



JENSEN BEACH, FL  
772-334-SURF (7873)

## **COUNSELOR GUIDELINES**

*Posted for prospective Counselors and Camp Parents alike, these guidelines are lengthy but contain information that is crucial for all Camp staff members to understand and abide by.*

*If there is anything included about which you have question, please contact us at 772-334-7873. It is important that all points are clearly interpreted.*

## **PHILOSOPHY OF COWABUNGA CAMPS**

At Cowabunga Camps, our main goal is to ensure that **every** Camper, **every** day is treated and feels like a rock star; that they are respected and esteemed, that they leave at the end of each day having had the best day of their life, and that no matter what personal troubles they may have, all is temporarily forgotten in the activities and fun we provide. As an added benefit, Campers learn the skills that help them enjoy and appreciate watersports on Florida's Treasure Coast, certainly with safety as the main priority. This philosophy is the basis and mainstay of all that we do and all that we expect from each and every staff member at Cowabunga Camps.

## **COUNSELOR RESPONSIBILITY**

As a Counselor, you are the most important ingredient for a successful Camp. Your major responsibility is to supervise a group of Campers and provide a safe, fun, and exciting Camp experience.

Your duties as a Counselor should be taken extremely seriously. Your primary goal will be to know where each of your Campers are at all times and ensure their complete safety. The needs and safety of the Campers in all situations must be considered from the time the Campers arrive at Camp until they are released to their parents or guardians.

Beyond that, Counselor responsibility involves listening, sharing, guiding, and advising Campers and helping them to adjust to new situations, giving encouragement, and caring about each Camper as an individual. Great regard must be taken not to esteem one Camper over another.

You will never be asked to discipline a child for misbehavior, but always to encourage participation and acceptable behavior. All discipline will be handled by the Camp Manager or Camp Administrator. Likewise, all medical needs and emergencies must be directed immediately to the Camp Manager or Camp Administrator, no matter how small or insignificant they might appear.

## **STANDARDS & EXPECTATIONS**

The Cowabunga Company and Cowabunga Surf & Watersports Camp is a family operation and we invite you, as a hired Counselor, to be a part of it. We operate our Camp as a family, and expect everyone to work together, to respect the philosophies and standards of the Camp, and to follow the rules and guidelines as outlined in this document, as well as those presented at any other time and for any other reason.

Each Counselor must demonstrate an interest in the Camp traditions, ideals, events and activities, as well as in the Campers, their needs, undertakings and special challenges. We expect you to respect and support the Camp management, the other Counselors and the Camp equipment and our investment in it, treating it as your own or better. Counselors will be held responsible for missing equipment or equipment damaged due to mishandling.

Each Counselor will set the tone and be an example for Campers by actively and enthusiastically participating in all Camp activities, abiding by all Camp rules and regulations. Likewise, they must ensure that all Campers are treated equally and fairly and are involved in all Camp activities.

At The Cowabunga Company, our goal is to provide a welcoming environment for people of all ages and backgrounds. We always must be sure that we are positive and encouraging role models, especially to the many children that come through our Camp. We hold ourselves and each member of our our staff to high standards of modesty in behavior, speech, and dress.

Swearing, "off color" speech, or inappropriate joking will not be tolerated. This includes slang terms that may be acceptable to teens or adults, but could possibly be offensive to parents within earshot of their children (i.e. "suck", "stupid", "freaking", etc.). Be aware and discerning of how and what you speak. You WILL be an example, and we expect you to be dedicated to being a good one.

All information regarding Campers and their families (including that voluntarily shared by Campers themselves) shall be kept **strictly confidential** and may not be shared with anyone within or without the Camp setting except for the Camp Manager or Camp Administrator.

We are extremely protective of our campers well-being and camp experience as well as of our reputation and standards. We would hope and expect you, as a Counselor, to be more loyal to Cowabunga Company than to another Counselor who is not upholding our expectations. In this regard, any communication between you and Camp Management will be kept strictly confidential.

## **BACKGROUND CHECKS / FINGERPRINTING**

As stated in the Camp Staff Application, you must authorize The Cowabunga Company to conduct a criminal background check. As a state mandate, all childcare workers also must be fingerprinted. The Cowabunga Company will pay for all background and fingerprinting services.

Any and all accusations or convictions, arrests, violations, job terminations or other legal or professional action taken against you must be fully disclosed upon signing this agreement. If your background history reveals behavior or actions that make you unable to work at Cowabunga Surf Camp and that information has not been disclosed to us, a non-disclosure fee of **\$250** will be charged to you/your parents to reimburse us for time and charges.

