

El Cerrito Camp Ravencliff 2023 Parent Handbook



RETURNING TO THE RIVER, 2023!

We look forward to our 21st summer in beautiful Humboldt County along the South Fork of the Eel River. At Camp Ravencliff, campers and teen leaders get to enjoy the great outdoors among redwood trees and stars and participate in activities that include canoeing, sports, crafts, performing arts, friendship and team building, self-reflection, and so much more. Our staff are an incredible group of talented, caring, and fun people, many of whom are past Ravencliff campers and teen leaders themselves. Prior to the first day of camp, staff participate in rigorous training that covers such topics as camp safety, group development, camper/teen needs and camp programs and objectives.

EL CERRITO CAMP RAVENCLIFF 2023 SUMMER CAMP SESSIONS

For **Campers** Entering Grades 4 – 9

Session One: Wednesday, July 26 – Sunday, July 30 (5 days, 4 nights)

Session Two: Sunday, July 30 – Saturday, August 5 (7 days, 6 nights)

Campers are welcome to join both sessions! Please note that you will have to register for each session separately. Campers will stay at camp on Sunday, July 30 (they do not have to return home and then go back up).

Teen Leadership Program (CITs & TILTs) for Entering Grades 10 – 12

Wednesday, July 26 – Saturday, August 5 (11 days, 10 nights)

Teens are required to stay for both sessions.

CONTACT INFORMATION

City of El Cerrito Recreation Department
7007 Moeser Lane, El Cerrito, CA 94530
(510) 559 7000 • recreation@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

REGISTRATION INFORMATION & FORMS

Registration: Registration is a two-step process and includes:

- Registering at www.el-cerrito.org/onlineereg including payment of camp fees.
 - Registration opens Wed, 2/15 at 9am. Please note that Camp Ravencliff registrations are NOT ELIGIBLE for the 10% discount.
- Completing the [Registration JotForm](#). This form includes camper information such as emergency contact information, photo, and other important information. A link will be included in your registration receipt as well as on our website www.el-cerrito.org/eccampravenciff.
 - *JotForms must be turned in within one week of registration. If not received by **6/26/2023**, your child may forfeit their spot in camp. Please note these forms must be completed all at once (you cannot save progress or come back later).*

Fees: Camp fees are listed as El Cerrito Resident and Non-Resident rates. To qualify for Resident rates, you must reside in El Cerrito city limits (94530 zip code).

- Session 1 Camper \$600 RES/ \$720 NRES
- Session 2 Camper \$800 RES/ \$960 NRES
- Teen Program \$890 RES/ \$1068 NRES

Camp fees are paid via credit card and can be paid in full or by opting for the deposit only option. Those choosing the deposit option will be required to pay via credit card a \$150.00 deposit per camper. The remaining camp balance, for both sessions, will be automatically debited from the same credit or debit card on Monday, July 3, 2023. The card must have an expiration date of 08/2023 or later.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarship information can be found online: [David Hunter Memorial Scholarship Fund](#). Additional scholarships are available through a donation from the [Friends of Ravencliff](#). Please apply for scholarships prior to registering. Visit www.el-cerrito.org/eccampravenciff for more information.

CANCELLATIONS

Cancellations and transfers will not be granted for non-attendance.

Cancellations **before Friday, May 12th** will have a \$50 cancellation fee.

Cancellations **between Saturday, May 12th and Sunday, June 2nd**: \$150 (deposit amount) will be forfeited; camp fees will be refunded.

Cancellation **on or after Monday, July 3rd**: if camper/teen's spot is not filled by the start of camp, no refund will be given. If the spot is filled, deposit and 50% of camp fees will be forfeited and remaining fees refunded.

COVID-19 CANCELLATIONS

While the El Cerrito Recreation Department will do what we can to make the camp environment as safe as possible, families are reminded that the possibility of COVID-19 transmission cannot be eliminated. Case rates as well as Health Orders, guidelines, and vaccination/testing requirements from State and County authorities are subject to change at any time. Families will not be eligible for a refund outside of our cancellation policy due to such changes.

