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Reply to: Columbia

March 31, 2017

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CAMP
ADDRESS
CITY, STATE ZIP

Re: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Summer Camps

Dear Camp Administrator:

As the summer holiday draws near, we know you are making plans for terrific programs that enrich the experience for our children as they develop into the leaders of tomorrow. Enclosed you will find a bulletin developed by the Department of Justice and the U.S. Attorney's Office here in South Carolina regarding the applicability of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to summer camps. The bulletin is provided as part of our focus on ensuring that all children have access to the camp experience, which as you know such can be such an important catalyst in youth development. The bulletin outlines the provisions of the ADA that require summer camps (both private and those run by municipalities) to make reasonable modification to enable campers with disabilities to participate fully in all camp programs and activities, unless the camp can demonstrate that the necessary modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the services and activities offered by the camp. This generally means that children with disabilities are entitled to attend any camp and/or participate in any activity that non-disabled children enjoy, that camps must evaluate each child on an individual basis, and that camps must train their staff in the requirements of the ADA.

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns. We hope you and your campers have a safe and enjoyable experience this and every summer. We thank you for your dedication to your work and to raising the next generation!

Sincerely,

BETH C. DRAKE
United States Attorney

By: *Robert Sneed*
Robert Sneed
Assistant United States Attorney



SUMMER CAMPS AND THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

U.S. Attorney's Office
District of South Carolina

March 2017

Summer Fun for Children of All Abilities

Children with learning, mental health, or physical disabilities have the right to attend summer camp alongside their peers without disabilities and cannot be denied admission or full participation due to their disability.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that summer camps (both private and those run by towns or municipalities) provide reasonable modifications of their policies, practices, and procedures when necessary to enable campers with disabilities to participate fully in camp programs, unless the camp can demonstrate that the necessary modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the services and activities offered by the camp.

Helpful tips for summer camps:

- *A camp may not impose eligibility criteria for participation in its programs, services, or activities that either screen out or tend to screen out persons with disabilities, unless it can show that such requirements are necessary for the provision of the service, program, or activity.*
- *Camps may not exclude children based on disability and must evaluate each child individually.*
- *The ADA prohibits unnecessary inquiries into the existence of a disability. A camp's questionnaires and medical documentation requirements as to a child's ability to participate in various camp activities must be tied to ensuring safe participation in camp activities. The camp, however, may not use this information to screen out children with disabilities from admittance to the camp.*
- *Parents cannot be required to pay the cost of the reasonable modifications necessary for their child to fully participate in all camp activities.*
- *Camps should train staff in the requirements of the ADA.*
- *When necessary, camps must train staff to administer daily medicines required by campers with disabilities, such as insulin (via pump or shots) and emergency medications, such as Glucagon and Diastat, just as they do for the proper use of Epi-Pens, and oral medicines.*

Pool Questions: Please see DOJ ADA 2010 Revised Requirements: Accessible Pools—Accessible Means of Entry and Exit https://www.ada.gov/pools_2010.htm; DOJ FAQ's re Accessibility Requirements for Existing Swimming Pools At Hotels And Other Public Accommodations https://www.ada.gov/qa_existingpools_titleIII.htm

The U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of South Carolina are committed to enforcing the ADA. This bulletin contains only a short summary of legal rights and obligations under the ADA.

For more information, check out www.ada.gov

Contact: Department of Justice: ADA Information Line: 800-514-0301 (voice); 800-514-0383 (TTY); or the U.S. Attorney's Office Civil Rights Team: (803) 929-3000.