

April 15, 2003 - Emergency Medical Care Facilities, Background Screening, Insurance Rates, Allergies and Medications, New Safety Brochures

Emergency Medical Care Facilities

You should have received notice about not being able to use the Beutel Student Health Center for Camp emergency medical care. This is NOT due to Beutel being unwilling to provide emergency care but rather due to a piece of Federal legislation that would require very burdensome processes of Beutel if camps continued to use that facility.

Each camp should have selected an emergency care provider and provided contact information for that provider with the camp/enrichment program application. If you have a need for emergency medical care, at the time that you transport the student with you or in the ambulance, please carry with you a copy of the letter that you mailed to the emergency care facility you selected for your camp. This should be the same facility that you listed on your application. Your letter will include the policy number and billing information that the emergency care facility will need.

Unless our policy changes this year, the information in the sample letter is up to date. IF the policy information changes I will send you a notice of the information to take with you in the event of an emergency. If you forget your letter you can access the information from any computer (including from the hospital) by going to the Summer Camp website. As soon as the policy is confirmed for this camp season I will update the website with that information if need be. (There will be a separate section under the "forms button " where medical care providers can locate the information they need to process claims at <http://camps.tamu.edu/119999m101findx.htm>.) Please do not have bills sent to you nor to my office as we would then fall back under the same federal legislation that we were trying to avoid by moving emergency care services from Beutel. If the emergency care facility has questions about the policy you can direct them to me and I will assist them. I have made arrangements with both the College Station Med Center and St. Joseph's Hospital so that they are aware of the changes in our process. Like any new system, this year may help us learn better how to operate in the future but for now both of those facilities request that whomever accompanies the camper to the hospital have the information on the emergency medical policy that is in place for that camp. Since Third Party camps will not be on the university policy they should NOT use the number on the Website rather they should use their own insurance policy numbers. I will make an effort to contact all of the emergency medical facilities listed on the camp applications to make arrangements similar to those with the College Station Med Center and St. Joseph's Hospital. Please contact me via e-mail with any questions or concerns you have regarding emergency medical care arrangements at <mailto:kchavis@tamu.edu>

Background Screening

I commented at our recent training meetings that background screening might be a requirement at some point...that day has come. While I am still trying to ferret out what level of screening will be required at this point, let me fill you in on what I know. The President has directed that "all staff, counselors and other adults operating these camps" will be screened. The results of the survey I conducted recently show that all but 1% of camps that responded (we had an 82% response rate) are doing some form of screening. Some camps are screening grades but nothing related to background screening. At this point I am understanding that background screening can be several levels of effort...person interviews, reference checks, Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) (you may access this service through the Human Resources Department), or the Registered Sex Offender Data bases (links on the camp site are to the Texas register but the last link in that grouping will give you access to data bases in each state. This may be helpful if you are using staff or volunteers from outside of the State of Texas. Even if you use the DPS criminal history screening through Human Resources you may still want to access these other databases for non-Texans because DPS and the Texas Sex Offender registry will only report Texas offenses). If you use DPS checks through Human Resources please appreciate that Human Resources is providing a service to camps and this is an additional demand on their staff, therefore please submit your staff and volunteer information as soon as your hires are confirmed, especially for larger camps or programs. I have worked with the Office of General Counsel to devise a form for the purpose of conducting background screening. You will find that form on the Camp website under the "forms" button at <http://camps.tamu.edu/Forms/BackgroundCheckForm.doc>. I will also provide, on the website, directions on how to use the DPS service through Human Resources. It will be under the first link under the Safety Awareness button under the heading "assistance in Personnel Screening " at <http://rules.tamu.edu/guide/rs/119999m1rs/safetyguide.htm>. These instructions should be posted within the next week. Please examine your background screening processes. If you did not respond to the survey, OR if you received a call from me indicating that your screening process may need a little more substance, please send me a summary of the screening process for your program. I do not need to see each background check result but you will need to retain these in your records in the event that you are audited and are asked to produce evidence that you have screened as required. The Camp Rule and SAP are being revised (one more time :)) to include this requirement. I will need to have a summary of how you are screening before I can send your applications forward for approval. If you have not provided that information please put this on your "to do" list.

While I am on the subject of background screening I'm working on getting information together for your use to provide support to staff or volunteers if such information would be helpful to your camp. Some of your camps are overnight or have activities that would lead toward adults being isolated with a camper. I will try to find literature that you can use as a guide to protect not only your campers but also possibly your staff as well from allegations or misunderstandings. I'll see if I can get some information to you on general rules of thumb such

as conducting bed checks in 2 person teams and so on again, I'll see if I can find some literature on this that can be available for your use.

Insurance rates

Many of you have asked about insurance rates for the 2003 camp season.

To date I have heard nothing that indicates our rates will be higher than last year. I will send a notice via this medium as soon as I hear anything more about rates. Reminder, you will receive an ESTIMATE of your insurance costs when your application is processed. Once your camp has concluded you MUST submit a listing of your participants and a final count of participants (if you are insuring staff who are not University employees you need to indicate that as well since this will affect your bill). Once the roster and a headcount are submitted you will be sent a bill for insurance costs. You will have 5 working days to review this bill. After 5 days we will make the deduction from the account indicated on the application. Some Third Party camps will not have account therefore the bill submitted will need to be paid via check or some other form of payment. Since Third Party Camps are not insured on the TAMU plan I do not need a roaster of participants in those cases, just a head count will do.

Allergies and Medications

If you have not already done so you might consider providing a means for parents to inform you of special care needs for their child. Such things as severe food or medicine allergies, or prescribed medication that needs to be administered to a camper might be some of the information collected by a camp. Keep in mind that you probably do not want to collect this information in advance when competitive selection is used or where space in a camp is limited. If you take all comers you may be okay to get this information up front but if there is any chance you might have to refuse to accept a child it is MUCH better to have made that refusal BEFORE you received any special needs information. We would NEVER want medical issues to be confused as being factors in the selection process. A good practice might be to select the campers and THEN get information about special needs. If medication is to be administered be certain that you have arranged for security of the medication, that someone knows when and how to administer it, and that the medication dosage and frequency is given as it is prescribed.

New Safety Brochures for your Campers

I have worked to develop two new safety brochures that camps may distribute to participants... one is on "stranger danger" (for lack of a better title). I am still working on the title so I'm open to suggestions for something more positive. The second brochure is on Fire safety. Many of our campers will experience their first overnight stay in a dorm or without Mom or Dad at a camp. Dorm housing is considerably different from their home settings. The brochure

includes basic fire safety for high-rise structures. The content was developed in conjunction with the College Station Fire Department. If there are items that you feel could enhance either of these publications please feel free to send me an e-mail. These brochures are still in draft form and should be available on the camp website soon. They will be formatted to be printed on legal size paper, front and back, and folded into a brochure for distribution. The same information formatted to fit a regular single page will be available as well.

Sorry this is such a long note. I'll try to keep the rest shorter there were a number of items to cover this time. I'll let you know more as it develops about insurance rates and background screening.

It's ALREADY April!!! Camp Season is just around the corner. Have fun! K