## **PRE-CAMP COUNSELOR TRAINING**

Each Counselor is expected to attend the Cowabunga Surf and Watersports Camp Training and Pizza Get Together. Attendance is mandatory. Counselors will be notified of training dates and times upon hiring and no later than April 15.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA REQUIREMENTS**

Each Counselor's activities and dress during off-hours must either be above reproach or kept private. We won't tell you how to live your life, but public knowledge of activities or lifestyle choices that are not in keeping with our philosophies and standards or that are illegal (including underage drinking) will be grounds for termination without pay. Your friends are not the only ones checking your social media! Campers and their families want to know more about who is caring for their children, and they WILL refer to all avenues of social media to find out.

If you have social media pages, your posts, and those shared or posted to your page by your friends or those whom you follow, must be completely G-rated and acceptable to the most conservative family of a 5-year old child. Likewise, if you have pages on which you are not active, please monitor them as well for unexpected posts by others. If you have any question about what is or is not acceptable, it is most advisable to ask us before a parent comments to us about something on your page(s).

If you do not think you will be able to uphold our social media standards, please make your social media pages completely private from the time you sign our Agreement until September 1, well after camp has ended. Regardless of your site status, Cowabunga Surf Camp Directors and Administrators require access to all Counselor social media pages.

## **CAMPER CONTACT**

Under no circumstances is any counselor to contact any camper by phone, by photo, by text, by email, or through any means of social or personal media. Such contact is grounds for immediate termination.

Furthermore, if a camper of any age requests to follow you on any of your social media pages, The Cowabunga Company requires that you deny the request. Accepting these requests is grounds for immediate termination.

Between the start date of Camp and August 31 each year, ALL requests by a camp parent or family member for babysitting, childcare, or any other service concerning a Cowabunga camper must first be made to the Camp Director or Camp Administrator. If a parent approaches you personally for this purpose, please direct them to the Camp administration.

## **COUNSELOR ATTENDANCE**

Counselors are to arrive at the Camp location **ready to work** Mondays at 8:00 a.m. and Tuesdays through Fridays at 8:30 a.m.; every day ending no later than 3:30 p.m. on each of the Camp weeks for which they are hired. Daily, a small staff will be retained and paid an additional amount to work from approximately 12:00 to 1:15 p.m. to help with lunch and beach security. Other staff members will be given this time period off as unpaid, personal time. It is important to note, however, that if this time period is abused by late returns to the property or by attitudes and actions not in accordance with The Cowabunga Company philosophies, all Counselors will be required to remain on the property during that time for no additional pay.

Counselor attendance is crucial to the safety of the Campers and to a positive Camp environment. If you commit to working a week of camp, **we expect you to be there!!** Requests for planned absences must be submitted in writing to CowabungCoFI@gmail.com by May 15. Unforeseen absences (other than illness) must be **requested in writing** to the same email address **at least two weeks in advance**. Counselors will not be paid for days not worked.

**\*\* All medical or other personal appointments must be scheduled outside Camp hours.\*\***

Counselors are hired by Cowabunga Surf and Watersports Camp based on estimated staffing needs for the upcoming summer. If for any reason and at any time the Camp requires fewer staff members than it currently projects, we reserve the right to temporarily or permanently dismiss Counselors without pay. In this case, Counselors will be given at least 5 days notice prior to the week they are scheduled to work.

If an Act of God or a national or local emergency prevents Camp from being presented as planned for any length of time, The Cowabunga Company will be released from compensating Counselors for time missed due to the close of Camp.

## **CAMP DRESS**

Ladies will be required to purchase a swimwear bottom as chosen by Cowabunga Camp Administrators, to be worn each day of Camp. With purchase, one identical swimwear bottom will be supplied free of charge. These are to be worn each day of camp. A modest, secure, full coverage swimwear top of your choice may be worn.

Guys will be required to purchase a pair of swim trunks or board shorts, as chosen by Cowabunga Camp Administrators. With purchase, one identical pair will be supplied free of charge. These are to be worn each day of camp.

Camp rash guards will be supplied free-of-charge at the beginning of the Camp season. All Counselors must wear the supplied Camp rash guard at all times during Camp hours. If a Camp rash guard is lost, misplaced, forgotten, or stained/torn beyond wearability, another must be purchased for \$35.00. Camp rash guards are mandatory for all Camp participants each and every day.

