



West River Volunteer Job Description

Volunteers are the heart and soul of West River. What you do during your week of camp will make or break our shared ministry. You have a very demanding job during your week of camp, and we thank you for sacrificing your time, energy, and skills to prioritize the campers for this one week. This job description is intended to clarify your role, as well as the role of the Program Staff at West River.

At All Times

You are responsible for the general safety and supervision of your campers at all times. When program staff members are with your group, they are there to lead an activity and will need your help to keep the campers on task. One of the most challenging responsibilities you will have is to manage camper behavior. Often, but not always, this is as simple as reminding a camper to stay focused on their activity. The entire camp team should work together to handle significant discipline issues in accordance with camp and conference policies.

Pool

During pool time you are expected to, along with our non-lifeguard camp staff, serve as lookouts and help control the pool deck area during swim times so the lifeguards can watch the water. Water activities are the most dangerous ones at camp, so we need your help to keep everyone safe. We will create a rotation with other volunteers and staff so you can enjoy the pool as well. Camp groups should expect to send a minimum of two supervising counselors (while keeping appropriate ratios) to a swim time at which their group is present. This can be an excellent time for some volunteers to get some down time, assuming you have appropriate coverage.

On the River (Paddle Sports)

Paddle sports are led by program staff. Please help campers stay focused as they receive instructions on how to safely use the watercraft (canoes, kayaks, stand up paddle boards). Assist campers with putting on their PFDs, getting paddles, and moving boats. We ask that you help keep an eye on campers and enforce safety precautions while they are on the water and encourage you to join the campers on the water.

Low Ropes

Program staff members are specially trained to lead the low ropes. They need your help to keep the campers together and focused on the element they are working on. The staff may need you to help spot on certain elements if you are physically able. You can also help make the connection between the ropes elements and the other things they are doing throughout their week at camp during the element debriefing.

High Ropes

High ropes are dangerous. We need your help to make sure campers are paying attention to program staff. We also need some volunteers to help with certain high activities. The most common requests for help are: helping campers put on equipment, reiterating safety rules, and assisting at the Giant Swing. If you are asked to help, the staff will make sure you know, and are comfortable with, your role in the activity.

Archery

The archery ranged is run by a certified instructor at all times. When a group of campers is up for their turn to shoot, the instructor will be entirely in charge of that group. As a volunteer, you need to oversee the campers who are waiting their turns for instruction. This typically means keeping them from being a distraction to the archers and instructor. Instructors will make an effort to give counselors a chance to shoot if time allows.

Camp-wide Activities

These events are typically led by program staff, but require volunteer participation to keep the larger group involved and attentive, as well as ensuring fair play and good sportsmanship. Please participate in these camp-wide activities as you are able and help keep campers under control. If you have campers who need to sit out, feel free to split your volunteer team with some playing, and some on the sidelines, while keeping your group together.

Free Time

Free time is an excellent chance for creative play to occur, where young people can set their own goals and activities. It can be helpful to put parameters in place to help you maintain supervision throughout this time. Proper supervision requires having a Supervising Counselor who can see, and ideally hear, everyone in the group they are supervising. If you are using indoor spaces, be certain that you meet Safe Sanctuary guidelines.

Outdoor spaces can be easier to monitor as one person might be able to sit in a central location and observe a large area. Be sure to communicate with the rest of your team as to which campers are where, so you can be certain everyone is always accounted for. If possible, this can be a good time for a volunteer or two to get a break while other team members keep an eye on things.

Bible Study

Your job is to lead Bible study and ensure the messages for the day and week are presented to campers in a way they can understand and bring home with them when they leave camp. Aside from camper safety, this is your most important task at camp. A curriculum will be provided to your team ahead of time that will give you a full lesson plan, materials, and tips for how to teach your specific age group. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the camp.

Worship

This is an opportunity for your camp to help lead worship. A lot of our campers may not have the chance to lead worship at their home churches, so camp is an excellent space to experiment. Work with program staff to make sure the day's message is conveyed in a meaningful manner.

Meal Times

Volunteer counselors will eat with their group and follow the COVID meal procedures described by staff during your camp week orientation. Please make sure there is at least one counselor at each of your groups' tables. Try to have the campers use good manners and correct them when they do not. Make sure no one from your table leaves until everyone is finished and that everyone helps with any cleanup process.

Shower Time

Showering can be a challenge for many groups. Your goal should be to keep an appropriate eye on your group while keeping them moving through the bathrooms as quickly as is realistic. Many groups handle this in different ways. If you are concerned with finding a functional system, please ask camp staff, or other volunteer teams.

Night/Sleeping

Volunteers are typically the only adults with the campers during sleeping times. Nighttime supervision of campers is not part of the program staff's normal duties. The late evening is often one of the best times of the day for fellowship and diving deeper into the topics of the day. While younger campers may be exhausted and need to get to bed, older campers may seek to stay up and continue enjoying each other's company and continuing to chat together.

Feel free to create space and schedules around both of those options, depending on your age group. Younger campers may need help with getting everyone through the shower and going through bedtime routines. Older campers may need less specific direction, but it is still beneficial to ensure there is time in the day for adequate hygiene practices.

Set a consistent in bed/lights out schedule and stick to it. If you have any questions or concerns around getting your group to bed in an orderly fashion, feel free to reach out to staff.

If you have concerns about your ability to perform any of these tasks, please contact Chris at Director@WestRiverCenter.org