



## 2024 Residential Camper Handbook



### Welcome to Project O Camp!

We are thrilled you will be attending residential camp at Project O! Campers have been coming to summer camp at Project Oceanology for 50+ years. Many of our campers return every year (maybe you?). We are proud to continue this tradition and look forward to an amazing summer!

At camp, your days will be spent cruising the waters of Long Island Sound aboard our research vessels and skiffs. Campers will explore and study local environments like salt marshes and rocky intertidal zones. Under the guidance of professional marine scientists, campers will use oceanographic equipment, measure water quality parameters such as dissolved oxygen and salinity, and capture marine organisms using a variety of fishing nets. Campers will also examine organisms up close and conduct experiments in our laboratories. At the week's end, expect to be sun-soaked and sandy!

Our waterfront hostel on the beautiful Avery Point Campus will be your home away from home for the week (you can check out the photos and camp tour video on our website). Our hostel has 14 bunk rooms, and each bunk room has two sets of bunk beds for a maximum of four campers in each room. Two hostel floors have separate male and female bathrooms (and individual showers). We also have a gender-neutral single-occupant bathroom with a shower. Our enthusiastic and highly trained residential staff provide more than just 24-hour supervision: they carefully monitor the needs of individual campers, organize games and activities during breaks in the action, and lend their scientific expertise as they nurture camper enthusiasm for science. The University of Connecticut dining services provide meals in our onsite cafeteria, with careful attention to special dietary needs.

This handbook will help you and your family prepare for your week-long adventure, so please review it and get ready! It is split into three parts: Before Camp, During Camp, and Last Day of Camp. If you still have questions after reading through it, please either call us at 860.445.9007 or send us an email at [projecto@oceanology.org](mailto:projecto@oceanology.org)

### Camp Staff

- Licensed Captains operate our Coast Guard-inspected vessels
- Marine Educators are the Camp Directors with degrees in Marine Science or related fields.
- Summer Interns are college students in pursuit of a degree in related fields
- At least one licensed lifeguard per camp

As mandated by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood – Division of Licensing requirements:

- All camp staff are American Heart First Aid/CPR/AED certified
- All camp staff is certified in the self-administration of medication, and EpiPen
- All camp staff are certified mandated reporters
- Comprehensive background checks and drug tests are required of all staff
- Boat Captains and crew are also part of a random drug pool testing – per U.S. Coast Guard requirements
- Camp enrollment is capped at 32 students. Camp Staff/Student ratio is 1 staff to 8 campers
- Required as of 1/1/22; please refer to this link to review the [Ct Safe Sport Policy: Child Abuse Prevention](#)

## **Before Camp**

As soon as you complete the online camp registration, you will receive a confirmation email that contains a link to your online camp account and the required forms. These forms can also be found on our website: [www.oceanology.org/summer-camps](http://www.oceanology.org/summer-camps)

**Complete all required forms** and upload them into your camp account (Active Network) at least **30 days before camp check-in** (these forms must be reviewed and accepted by our camp directors well before the first day of camp)

***Promote behaviors that will help at camp. Wellness starts at home. Please ensure your camper arrives at camp healthy.***

## Packing for Camp - *Please do not bring valuables to camp*

### Required Items

- Backpack/Drawstring bag
- Bathing suit
- Beach towel(s)
- Sunscreen
- Refillable water bottle with name on it
- Water shoes (flip flops are not good water shoes)
- Sneakers/Closed-toe shoes for boat trips
- Socks
- Undergarments
- Long pants
- Shorts
- Tee shirts
- Sweatshirt/Jacket
- Sleepwear
- Bath/Shower towel(s)
- Toiletries
- Pillow
- Bedding (sleeping bag or bed linens (Twin XL) and blanket)

### Optional Items

Mask/Goggles  
Sunglasses  
Rain Gear  
Flashlight  
Hat  
Notebook  
Insect Repellent

***Please do not pack*** electronics of any kind (including smartwatches). If campers need a phone on check-out day, we will safely store the device until then (this should be arranged at check-in). If we see a device after check-in, it will be taken away and returned at check-out.