If a camper tests positive prior to camp (supported by a doctor's note or copy of positive test result) and is prevented from attending camp due to isolation requirements, a refund will be provided less than the \$50 cancellation fee. If a child tests positive while at camp and is sent home, they will NOT be eligible for a refund.

COVID-19 HEALTHY & SAFETY

While at camp, our team will continue to follow COVID-19 guidelines established by the CDC and CDPH, as well as local agencies if applicable. As COVID-19 case rates and protocols are subject to change, please note that our related policies are subject to change at any time as well. If circumstances and guidance related to operating summer camp evolve, our plans may also shift accordingly. We will update enrolled families about the pre-camp health & safety protocols once they are finalized for 2023. Changes and updates will be indicated in **red text** in this document. The information below provides an idea of what families can expect.

SUBJECT TO CHANGE

BEFORE CAMP: Campers and staff will be required to be fully vaccinated to attend camp. As part of the [Jotform Registration Form](#) for camp you'll be required to upload proof of vaccination (and available boosters).

All campers will be required to take a pre-Camp PCR COVID-19 test 3-5 days before departure and provide proof of negative results the morning of departure. Any child or staff who develops COVID-19 symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19 during the 3-5 days before camp begins should contact us immediately to determine if they will be able to attend Camp.

Campers will be required to take an at-home rapid test the morning of departure. Parents should be prepared to present a time-stamped photo of their camper/teen's negative test prior to boarding the bus to camp (photo on your cellphone).

AT CAMP: Our team will implement a consistent and layered use of multiple prevention strategies to help reduce the possibility of COVID-19 including limiting the amount of time indoors, sporadic testing as well as testing when someone expresses or exhibits symptoms, and more frequent handwashing and sanitizing.

SICK CAMPER POLICY: If a camper tests positive for or shows symptoms of COVID-19, parents/guardians, or other authorized adult, **MUST** be available to come pick them up from camp **immediately** within 4 to 12 hours.

MORE HEALTH & SAFETY

FIRST AID, ACCIDENTS, AND INJURY: A Camp Nurse will be onsite the full duration camp and be the primary person responsible for responding to illness, injuries, accidents, and administering first aid (though all staff will be trained in CPR and first aid). The Camp Nurse will have a variety of over-the-counter medications available for single ailments such as antacids, antihistamines, antibacterial ointments, hydrocortisone, pain/fever medicine (acetaminophen, aspirin, or ibuprofen), etc. Parents must authorize administration of these as part of the Registration JotForm.

Camp staff will treat bumps, bruises, scrapes, and other minor injuries. More serious illnesses or injuries may require our staff to transport campers/teens to the local hospital or to contact Emergency Medical Services. Parents will be notified as soon as possible in the event of serious injury. Should a medical emergency arise, City staff, or such substitute as the Camp Director may designate, may need to act as an agent to consent to camper x-ray examination, anesthetic, medical, or surgical diagnosis or treatment, and dental or hospital care on the advice of a physician, surgeon, or dentist licensed under the provisions of the Medical Practice Act or Dental Practice Act. Please note the City does not pay the cost of ambulance or medical services and does not provide accident insurance for campers. Any costs related to these services must be assumed by the parent/guardian and/or their health plan.

MEDICATION AT CAMP: All medications must be turned in to the camp nurse or their designee when campers/teens are checked in at the buses before departing for camp. Please do not pack any medications, including non-prescription medications or vitamins, in your child's luggage. All medication containers (prescription and non) must be put in a sealed Ziploc bag with your child's name and age clearly labeled. Medications are usually dispensed at mealtimes and/or right before bed by the Camp Nurse. If your child needs medications at other times, please clearly mark it on the Medication Form (part of the JotForm).

Prescription medication must be in the original container with the child's name and dosage information. Medications prescribed to other people cannot and will not be administered to campers/teens. We cannot dispense medications not in the original packaging or prescribed to a different name.

Non-prescription medication must be in original packaging with camper/teen's name and clear instructions included on the medication form and with the medication. The Camp Nurse cannot dispense more medication than is indicated on the label without a doctor's instruction.

