

Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council  
Google Meet Meeting  
Thursday, April 15, 2025  
Minutes

Name	Representation	Attendance
Allison Abbondante	Camp Owner/Manager-For Profit	Present
Cassandra Casey	Camp Owner/Manager	Present
Dr. Jasmin Whitfield	Maryland Department of Health	Present
Anne Irwin	Camp Owner/ACA Accredited.	Present
Ramona Riley-Bozier	Public	Present
Virgil Boysaw, Jr.	Local Health Department	Absent
Lellia Sheline	Camp Leader	Present
Ed Arellano	Local Health Department	Present
Dr. Nobin Ngozi Ogbonna	Camp Owner/Manager - Nonprofit	Present
Amy Schisler	National Camping Organization	Absent
Parker Bratton	National Camping Organization	Present

MDH Staff Present

Brian Flynn

Tylvia Koromah

Allison Abbondante, chair of Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council requested a motion to start meeting. Cassandra Casey and Jasmin Whitfield approved of the start meeting. Allison provided instructions for how all can participate in the meeting using the raised hand and the chat.

Council attendance: **Allison Abbondante**, works as the for-profit camp manager at Sandy Hill, which is in Cecil County. It's a residential camp. This is her last meeting as chair. She will remain an active member. She served two terms and her time is up. **Cassandra Casey** is the council's co-chair and a camp manager in a community college-based day camp in Carol County. **Lillia Sheline** is a camp director at Camp Greentop, which is a camp that services children and adults with disabilities in Maryland. **Anne Irwin** is a former camp director and a member of the council not affiliated with a summer camp. **Jasmin Whitfield** is a school health program manager at the Maryland Department Health, Maternal Child Health Bureau. **Ramona Riley-Bozier** is listed as public. She is not connected to a summer camp. **Parker Bratton** is an executive director of a nonprofit that provides kids opportunities to caddy at golf clubs and a program director at Leveling the Playing Field. **Ed Arellano** is the environmental health director for the Cecil County Health Department. Amy left word that she will not attend the meeting. Virgil was absent.

Allison requested approval for the agenda and February meeting minutes. Jasmin motion to approve the agenda and Lillia second the motion. Lilia motion to approve February minutes and Jasmin second.

**Update on open council positions/attendance:** Tylvia reported that there are 2 new appointments to be confirmed.

**Selection of YCSAC 2025-2026 Chair:** Allison stated that the council needs to elect a 2025-2026 chair. She has been fulfilling this role. The chair set the agenda, approved the minutes, and ran meetings in line with Robert's rules of order. In the past the council had a co-chair, which is an option. It is good in the event the chair is absent from the meeting. Cassandra nominated herself to chair. Allison asked if anyone wanted a chair with Cassandra. Someone from the public requested to chair. But the chair must be a council member. There were no objections to Cassandra's nominations and no nominations to co-chair from the council. Cassandra will start to chair in the October meeting. Congratulations.

**Continuing discussion of Medication Administration:** Allison stated for those who don't know, this is currently an annual thing that all people who want to administer medications must go through. The council is looking at having a recertification course for people who have taken it before, that may be a little bit cost effective. Obviously not for this summer, something probably for 2026. Cassandra reported that it was her understanding that they have been greenlighted for the concept of doing this and the materials that were made are on their way to the office which need to be approved. Dr. Cliff Mitchell, who was at this meeting, gave a response in agreement. Cassandra has been working on it for several years. It is a long process, and she will keep plugging on this until it gets done. Allison responded that this is great. It's long and arduous, but it's something that camps have been wanting and it's a great cost-effective tool. She thanked Cassandra for her efforts and all for the support, MDH people as well. Brian added that we thank all for their patience with our office on this. It's been a very busy legislative session.