**Money is not needed at camp.** We do have a camp store, and campers will have an opportunity to make a purchase. We encourage store purchases to be paid for by the parent with a credit card over the phone or an online invoice. You will receive an email with our store items and procedure for payment ahead of your camper's arrival. If your camper brings money to camp, they can give it to our camp staff for safekeeping until needed. We are not responsible for lost or stolen money (or valuables) that are not held by camp staff.

### Medication

If you are bringing medication for your camper, please check these items before arriving at camp:

- The medication is in its original container with the original prescription label.  
*ex. Inhalers need to have the box with the prescription label*
- The medication is not expired or in a bottle with an old label that is expired.
- If the form from the doctor lists a specific brand of medication, a generic brand cannot be used as a substitute.
- It would be helpful to bring a copy of your medical administration papers.
- Each medication needs its own form and requires a Doctor's signature. Even **over-the-counter** medications such as Advil (Ibuprofen), Tylenol (Acetaminophen), Vitamins, etc., require a form with a Doctor's signature. Please call us if you are unsure if a form is required

**State law permits no exceptions, so please take the time to ensure each medication, container, and label is in order and matches the forms submitted.**

## **Summer Camp Meal Program**

Project O partners with UCONN Dining Services to provide meals for our campers. The menu aligns with meals that are offered at the University's cafeteria. UCONN Dining Services can meet the needs of campers with special diets and food allergies if they are clearly stated in your child's camp registration. Please review the registration to ensure the information you submitted when you registered for camp is still correct. If changes need to be made, please email us at [projecto@oceanology.org](mailto:projecto@oceanology.org) or notify the camp director at check-in.

Camp meals are not buffet-style. Meals are plated individually by the chef for each camper based on their dietary restrictions (i.e., if 6 campers are vegetarians, only 6 vegetarian meals are prepared. Someone who is not vegetarian might not be able to select the vegetarian meal if they don't like the day's entree). Salad is typically offered as an alternative entree for lunch and dinner. We have snacks on hand, though we do not consider that an acceptable meal option. If your child does not have specific dietary restrictions but is a selective eater, please have this conversation with them before they arrive at camp. If your camper is not eating an adequate number of meals during camp, then dismissal from the program is at the discretion of the Camp Director.

Meals are an important part of the camp experience. Our daily camp activities require your child to stay hydrated and refueled with three meals and snacks because most of our day occurs in the field. Project O provides snacks for campers between meals, and you are welcome to pack snacks for them as well. Contact us any time with concerns regarding your camper's dietary needs.

Our camp menu will be posted on the Camp FAQ page of our website for your review.

### **Guidelines for Dietary Restrictions**

UConn Dining Services must adhere to the dietary restrictions listed on the registration for the entire week of camp. Campers can't choose to eat something that has been listed as a dietary restriction, so it's important that your camper knows what has been stated on their registration.

**Special Diets** (i.e., dairy-free, gluten-free, vegetarian, vegan, pescatarian, etc.)

#### **Food Allergies:**

- Be precise when stating the allergy (i.e., Tree Nuts, Peanuts, All Nuts, Milk, Shellfish, etc.)
- Include the severity of the allergy (i.e., severe if ingested, airborne, non-life threatening)

**Food Sensitivity/Intolerances:** (i.e., lactose intolerant, wheat, nuts, soy, etc). Even if your camper can tolerate a small amount of their sensitivity, their meals will be altered to eliminate it from their diet.

# During Camp

## Arriving at Camp

Directions to Project Oceanology, 1084 Shennecossett Rd., Groton, CT 06340

- I-95 to Exit 87 (Rt. 349), the Clarence B. Sharp Highway
- Turn right at the second traffic light onto Rainville Ave
- Turn left at the next traffic light onto Benham Rd
- Straight on Benham Rd. approx. 1.7 miles to the UCONN Avery Point campus
- Enter via the main entrance and follow the small blue signs for Project Oceanology. Parking is available in Lot D. Please observe all posted parking rules.

