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LIVING RIVER
A RETREAT ON THE CAHABA

Living River Rental Group User Guide

Requirements Before Arriving

- A signed Rental Agreement and a non-refundable but transferable $500 deposit are due to reserve dates for both single-day use and overnight use.
- A Certificate of Insurance naming Living River as an additional insured is due 30 days before arrival.
- For cancellations received less than 7 days before your event, a $150 cleaning fee will be deducted from your deposit.
- A Facilities Form asking which buildings and rooms your group will use will be sent two weeks before your dates and is due back one week before your dates.
- A signed Hold-Harmless Form is required for each participant upon departure. Living River's host will collect these. Anyone under the age of 18 must have their form signed by a parent/guardian. A waiver is available below, or we can send a digital waiver: https://form.jotform.com/250725613985060.

Food at Living River

Living River does not provide food service. We can connect you with a caterer who can provide your group's food for an additional cost. Or, your group can bring its own food and cook for itself, or hire its own catering service. If your group hires a catering service, the cooks can use a motel-style room free of charge.

Linens at Living River

Your group must bring its own linens, pillows, towels, and toiletries. All beds are single beds except for the queen beds in three motel-style staff rooms and two beds in the Shades Valley Lodge. (A limited number of rental linen sets are available for out-of-state groups.)

A sample packing list is at the end of this user guide.

Healthcare Provider

It's recommended that your group bring a licensed healthcare provider, especially if there are any individuals under 18. Your licensed healthcare provider can use a motel-style room free of charge. A stocked healthcare room is attached to a motel-style cabin room.

Lifeguard

For groups or individuals not part of a Living River supervised program (rental groups or individuals) who want to swim or canoe on the lake, a lifeguard is strongly recommended, and PFDs are required for every participant. Access to PFDs is available upon request.

If attempting to swim or canoe on the Cahaba River, groups or individuals not part of a Living River supervised program (rental groups or individuals) do so at their own risk. PFDs are highly recommended.

Please see Living River's Waterfront Policy below for more safety guidelines.

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Ask Living River with enough advance notice if your group would like us to provide you with a lifeguard. Your group will compensate the lifeguard directly at $20/hour. Our ability to provide a lifeguard depends on their availability, so the earlier we schedule, the better.

Living River's Educational Partners

Living River's environmental education partners include the Cahaba River Coalition, Alabama Forestry Commission, Bibb County Extension Office, and more. These educational partners can be scheduled to work with your group. Some of them will have their own program fee. If interested, please let Living River know as soon as possible so that we can check their availability and get your group on their schedule.

Service Projects at Living River

If you'd like your group to do a service project while at Living River, please let us know in enough time to coordinate a project and have supplies ready. It is not guaranteed that there will be a need or available leadership during your group's time at Living River, but we'll do our best to work it out!

Civil Rights Learning Experiences

Living River is within a 1-1.5 hour drive of Birmingham, Montgomery, Selma, and Tuscaloosa, all important cities during our nation's struggle for civil rights for all races in the 60s. Groups are encouraged to use some of their time at Living River for a day trip. Please let us know in advance if this is your group's intention, and the Living River staff can help you coordinate your experiences and group reflection time.

While at Living River

Your Living River Host

Unless otherwise communicated, a Living River host will meet your group leader upon their arrival and stay at Living River for your group's duration. Please designate one person as the point of contact with the host. The host will go over basic safety and user information and make it clear how to communicate with them if needed. The host will help you understand where you're staying at Living River and take an accurate headcount of your group. The host will provide you with maps and a key to the bunk cabin utility closet. Please consider your host a resource while you're at Living River.

Medical Emergencies

- If applicable, the Health Care Provider for this event is (state their name and let them introduce themselves).
- An AED is located in the Dining Hall lobby.
- An additional AED will be present wherever water activities are taking place.
- Have someone call 911 if needed.
- The closest hospital with an emergency room is Shelby Baptist Medical Center, 1000 1st St N., Alabaster, AL 35007. It is approximately 45 minutes away.
- Opioid Overdose–Naloxone (brand name: Narcan) nasal spray is located in the dining hall lobby. If an opioid overdose is suspected (signs of breathing problems and unresponsiveness), Naloxone should be administered as soon as possible. Alabama has a Good Samaritan law (HB208), which

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provides immunity from civil or criminal liability to individuals who administer naloxone in good faith to someone at risk of an opioid-related overdose.

- First Aid Kits
    - Living River maintains First Aid kits on site.
    - A first aid kit is located at the dining hall desk. Additional medical supplies are in the health room.
    - Rental groups are welcome to use the Living River First Aid kits or the health room and should notify Living River staff of any missing or used supplies.
    - Take portable first aid kits on all activities away from the main camp. Check portable first aid kits before leaving the main camp to ensure they are stocked.

Child and Youth Safety

When children or youth under 18 are present, please have your group follow the “Rule of 3” for best child safety practices. A minor should always be in a group of 3 whenever away from the whole group.

General Safety at Living River

Follow all local, state, and federal laws. Living River has all the usual outdoor hazards.