**Allergy Action Plan Form Update:** Allison stated this is another optional form. It will be second as a medication administration form for the state of Maryland. Similar to the asthma action plan, this form will give a little bit more information to camps about specific allergens discovered or if a camper is having an allergic reaction. Brian reported that MDH has a draft that Greg has submitted and it's on Cliff's list of things to review. Cliff responded yes. Brian looks forward to getting a document to use. It looks like it will be ready for summer 2026. Allison commented that this topic is something to look forward to for the council's October meeting.

**Senate Bill 770 Update:** Brian reported that this bill required certain services to be available to kids at schools that had an incident where an adult, a teacher, administrator, or someone basically got in trouble for acting inappropriately in that setting. It was meant to have services available for the kids who have traumatic events in their lives. Added to this bill, a council was to be created to look into background checks for a number of things of which were youth camps. We had some issues with the bill and the bill did not make it in committee. We don't have to worry about it until next year. A link to the bill was in chat. Megan (Public) Requested for the three-medication form. The link to the form was in chat.

**FBI Background Check Updates:** Brian reported that he received word on April 3rd from the FBI that MDH has been approved to receive criminal histories. We went through a rather cumbersome process which included creating new legislation to legally allow us to get the FBI results for camp staff. We had been in a queue with the rest of the country to get this. The main question is when is this going to be implemented? There are a number of things that need to happen before it can take place. First, CJIS has to do some reprogramming in their system to stand it up on their end. There are discussions, specifically about this. No one had expected this to occur now. I've been in this meeting a number of times and said it doesn't look like it's happening this season because we hadn't heard anything and there was no indication that it was. We're going to be requesting that it happen after the season. We need to work through some details with CJIS with getting and assigning the results to the appropriate places.

Right now, the existing process is each camp has an assigned personnel administrator and that individual has to have their results vetted through our office because it's just one per camp and those positions do not turn over every season. It's something that we can handle without any additional buildout or infrastructure. Getting all the FBI's results for all your staff is a lot for us to handle how we presently operate. One of the big things is we can easily match up results for the personnel administrators to the camps because we're usually in contact with the PA and you've informed us that you want this done. Once the tap is turned off for camps and we start, it's turned on for us. We're going to start getting a bunch of results and inundated. We will need an identifier that indicates which camp these results are going to be going for. We also have another process that we can use which would allow camps to log in to our portal and indicate to us who they have sent to get background checked. We have two potential ways of actually solving that issue. We're waiting to have some additional discussions to figure out what is going to work best. Nothing's happened yet and we have made it clear that before it happens there needs to be proper information put out to the camps to understand what the new process is going to be and what to expect and how to operate it. The last thing I want to point out is this is only FBI criminal history. Youth camps will still be receiving the Maryland criminal history as well as the Child Protection Services (CPS). Those processes are not changing right now.

Cliff responded with an introduction. He is the director of the Environmental Health Bureau, and he welcomes and thanks all the council for their service to youth camps, the kids of Maryland, and on this council. He knows from personal experience that this is not easy to do. It's time out of your busy lives which are very very busy to work for the good of the youth camps and the kids of Maryland. He appreciates their giving of time so freely and their willingness to think about how they represent the entire industry and their voice towards making youth camps better.

As you all know, there are a lot of things happening with youth camps right now, particularly with respect to safety and criminal history checks and the focus of both the legislature and the public on child safety at youth camps. This bill was passed in 2023 originally, the departmental, which allows us to receive criminal history record checks. The FBI indicated to the state of Maryland that in fact the way criminal history record checks were being done, not just with

youth camps programs, but with many programs across the state had to change in order to conform to federal law. So as we are taking over the processing of those, it is because the federal government told the department of public safety and correctional services where CJIS is housed that only the authorized licensing authority can receive the actual criminal history record check from the FBI and they have to be the ones to determine whether or not it does or does not allow that employee to meet their conditions in order to have contact with children. The entire reason for this is because the federal government told us that this had to happen this way.

The second thing from the legislation is that we are looking at this not only for employees but for volunteers as well. Brian didn't mention that in detail, but this is one of the things that we are going to have to think about as well.