## Camper Check-in on Sunday.

**Please double-check that you have all the necessary paperwork required for check-in**

Residential camps will check in at 3pm. When you arrive on Sunday afternoon, park in Lot D and proceed to the Project O front entrance.

The check-in process will take about an hour and include a brief presentation, a review of the required paperwork, and medication check-in, if applicable. Your camper will go to their assigned bunkroom with their gear during this time. You may accompany them to get settled if needed.

**Parents are asked not to use the hostel bathrooms. There are bathrooms located in the front lobby for parent use. Please access those bathrooms through the front door.**

If you arrive early, you can explore the UCONN Avery Point campus.

## How to reach your camper at camp

Email can be sent to your child at [camps@oceanology.org](mailto:camps@oceanology.org). Please put your child's name and the name of your child's camp (e.g., "Ocean Camp" or "Research Camp") in the subject line. Emails will be printed out and given to your child during meal times daily. Campers will be able to respond to parents during meal times under the supervision of a staff member.

### **US Postal Service**

Project Oceanology  
1084 Shennecossett Rd  
Groton, CT 06340

Attn: Child's name, Name of camp

### **Fax**

Our fax number is 860.449.8008

*Please put your child's name and the name of your child's camp on the cover letter*

### **Phone**

If you need to reach your camper during business hours, please call us at 860.445.9007. Please leave a message on the camp phone at extension x317 for non-emergency calls.

Messages will be checked in the morning and after dinner. Campers and staff spend most of their day on boats and exploring the shoreline, so we often don't return to the building until dinnertime.

In case of an emergency after hours, you can reach the Residential Supervisor from 9pm – 7am at 860.445.9007 x320. If there is no answer, please leave a message, and your call will be returned as soon as possible.



Campers may call home during the week if they request to do so. Calls home are usually made before bedtime. Parents should expect to hear from a Project O staff member first and then have an opportunity to talk to the camper. Please end the conversation with a Project O staff member.

If you have any questions, contact any of the Residential Camp staff; we will help in any way we can.

### **Camper Code of Conduct**

Honesty, Kindness, Responsibility, Respect, and Safety.

We expect all campers to demonstrate care, respect, and responsibility at all times; campers must also exhibit self-control and kindness and follow instructions. If a camper does not abide by these expectations, they will be asked to take responsibility for their actions as part of our “3 strikes” disciplinary protocol:

1. Verbal discussion with a counselor or camp director
2. If discussion is ignored and poor behavior/choices continue, a constructive plan for improvement will be created through discussion with the camper, parent/guardian, and camp director
3. If the behavior does not improve after implementing a constructive plan and discussion with the parent/guardian, they will be asked to leave camp without a tuition refund.

Please note any camper who exhibits behavior that is harmful to themselves or others, including but not limited to bullying, theft, dishonesty, disrespectful actions, or language, can be dismissed without our “3 strikes” disciplinary protocol. Camp Administrators assume the right to determine when such an incident has occurred.

Campers need to bring any issues to a Project O staff member as soon as possible to resolve problems swiftly.

### **Enrollment conditions that were agreed upon when you registered for Camp**

1. Project Oceanology is not responsible for articles of clothing or personal belongings lost or damaged by any means. Campers should not bring valuables such as expensive jewelry, cameras, radios, cell phones, tablets, or laptops to camp.
2. The possession or use of tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, or unlawful drugs at Project Oceanology is strictly prohibited. Any camper violating this rule will be subject to immediate dismissal.
3. Project Oceanology supports using social media to engage campers, their families, teachers, and the general public in furthering its mission to nurture enthusiasm for science and our planet’s marine environment. However, **cell phones are not permitted at camp**. Misusing social media, such as engaging in inappropriate or disrespectful behaviors/posts/pictures or any other online activities intended to harm another person physically or emotionally, is prohibited at Project Oceanology. Any camper violating this rule will be subject to immediate dismissal from camp.