- Apply bug spray outside, not in the cabins or on the porches.
- Conduct tick checks upon returning inside.
- Do not sleep in the same clothing you wore in the woods. Chiggers/red bug bites are common.
- Wasps, yellow jackets, and scorpions are also common.
- Wasp spray is kept in the dining hall desk.
- Scorpions like sink and shower drains. Run water to flush them down.
- Venomous spiders and snakes are also present. Give them plenty of room.
- Living River is a former mining operation. Do not go into any opening that looks like a cave.
- If there is thunder or lightning, come inside and wait 30 minutes before resuming outdoor activities.
- A 150-person tornado shelter is behind the dining hall. Your host will help monitor for extreme weather, such as tornadoes.

Cabins

- Absolutely no food or smoking allowed in cabins (no smoking is allowed in any Living River building).
- Your group leader will be issued a key to the utility closet, where you will find cleaning supplies and extra toilet paper. Please keep the utility closet door locked when you are not using it.
- Your group must bring its own linens, pillows, towels, and toiletries. All beds are single beds, except for the queen beds in three motel-style staff rooms and two rooms in the lodge.
- There are just a few sets of “loaner” sheets and towels in the health room bins. Wash, dry, and fold them, and return them to where you found them. A washer and dryer are located in the room at the end of the staff cabins marked “staff lounge.”

Dining Hall

- You are responsible for moving tables and chairs into the formation you wish to use during your retreat and returning them to their original location.

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- For the AC/heat to work best, set the controllers **to the same temperature on both sides** of the dining hall, and keep the doors to the lobby and kitchen closed. Please adjust the AC/heat in no more than 2-degree increments.
- You are welcome to use the **sound equipment and TV.** The speakers connect to a receiver that you can plug a phone or laptop into. The TV is a smart TV and can be cast to or connected to using HDMI. The TV remote is kept on top of the desk near the frying pans.
- Your group is welcome to purchase items from the glass “Camp Store” shelf. Your group leader may collect cash or checks for merchandise and leave with the host, or let us know that we can add the merchandise purchased to your group’s invoice.

Use of the Kitchen

- Leave it as you found it, with all dishes clean and on the shelves and **no food left behind** in refrigerators, freezers, or on shelves.
- Take all kitchen trash with you or place it in the dumpster off the road to the lake. We recommend taking kitchen trash to the dumpster each night. If you leave food trash in the kitchen overnight, you may find mice in the morning. Never leave trash outside the kitchen door overnight.
- Please refrain from using styrofoam cups and plates and plastic water bottles.
- If you wish to consume alcoholic beverages or to serve to adults over 21, you must obtain permission from the Executive Director.
- Each appliance has directions for the dishwashing machine, the ice dispenser in the Dining Hall (the ice maker is in the kitchen), and the coffee maker.
- The kitchen is on a separate HVAC unit. Keep the dining hall doors closed unless serving a meal or cleaning up. Also, do not prop the outside door open.

Internet and Cell Service

- The WiFi networks are LR-Guest (no password) and LR-Staff (Staff@LivingRiver26)
- Cell service is available randomly around the property. There is usually service on the office porch or in areas outside the Dining Hall.
- **In the event of a power outage,** the internet will not work. Your Living River host will contact our Executive Director and keep you up to date on when the power is projected to return.

Campfires

There are three fire rings at Living River- on the large field, off the road on the way to the Dining Hall, and at Shades Valley Lodge. Only build campfires in those rings or at a campsite.

- Make sure the fire is fully extinguished before leaving.
- You may use the already cut firewood near the campfire rings.
- You are welcome to use the marshmallow roasting sticks in the Dining Hall kitchen for s’mores or roasting hot dogs. If you make s’mores, soak the roasting sticks overnight, then hand-wash them.

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Recreation

The dining hall has a few kickballs and basketballs, board games, and other miscellaneous fun things. We have a shed with additional recreational equipment that your host can unlock for you. Your group is also welcome to use the supplies in the "Craft Hut," the building at the end of the bunk cabins. The "Craft Hut" is a great multipurpose space, like the Dining Hall. Both can be used for your group's unique purposes. Please clean up after yourselves and leave things slightly better than you found them. Living River also has a **Gaga Pit, Volleyball Court, and Labyrinth.**

Low Ropes Course

Our Low Ropes obstacles are:

- Balance Beam
- The Whale Watch
- The Spider Web
- A Track Walk
- The King's Finger
- Team Wall

Ask for a Low Ropes Facilitator Instruction Sheet if your group would like to do Low Ropes and you'd like some guidance.

Outdoor Chapels

Living River has two **outdoor chapels** that are great for worship, vespers, or meeting locations. The Durham Chapel is a very short walk down the hill from the Dining Hall. The IPC Chapel is a slightly longer walk down Main Road Trail. Both are beautiful!

River or Lake Use

The road forks at the office: the right takes you to the main part of the camp, where all the buildings are, and the left takes you to the best river access (Williams Access Point), the lake, and Fossil Ridge. It is over a mile hike if your group walks from the bunks to the lake.

Groups can swim, fish, or canoe and kayak in the lake. Groups could also wade and play in the Cahaba River or canoe the Cahaba. Living River has 4.5 miles of the Cahaba on its property! Living River has some fishing poles, cane fishing poles, and lots of life jackets, all of which are down by the lake. Please see the "Lifeguard" section above and the Waterfront Policy below for safety guidelines.

