



DAY CAMPER HANDBOOK



Welcome to Project O Camp!

We are thrilled you will attend day camp at Project O! Campers have been coming to summer day 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 end of the week, expect to be sun-soaked and sandy!

This handbook will help you and your family prepare for your week-long adventure, so please review it and get ready! If you still have questions after reading through it, send us an email at projecto@oceanology.org

Camp Staff

- Licensed Captains operate Coast Guard-inspected vessels.
- Marine Educators are the Camp Directors and have degrees in Marine Science or 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 are 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 24 students with 1 camp director and 1 or more camp staff
- Required as of 1/1/22, please refer to this link to review the [Ct Safe Sport Policy: Child Abuse Prevention](#)

BEFORE CAMP

Once you have registered for camp, you will receive a confirmation email containing a link to your online camp account and forms that must be completed well before camp. These forms can also be found on our website: www.oceanology.org/summer-camps

Complete all required health 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

- Bathing suit
- Beach towel
- Sunscreen
- Refillable water bottle with name on it
- Water shoes (flip flops are not good water shoes)
- Dry shoes to change into
- Dry clothes to change into
- Sweatshirt or long sleeves for lab time

Optional Items

Sunglasses
Rain Gear
Hat
Notebook
Insect Repellent

Medication

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

- The medication is in its original container that has 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.
- The medication should remain at camp for the duration of the week to avoid the daily transfer of medication between home and camp

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 Lunch Program

Project O partners with UCONN Dining Services to provide lunch for our campers. The menu aligns with the meals that are offered to our residential campers. There will be one or more days when campers will be in the field during lunch. On those days, a "to-go" lunch will be a sandwich choice (turkey, ham, or hummus) or salad.

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 or notify the camp director at check-in. 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 you prefer to pack your camper's lunch each day, please opt out of our lunch program by sending us an email as soon as possible. Our camp menu is posted on the Camp FAQ's page of our website for your review.

DURING CAMP

Arriving at Camp

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

- I-95 to Exit 87 (Rt. 349), 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 second entrance and follow the small blue signs for Project Oceanology

Camp Hours

8:30am - 4:00pm Monday- Friday

Morning Check-in

- ***The first day (Monday) typically takes longer, so please be patient as everyone goes through the process for the first time.***
- Check-in will take place around the circle adjacent to the Project O building. Please remain in line as ***each camper is checked in from their vehicle and pull up accordingly to the next available Project O staff member.***
- Please have medication ready for **Monday check-in** if applicable.

It's important to note that campers cannot be "dropped off." The daily wellness screening outlined below requires parents and campers to remain in their vehicles until our camp staff clears the camper to attend camp. Camp staff cannot check in campers before 8:30am daily.

- The first car in line will begin the check-in process. Please be patient and remain in your vehicle. All campers will be screened for any observable illness, including cough or respiratory distress. This screening process will take place in the vehicle each day.
- ***Please be mindful of the side road between the Project O and Marine Science buildings. As you pull up in line for check-in, be sure to keep that space clear.***
- Once all the campers have been checked in, they will head to their indoor or outdoor classroom (depending on the weather).

Afternoon Pick-Up (Monday-Friday)

Afternoon "curbside" pick-up at 4:00pm will take place at the same location where the camper was dropped off in the morning. All parents/caregivers will be asked to remain in their vehicle until their turn in line.

A Project O camp staff member will ask for a photo ID and confirm that the person is listed as authorized to transport before the camper is released. Please note that additional people can be added to the authorized transportation list before pick-up.

Running Late or Absent

If a camper will arrive late or miss a day of camp, please call Project O at 860.445.9007 or email one of the Camp Directors as soon as possible:

Ocean Explorer Academy Camp:

- Marissa Gustafson mgustafson@oceanology.org

Undersea Technology Camp:

- Debbie Sayer dsayer@oceanology.org

How to reach your camper while they are at camp

If you need to reach your camper during the day, please call the Project O main office at 860.445.9007, and staff will help you get a message to our camp right away. All camp staff carry personal cell phones.

A Typical Day at Ocean Explorer Academy Camp

8:30	Check-in
9:00-9:15	Stow personal gear, gather science gear for the day
9:15-12:15	Habitat exploration by skiff or research vessel
12:15-1:15	Lunch in the field
1:15-3:00	Art project or science experiment in an outdoor classroom setting
3:00-4:00	Team building/Group games
4:00	Check out

A Typical Day at Undersea Technology Camp

8:30	Check-in
8:45-9:30	Build/Modify SeaPerch ROV for Bottom Retrieval Challenge
9:30-10:00	Complete Bottom Retrieval Challenge from docks in the harbor
10:00-12:30	Ride skiffs to local sandy beach: Beach Clean-up, Seining
12:30-1:00	Lunch in the field
1:00-2:30	Current Drogue Study and Erosion Engineering Challenge
2:30-3:30	Return to Project O, Clean up
3:30-4:00	Group Games/Science Notebooks
4:00	Check out

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, s/he 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 behavior does not improve after implementing a constructive plan and discussion with the parent/guardian, s/he will be asked to leave camp without a refund of tuition.

Please note any camper who exhibits behavior that is harmful to themselves or to 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. The same applies to any camper found possessing or using alcohol, illegal drugs, or weapons.

It is important for campers to bring their concerns to a Project O staff member as soon as possible so that problems can be resolved swiftly.

Parent Feedback

Please share your feedback with us! Expect an email containing a survey about your camper’s experience. Your thoughts and comments help us make our day camps better each year.

Camper Photos

The photos taken throughout the week will be shared via email with Google Photos. These photos will not include any camper with a written request on file not to be photographed.

Promoting behaviors that will help at camp

Wellness starts at home. Campers eating healthy, exercising, getting adequate sleep, and finding time to unwind before arriving at camp ensure they are fit and ready for the camp experience.

Illness at Camp

If a camper has a fever, diarrhea, and/or vomiting, they 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. Camper must remain at home until 24 hours have passed with no fever, diarrhea, and/or vomiting (without the use of medication).

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, the camper will need to take a Covid test at home:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

If the test is negative, camper must remain at home until 24 hours have passed with no fever, diarrhea, and/or vomiting (without the use of medication) and other symptoms above must be greatly improved.