If your child takes medication and you are considering taking them off those medications while they are at camp, please consult your doctor and provide necessary information on your paperwork. Similarly, many children are more active at camp than in their average daily lives and may require medication adjustment as a result.

HEALTHY BEGINNINGS: Sending an ill camper/teen to camp jeopardizes the health of the entire camp. As such, camper/teens are not allowed to board the bus or attend camp if they are ill or have been exposed to anyone with flu-like symptoms in the past 48 hours, regardless of COVID-19 test result. Please adhere to this policy for the health of everyone at camp!

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING: All staff at El Cerrito Camp Ravencliff are mandated reporters. If there is an accusation of child abuse, camp staff and the Camp Director will take prompt and immediate action following State reporting procedures. The City of El Cerrito Recreation Department will file reports in accordance with relevant state and local requirements and staff will cooperate to the extent of the law with any legal authority involved.

CAMP WELLNESS: We are committed to providing quality experience for our campers and teens. Our programs encourage interpersonal skills, appreciation of the environment, and experiencing outdoor activities. Our focus is creating a positive and nurturing environment for all. If there is anything about your camper or teen we should know or that might help us better give them the experience we aim for, you are encouraged to include that information on the application or via email to Taylor Melton at tmelton@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us (please do so at least two weeks prior to camp as staff will head up early for training).

IMPORTANT CAMP POLICIES

BEHAVIOR & DISMISSAL POLICY: Attending Camp Ravencliff is a privilege that you have chosen for your child. All campers/teens and a guardian must sign the Liability, Medical Release, and Indemnity Agreement for Minors portion of the JotForm indicating they will abide by camp rules. We ask that you discuss these topics with your camper/teen when you have them sign the form. We also clearly outline expectations at camp upon arrival and reiterate throughout the session. Camp staff strive to provide an environment that supports positive behavior management through a combination of setting boundaries, reminders, and providing encouragement. Staff understand that each camper is different, and inappropriate behavior can be lessened using a range of guidance techniques. The most common methods used at camp include:

- Diverting campers and redirecting the child to a new or modified activity
- Recalling rules to internalize positive behavior
- Resolving conflicts by problem-solving and discussion
- Providing a related, age-appropriate consequence to the situation

Campers must not verbally or physically abuse or hurt themselves, staff, or other children, or cause an unsafe situation/environment for themselves or others. This includes but is not limited to:

- Deliberate mistreatment of or using threatening language towards self, staff, or others in the program
- Uncooperative, abusive behavior (physically or verbally) towards staff
- Deliberate misuse of equipment, materials, and destruction/damage of property
- Leaving activity areas, camp sites or program locations without authorization
- Bringing dangerous or illegal objects to camp including, but not limited to, weapons of any kind, drugs, alcohol, smoking devices, and marijuana/CBD products
- Engaging in sexual activity
- Refusal to comply with health & safety protocols

If we find that we are unable to redirect your camper/teen's behavior, we may contact you for assistance. Camper/teens who cannot abide by the rules, or who are adversely affecting the experiences of other camper/teens, may be dismissed without refund and at the expense of their guardians. Disciplinary steps may not be sequential and one severe act, as determined by one of the Camp Directors, may lead to immediate dismissal from the program(s). We do not take this decision lightly, and it is a rare occurrence. Please also make sure your camper/teen knows that belongings may be searched, at the discretion of the Camp Director, if theft or other suspicious activities are in question.

DRESS CODE: Please send typical play clothes with your camper/teen- the kind that you don't mind losing or getting very dirty! All items should be clearly labeled with the camper's name.

Layers are recommended as it can get very hot during the day and chilly at night! Lightweight breathable fabrics are recommended for the daytime, and please keep in mind that higher necklines, sleeves, and longer shorts can be great for sun protection. A packing list is included in this handbook to help prepare your baggage before camp!

Clothing should cover cleavage, midriff, chest, and buttocks; undergarments should be covered and not visible. Apparel that depicts illegal substances, profanity, or other offensive language is prohibited. Shorts should extend to the end of the fingertips. Camper/teens will be asked to change clothes if what they are wearing is deemed inappropriate by staff.

