



2026 Summer Camp
PARENT HANDBOOK

April 2026

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Welcome back to all our returning campers—we are so excited to see you again! To our new campers and families, welcome to our summer camp community. We are thrilled to have you join us and look forward to an exciting season filled with fun, learning, and new friendships.

This handbook has been thoughtfully created to provide you with important information about our program procedures, guidelines, and expectations. It is designed to help ensure a safe, organized, and enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

We are looking forward to a successful and memorable summer camp!

Sarah Poole,

Youth Programs Supervisor
Tuscaloosa County Parks & Recreation Authority
2200 Rock Quarry Drive
Tuscaloosa, AL 35406
spoole@tcpara.org

Tuscaloosa County Park & Recreation Authority reserves the right to terminate any participant on the basis of keeping all other participants safe and ensure a quality program for all.

Campers must be entering Kindergarten through 5th grade for the 2026–2027 school year to participate in the ParaKids Summer Day Camp program. Children entering Kindergarten must have been enrolled in a Pre-K program during the 2025–2026 school year to be eligible for camp enrollment.

Additional programs are available for youth in grades 6-12. For more information, please visit our website at www.tcpara.org.

Program Dates, Times and Locations:

Dates: June 1, 2026 – August 7, 2026

Days: Monday – Friday

Hours: 7:00 AM – 5:30 PM

Camp Closures:

- June 19, 2026
- July 3, 2026

Locations:

- Belk Activity Center – 2101 Bowers Park Dr., Tuscaloosa, AL 35405
- Faucett Activity Center – 13040 Eugenia Faucett Dr., Northport, AL 35474
- Miller Activity Center – 300 Bobby Miller Pkwy, Tuscaloosa, AL 35405
- Phelps Activity Center – 2200 Rock Quarry Dr., Tuscaloosa, AL 35406
- Tingle Activity Center – 21973 AL-216, McCalla, AL 35111

Program Fees:

Registration Fee: \$40

This fee covers administrative costs and includes a camp T-shirt.

Weekly Enrollment Rates

- \$125 – PARA All-Inclusive Members
- \$175 – Non-Members

Sibling Discount (Weekly Enrollment):

- \$10 off for the second child
- \$20 off for the third (and each additional) child

Pay by Day Enrollment Rates: if space allows

- \$30 – PARA All-Inclusive Members
- \$40 – Non-Members

Late Pick-up fees will be \$10 for every 15 minutes a parent/guardian is late picking up after 5:30 p.m. Multiple late pick-ups may result in termination from the program.

- No refunds or credits

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Payment & Financial Policies

Activity Program Staff and/or the PARA Youth Programs Supervisor reserve the right to deny a child's attendance if payment has not been made prior to participation in any activity.

- Households whose financial obligations are covered by DHR, or another child service entity must provide written confirmation to the Youth Programs Supervisor (Sarah Poole) at spoole@tcpara.org.
- Registration fees are non-refundable.
- Checks should be made payable to PARA. Please include your child's name and program location on each check.
- Returned checks must be repaid in cash or by money order and will incur a \$30 returned check fee in addition to the original amount. Children may not return until all fees are paid.
- Any individual with three returned checks will lose check-writing privileges and must pay by cash or with credit card for all future PARA activities.
- For split households, separate registration forms must be completed by each party. Please communicate this with the office manager and camp coordinator.
- It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure all balances are paid promptly after services are rendered.

Check-In / Check-Out Procedures

- A parent or guardian must sign their child in and out daily using the designated sign-in/out sheet.
- Children will only be released to individuals listed on the Youth Information Sheet. A photo ID may be required.
- Please notify staff of any changes to pick-up arrangements.
- Each program site will have a contact phone number posted on the weekly itinerary.

Late Pick-Up Policy:

- A fee of \$10 per 15 minutes will be charged for late pick-ups.
- Fees must be paid before the child can return.
- Repeated late pick-ups may result in suspension or termination from the program.

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Dress Code

- Campers should wear play-appropriate clothing: t-shirts, shorts/pants, and closed-toe shoes.
 - Sandals are only permitted in designated pool areas.
 - Campers not dressed appropriately for safety may be restricted from activities.
 - Jewelry (watches, bracelets, necklaces) is not allowed.
 - Hats/caps are encouraged for outdoor activities.
 - On swim days, campers may wear swimsuits under clothing (t-shirt and shorts). Please send:
 - A towel
 - A change of clothes
 - Clearly label all personal items.
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Camp Rules

PARA is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and engaging environment.

Please review these rules with your child:

- Follow instructions from staff
 - Keep hands, feet, and teeth to yourself
 - Always respect staff and others
 - Stay with your assigned group
 - Remain seated on the bus; always keep body parts inside
 - Respect property (no taking, damaging, or hiding items)
 - No inappropriate, harassing, or profane language
 - No disrespectful communication
 - Campers may not share food
 - Campers may not borrow or lend money
 - No toys or devices should be brought to camp
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Discipline Policy

PARA uses a positive behavior approach, including reinforcement and redirection.

- Verbal and/or written warnings will be issued for repeated issues.
- All incidents are documented in a behavior log.

