) A camp operator must ensure that camp staff, and others falling within the definition of mandated reporter under Section 488 of the Social Services Law who will or may have direct contact with campers having a developmental disability, receive training regarding mandated reporting and their obligations as mandated reporters. A camp operator shall ensure that the telephone number for the Justice Center's hotline for the reporting reportable incidents is conspicuously displayed in areas accessible to mandated reporters and campers.

(3) The camp operator shall ensure that all camp staff and others falling within the definition of "custodian" under Section 488 of the Social Services Law are provided with a copy of the code of conduct established by the Justice Center pursuant to Section 554 of the Executive Law. Such code of conduct shall be provided at the time of initial employment, and at least annually thereafter during the term of employment. Receipt of the code of conduct must be acknowledged,

and the recipient must further acknowledge that he or she has read and understands such code of conduct.

(k) Disclosure of information

(1) Except to the extent otherwise prohibited by law, the camp operator shall be obliged to share information relevant to the investigation of any incident subject to the reporting requirements of this Subpart with the permit-issuing official, the State Department of Health, and the Justice Center. The permit-issuing official, the department and the Justice Center shall, when required by law, or when so directed by the department or the Justice Center and except as otherwise prohibited by law, be permitted to share information obtained in their respective investigations of incidents subject to the reporting requirements of section 7-2.25 (i) of this Subpart.

(2) Except as otherwise prohibited by law, the operator of a camp not otherwise subject to Article six of the Public Officers Law shall make records available for public inspection and copying to the extent required by subdivision six of Section 490 of the Social Services Law and regulations of the Justice Center.

(l) Incident Management.

(1) The camp operator shall cooperate fully with the investigation of reportable incidents involving campers with developmental disabilities and shall provide all necessary information and access to conduct the investigation. The camp operator shall promptly obtain an appropriate medical examination of a physically injured camper with a developmental disability. The camp operator shall provide

information, whether obtained pursuant to the investigation or otherwise, to the Justice Center and permit-issuing official upon request, in the form and manner requested. Such information must be provided in a timely manner so as to support completion of the investigation subject to the time limits set forth in this subdivision.

(2) Unless delegated by the Justice Center to a delegate investigatory agency as defined in subdivision six of Section 488 of the Social Services Law, incidents of abuse or neglect, as defined in subdivision eleven of Section 488 of the Social Services Law, shall be investigated by the Justice Center. With regard to all other reportable incidents, as defined in Section 488 of the Social Services Law, the permit-issuing official shall initiate a prompt investigation of an allegation of a reportable incident, which shall commence no later than five business days after notification of such an incident, unless the Justice Center agrees that it will undertake such investigation. Where the permit-issuing official is the department, such investigation shall be undertaken by the department; where the permit-issuing official is a local health officer, such investigation shall be undertaken by the local health officer. Additional time for completion of the investigation may be allowed, subject to the approval of the department, upon a showing of good cause for such extension. At a minimum, the investigation of any reportable incident shall comply with the following:

(i) Investigations shall include a review of medical records and reports, witness interviews and statement, expert assessments, and the collection of physical evidence, observations and information from care providers and any other information that is relevant to the incident. Interviews should be conducted by qualified, objective individuals in a private area which does not allow those not participating in the interview to overhear. Interviews must be conducted of each party or witness individually, not in the presence of other parties or witnesses or under circumstances in which other parties or witnesses may perceive any aspect of the interview. The person alleging the incident, or who is the subject of the incident, must be offered the opportunity to give his/her version of the event. At least one of the persons conducting the interview must have an understanding of, and be able to accommodate, the unique needs or capabilities of the person being interviewed. The procedures required by this Subparagraph (i) may be altered if, and only to the extent necessary to, comply with an applicable collective bargaining agreement.

(ii) All evidence must be adequately protected and preserved.

(iii) Any information, including but not limited to documents and other materials, obtained during or resulting from any investigation shall be kept confidential, except as otherwise permissible under law or regulation, including but not limited to Article 11 of the Social Services Law.

(iv) Upon completion of the investigation, a written report shall be prepared which shall include all relevant findings and information obtained in the investigation and details of steps taken to investigate the incident. The results of the investigation shall be promptly reported to the department, if the investigation was not performed by the department, and to the Justice Center.

(v) If any remedial action is necessary, the permit-issuing official shall establish a plan in writing with the camp operator. The plan shall indicate the camp operator's agreement to the remediation and identify a follow-up date and person responsible for monitoring the remedial action. The plan shall be provided, and any measures taken in response to such plan shall be reported, to the department and to the Justice Center.

(vi) The investigation and written report shall be completed and provided to the department and the Justice Center within 60 days of when the incident was first reported to the Justice Center. For purposes of this section, "complete" shall mean that all necessary information has been obtained to determine whether and how the incident occurred, and to complete the findings referenced in paragraph (1)(2)(iv) of this subdivision.

(3) (i) The camp shall maintain a facility incident review committee, composed of members of the governing body of the children's camp and other persons identified by the camp operator, including some members of the following: camp administrative staff, direct support staff, licensed health care practitioners, service recipients, the permit-issuing official or designee and representatives of family, consumer and other advocacy organizations, but not the camp director. The camp operator shall convene a facility incident review panel to review the timeliness, thoroughness and appropriateness of the camp's responses to reportable incidents; recommend additional opportunities for improvement to the camp operator, if appropriate; review incident trends and patterns concerning reportable incidents; and make recommendations to the camp operator to assist in reducing reportable incidents. The facility incident review panel shall meet each year prior to camp opening and within two weeks of the completion of a written report and remedial plan for a reportable incident.

(ii) Pursuant to paragraph (f) of subdivision one of section 490 of the Social Services Law and regulations of the Justice Center, a camp operator may seek an exemption from the requirement to establish and maintain an incident review committee. In order to obtain an exemption, the camp operator must file an application with the permit-issuing official, at least sixty days prior to the start of the camp operating season, or at any time in the case of exemptions sought within the first three months following the effective date of this provision. The application must provide sufficient documentation and information to demonstrate

that that compliance would present undue hardship and that granting an exemption would not create an undue risk of harm to campers' health and safety. Where the permit-issuing official is not the department, such official shall consult with a representative of the department, and shall obtain department approval for the proposed decision, prior to granting or denying an exemption. An operator must meet all terms of an approved exemption(s), including the condition that it will remain in effect for one year unless revoked by the permit-issuing official, subject to department approval, or the facility changes operators. Any application for renewal shall be made within 60 days prior to the start of the camp's operating season. The procedure set forth in this Subparagraph (ii) shall be used instead of the general procedures set forth in section 7-2.24 of this Subpart.

(m) In addition to the requirements specified by subdivisions (d) and (g) of section 7-2.4 of this Subpart, a permit may be denied, revoked, or suspended if the children's camp fails to comply with regulations, policies, or other requirements of the Justice Center. In considering whether to issue a permit to a children's camp, the permit-issuing official shall consider the children's camp's past and current compliance with the regulations, policies, or other requirements of the Justice Center.