EMERGENCY CONTACT(S): It is vital that you provide contact information for at least 3 people we can contact who could assist with a camper/teen illness, injury, or the unlikely event your camper/teen is dismissed from camp and you are unreachable. If you are planning to be out of town at any time during your camper/teen's stay, please arrange pick-up contingencies in advance and make sure contact numbers are current on your forms.

EARLY PICK-UP: Parents/guardians must be available for, or arrange for, their child's return transportation home whenever the Camp Director deems it necessary. Pick-up must happen on the same day if parent is contacted before 4pm and by 10am the next day if notified after 4pm.

LIFE AT CAMP

CABINS: A cabin group generally consists of 8 campers, 1 adult counselor and 1 teen CIT (Counselor in Training). Campers will be grouped into cabins by age. Please indicate on your JotForm Registration form if you have a friend you would like to be paired with. Every effort will be made to accommodate pairs or small groups, but it is not guaranteed. Large groups of five or more friends will likely not be placed in the same cabin. Also, friends of different ages may or may not be placed together depending on the circumstances and general ages of campers. If your child has a close friend who is two or more years apart in age, please prepare them for the fact that they may not be in the same cabin. Not attending with a friend? No problem! Staff will help campers quickly bond with their cabin mates.

GENDER IDENTITY: Camp Ravencliff is an inclusive camp welcoming all youth. On your registration JotForm we ask for a preferred name and preferred gender pronouns. If you and your camper wish to share that information with us and/or have requests (for example: bunk/cabin assignment) please add that information to your form. You may also email the Camp Director (Jenya Jawad jvawad@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us).

ACTIVITIES: Each day campers will enjoy several "Activity Periods." Camp staff will present a list of activities available during that period, and campers have the freedom to choose which activity they want to participate in. Examples of popular activities include hiking the creek, canoe dodge ball, tie-dye, Capture the Flag, lazy river, nature hike, friendship bracelet making, and blackberry picking.

"Free" periods are also offered during the day where campers can move between well supervised areas of camp (like free swim, yard games, or crafts) or they can hang out with friends in designated, supervised areas. Campers also spend bonding time with their cabins during "Cabin Activities" to get to know each other and grow as a group with conversations and activities led by their counselor and CIT. Trying new things is a huge component of camp and we encourage everyone to step outside of their comfort zone. Camp is a safe and positive environment to experience something new.

FOOD: Our Chef and Assistant Chefs take pride in the meals they provide. If your camper/teen has dietary restrictions or allergies, please note them on their Health History Form. Due to preparing meals for large groups of people, campers/teens need to be willing to eat the meals at camp to maintain enough energy for the week.

COMMUNICATON: Campers/teens are not allowed to have cell phones. The ability to contact home can be distracting, lead to homesickness, and can reduce cabin and camper connection. Instead, we encourage you to send letters, postcards, and/or care-packages via post. We can only receive mail through the U.S. Post Office and the post office is only open Mon-Fri. UPS/FedEx are not able to deliver directly to us.

Hot Tip! *Send a letter to your camper/teen 2 days before they depart so it arrives by the first mail day! And remember to leave the electronics at home. It's the best way to set your camper/teen up for a successful integration into camp life.*

Please note there is little to no cell phone reception at camp. Further, there is absolutely no opportunity for charging of any electronics. Your camper/teen bringing their phone, tablet, or other electronics may cause unnecessary issues within their cabin, among campers/teens, or otherwise. If camp staff see a phone out, they may remove it and keep it in the main office until the end of camp. We are not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

CARE PACKAGES

Campers may receive care packages at camp using the Camp Mailing Address below. Please be mindful of items being sent to campers in care packages as well as the volume of items being sent. Food, candy, snacks, etc. cannot be stored for more than a couple of days and sharing those items amongst the campers isn't recommended. Please note the Recreation Department is not responsible for any packages delayed by USPS or not received at the Redway Post Office prior to the last day of camp.

El Cerrito Camp Ravencliff

Attn: <Camper/Teen Name>

PO Box 2249, Redway, CA 95560

Hot Tip! If you are looking for ideas of what to send your camper, see our list of popular and approved items. Please do not send items to camp until at least 1-3 before the departure date.

