Family Camping FAQ’s

Are you looking for an adventurous and exciting weekend for your family this summer? Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois is opening our camps to all Girl Scouts and their families to create their own unique outdoor fun! Families will be able to rent an individual sleeping quarter at all four of our camping properties: Camp Dean (Big Rock, IL), Camp McCormick (Stillman Valley, IL), Camp Far Horizons (Hanover, IL), and Mary Ann Beebe Center (Harvard, IL). Please read the information below on expected guidelines before making a reservation.

Does my girl need to be a registered Girl Scout to attend camp?

Yes. This opportunity is for registered Girl Scouts and their immediate families. One family member must be a registered member. All members of the household (excluding pets) are welcome to attend! To comply with The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) and Illinois Department of Public Health’s (IDPH) standards, only one household per tent or cabin.

GSNI camps will not be open to the public. All camps are gated and for all campers’ safety, all gates will remain closed outside of scheduled check-in and check-out times. No visitors will be allowed to enter camp properties. Once arriving on property, families will not be able to travel off-site and return throughout the day.

Will camp staff be at camp?

GSNI Rangers and Outdoor Program Managers will be on site to monitor and assist in emergencies. All families are expected to provide their own activities and entertainment throughout the day. Familiar faces around GSNI, including council and previous resident camp staff, may visit as attendees but are not considered camp staff for the event.

What are GSNI’s rules and expectations of families?

- All families will practice social distancing with others on camp property. This includes:
  - Family units are classified as a single household. All reservations should be for a single household only.
  - Family units limit intermingling with others. Families should not enter others’ sleeping quarters.
  - Wearing a mask when within 6 feet of others.
  - Follow sanitation guidelines and clean surfaces after use.
  - Once arriving on property, families will remain on-site until check-out.
- No running on any camp property.
• Adult supervision is always required, especially near ponds and streams.
• Quiet time for all camps is 10 p.m.–6 a.m.
• No guests may visit during duration of stay at camp.
• Recycling: separate recyclable items and place in recycling containers. Other garbage needs to be placed in garbage cans.
• Do not approach wild animals. Notify the ranger or GSNI Outdoor Program Managers of the presence of any nuisance animals.
• Do not pick flowers, break branches from trees or bushes, or dig holes in the ground.
• Do not remove furnishings or equipment from within or around units.
• All buildings (excluding latrines) will be closed and off-limits.
• The Ranger's house and yard are considered a private residence and are not available for camper use. If assistance is needed for an emergency, please contact the Ranger or GSNI Outdoor Program Managers on call. This information will be posted at each site.
• A Girl Scout leaves a place cleaner than she found it, and all families will follow basic sanitation guidelines to help maintain a clean and safe camp for all.
• Families are responsible for providing their own activities and entertainment.
• Families will provide their own food, charcoal, and must store food items in their own coolers. Refrigerators are not available for use.
• Families will give a minimum of 3-day notice of reservation cancellations.

**Prohibited on Camp Properties of Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois**

• Pets
• Alcohol and drugs of any sort. This includes marijuana.
• Firearms, ammunition, air rifles, or other weapons
• Explosives and fireworks of any kind (including sparklers)
• Large fires (bonfires). All fires should always be supervised by an adult and limited in size for cooking and minimal environmental impact.
• Lighter fluid. Charcoal grills must be started with charcoal chimneys, fire starters (melted candles, wax paper, or crayons), or wood fires.
• Any type of smoking which includes cigarettes, vaping, and e-cigarettes - smoking is only allowed in the parking lots and out of view of all campers. Please dispose of cigarette butts properly. **WARNING:** Do not smoke in the composting toilets. This is highly combustible. In composting toilets, a cigarette can ignite a bed of air-dried wood chips.
• Transporting people in the bed of a pick-up truck
• Disposal of sanitary supplies in latrines
• Rearranging beds in buildings or tent units
• Removing sleeping mats from buildings or tent units
• House Trailers and RVs
• Electrical appliances are prohibited. There is no electricity in units.
Cancellations and Refunds

If a session or event does not meet the minimum registration as of the deadline date, GSNI reserves the right to cancel. Notice will be made by email. REFUND PROCEDURE: A full refund of the fee (including deposit) is made ONLY if a participant can’t be placed in the event of her choice or if it is necessary for GSNI to cancel an event.