Hiking

- **Trails around "the thumb"-** off of the field, down the hill from the Dining Hall, there are four trails that connect or can be out-and-back, around 4 miles of hiking.
- **Railroad Trail**- the Keller Railroad Trail outside the office is beautiful, short (about 0.25 miles one way), and ends with a view of the river (down the hill to your right at the end). This is a great option for young kids or anyone looking for a short hike.
- **Fossil Ridge**- because Living River's property was a mining operation, we have a Fossil Bed! The fossils at Fossil Ridge are 300-600 million-year-old plant fossils from the Carboniferous period or earlier. Each member of your group can take a fossil no bigger than the size of their hand. The hike to Fossil Ridge starts at the Lake.

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After Staying at Living River

Leaving Living River

Please walk through all areas used to check for lost and found, ensure that all trash has been removed and taken to the dumpster, and turn off the lights. Please follow the checkout list for each building that your host provided. The group leader must check out with the host upon departure. Please turn in all signed hold-harmless forms, radios, and keys at this time.

Final Invoice and Thank You!

A final invoice will be sent to your group's contact for the remaining balance after your group's stay at Living River. We will also send your group's contact a feedback form about your experience at Living River. We appreciate any feedback.

Thank you for bringing your group to Living River!

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Living River Packing List for Retreats

The following list includes items that retreat-goers should bring to Living River. Please remember that at Living River, you will be active; wear comfortable, durable clothes that are easy to replace if lost or damaged. Please bring enough clothing to last the length of your retreat. Leave any item of significant value at home. **Please consider labeling your belongings with your name in case you lose something.**

___ Shorts or long pants (enough for each day, plus an extra. Weather dependent)
___ Tee Shirts (enough for each day, plus an extra.)
___ Sweatshirt/Fleece (at least 1)
___ Pajamas
___ Socks (enough for each day, plus extra)
___ Underwear (enough for each day, plus extra)
___ One pair of sturdy closed-toed hiking or athletic shoes
___ One pair of shoes to wear into the river that has a back strap and covers your toes (retreat dependent. Ex: Crocs, whole foot water shoe, tennis shoes that can get wet)
___ Extra shoes, as able or desired, in case athletic shoes get muddy
___ Shower shoes (as desired. Ex: flip-flops)
___ Bathing suit (retreat dependent.)
___ Rain jacket/poncho
___ Sun hat
___ Reusable water bottle (no single-use plastic bottles.)
___ Towels/washcloths for showering
___ Beach Towel for river/lake (retreat dependent.)
___ Toiletries- soap, toothbrush and toothpaste, others as desired
___ Pillow
___ Sleeping bag or sheets and blanket
___ Day pack/book bag
___ Bible
___ Insect repellent
___ Sunscreen
___ Laundry Bag for dirty clothes
___ Flashlight

Optional:
___ Books, card games, Lovies
___ Hammock
___ Musical instrument (at your own risk.)

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Living River Emergency Procedures

Severe Weather Procedures

Living River's Executive Director or designee should remain weather-aware by subscribing to Shelby and Bibb County EMA's email notifications and checking local news daily.

When severe weather is possible, the Executive Director or designee will notify relevant user groups or, for Living River-sponsored programs, designate a staff member to monitor a NOAA Weather Radio, local media, and notifications from both the Shelby and Bibb County EMAs.

When severe weather is imminent, the designated weather monitor will contact the Executive Director or designee, who will then alert all staff via radio.

In the case of any emergency not listed below, follow the general guidance to alert leadership, seek shelter, and call 911 if there is any doubt about safety.

Thunder or Lightning-

When a staff member hears thunder, they should alert all staff via radio. All participants should move inside. All adult chaperones/counselors responsible for minors should conduct a name-to-face count of those in their care and then move inside. Remain inside for 30 minutes after the most recent rumble of thunder. Participants and staff will follow the direction of the Executive Director or designee.

Thunder or Lightning when Canoeing/Kayaking on the Cahaba River- If staff see a thunder/lightning storm approaching, hear thunder, or see lightning while on a canoe trip on the river, they should immediately get to shore and seek shelter.

- If the canoe trip is within 30 minutes of a canoe launch or landing, the group should proceed quickly to it and exit the river as quickly as possible.
- If the canoe trip is more than 30 minutes from a canoe launch or landing, the group should proceed quickly to shore at a point where they can exit the canoes and climb the bank.
    - The group should seek shelter under low-lying, thick groups of smaller trees and avoid tall trees and isolated shelters at all costs.
- The canoe trip lead or sweep should radio back to a point of contact at the main camp to inform them of the group's plan.

Flood Watches-

Staff will be informed when severe weather is predicted. Staff will receive a radio announcement of a flood watch. Staff should be prepared to move quickly to safety.

Flood Warnings-

1. If a flood warning is issued for our area, Living River's Executive Director or designee will alert all staff via radio and sound an air horn once (pause, then repeat the air horn warning).
2. **Upon hearing the flood air horn blast, adult chaperones/counselors will:**
    - Conduct a name-to-face count to ensure all minor participants in their care are accounted for.

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- As quickly and safely as possible, lead participants to the Dining Hall, which is above the flood zone.
- Upon arrival at the Dining Hall, conduct a second name-to-face count to ensure all minor participants in their care are accounted for.
- Report their arrival to the Dining Hall to the Executive Director or designee.
- Supervise those in their care while projecting a calm, reassuring presence.
- Assist as directed by the Executive Director or designee.