LOST AND FOUND: Lost and found is available for camper/teens to check daily and is displayed on the last day of camp. Please label your camper/teen's clothing. After camp, unclaimed lost and found will be donated within 2 weeks of return date. Please do not send valuables to camp!

List of Approved/Popular Care Package Items and Ideas

- Cards or other small games, toys
- Love notes from home
- Stationery for them to write to you
- Mad libs or comic books
- Extra toiletries or other supplies
- Books
- Self-addressed stamped -envelopes
- Stationery/note cards
- New Goggles
- New Sunglasses
- New water bottle
- Flashlight (don't forget the batteries!)
- Book light
- Books
- Magazines
- Comic Books
- Sketch books
- Battery operated fan (don't forget the batteries)
- Warm, fuzzy socks
- Glow in the dark bracelets and necklaces
- Glow Sticks
- Glow in the dark body paint
- Deck of cards
- Bubbles
- Temporary tattoos
- Wigs
- Small stuffed animal

HOMESICKNESS: For many campers/teens, sleepaway camp will be the longest time they've ever been away from home. Homesickness is common and expected in campers. Camp staff are trained in coaching campers through their experience, and we believe that overcoming the challenge of homesickness can be a hugely positive experience. We will contact and involve parents if significant homesickness does not improve, so again, 'no news is good news'! We know it's hard to be out of contact with your child, but a big part of the charm of camp is that the campers/teens have a sense of independence and freedom.

Hot Tip! Check out these tips to help prevent and address homesickness:

- Be enthusiastic: Talk about the exciting new experiences your child will have at camp. If your child has a sibling or friend who has been to camp, ask them to share their best memories. Describe potential challenges in a positive way.
- Practice: Have your child stay overnight at a relative or friend's house before camp starts to get used to the idea of being away from home. You can also help prepare by having your child practice using camp equipment like a flashlight, or let them pack their suitcase or backpack.
- Acknowledge feelings: Let your child know that missing home is okay. Reassure your child that it's ok to miss home, and that other kids and adults feel the same way sometimes. Let them know that they can still have fun though, even if they are sad.
- Encourage confidence: Encourage your child to stay at camp. Tell them you are proud of them and all of the things they will accomplish at camp including making new friends and trying new things. Camp helps kids develop independence and confidence.
- Don't make promises or bribes: Avoid the temptation to tell your child that you will let them come home early if they are homesick. Try to be reassuring first. Don't offer material objects in exchange for staying at camp. Also, don't promise that you'll come for your child if they are feeling homesick. Instead, help make a plan for what to do if this happens, such as who they can talk to or how to send letters.

- Pack personal items: Items from home like a stuffed animal or blanket can help comfort campers.
- Send mail: Campers love to get letters and packages. Write letters of encouragement and ask for letters in return. Ask questions about their favorite experiences so far to help keep their thoughts positive.

***Hot Tip!** Campers can often feel overwhelmed right at the start of camp and may express hesitancy or the desire to call or even return home. One technique staff may utilize is to encourage campers to write a letter home. If you receive a homesick letter near the start of camp, please don't be alarmed. This is common! Often, these are the very same campers who demonstrate so much growth and enthusiasm by the end of the session. When responding to homesick letters, we encourage you to do so with reassurance and strong focus on the positive.*

- Inform staff: Let the staff know if your child will celebrate a birthday or other milestone at camp. Doing something special for the campers might help cheer them up or take their mind off the fact that they're not at home celebrating with family.
- Be open to communication from the Directors: While most incidents of homesickness will pass in a day or two, research shows that about 7 percent of the cases are severe. If your child is not eating or sleeping, then it is time to go home. Camp staff will always communicate with parents/guardians in such cases. If it is in your child's best interest to return home early, focus on the positive and encourage your child to try camp again in the future if they are up to it.