The third thing to note is we are not in control of this process. Ultimately the FBI and the criminal justice information system at the department of public safety and correctional services are in charge and we are at their mercy with respect to timing and roll out and other things. They have been very good at working with us. But we will and we are doing our utmost. We don't discuss this with the FBI directly. It is CJIS that directly communicates with the FBI and so we are somewhat at their mercy a little bit in terms of how this gets rolled out and what we do.

The final thing is this is one of a number of changes. I do want you to know and I know Brian has talked about this before that we will always be transparent with you and honest with you about how this is going because we do not want any surprises for you. So as you know we have new regulations that are in part necessitated by the fact that this program was not paid for by any statutory or governmental authorization. So, it means that it has to be self-sustaining. How that gets rolled out is in our regulations. But I don't want you to be surprised. I think you all recognize that the state budget and the legislature is looking to make sure that programs that are required can be paid for but often it is by the group that is benefiting from the program.

We will keep you informed, and you have an open door to Brian's door and my door. Cliff's and Brian's email were in the chat. But you should know that we are here to support the youth camps industry and our reason for doing all of this is to give the public greater assurance about the safety of their children while at camps because the legislature has told us to do so. He wants all to understand that this has attention at the highest level of the department. The secretary and deputy secretary are aware of all of this. They look forward to hearing from you in your annual report. You should definitely make sure as we progress that you let us know both the challenges and the things that are working. This is going to be a work in progress, and he promised that it will not be without probably a few bumps along the way and you need to let us know as those problems develop how it is that together we can solve them. So that's just a little bit of framing for Brian's discussion and to say thank you for all of your help.

Brian added that CJIS understands the position that MDH are in and this is not a good time to implement this during camp season. When the CPS background check was implemented that was a terrible rollout experience. It started off as a paper application that needed to be

notarized and sent in the first year or two of that implementation. Camps were not getting results for weeks and months or ever in some cases. We basically came up with a way to acknowledge that you were attempting to comply but were unable due to forces outside of your control. We did not hold this against you, which was an infraction technically under law. If worse comes to worse, we would probably be looking at something along those lines. **You will not be held liable if you are unable to comply.**

Allison thanked Brian and Cliff for giving a great background about the criminal background. She is one of them, in which staff will be arriving in less than a month. So, timing is ideal. If you need any help from the council in terms of letter testimonials, we're here to support you and as you are our voice for the powers at bay. Cliff responded yes, it is certainly within the council's prerogative to express a preference about when this happens. That doesn't mean it will happen then. But if the council wishes to make a motion related to its preference to see this rolled out after the current camp season, that is certainly something as an expression of sentiment from the camping community that we would put into a letter that we've been asked to submit to CJIS on its preference for timing. **He did not** want to tell the council how to proceed, but certainly if it wished to pass a motion or related to its preference for when this gets implemented, that certainly seems to me is something that we would take into account very seriously.

Allison added this to the new business because it would be great to get a decision for the council's preference.

**Public: Jazmyne Rogers:** She has a unique system where they have the childcare center and then the summer camp runs under its own license. Brian requested for her to send him an email and MDH will help.

**Public:** Do staff who were previously fingerprinted last summer need this for this summer? Brian responded if you still have their records, and it's not considered a break in employment you don't need to rescan them.

**Public:** Can someone clarify if the CPR first aid training still suffices for administering EpiPens or if staff need training in medical administrations for EpiPen? Brian responded that they are trained for that specifically.

**Public:** Can we request that when the new fingerprinting is rolled out, there's specific guidance for operating under a larger parent organization like independent schools or childcare centers? Brian responded absolutely. He imagines that MDH will have all kinds of information for you guys. The larger programs are one of the things that we have been specifically thinking about because it could have a lot of data input and certainly very difficult to keep track of everything.

**Public:** Nancy Adleman had a question regarding insulin administration for children with type 1 diabetes. Allison responded that she would put that in the new business discussion.