3. **Upon receiving a warning of imminent severe weather, <u>the Health Care Provider</u> will** take all participant and staff health forms and medications to the Dining Hall.
4. Living River's Executive Director or designee will contact the Bibb County EMA office at (205) 926-3113 or, if in imminent danger, call 911 to alert them that there are individuals on site and to seek advice on sheltering in place or evacuating the property. (See Evacuation below)
5. Participants and staff will follow the direction of the Executive Director or designee.

<u>Tornado Watches-</u>
Staff will be informed on days when severe weather is predicted. Staff will receive a radio announcement of a tornado watch. Staff should be prepared to move quickly to safety.

<u>Tornado Warnings-</u>
1. If a flood warning is issued for our area, Living River's Executive Director or designee will alert all staff via radio and sound an air horn three times (pause, then repeat the air horn warning).
2. Staff will direct participants to Living River's tornado shelter. Under no circumstances should staff members place themselves at risk of injury.
3. **Upon hearing the tornado air horn blasts, <u>adult chaperones/counselors</u> will:**
   - Conduct a name-to-face count to ensure all minor participants in their care are accounted for.
   - As quickly and safely as possible, lead participants to the storm shelter.
   - Upon arrival at the storm shelter, conduct a second name-to-face count to ensure all minor participants in their care are accounted for.
   - Report their arrival to the shelter to the Executive Director or designee.
   - Supervise those in their care while projecting a calm, reassuring presence.
   - Assist as directed by the Executive Director or designee.
4. **Upon receiving a warning of imminent severe weather, <u>the Health Care Provider</u> will:**
   - Take all participant and staff health forms and medications to the storm shelter.
   - Designate someone to bring the AED to the storm shelter.
5. Upon receiving a warning of imminent severe weather, all other camp staff will report to the storm shelter and assist as directed by the Executive Director or designee.
6. The Executive Director or designee will document participants' arrivals using the Emergency Master Participant List to ensure everyone is accounted for.
7. Living River's Executive Director or designee will contact 911 to alert them that there are individuals on site.
8. Participants and staff will follow the direction of the Executive Director or designee.

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Lost Participant-

1. If a participant is suspected to be missing, their adult chaperone/counselor will assemble all participants in their care and conduct a name-to-face count to ensure the participant is accounted for.
2. If the participant is missing from their group, their adult chaperone/counselor will immediately note the time of their absence.
3. Adult chaperones/counselors will ask group members whether they know the participant's whereabouts or the last place where they were seen.
4. One adult/counselor will remain with the group while another quickly checks the immediate area, including nearby bathrooms, cabins, and other areas.
5. If it is determined that the participant is lost, one adult/counselor will remain with the group. At the same time, another staff member reports the lost participant and the time their absence was noticed to the Executive Director or designee.
6. Upon learning of a lost participant, the Executive Director or designee will notify all staff via radio.
7. All staff and adults not currently supervising minors will report to the Dining Hall.
8. The Executive Director or designee will dispatch staff members to check with each group of participants to ensure that the participant is not with the wrong group.

If the participant is not found within 20 minutes, and they were last seen near the water, the Executive Director or designee will:

1. Contact local authorities for assistance immediately.
2. Create land and water search teams to begin searching the property.
3. The water search team will search by boat until authorities arrive. A member of the water search team will meet the local authorities and inform them of the lost participant's last known location and the details of the search thus far.
4. Instruct all participants and staff to assemble at the Dining Hall, where adults/counselors will conduct a Name-to-Face Count and report their group's presence to the Executive Director or designee.
5. The Executive Director or designee may call off local authorities if the participant is located before they arrive and is not injured.

If the lost participant is not found within 20 minutes, and they were last seen on land, the Executive Director or designee will:

1. Contact local authorities for assistance immediately.
2. Create a search team to begin searching the property.
3. Instruct all participants and staff to assemble at the Dining Hall, where adults/counselors will conduct a Name-to-Face Count and report their group's presence to the Executive Director or designee.
4. The Executive Director or designee may call off local authorities if the participant is located before they arrive and is not injured.

Forest Fire-

1. When someone identifies a forest fire that may impact the camp, they will notify the Executive Director or designee.

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2. Living River's Executive Director or designee will contact the Bibb County EMA office by phone at (205) 926-3113, or, if in imminent danger, call 911, to alert them that there are individuals on site and to seek advice on sheltering in place or evacuating the property. (See Evacuation below).
3. When a forest fire threat is imminent, the Executive Director or designee will alert all staff via radio and sound an air horn twice (pause, then repeat the air horn warning).
4. **Upon receiving a warning of a forest fire, <u>adult chaperones/counselors</u> will:**
    - Conduct a name-to-face count to ensure all minor participants in their care are accounted for.
    - Safely and as quickly as possible, lead participants to the Dining Hall.
    - Upon arrival at the Dining Hall, conduct a second name-to-face count to ensure all minor participants in their care are accounted for.
    - Report their arrival to the Dining Hall to the Executive Director or designee.
    - Supervise those in their care while projecting a calm, reassuring presence.
    - Assist as directed by the Executive Director or designee.
5. **Upon receiving a forest fire warning, the <u>Health Care Provider</u> will take all participant and staff health forms and medications to the Dining Hall.**
6. The Executive Director or designee will document participants' arrivals to ensure everyone is accounted for using the Emergency Master Participant List.
7. Participants and staff will follow the direction of the Executive Director or designee.

