

Minutes of the Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council  
 Anne Arundel County Community College  
 Arnold Campus-Annex A – Room 114  
 101 College Parkway  
 Arnold, MD 21012

December 4, 2019

**YCSAC Member Attendance**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Representation</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Allison Abbondante	Camp Owner/Manager-For Profit	Present
Anita D. Anderson	Camp Owner/Manager-Non Profit	Absent
Carla DeWitt	Public	Present
Gabriel Houghton	Local Health Department	Present
Janet Rose	Camp Leader	Present
Kelly Campbell	National Camping Organization	Absent
Margaret S. Harris	Camp Owner/Manager	Present
Meena Suri	Camp Owner/Manager - ACA	Present
Monika Piccardi	Maryland Department of Health	Present
Rabbi Rami Schwartzer	National Camping Organization	Present
Virgil Boysaw, Jr.	Local Health Department	Present

**MDH Staff Present**

Nicole Alonge-Smart  
 Tylvia Koromah

**Introductions**

Carla DeWitt called meeting to order at 10:00am.  
 Anita D. Anderson and Kelly Campbell were absent from meeting.

**Approval of October 2019 Minutes**

Minutes from the YCSAC meeting on October 2, 2019 were reviewed.  
 No corrections or suggested changes to the minutes.

- Motion to approve the minutes from 10/2/2019 as written by Allison Abbondante.*
- Motion seconded Janet Rose.*
- Motion passed unanimously.*

**Update on Open Council Positions/Attendance**

Nicole reported that Margaret is the Council’s newest appointment.  
 The following positions end 6/30/2020:

- Dr. Jed Miller is waiting for State approval to take Monika Piccardi’s position, representing Maryland Department of Health.

- Melita Bell is waiting for State approval to take Anita Anderson's position, representing Owner Manager.
- At this time, there are no applicants for Carla DeWitt's position to represent the public. Her appointment ends 6/30/20. The public is someone who is not affiliated with camps. This is a Governor-appointed position. If you have someone in mind, contact Linda Rudie.

Nicole announced that she had travel expense reports for the Council, if needed, that must be submitted before the end of the month.

### **Annual Report Letter**

Nicole reported there is no actual due date for the letter. Tentative guideline is for the Council to have a finalized draft by February. Once the letter goes through the clearance process, the Council will approve the final version in April. Rami responded that the letter follows the same process as last year. This year, we are reporting 180 more camps submitted their 2019 annual report. He noted the change/addition in the following recommendations on the letter:

#4: – deleted (c) which mentioned the creation of a logo that licensed camps can use in their marketing materials. More information regarding logo was discussed later in this meeting.

#5: – new recommendation to add additional fields to the state's incident reporting system and to set guidelines on how camps gather mental health information

Carla asked if there were any questions or comments from Council regarding the annual report. Council agreed as stated. She asked that Janet review the draft. The floor was opened to the meeting attendees for any questions/comments. An attendee asked for a copy of the annual letter and stated that it was available in years past. Nicole was not sure if the draft can be shared outside of Council, but will ask Linda. Carla responded if the Office is comfortable, we could post as draft on the website. Rami responded that nothing is missing from the letter, just the changes as previously stated.

The Center of Healthy Homes and Community Services (CHHCS) is still working on the numbers. The Council will submit the data submitted by Linda. There are 150 more than last year. 1,000 active camps submitted this summer.

**Action item:** Janet will proofread annual letter. Council will circulate letter and present final draft at the February meeting and approve final letter in April.

### **Incident Report Data/Mental Health**

A copy of the mental health draft form was viewed by all on the projector. Rami and Allison are the subcommittee members. There are two elements of mental health reporting: (1) data that is captured according to category, with a box on the incident report to indicate a mental health incident, and (2) creating proactive plans within all our camps. The goal for the mental health form is to report what mental health might look like. The Council heard responses from the meeting attendees about the increase in regulations and the lack of support. The goal is to inform camps of the resources and support. The plan is to provide a level of preparedness. It is not

necessary to require certain kinds of trainings, but there are things that can be available to all camps that will enable them to have mental health plans of some kind.

The following questions, written at the bottom of the form, need responses from the Council:

- 1) Should we detail specific behaviors staff should be aware of in mental health training module?
  - a) What sorts of training modules should be required v. recommended?
- 2) What liabilities do camps face if they know about a mental health history but are inadequately prepared to manage it?
- 3) What is the mental health certification we want to recommend to camps?

The meeting attendees expressed concerns over the legality of the form.

- It was suggested that the Council contact sources at the MidAtlantic ADA centers who have lawyers and experts who are familiar with mental health issues.
- Would this mental health plan fall under the category of regulation change? Rami responded that the job of the Council is to make recommendations to the State, not to offer legal advice. The State has a review process before final approval, which includes a legal review beyond the scope of the Council.

It was noted that the mental health form will be inserted into the overall health plan of the camp.