# **Last Day of Camp**

## **Camper Check-out on Friday**

Please arrive for check-out at 3pm (see the schedule by camp below). When you arrive on Friday afternoon, park in Lot D. The Project Oceanology building will open at 3pm for check-out to begin. Campers should already have their personal belongings outside. Please do not drive away with your camper until they are signed out of camp and our staff has confirmed that you are on the approved pick-up list. A parent/guardian must pick up and sign for the return of any medications before departing.

### **Ocean Camp-**

3:00-3:30 Check Out

### **Marine Science Research Experience-**

3:00-3:30 Camper Poster Session in the cafeteria

3:30-4:00 Check Out

### **Camper Poster Session**

The Poster Session is an opportunity for camp families to engage with research campers by walking around to each poster to learn about their research projects, ask questions and acknowledge their accomplishments. Campers will be stationed at their poster to answer questions and share about the research project they've worked on all week. Formal presentations were recorded before the poster session. Those videos will be included with the camp photo album.

If you cannot adhere to the pickup schedule, please call our office at 860.445.9007 as soon as possible to discuss alternative arrangements.

### **Parent Feedback**

Please share your feedback with us! Expect an email invite after camp to complete a survey. Your thoughts and comments help us make our residential camps better each year.

If your camper is the recipient of tuition assistance, please be sure your child shares their camp experience with us in writing (via email or mail) within a week after they have attended camp. This information will be shared anonymously with the grantors and/or private donors who made the assistance possible.

### **Camper Photos**

Camp parents will receive a link to Google Photos at the beginning of the week to view photos taken of the camp experience throughout the entire week. These photos will not include any camper with a written request on file not to be photographed.

## A Typical Day at Residential Camp

<u>Ocean Camp</u>			<u>Research Camp</u>	
7:30 AM	Wake Up		7:30 AM	Wake up
8:00 AM	Breakfast		8:00 AM	Breakfast
9:00 AM	Marine Science Expedition aboard research vessel		8:30 AM	Meet with research partners & mentors, gather equipment, create sampling schedule
12:00 PM	Lunch		9:00 AM	Collect data in the field for research projects aboard our fleet of skiffs
1:00 PM	Barrier Beach Exploration by skiff		12:00 PM	Lunch
5:00 PM	Return to Project O for group games		1:00 PM	Pine Island and Bluff Point by skiff for seining survey
6:00 PM	Dinner		4:00 PM	Meet with mentors; process samples in laboratory; enter data
7:00 PM	Evening Lab: Plankton Exploration		5:00 PM	Lab meeting: share experiences and troubleshoot experiments
9:00 PM	Free Time		6:00 PM	Dinner
10:00 PM	Lights Out		7:00 PM	Evening Lab: Fish Printing
			9:00 PM	Free Time
			10:00 PM	Lights out



## Illness at Camp

### ***Your child will be sent home if:***

1. They develop a fever, diarrhea and/or vomiting
2. They test positive for Covid
3. The camp director feels they are too ill to remain at camp (they are not actively participating in camp activities)

- If a camper has a fever, diarrhea, and/or vomiting while at camp, they will need to go home. They will be isolated from the group and supervised by camp staff. The family will be contacted to arrange camper pick up as soon as possible.
- In addition, camp directors will use their discretion to determine if a camper is too ill to remain at camp due to illness of any kind.
- If Covid symptoms are present, a Covid test will be self-administered. Symptoms are:
  - Fever or chills
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Fatigue
  - Muscle or body aches
  - Diarrhea
  - Headache
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Sore throat
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Nausea or vomiting

If the test is negative, the camper can resume camp activities. A second test will be self-administered again in 24 hours.

If a camper tests positive for Covid, they will be isolated and supervised by camp staff. The family will be contacted to arrange camper pick up as soon as possible.

