

Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council

Google Meet Meeting
Thursday, February 06, 2025
Minutes

YCSAC Member Attendance

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.	Absent
Ramona Riley-Bozier	Public	Present
Virgil Boysaw, Jr.	Local Health Department	Absent
Lillia Sheline	Camp Leader	Absent
Ed Arellano	Local Health Department	Present
Dr. Nobin Ngozi Ogbonna	Camp Owner/Manager - Nonprofit	Present
Amy Schisler	National Camping Organization	Present
Parker Bratton	National Camping Organization	Absent

MDH Staff Present

Brian Flynn
Tylvia Koromah

Allison Abbondante, council chairperson, called the meeting to order 10:02am. The call to order was accepted by Amy Schisler and Jasmin Whitfield. The youth camp website link was available in the chat.

Allison requested council attendance and introductions. She is a camp manager for profit in Sandy Hill camp in northeast Maryland and chairs the council. This is her sixth and final year being able to serve. She took over a term, so maybe seven years. **Jasmin Whitfield** is a nurse program consultant for the office of school health at the Maryland Department of Health. **Amy Schisler** is a director of summer roundup Girl Scout Camp on the midshore in Denton in Caroline County. This is her first official year on the council. **Ed Arellano** is an environmental health director for Cecil County Health Department. Ramona Riley-Bozier, Dr. Nobin Ngozi Ogbonna and Cassandra Casey (joined after roll call) were all present.

Allison requested approval of the agenda and the December meeting minutes. Amy approved the agenda and the December minutes. Jasmin second the approval.

Update on open council positions/attendance: Tylvia Koromah (MDH) reported two council positions will end this June. MDH have been in contact with the Governors Appointment Office and sent contact information for at least 2 persons who may be interested in serving on council.

The positions are posted on the website. If anyone is interested or knows someone, please send contact information to Brian or me. Allison added that this is her last year and it has been a pleasure to be on this council. She highly recommends serving this council.

Youth Camp Regulations Training Dates: Brian Flynn (MDH) confirmed training for: Harford Community College on February 28th, Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute (MFRI), and College Park on March 13th, and Chesapeake College on March 27. Working to confirm April 7 at the Slayton House. Will schedule training for specialized self-regulated camps, virtual training, and hot topics.

2024 Annual Report Letter update: Allison reported that this was approved, and it was submitted to Secretary Laura Herrera Scott on December 5th. It will also be posted on the Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council website.

Medication Administration training requirement for youth camps: Cassandra Casey had connectivity issues and could not provide updates.

Allergy Action Plan form discussion: Allison gave a summary of the history of this form. The council was asked by some camps to come up with an allergy action plan similar to the asthma action plan that also doubles as a medication administration authorization form that camps can use. It doesn't have to go through council approval. Brian Flynn and Greg Joseph, former chair of YCSAC, were working on this. Brian reported that the document was received this week and thanked Greg for his efforts in creating it. It is very detailed and sure it was time consuming to produce. Brian will meet with Cliff to go over it with him and to gather his comments.

Greg responded that he was happy to do the form. He shared his screen to present the draft to the council. The document is a merge of our existing MAA and the fair food allergy with the focus on anaphylaxis. Full disclosure: their document is food related. He broadened the Maryland one to be all anaphylaxis. Insects, animals dander like horses and some really rare other ones. It all is part to meet COMAR standards for what has to be in an MAA. It has to be approved by MDH.

Michael McNeely(MDH) recommends before we move the form forward, there is an authorization box for self-administration and self-care. Someone is not going to self-administrate medication. That's why it's an emergency medication. When people fill this out, keep in mind that people do need to be trained on this and that the person who's going to carry it is less likely going to be able to self-administrate.

Amanda (Camp Mercy) added self-carry with self-administers can be tricky. This form also has antihistamines on it as well. She is looking at her fair forms at school to see if it has that same component. She believes just because we're pulling it from the fair form, they also have that self-administer self-carry box, but that is something especially for the EpiPen or Naloxine, whichever prescription is used for anaphylaxis, we could remove it too.

Public: Does it include anaphylactic latex allergies? Allison answered that it would just go in as what the allergen is and go from there. Greg responded his intention was to broaden the form, to include latex as one of those again insect bites, horse dander, all of those things. In the state

of Maryland, in order to administer a medication, you have to have an MAA that follows COMAR guidelines. This form would combine them. Obviously, the downside is it's one more form that folks have to fill out and sometimes pay for at their providers. To my knowledge, we have to have all of the things that make an MAA. The fair form in and of itself does not have all those boxes. Brian responded that it is correct and hopes we can get this approved before the next meeting in April so folks can have an opportunity to plan appropriately. Allison thanked Greg for his hard work on this. It will move forward offline and hopefully the state will approve and we'll be able to use it this summer. We will keep this on the agenda for our April meeting.