A $50 deposit is collected in case of any damage done to campsite or property. This deposit is refundable only if no damage is found by GSNI Camp Rangers and GSNI Outdoor Program Managers.

No refunds will be made for campers arriving late, leaving early, attending only part of the program, or for those who fail to attend. Contact Customer Care at customercare@girlscoutsni.org or 1-844-476-4463 within 72 hours if your family needs to cancel.

What if the weather is bad?

Camp is open rain or shine! Families must be prepared to spend time outdoors, regardless of weather. If severe weather or extreme heat is anticipated during your reservation, GSNI may cancel all reservations for that weekend.

When is check-in and check-out?

Families can check in with Rangers or GSNI Outdoor Program Managers at 4 p.m. Check-out is at 11 a.m.

Where do I check in and how do I check out?

At Camp Dean, once you have entered the camp, park your vehicle in the main parking lot, and head to Foxes Den to check in.

At Camp McCormick, you will park your vehicle in the main park lot located near the Welcome Center. A staff member will meet you outside to check in.

At Mary Ann Beebe Center (MABC), a staff member will meet you at the main parking lot near the ranger’s house before you get to the gate.

At Camp Far Horizons, a staff member will meet you outside Tamarack Lodge.

What are the sleeping arrangements?

A "unit" refers to a large clearing or space that houses a collection of tents or other sleeping arrangements. Each unit offers between 6–8 cabins or tents. Latrines are available at each unit, and each family will have an assigned cooking area (including fire scar and table) outside their tent. Families will be assigned units by the Outdoor Program Managers and will be included in confirmation emails one week prior to registration.

In order to comply with the CDC, IDPH, and American Camp Association (ACA) current guidelines, no buildings (excluding latrines) will be open. Please note that no unit has electricity available. Families will need to provide and store their own food. Families will be provided with a fire scar and will need to provide their own outdoor cooking equipment. To
comply with CDC, ACA, and IDPH’s current guidelines, pavilions and unit boxes will not be available. Families must bring their own Dutch ovens, pie irons, roasting forks, and propane stoves, as well as mixing bowls, spatulas, measuring cups, etc.

At Camp Dean, campers sleep in cabins - a small, enclosed one-room house with bunk beds. There are two sizes of cabins – 4-person cabins with 2 bunk beds and 8-person cabins with 4 bunk beds for families of 5 or more. There is light within the cabin but no other electricity. Mattresses and cleaning equipment will be provided in each cabin.

At Camp McCormick and Camp Far Horizons, campers stay in platform tents. These tents have a wood floor off the ground, a roof overhead, and canvas walls. Each tent holds 4 campers in single beds. Camp McCormick also has the option of Adirondacks (platform with 3 wood walls and one canvas side), which holds 6 campers in bunk beds. Mattresses and cleaning equipment will be provided in each tent.

Mary Ann Beebe Center offers two units of Adirondacks. However, these hold 4 campers only. Yurts (large huts) are available for larger families and hold up to 6 campers. No furniture and mattresses are provided at MABC, and families must bring their own sleeping mattresses.

Primitive or personal tent camping will also be available at all camps.

**What unit will we be reserving?**

All family camp reservations will be assigned by our Outdoor Program Team and included in reservation confirmation email one week prior to reservation. Confirmation emails will also include codes to enter the gates located at Camp Dean and Mary Ann Beebe Center.

**What if my household size is 5 or more?**

To comply with ACA and IDPH’s guidelines, tents cannot exceed a capacity of 4 beds. Families of 5 or more can reserve larger sleeping arrangements (larger cabins at Camp Dean, yurts at MABC, and Adirondacks at Camp McCormick). Families may also reserve more than one sleeping accommodation if necessary or pitch their own tents.

**What activities will be available at camp?**

In order to comply with CDC, ACA, and IDPH’s guidelines, only certain self-led activities will be available. Families are responsible for their own activities and entertainment. Some activities available include:

- Trail hiking
- Star gazing
- Geocaching
- Gaga ball
- Fishing (families provide own equipment)

Facilitated activities, such as archery, crate stacking, and zip line (at Mary Ann Beebe Center only) can be booked for a fee at time of registration.
Families will be able to purchase a Lead Your Own Adventure pack which will include but not be limited to various hikes, games, outdoor activities, and crafts. Lead Your Own Adventure packs must be purchased in advance, and you can do so when making your reservation!