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- Behavior plans may be developed in collaboration with parents/guardians and staff.

Zero Tolerance:

Bullying or disrespect toward participants, staff, or volunteers will not be tolerated.

Behavior Management Strategies

Staff will:

- Clearly communicate and enforce rules
 - Set consistent and fair expectations
 - Redirect inappropriate behavior
 - Use positive reinforcement and recognition
 - Listen actively to children’s concerns
 - Provide immediate, specific praise
 - Proactively prevent behavioral issues
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Examples of Inappropriate Behavior

Includes, but is not limited to:

- Requiring constant staff intervention
 - Threatening the safety or well-being of self or others
 - Refusal to follow rules
 - Physical or verbal aggression (e.g., hitting, biting, pushing, threats)
 - Name-calling
 - Inappropriate exposure
 - Stealing
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Disciplinary Action Steps

1. Removal from activity for up to 5 minutes (time-out)
2. Parent/guardian notification
3. Meeting with Youth Programs Supervisor to implement a Behavior Improvement Plan (if needed)
4. Suspension (one or more days)
5. Removal from the program

PARA cannot accommodate children with chronic disruptive behavior. Reasonable efforts will be made to support each child’s success; however, if a child cannot adjust, they may not be allowed to return.

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Note:

Campers suspended or dismissed due to behavior are not eligible for refunds and may not transfer to another PARA site.

Pool Schedule

Each camp location will have a designated day and time to swim at the pool or visit the splash pad. Campers in grades 3-5 will attend the Bowers Park Outdoor Pool, while campers in grades K-2 will enjoy the splash pad.

In addition, all camp locations will be scheduled to use the indoor pools once per week.

Safety Rules for Day Cares and Day Camps while at the Pool and Pool Area

1. All new swimmer must pass a Swim Test and receive a wristband enter the deep end of the pool, including the pool deck. Lifeguards will issue the Swim Test. Daycamps are responsible for putting their wristbands on the swimmers that have passed. Swimmers only must pass the test once per season. Daycamps are responsible for keeping a list of the ones that have passed and can wear a wristband. Lifeguards will issue the appropriate number of wristbands to the Camp Director, and counselors are responsible for putting them on the swimmers that have already passed. New swimmers during the season must be tested before receiving a wristband. Swimmers will not be allowed to test twice during the same day if they do not pass.
2. Sunscreen should be applied before arriving at camp.
3. We ask that all loose clothes be put in bags and kept together as a group on the deck. We cannot be responsible for anything left behind, so please be sure to check pool area and bathrooms before you leave.
4. Counselors are to help the lifeguards make sure their children are following all posted pool rules.
5. Lifeguards have the right to make any child not following the rules sit out, a repeated offender will be asked to get out for the rest of the day.
6. Toys are not allowed in the pool. Floatation that is used to assist a non-swimmer is allowed. Large inflatables are not allowed.
7. We ask that children wait until the end of their swimming time before getting a snack, if the children do have a snack during swim time, it is the counselor's responsibility to see that the child waits 15 minutes before re-entering the water.

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Medical Policy

- PARA employees are not permitted to administer over-the-counter (OTC) or prescription medications to campers. Parents must administer medications.
 - Campers are not allowed to keep any medications or similar items (including cough drops) in their backpacks or lunch boxes.
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Medical Emergencies

If a child becomes injured or ill and requires more than basic first aid, the following procedures will be followed:

- Staff will call 911 immediately.
 - A parent/guardian will be contacted. If unavailable, emergency contacts listed on the registration form will be notified.
 - Emergency medical personnel will transport the child to the nearest medical facility for further care.
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Illness Policy / When to Keep Your Child Home

To help maintain a healthy environment for all campers and staff, please do not send your child to camp if they are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100.4°F or higher within the past 24 hours
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea within the past 24 hours
- Persistent cough, sore throat, or difficulty breathing
- Rash of unknown origin or any contagious skin condition
- Red, itchy, or draining eyes (possible pink eye)
- Head lice or nits (untreated)
- Any other symptoms of contagious illness

Campers must be symptom-free for at least 24 hours without the use of medication before returning to camp.

If a Child Becomes Ill at Camp

- The child will be separated from the group and monitored by staff.
- A parent/guardian will be contacted and must arrange for prompt pick-up.

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- If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be notified.
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Return to Camp

- PARA reserves the right to request a doctor's note before a child returns to camp if deemed necessary.
 - Children diagnosed with a contagious illness may only return once they are no longer contagious and meet all health guideline.
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Camp Check List

- Lunch (no food requiring refrigeration)
- 2 Snacks
- Re-fillable water bottle
- Pillow
- Blanket
- Book for Rest and Relaxation
- Sunscreen
- Bug Spray
- Change of clothes
- Hat or cap for sun protection
- Hand sanitizer
- Required medication (given to staff per policy)

Swim Days (also include)

- Swimsuits
 - Boys' swim shorts should be an appropriate length (mid-thigh or longer). Girls' swimsuits should be a one-piece or tankini style.
- Towel
- Flip flops or slides
- Change of clothes
- Sunscreen

Label all your children's items.