FBI Fingerprinted Status Updates: Brian reported that there has been some progress. We have not received any additional information that indicates that this is going to be implemented for this season. We have been in contact with CJIS and are getting closer to actually planning meetings with them. We are working on our other plans which includes hiring a new administrative person who's going to be in charge of all these background checks. We have been meeting with Carahsoft and our Salesforce contacts to update our Salesforce system to allow for this to streamline as much as possible. Some of those discussions are going to involve CJIS and of course all the legalities of transmitting such sensitive data. There's definitely some things that need to be hashed out. Also, we've been working on legislation to help stand this additional process up for us.

There will be some additional fees that go along with this. There will be a fee per individual for a background check. We discussed the idea of changing the different levels of fees for the camps and doing a kind of a flat change. But we felt this is probably the easiest way to make it fair. So camps are only paying for what they are having processed is to do it by the individual. At the moment that is going to be \$20 per person getting background checked for camp. There is the initial fee for your license that you pay early in the season. After the start of the fiscal year, there will be a second billing going out to camps because we're aware that the camps are in the hiring process and in the middle of getting all the backgrounds in at that point early on and there is not a flood of funds at that point to deal with that. There'll be a second billing similar to a fee balance notice from us. That's going forward this legislative session. It will follow all the norms of any legislation. There'll be an opportunity to review the document and make comments as well. Allison asked about the opening of the comment period. Brian will broadcast when we know when that is going to take place. Allison commented that would be great.

Greg commented that he agrees that it should be per person. Where did the \$20 number come from conceptually? Does that make it neutral for the state or is the state still kicking in some funds or is it a profit center? Brian responded that it was not for profit. It was calculated based on how many people we thought in a typical year would get background checks. The given number is about 18,000 individuals across the entire camp program. Greg added, so the \$20 is an attempt to cover new expenses in a neutral way. Brian responded that is correct. It's basically to pay for the administrative position that we're looking to hire. We're obviously not going to roll out any new fees until the process is actually started.

Public(Deborah): Can you clarify where in COMAR it says who must be fingerprinted. Staff is all printed background checked, but what about volunteers? Brian responded, we have not

required volunteers to be fingerprinted. However in going through this process we spent more time with the childcare documents and the law involving this. We were advised that it should be for volunteers as well. Someone would need to pay for the volunteers to have backgrounds checked.

Public: Do staff need to be fingerprinted every year? Brian responded no, we're looking at having it done once, if they're returning staff and with the availability of wrap back, it shouldn't be something that has to be repeated every year.

Public: Will self-regulated camps also incur this fee? Brian responded this is one of the questions we are trying to get answered. In theory they would be considered another government agency. Looking at the way the law is written, CJIS can only give those results to another government entity. So it sounds like that's possible. However, the process that the state of Maryland MDH is going through has been rather laborious and long to get approved to receive those results. He is expecting that there would be some sort of process that a self-regulated camp would have to do. I don't expect that they would just continue to give you those results without some additional vetting.

Public: Will we still be able to use our own ORI this summer for fingerprints for all staff and volunteers? Brian responded that we have received no indication that this is in the near future as in the 25 season.

Public (Danielle): Will camps be notified about everyone who is cleared in addition to anyone that has a record and cannot be hired? Brian responded yes. The results that previously would go to the camps are changing. Those results are going to be routed through our office and we are working on a process to safely receive that information from CJIS, vet it and then get the results to the camps. The way the law is written, we have three business days upon receiving the results to get that information to the camps.

Public: How long do we need to keep fingerprints results on file for staff? Brian responded as long as they are staff. If that individual leaves and they're not coming back, camps are supposed to get rid of that information and let CJIS know that the individual is no longer employed so they don't send you updates for people that are no longer working for you.

Public (Scott): Questioned the cost for the position that it's going to be \$360,000 for one admin position. Allison commented, guessing it's not just for the admin but it's also for the over cost and all the people running the background. Brian responded yes.

Public (Summer Norwood): Does the wrap back system not apply to this fingerprinting? Currently, we only need to have people fingerprinted once and we get notifications if an issue arises. Why do we need to have everyone fingerprinted every year? Brian responded, wrap back it is in use now. We're trying to get clarification from CJIS on what instances do employees need to get rechecked? We have historically allowed people if they're continuing to work with a camp for one year to not have to be checked every year.

Public: Volunteers under the age of 18, does this include them? Brian responded yes. They would still need to get checked.

Public: Will online background checks suffice for volunteers as opposed to fingerprinting? Allison replied, no. It has to be a fingerprint. Brian added that's in the law.

Public: Is this \$20 payable directly to CJIS or are we being billed or is this a fee on top of what we already pay for staff to be fingerprinted by whatever vendor we choose? Allison responded that there is an Initial license fee, vendors fee if there is one, and then an additional fee. Brian added that you're going to pay for your license first. Neither us or you will know at the time how many people you're getting background checked. So there will be a bill afterwards that is just for your staff that have been through this process. We have been looking at doing that sometime after the start of the next fiscal year because we don't want to be tied up with billing and trying to process all these payments, throughout the entire season. We will try to bundle it up as neatly as can be done. It's going to be after the season has started and hopefully all the background checks have been done. Sometimes people get them in mid-season, so we'll have to contend with that. The goal is to try and do it all at once.