Public: What is the minimum age of volunteers for background check? Brian responded at 14 years of age.

### **New Business**

**Background Check Preferential Timing:** Allison requested that the council express a sentiment of our preferential timing for this new roll out to be summer 2025- 2026, given the fact that many of our staff arrive next month. She requested a unanimous response from members. All agreed. Cliff and Brian, you have a unanimous council vote that would like to express the sentiment of preferential timing to be summer 2026, and if you need a letter or something else too, happy to put that through as well. Of course. Cliff responded that he really appreciates that, and we will put that in the strongest possible terms. Ultimately, again, we don't control the timing. It's the FBI and CJIS that do. But very much we appreciate the feedback. and it's helpful. Brian agreed.

**Administering Medication:** Nancy Adleman, a parent stated that she has a child who's 5 years old with type 1 diabetes, who wears an insulin pump. She will be on spring break next week. Then obviously in the summer there will be a time when she is not in her preschool. She'll be starting kindergarten in the fall. We signed her up for a spring break camp and I have learned that the Maryland rules state that even with training for administering medication, no one who does not have a medical license can administer insulin. While I appreciate the concern about making sure that insulin is given appropriately, I think this creates an undue burden on parents, particularly those who are not able to attend to this medical need for their child. She is a professor on leave right now and is able to go and sit there all day for two snacks and lunch when her daughter needs to have insulin administered. But she worries about parents who don't have that flexibility and are not able to do that. I think that this makes it so that these children don't have reasonable accommodation. I know that they can self-administer, but my daughter's five. and obviously she can't read yet. She can't self-administer. She is trying to figure out the best way to essentially get something in place that's like what we have at schools where Maryland allows trained people who are not licensed to administer insulin, particularly for those who are on pumps where it's a lot easier to administer. They're not drawing insulin out of a vial into a needle and measuring it. The pump does most of the work. Right now, in my daughter's preschool, I'm just texting with them all the time and telling them how much to give her. So, I would be very interested in figuring out a way to allow trained individuals who are approved by the parent and the prescriber, to be able to give insulin to children who are too young to self-administer.

Cliff stated that he was sorry and introduced himself, the director of the Environmental Health Bureau. Nice to meet you and thank you both for your participation in the council and for this question. He gave a little history about this that will be helpful because he was partly responsible. He is a practicing physician, but not in pediatrician. There has been a specific discussion about insulin pumps in the past. In fact, back in 2021 when we were first talking about the regulations for medical technicians and certified medical technicians the question about insulin pumps came up and there is a specific chapter of the COMAR code of Maryland

regulations that deals with insulin under emergency and non-emergency situations and the challenge. At the time I was part of this decision, so I am partly responsible for this decision in looking at the regulations. It was clear that insulin administered through an insulin pump does not meet the criteria for emergency medication administration. It's routine. It requires titration and the regulations are specific about what is not or is allowed under emergency and non-emergency situations. So I will say at the time the decision was made, and I agree with the decision at that time because it was not emergency medication because it was not within scope of practice for CMTs that we would not recognize insulin pumps under the non-medical administration provisions of COMAR.

He continued with life evolve, technology evolves, training evolves, etc. and I'm certainly happy for us to examine this question, but I also do feel strongly, and I get that as a parent, parents are obviously very knowledgeable. I am concerned about some of the more sophisticated medical technology not overly relying on people who are not specifically trained for it. And this is where I think it is quite possible that with this kind of technology becoming more familiar, we are going to have to evolve our regulations. But that is going to be a thoughtful discussion. So right now, I think we have left the regulations as they are. He is willing to open to discussion and input from the council about this question. We would also have to include in this discussion school health, childcare, and others because our population crosses into both of those.

It is a complicated question and as much as we hope for a one-size fits-all answer, we need to make sure first and foremost that we are keeping kids safe and not exposing them to undue risk. This is an area where I think I'm perfectly willing to believe that we should look at those regulations again. But right now, the regulations are what they are.