<u>Structure Fire-</u>

1. When someone identifies a structure fire at the camp, when sprinklers go off in any building, when a smoke detector goes off in any building, or when the fire alarm goes off in the Dining Hall, they will notify the Executive Director or designee.
    - If a sprinkler, smoke detector, or fire alarm needs maintenance, the Executive Director or designee will notify the Facilities Director.
2. The Executive Director or designee will call 911.
3. When a structure fire may impact participants, the Executive Director or designee will alert all staff via radio and sound an air horn twice (pause, then repeat the air horn warning).
4. **Upon receiving a warning of a fire, <u>counselors or adult chaperones</u> will:**
    - Conduct a name-to-face count to ensure all minor participants in their care are accounted for.
    - Safely and as quickly as possible, lead participants to the Dining Hall.
    - Upon arrival at the Dining Hall, conduct a second name-to-face count to ensure all minor participants in their care are accounted for.
    - Report their arrival to the Dining Hall to the Executive Director or designee.
    - Supervise those in their care while projecting a calm, reassuring presence.
    - Assist as directed by the Executive Director or designee.
5. **Upon receiving a fire warning, the <u>Health Care Provider</u> will take all participant and staff health forms and medications to the dining hall.**
6. The Executive Director or designee will document participants' arrivals to ensure everyone is accounted for using the Emergency Master Participant List.
7. Participants and staff will follow the direction of the Executive Director or designee.

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Intruder-

1. If a staff member sees a person at camp whom they do not recognize, they should approach them and ask if they can help.
2. If the person is a visitor, they should be directed to a Living River director for check-in.
3. If the person is an intruder without a legitimate reason to be on the camp property, they should be politely informed that the camp is private property, how to contact the office to coordinate a visit, and asked to leave.
4. If the intruder refuses to leave, the staff member should send another staff member to notify the Executive Director or designee. If only one staff member is present, they should note the intruder's last location and leave to notify the Executive Director or designee.
5. If an intruder is near minors, adult chaperones/counselors should move the minors to a safe distance.
6. The Executive Director or designee will:
    - Call 911.
    - Attempt to get the intruder to leave the camp.
    - Determine whether the entire group should gather and relocate to a safe area.
7. Participants and staff will follow the direction of the Executive Director or designee.

Active Shooter-

1. If an intruder has a weapon, staff and participants should follow the advice, “Run. Hide. Fight.”
2. If possible, leaders should instruct participants to run to the tornado shelter—the tornado shelter locks from the inside.
3. The Executive Director or designee will assign a leader to open the door for all persons seeking shelter who have identified themselves.
4. Anyone who notices an intruder should call 911.
5. Adult chaperones/counselors should, to the best of their ability, do a name-to-face count upon arriving at the shelter and report to the Executive Director or designee any participants whose whereabouts are unknown.
6. Staff and participants should remain in the shelter or remain hidden until law enforcement gives the all-clear.

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Evacuation Checklist

1. In the event of floods or forest fire, Living River's Executive Director or designee will contact Bibb County EMA by phone at (205)-926-3113 or, if in imminent danger, call 911, to alert them that there are individuals on site, and seek advice as to sheltering in place or evacuating the property.
2. The evacuation site will be Antioch Church, located at 8135 Co. Rd. 10, Montevallo, AL 35115.

Executive Director or Designee

__ Coordinate with emergency officials
__ Contact and confirm emergency shelter, Tracey Lamb (205) 789-9944
__ Contact and confirm emergency transportation
__ Prepare communication for parents, social media, and website.

Office

__ Work with the Executive Director to send e-mails to parents/guardians.
__ Work with the Executive Director to post notifications on social media and the website.

Health Care

__ Gather all health forms (participant & staff).
__ Gather all participants' and staff medications.

Leader(s) Designated by Executive Director or Designee

__ Verify that there are enough vehicles to move every participant off campus using the Emergency Master Participant List.
__ Meet with adults/counselors to discuss plans and verify that each adult/counselor has a cell phone that has a charge and signal.
__ Dispatch adults/counselors to instruct participants to move to the parking lot and wait in whatever group format makes the most sense.
__ Verify that each designated vehicle used for evacuation has its key.
__ Assign drivers or designate someone to assign drivers for each vehicle.
__ Prepare vehicles or assign someone to prepare vehicles for loading and departure.
__ Verify everyone is accounted for using the Emergency Master Participant List.
__ Load vehicles.
__ Verify that everyone assigned to each vehicle is accounted for.

Adults/Counselors Responsible for Minors

__ Follow the instructions of the Executive Director or designee and the leader(s) designated by the Executive Director or designee.
__ Upon arrival at the evacuation site, do a name-to-face count

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Living River Waterfront Policy

This policy applies to participants in Living River supervised programs.

For groups or individuals not part of a Living River supervised program (rental groups or individual users) who want to swim or canoe on the lake, a lifeguard is strongly recommended, and PFDs are required for every participant. Access to PFDs is available upon request.