Public: Regarding the qualifications of volunteers that run one activity and are never alone with kids are they exempt from getting fingerprinted? Allison responded no. Brian added, we can entertain individual circumstances, but we haven't necessarily required. If you have a vendor that brings in a reptile show for the day or something like that, unless they're being unobserved and alone with the campers, we haven't required that person and their helpers to get a check. There are some exemptions that can be considered, but generally speaking, if you're going to have people employed at the camp and working throughout the season, whether they're volunteers or paid staff, they have to be vetted.

Public: Does this also apply to private schools hiring new teachers? Brian responded if we're talking entirely for schools, he did not have the answer.

Public: Can volunteers be background checked with social security numbers? Brian responded they have to go through the same process as paid staff. A lot of the typical online searches aren't going to unfortunately meet that standard.

Public: Are fingerprints done for the child care system and the camp? Brian responded that this is a question in which we need additional clarification from CJIS. Same for church in a camp. Greg added that in the past volunteers were exempt. Clarity is needed and an update is needed in COMAR to include volunteers. Is this planned for this summer or summer 2026? Brian responded in practice we will require for this summer, as recommended by legal counsel. As far as changing COMAR to reflect this he will check and look at the version that will be posted to verify that it's going to be done. If it's not in there, it will be because that'll be a necessary change.

Michael added, the reason why it's there is because there was a review by the AG's office in reference to two other laws. One was the family care act and he forgot what the other law is and that makes it a requirement. The law is definitely greater than a regulation. It already is in

existence. It's one of those things where we have to follow the law. Greg mentioned that someone may question the fingerprinting of volunteers since it is not in COMAR. Brian added, there's definitely a legal rationale for making that change.

Public: Are we holding fingerprinting for this summer? Allison responded no, do not hold out move forward as planned for this summer, unless we hear otherwise. Brian agreed.

Public: Do staff need to fill out the 365 day form every year if they are returning? Brian responded no.

Public: We have a staff member that works year-round and is also the camp director. Do they need to do a new background check each summer? Allison responded, no if it is on file.

Public: All volunteers must be fingerprinted by CJIS this summer. Is there a process to report back to camps who's approved or nonapproved? Allison answered as in previous summers, you're going to get your background checks and the results directly. This is a change from when CJIS was audited by the FBI that the results have to go back directly to a government entity. A lot of the camps in Maryland are not government entities. So this has been a long process. This is not unique to Maryland. For all of you out there who might not have connections in other states, there's a lot of other states that this is happening to and it'll probably happen to many more. We are not alone. Brian added that it is taking so long because we're in a line with probably at least half the other country that they're vetting them as well. There are a lot of changes need to happen within both of our agencies in order to make it happen in addition to the FBI giving us the green light to actually get those results.

Public: Do volunteers need a CPS check? Brian responded Yes. If fingerprints and the results are sent to MDH do we have to do one for the camps? Brian responded no, this will be for both for that purpose.

Allison wrapped up this portion of the meeting with a lot that has been covered. This item will continue on the agenda through next year. Thanks to everybody for your patience and hanging tight. I would also recommend for all of those new camp directors or camp administrations to get to one of regulation training. They're very helpful and MDH does a great job. Tylvia has put the link in the chat.

New Business: Allison gave an up update on the OSHA Head Index Bill. It was introduced this past summer, as a heat injury and illness prevention in outdoor and indoor work settings, which was essentially going to have a kind of tiered system. This was on a federal level. For the new administration, it is dead in the water. She will keep watch if anything changes in the future, but that would be on the federal level.

Opportunity was given to council members and the public for any other new business. MDH will confirm the correct training dates.

Public: Is there any guidance or recommendations from the state regarding language or policy if ICE shows up at a camp? Brian responded no, we haven't gotten any guidance on that scenario.

Allison received a message that Cassandra was having connectivity issues and will have updates regarding the medical administration training at the April meeting. This is an update for medication administration training. Unfortunately, it is not going to happen this summer in terms of what we were able to change in terms of those regulations for medication administration. It's just something that we're looking for in the future, not for summer 2025. Greg added there was no change to medication administration training. This is about research, how to make research less in cost. Brian added we recently received an outline of what a research course might look like. He is in the process of evaluating it with Dr. Cliff Mitchell. We're also dealing with the legislative session right now and there just isn't enough time to talk about everything. But we're trying. I hope to have some additional information by the next meeting about whether or not we're going to go forward with either that or at least in concept with it.

Allison added that April 3, the last working meeting. There is a brief meeting on May 1st to approve meeting minutes. There was a question about MDH's ORI number that is placed in the fingerprint application. Brian will respond offline.

Allison requested a motion to adjourn. Amy moved to adjourn the meeting and Jasmin second the adjournment. Allison ended with all in favor. Have a great two months and we'll see you on April 3rd. Take care, everyone.

The meeting ended at 11:46am.

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: Lillia Sheline and Jasmin Whitfield on April 10, 2025