A meeting attendee suggested providing best practice lists or some bulleted items. Rami responded that Allison has already put together recommendation of resources, first responder training, crisis hotlines that camp directors can use. It is unclear who would be the appropriate body or persons to create list; not sure if is the Council.

Rami commented that this could be new business item - Does the Council want to put on the camp website a list of resources if one does not already exist?

Virgil commented that the Council should consider substance abuse, and will provide any recommended language to add to the mental health document regarding substance abuse.

A meeting attendee stated that perhaps the line should be added in COMAR 10.16.07.03.

**Action items as stated by Rami:**

1. Approach the State about adding to COMAR regulation one line about the mental health document
2. Refine document to add into handbook about what mental health plan should look like
3. Continue to work on best practice documents to put on website
4. Request the State provide mental health module in camp directors' training
5. Begin the process of exploring the data in the event state ask for additional data

Carla thanked everyone for a great discussion on the mental health plan.

### **Licensing Logo**

Nicole reported that the MDH logo or branding is only used for State business. The Council cannot create a logo specific to our office. All branding is through the State. Nicole suggested the use of the license certificate number as a logo. It is an official state document that is public information. Camps are required to post their certificates. Rami suggested the language to send to camps - "We have a new program and are excited about giving you all recognition for all the great work. You may add to your website your license certificate number."

Carla offered the following language be recommended to camps to include on their website: "Maryland Youth Camp License Number: \_\_\_\_\_"

Carla stated that the logo recommendation is closed. It will be reopened if something else arises.

### **Licensed Camp Database**

Carla commented to Nicole that it sounds like there will be a camp list posted instead of having external access to Salesforce so that it can be searchable. It is a nice stopgap, but the public has been asking for this database for a while. Tylvia stated that the database is still work in progress. The discussion of the database involves input from IT as well.

The current solution: MDH can provide a current list of certified camps. However, direct public access to a real-time list updated by Salesforce is not available at this time.

**Action item:** Carla stated that updates regarding public access to an online list of licensed camps are requested for next meeting.

### **Background Checks for Camp Contractors**

Margaret explained how the vendor process works at her college. Agencies trust the vendors to let them know that everything is okay. It is up to the vendor to update the camp manager. She is not comfortable with this because children in her camp are her responsibility.

In response to the concern of vendors obtaining background checks because of their involvement with the campers, Nicole responded that she and Linda discussed vendors. The vendors will provide the staff and the camp vetting. Additional camp staff are not required to be checked. It is required to: (1) Make sure it is CJIS reported. If the background check is going to be through the vendor, Linda's recommendation is to complete form 365; (2) CPS has to be through a personnel administrator. She gave several scenarios regarding vendors.

Rami clarified that the open question that the Council does not have the answer to is: "Is there a clear ruling on the responsibility of camps to run their own direct CJIS and CPS background checks when the staff are employees of an outside vendor and not of the camp?"

Carla thanked all.

## New Business

- Council motioned no new business.
- COMAR changes - A meeting attendee asked if there is anywhere on the website to get COMAR changes, without having to compare the old manual and the new manual line by line and how are camps notified of the changes. Nicole responded that CHHCS have not had any changes in a while. The changes are posted in the Maryland register, which is not easy to figure out. The changes are on the specific portion of the regulation. She has not been in this department when there was a regulation change. When a camp contacts her regarding regulation changes, she emails just the change, not the entire page. The State will not notify camps. This is something that CHHCS have to do internally.
- Directors Meeting - Nicole announced that the meeting is no longer called New Directors. People were under the assumption that directors had to be new to the camp. CHHCS welcome the existing and the new directors to the meetings. Regulations changes are given at those meetings. The department have started the process to schedule meeting dates. A link to Eventbrite will be sent to the camp community users to register.

Nicole was not certain, but there may be changes to the hot topic format. A meeting attendee suggested to post the COMAR number. Nicole responded that it is quick for her or Mike to just send the change or to post. She has no problem with providing this assistance.

Rami asked if an email regarding the meeting will be sent by Linda. Nicole responded that how to communicate this meeting has not been finalized. CHHCS have email options through Salesforce. Nicole will ask Linda about the notifications. Linda has her own working list, so you may receive double information.

- Carla requested to change the February and April meeting dates to assure Linda's participation. The Council agreed to the following dates:
  - February 5<sup>th</sup> meeting changed to February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020 (snow date February 13, 2020), venue TBD
  - April 1<sup>st</sup> meeting changed to April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, venue TBD

**Adjournment**

Carla DeWitt requested for motions to adjourn meeting at 11:55 am. Motions given by Allison Abbondante and second by Meena Suri.

Respectfully Submitted By,

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

Approved on 02/06/20 By: *Gabriel Houghton and Allison Abbondante*

And

Carla DeWitt, Co-Chair  
Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council

Rami Schwartzer, Co-Chair  
Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council