If attempting to swim or canoe on the Cahaba River, groups and individuals using Living River's property outside of Living River supervised programs do so at their own risk. PFDs are highly recommended.

Supervision Ratios

The American Red Cross recommends "one lifeguard for every 25 swimmers, plus one watcher for every 10 swimmers. This ratio applies when supervising swimmers in pools, but additional lifeguards and watchers may be needed for lakes, rivers, and streams." For all aquatic activities at Living River, two trained lifeguards must be present at all times, at least one of whom is 18 years of age or older. These individuals can be Living River employees or hired by a rental group.

One lifeguard should be off duty, ready to respond in an emergency, and rotate on duty when the on-duty lifeguard rotates off, according to the break rotation schedule described below. In addition to the on-duty lifeguard and down lifeguard, one lookout should be present for every 10 swimmers.

Physical Fitness

- The first time an adult or camper comes to the lake, they must perform a swim test so the lifeguard can assess their swimming skills while wearing a PFD. The swim test requires the camper to swim from the dock to the swimming area boundary, touching a buoy, and back to the dock without stopping or needing assistance.
- Those with physical disabilities can enjoy and benefit from aquatics if the handicaps are known and necessary precautions are taken.
    - Wheelchairs are not permitted on the docks.
    - If support equipment is removed from persons using a wheelchair, a lifeguard will remain close enough to assist the individual if necessary.
    - Any wheelchairs in the waterfront area must have a brake to prevent accidental rolling.

PFDs (Personal Flotation Devices)

- All participants must wear PFDs at all times at the lake and river, while wading, swimming, canoeing, and hanging out or fishing by the lakeside.
- All participants will be trained in the proper use of personal flotation devices.
    - PFDs should be tight enough so they don't rise above the ears when pulled upward.
    - All buckles of a PFD should remain buckled.
    - Swimmers must be within the size/weight limit of their PFD.
- Before starting any water activity, a lifeguard or lookout should check that all PFDs fit properly.
- All PFDs must be in good condition. Living River will check every PFD annually for its ability to release water (does the foam contract and retreat considerably), any tears, and any non-functioning buckles.

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Lake Rules

1. Buoys mark a safe swimming area reserved for swimming only.
2. Living River will conduct periodic water tests to monitor water quality.
3. Swimming will be permitted at the lake only when a lifeguard is on duty, a down guard is ready to assist and rotate on duty, and a lookout is on duty.
4. One on-duty lifeguard should ensure the group has a long-range radio and that a point of contact at main camp has a long-range radio tuned to the same channel.
5. Both the on-duty lifeguard and lookout will be stationed on the swimming dock.
6. Any additional lookouts needed (there will be one lookout for every 10 aquatic activity participants at all times) should be spread out across the shoreline.
7. The down guard will be within earshot of a whistle sound.
8. If canoeing and kayaking are taking place at the lake, there should be a lifeguard on duty for every 25 participants and a lookout for every 10 participants.
9. The lifeguards and lookouts for canoeing and kayaking can be stationed on the shoreline or in a personal kayak in the water.
10. Lifeguards will rotate every 20 minutes between the on-duty point on the dock, the on-duty position for canoes and kayaks (if in use), and the down guard (on break).
11. The lookouts will rotate every 20 minutes between positions, including a break position, so there must be one more lookout than needed for the 1:10 ratio at the waterfront when waterfront activities are taking place at the lake.
12. No one shall be permitted entrance into the safe swimming area without permission from the lifeguard.
13. Waterfront lifesaving equipment, including lifeguard tubes, whistles, a first aid kit with a CPR mask, an AED, and a backboard, will be immediately available.
14. If there is lightning or thunder, all swimmers will leave the waterfront area for 30 minutes and return to the main camp.
15. Diving will not be permitted in the lake.
16. Excessive splashing or excessively dunking another swimmer will not be permitted.
17. Holding one's breath for an excessive amount of time will not be permitted.
18. Pushing on the dock will not be permitted.
19. Campers may remove their shoes while swimming or sitting on the dock. However, they must wear shoes in the lake area at all other times.

Cahaba River Rules (Swimming/Wading)

1. At Williams Landing, lifeguards upstream and downstream will designate the safe swimming area.
2. Living River staff will monitor river height. Swimming/wading will not be allowed if the Cahaba River's height at the Helena USGS gauge exceeds 60 cfs/1.3 ft. or 100 cfs/2ft at the West Blocton USGS gauge.
3. Living River will conduct periodic water tests to monitor water quality.
4. Swimming will be permitted in the river only when an upstream and a downstream lifeguard are both on duty.
5. Assign one lookout for every 10 swimmers. Position all lookouts in line with the downstream lifeguard, evenly spaced across the river between the far and near sides of the safe swimming area.

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6. One lifeguard on duty should ensure the group has a long-range radio and that a point of contact at main camp also has a long-range radio tuned to the same channel.
7. No swimmers should be more downstream than the barrier of lookouts and the downstream lifeguard.
8. No one shall be permitted entrance into the safe swimming area without permission from the lifeguard.
9. Waterfront lifesaving equipment, including lifeguard tubes, whistles, a first aid kit with a CPR mask, an AED, and a backboard, will be immediately available.
10. If there is lightning or thunder, all swimmers will leave the waterfront area for 30 minutes and return to the main camp.
11. No diving or jumping into the water at Williams will be permitted.
12. No throwing rocks.
13. Excessive splashing or excessively dunking another swimmer will not be permitted.
14. Holding one's breath for an excessive amount of time will not be permitted.
15. Pushing will not be permitted.
16. All participants must wear closed-toe shoes with a back strap in the river.