## **LUNCHES / DRINKS**

Counselors may choose to bring their own lunch Monday through Friday, keeping in mind that no refrigeration will be available on site, or they may purchase lunch at local area restaurants. Counselors are released at 12:00 noon and are expected to return to the camp location no later than 1:15 each day to ready Campers and the camp site for dismissal or for their afternoon session. As above, if this time period is abused by late returns to the property or by attitudes and actions not in accordance with The Cowabunga Company philosophies, all Counselors will be required to remain on the property during that time for no additional pay.

The lunch period is the ONLY time a Counselor may use his or her cell phone for any purpose unless personally and specifically permitted by the Camp Director or Camp Administrator. Likewise, The Cowabunga Company will not be responsible for loss or theft or damage of any Counselor's personal equipment or belongings.

## **COMPENSATION**

Compensation will be based on Counselor experience. Returning Counselors will be compensated at a higher rate than those who are new to Cowabunga Surf and Watersports Camp. Rate of compensation will be discussed privately with each Counselor, recorded and agreed upon prior to the final signing of the employment contract by all parties.

Counselors will be compensated on a weekly basis as an independent contractor and as such, will have no taxes taken from their paychecks. Please be sure to personally budget for any income taxes that will be due on your Income Tax Return. Furthermore, consult your/your parent's accountant for tax deductions allowed as an Independent Contractor, especially if you have additional income during the year.

Payments will be made by direct deposit to a personal checking or savings account no later than the Friday following the week worked. For this, we will need the following documents: A completed W-9 form (supplied), a signed Direct Deposit Authorization Form (supplied), a blank, voided personal check.

## **ADDITIONAL INCOME OPPORTUNITIES**

Childcare will be offered, as requested by parents, from 3:15 to 5:15 pm on Camp days. Counselors hired by The Cowabunga Company to supervise this childcare will be paid \$10/hour.

Special events, private surf lessons, and a variety of Camp site projects will arise throughout the summer months and beyond. Camp Counselors will be hired for these opportunities based upon their work ethic, attitudes, enthusiasm, and skill level. Compensation for special staffing will be discussed prior to hiring.

## INSURANCE

Because Counselors work part time for a maximum of 10 weeks of the year, The Cowabunga Company expects each to carry their own health and general liability insurance.

## COUNSELOR / EMPLOYEE ALCOHOL and/or DRUG USE

In the event that any employee or Camp Counselor's attitude, demeanor, or behavior causes question regarding the use or abuse of illegal or legal drugs, respectively, putting at risk the safety of the The Cowabunga Company Campers, the goals of its Camp, or the reputation, philosophies, and overall mission of the Camp or its business in general, the owners of 4 Joy Ventures d/b/a The Cowabunga Company reserve the right to require immediate and random drug testing either by on-site or professional methods. Positive test results are grounds for immediate termination **without pay**.

However, if an employee or surf camp counselor chooses a lifestyle inconsistent with the mission, goals, and philosophies of The Cowabunga Company causing potential harm to its campers, its reputation, or to its business in general, it is much preferred that the employee or surf camp counselor take proactive measures to relinquish his or her position in consideration of lifestyle choices.

## COUNSELOR DISMISSAL / TERMINATION

A Counselor may be dismissed (temporarily or permanently) if physical condition, service, conduct, attitude, influence, or (as above) lifestyle choice is deemed unsatisfactory or detrimental to the best interests of the Camp or its Campers. In such cases, no notice must be given by Cowabunga Surf and Watersports Camp and the Counselor will be paid only for full days worked during the week of his/her dismissal. Such payment will be at the discretion of the Camp Director and Administrator and is dependent upon each individual situation.

Late arrival to Camp, unexcused absences and/or numerous absences, will be grounds for dismissal. All are detrimental to the successful functioning of the Camp and, more importantly, to the safety of the Campers.

If a Counselor must terminate his/her own employment prior to the end of the Camp season, Cowabunga Surf and Watersports Camp must be given at least two (2) full Camp week's notice.

## GRATUITIES

Camp Counselors may not personally accept gratuities or any other payment from Campers or their parents/guardians or family members. Any gratuities offered must be given to the Camp Manager or Camp Administrator to be managed appropriately, usually divided among the entire team of Counselors.

This requirement is waived if the Counselor, under the direction of The Cowabunga Company, provides water sport lessons or activities outside of the Camp setting.

## NON-COMPETE

Each Counselor must agree not to compete with Cowabunga Surf and Watersports Camp by owning, operating, or managing a similar surf camp program or any and all competitor surf camps within a 35 mile radius of Cowabunga Surf and Watersports Camp for a period of 18 months after termination, unless documented by the Camp Manager in a legal, signed agreement.

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