Nancy responded that she appreciates the responses and definitely wants our children to be safe. She stated that the annotated Maryland code 7426.4 allows unlicensed school staff to administer insulin to children at school and in child care. It does seem a little bit misaligned that they can't do this in camps. and it makes it concerning particularly for parents who don't have the resources to essentially take off work and go and sit there all day. You're right, it's not an emergency medication, but my daughter can't eat until she has insulin.

Cliff responded that he gets it and the only thing he will say is that we have to consider the fact that we deal with a variety of youth camp environments that in some cases may be under-resourced compared with childcare with schools. And so we just want to make sure if we do evaluate this that we are looking at that entire spectrum of child care settings for youth camps which as you know we try to keep them as safe as possible but they obviously have some constraints that are different in some cases than child care and we want to be thoughtful about how to do this. Nancy added that she would not suggest anything less than what's required for any other standard medication training and all of that. But it does seem difficult for families that insulin is specifically excluded from this. Nancy added and it means theoretically my daughter can't go to camp until she is old enough to read and self-administer. So, then she would have to get childcare for her and that's just a lot.

Cliff responded that he gets her point and understands full well what that means for people with diabetes. And I want to say this, I really appreciate both the passion and the spirit in which you are approaching this, and he thanked her seriously. The whole point of the council and this forum is to bring forward this kind of challenge and to make youth camps better. And if we can get more kids to go to youth camp by doing that in a safe way, I am totally supportive. Nancy would love any kind of way that I can help move this along. She is happy to do this until it happens. So, if there's some way she can help or something somewhere she should be pushing, she would be happy to do that.

Cliff continued, no, you've done the pushing right here and I think it's very much appreciated. It is on me and Brian's radar, and we have a few other things obviously on the plate. But he promised that they would look at this. Nancy offered her contact information. Cliff's contact information was in the chat. Cliff added, he is not promising what the outcome is because he thinks that we do want to be thoughtful about it. But he promised that she is now here officially on the transcription, we're going to look at it. Nancy responded that she appreciated this and thanked you very much.

Allison responded thanks to Cliff for the thoughtful response. We will add this to the October meeting agenda so that we can continue this conversation and look at alignment between schools. I will say one of the biggest challenges that Cliff touched on is the spectrum of camps that we serve in Maryland. We have the week-long art camp that might have 20 campers, or you have a summer long residential camp with 500 plus campers a week. So, the regulations have to be applicable to all of those and feasible for all of those camps as well. Thank you for bringing your concern, Nancy, this is why we're here. Allison asked if there is any other new business from the members or the public?

Cliff had to leave for another meeting. He did tell all that he values them and how much the department appreciates the council and its active involvement with youth camps programs. Allison thanked Cliff. Cliff ended with thank you and please feel free any of you to reach out in the meantime if you have specific questions.

Allison announced there is a brief meeting on May 1st. It is open to the public because our meetings have to be open to the public, but there will be no new business at it. We're just going to be approving today's meeting minutes so that they can be posted online before the summer. No need to really attend that, but you're more than welcome if you want to see us approve meeting minutes. That will be Cassandra's first meeting as chair. Our first fall meeting is going to be October 9th at 10:00 a.m. Look for the link to go around. It's also posted on the Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council website and then December February 5th, and April 10th. So, I hope you all have a great summer.

Public: Is this recording going to be available? Allison responded that recordings are not available. But meeting minutes will be once they are approved, and they'll be posted online



Public: Question regarding application approval. Allison responded that Brian would contact you. She requested a motion to adjourn today's meeting. Cassandra gave a motion to adjourn, and Jasmin gave a second motion.

The meeting ended at 11:46.

Respectfully submitted by,

Tylvia E. Koromah, Secretary of CRCEHS  
Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council

And

Allison Abbondante, Chair  
Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council

Cassandra Casey, Co-Chair  
Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council

Approved by: Cassandra Casey and Jasmin Whitfield on May 1, 2025