Watercraft Rules

1. All participants using a canoe or kayak on the lake or river at Living River must wear a PFD.
2. There should be a lifeguard (1:25) and a lookout (1:10) on duty for each watercraft activity as described in the lifeguard section below.
3. All participants must receive instruction from a Living River staff member who has received Level 2 Canoe Training from a certified instructor.
4. Watercraft use instructions must include:
    a. PFD fit, entering and exiting the canoe, unsafe watercraft behavior (standing up, rocking the watercraft excessively, using paddles inappropriately), basic paddling, and what to do in case their canoe flips:
        i. In the lake, the lifeguard will make sure both participants are okay and then direct the capsized participants to swim to the closest dock. If a participant needs medical attention, the lifeguard will blow three whistles to enact the EAP.
        ii. In the river, the trip lead or sweeper, whichever is closest, will make their way to the capsized boat and participants. Once they have verified the participants are okay, they will work with their canoe partner or signal for the lead to come and flip the canoe. If a participant needs medical attention, the sweeper and leader will blow three whistles to alert the other that they are enacting the EAP.
5. Each river trip should have a lead who has received Level 2 Canoe Training (covers class 1 rapids) from a certified instructor and a sweeper who has received orientation from the lead, is trained at least as a lookout, and is confident in their paddling skills.
    a. Either the lead or the sweeper should be lifeguard certified.
    b. Both the lead and sweeper should be Red Cross First Aid and CPR certified.
    c. The lead and sweeper should both have long-range radios tuned to the same channel during the entire trip. The trip lead or sweep should also ensure that a point of contact at main camp has a long-range radio tuned to the same channel.

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6. Rental Groups are advised to have at least one lifeguard-trained guide and/or a watercraft-certified guide who is also Red Cross First Aid certified for river trips.
7. If no Living River watercraft-trained staff person is available to give watercraft instruction to rental groups for a river trip, each rental group participant will sign a Living River watercraft instruction waiver in addition to Living River's general liability waiver.

Lifeguards and Lookouts on Duty

- When on duty, lifeguards have a rescue tube, whistle, and a first aid kit that includes a CPR mask.
- One lifeguard on duty should ensure the group has a long-range radio and that a point of contact at main camp also has a long-range radio tuned to the same channel.
- A backboard and an AED should be within sight of every lifeguard on duty.
- Lifeguards will conduct a safety orientation for participants before the activity.
- Lifeguards will not participate in recreational waterfront activities while supervising swimming activities.
- All Living River summer camp counselors must be trained as lookouts to help lifeguards keep swimmers safe.
- A minimum of 1 lifeguard will be on duty for every 25 participants during an aquatic activity.
- There will be one lookout for every 10 aquatic activity participants at all times.
- If more than one aquatic activity is taking place, a lifeguard should be on duty for each activity.
- Lifeguards and lookouts should rotate positions every 20 minutes.
- If lifeguards or lookouts supervising watercraft activities are in a kayak at the lake (canoe with a partner on the river), they will perform rescues without tubes since they will be wearing PFDs
- Between the minimum of two staff on duty for every water activity (a lifeguard and a lookout or lookouts), one must be at least 18 years old.
- **Lifeguards must hold current certifications in:**
    - Lifeguarding from a recognized certifying body
    - First aid, including training in bloodborne pathogens from a recognized provider, and CPR, including the use of breathing devices (e.g., pocket masks) from a recognized provider.
    - The guard's rescue skills must be verified in the environment in which they will guard.

Lifeguard Skill Verification and Lookout Training

Lifeguard candidates must demonstrate the following skills in the environments they'll be serving at Living River:

- ☐ Active Front Rescue
- ☐ Active Rear Rescue
- ☐ Passive Front Rescue
- ☐ Passive Rear Rescue
- ☐ Deep Water Passive Rescue
- ☐ Shallow Water Spinal Procedure
- ☐ Extraction with backboard (primary and secondary responders)
- ☐ Quality CPR with AED

All lifeguards (trained on-site or off) should be oriented to the following list.

- ☐ PFD inspection
- ☐ Swimming area rules

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- ☐ Watercraft rules and use
- ☐ Lookout responsibilities
- ☐ Canoe rescue
- ☐ AED location
- ☐ Backboard location

Lookouts- Non-lifeguard-certified individuals may be designated as "lookouts" to help monitor water activities. There will be one lookout for every 10 aquatic activity participants at all times. Lookouts must be CPR-certified. Lookout responsibilities include:

- ☐ Checking lifejackets for proper use.
- ☐ Keeping the lake and landing areas clear of unused items (toys, lifejackets, fishing equipment, personal items)
- ☐ Enforcing lake and river rules (life jackets required and fitted properly, no diving, jumping from the dock safely, no jumping in the river, no throwing rocks, proper shoes in the river)
- ☐ Helping lifeguards scan the swim area
    - ☐ Identifying swimmers in distress, active, and passive drowning victims
- ☐ Properly notifying a lifeguard of a need for help with whistle signals
- ☐ Carry out the following duties in an emergency.
    - ☐ Clearing the area of hazards
    - ☐ Directing others toward an out-of-the-way area
    - ☐ Calling 911
    - ☐ Assisting with CPR
    - ☐ Meet EMS to direct them to the victim

Buddy System

- Every swimmer will be paired with another swimmer who will be swimming in the same area.
- Buddies check in and out of the swimming area together.
- Buddies serve as a first line of defense, checking that their buddies are safe and well.
- Periodically, the Lifeguard will ask swimmers for a buddy check. During this procedure, all campers are to swim next to their buddies.