FIRST & LAST DAY

TRANSPORTATION: Chartered buses will depart from the scheduled location, promptly at scheduled times, whether-or-not all campers/teens are present. PLEASE BE ON TIME! If you miss the bus your space will be forfeited, and the fee will not be refunded. We do not allow late drop-offs or early pickups. **Approximately two weeks prior to camp, you will receive an email with information about drop-off and pick-up times and location.**

There will be only one departure location, typically the El Cerrito Community Center at 7007 Moeser Lane, though this is subject to change. Campers will need to be brought to the departure location for transportation, even if coming from out of town.

DEPARTURE DAY: The morning we leave for camp, campers will meet at the designated location during the drop-off window. During this time, they will be marked present, check in with the Camp and/or City Staff to present proof of a negative COVID-19 tests (PCR from 3-5 days prior, and rapid from that morning) before boarding, as well as check-in any prescription AND over-the-counter medications.

On the way to camp, the bus will stop at a rest stop so that campers can eat lunch. Please make sure your camper/teen has a nut-free bag lunch and sturdy re-usable water bottle for the bus.

PICK-UP DAY: You will be provided with an estimated pick-up time along with the departure information. We ask families to understand that buses can experience unexpected traffic or other delays beyond our control. We do our best to post updates on our outgoing message recording at (510) 559-7001. We know your camper/teen will be excited to see you when the bus arrives!

Due to the location & access limitations, and because it is disruptive to the camp experience, we do not allow late drop-off or early pick-ups from camp.

WHAT TO PACK

LIMIT BAGGAGE TO 1 BAG/SUITCASE (*that your camper can carry*), 1 BACKPACK, AND SLEEPING BAG/BEDDING (*make sure pillows are secure inside to avoid being lost*).

CLEARLY LABEL ALL BELONGINGS

LIST OF ITEMS TO BRING

- Sleeping bag (or twin-size bed sheets and two blankets)
- Pillow (*make sure pillows are secure inside to avoid being lost*)
- Sturdy, reusable water bottle, x2
- Sunscreen, x2 (SPF 45 or higher recommended)
- Flashlight or battery powered Lantern (*with new batteries*)
- 2 swimsuits
- A few pairs of shorts
- A t-shirt for each day, plus a few extra (may go through more than one a day)
- Socks (lots! – more than one pair per day)
- Underwear (lots! - more than one pair per day)
- 2 Sweatshirts (can be chilly at night and in the morning)
- Pajamas or comfy clothes for sleeping
- 2 pairs of pants (mornings and evenings get cool)
- 2 pairs of closed-toe shoes (closed-toe athletic/tennis shoes, and closed-toe sandals/water shoes)
- Toiletries: shampoo, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste
- 2 Towels (one for showering, one for the river)
- Any needed medication: See Medical Form for instructions
- Personal care items (i.e., feminine hygiene products, contact lens needs, etc.)
- Hat or cap

OPTIONAL/SUGGESTED ITEMS (These might be fun additions, but they are not necessary for enjoying camp)

- Writing Materials
- Envelopes & Stamps (*Hot Tip! Have envelopes pre-stamped and addressed so all your camper has to do is write the letter!*)
- Book(s)
- Journal
- Sunglasses
- Disposable Camera
- Plain, light-colored clothes to tie-dye

LIST OF THINGS NOT TO BRING

- Flip flops or any type of shoes with no back (sandals with a sturdy back strap are okay). *For safety reasons, campers are not permitted to wear flip-flops at camp. If campers do not have alternative footwear, shoes will be purchased at parent/guardian's expense.*
- Electronic Equipment: Phones, iPods, MP3 players, video games, cell phones or other devices are not permitted at Camp. Digital cameras are discouraged, a disposable camera is recommended.
- Water Guns or other 'toys'
- Matches/Lighters, etc.
- Cash (money will not be needed at any point during camp)
- Food, drinks, candy, or gum*
**Exceptions: nut-free lunch for the bus ride up; snacks and treats sent in care packages okay but will be kept in safe place (not in cabin) and accessible at only certain times of the day.*

THE FOLLOWING ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED

- Knives, lighters, matches or weapons
- Drugs or drug paraphernalia
- Other dangerous or inappropriate items
- Alcohol
- Cigarettes and tobacco; Vape Pens