Whistle Signals

The whistles must be used properly and only as necessary. Each lifeguard and lookout should have a whistle on them at all times when on duty. Whistles will be used for primary communication in our aquatic areas. Whistles should remain around the neck or wrist and not be twirled.

- One Short Blast: To get the attention of a participant. After a lifeguard or lookout gets a swimmer's attention with a whistle blast, they should give clear instructions to correct behavior. Lookouts should also watch for unsafe behavior along the lake and river shorelines.
- Two Short Blasts: To call a Buddy Check
- Three Short Blasts: To activate the EAP and signal that you are entering the water for a rescue.
- One Long Blast: Clears the water for break/closing and signals to re-enter after a break.
- **Lookouts should only blow their whistles to get a participant's attention (one short blast).**
    - Lifeguards should take note whenever a lookout whistles for a participant's attention. That swimmer may need help or may continue to be a problem.

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Rain, Water Level, and Water Testing

- Living River staff or rental group leadership will check the weather for chances of thunder and lightning before every water activity.
- If the water activity is in the Cahaba River, the Living River staff or rental group leadership will also check:
    - The USGS water gauge at Helena, upstream of Living River, (https://waterdata.usgs.gov/monitoring-location/USGS-02423555/#period=P7D&dataTypeId=continuous-00060-0&showFieldMeasurements=true) or West Blocton, downstream of Living River, (https://waterdata.usgs.gov/monitoring-location/USGS-02423647/#period=P7D&dataTypeId=continuous-00060-0&showFieldMeasurements=true)
    - The Cahaba Riverkeeper Swim Guide, when available, provides information on E. coli levels. (https://cahabarivercoalition.org/about-the-cahaba/swim-guide/)
- Water activities should be rescheduled if leadership determines that:
    - The chance of thunder and lightning is too high
    - The water level is too high or low if using the river.
    - The risk of E. Coli is too high for the group's comfort.
- If it rains without thunder or lightning, staff will be ready to clear the water, and lifeguards will be ready to blow one long blast to clear the water.

Living River Aquatics Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

1. Recognize an emergency has occurred.
2. Activate the EAP and signal other lifeguards to cover for you by blowing three short blasts on your whistle.
3. The nearest lifeguard will provide backup coverage. The backup will clear the water if necessary. All lifeguards available will assist as needed.
4. Check to see that the scene is safe to enter. Look for other patrons in the victim's direct path. Is the victim struggling violently?
5. Reach the victim, move them to safety, and assess their condition.
6. If the victim is unconscious or has been submerged, signal for EMS by having another staff member call 911 and ask to be connected to Shelby County. Then begin CPR, checking for breath first. Signal for the AED. Secondary, primary rescuers, and/or any CPR-trained lookout nearby take turns providing CPR until AED and/or EMS arrive. Skip to step 8.
7. If the victim is conscious, do a secondary survey; assess their condition, and continue to monitor their life signs. Then:
8. In either case:
    a. Notify Leadership
    b. Complete Accident/Incident Report.
    c. Check equipment and replace it if necessary (backboard, medical supplies)
    d. Take any corrective action to prevent another accident/incident.
    e. Return to duty.
    f. Have a staff debrief as soon as possible after the accident/incident.

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LIVING RIVER: A RETREAT ON THE CAHABA, INC
PARTICIPANT RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK AGREEMENT

Group/Organization or Event Name: _____

Participant Name(s): _____

Activity (check all): ___ Hiking ___ Canoeing ___ Swimming ___ Fishing __Picnicking__

Retreat ___Camping ___Overnight in LR buildings ___Meeting ___Other_____

Date(s): _____

In consideration of being allowed to participate in any way in the program, related events and activities, I the undersigned, acknowledge, appreciate, and agree that:

1. The risk of injury from activities involved in this program is significant, including the potential for permanent paralysis and death.
2. I KNOWINGLY AND FREELY ASSUME ALL SUCH RISKS, both known and unknown, EVEN IF ARISING FROM THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASEES or others, and assume full responsibility for my participation.
3. I willingly agree to comply with terms and conditions for participation. If I observe any unusual significant hazard during my presence or participation, I will remove myself from participation and bring such to the attention of the nearest official immediately.
4. I, for myself and on behalf of my heirs, assigns, personal representatives and next of kin, HEREBY RELEASE, INDEMNIFY, AND HOLD HARMLESS LIVING RIVER: A RETREAT ON THE CAHABA INC., its officers, officials, agents and/or employees, other participants, volunteers, sponsors, advertisers, and if applicable, owners and lessors of premises used to conduct the event (RELEASEES), from any and all claims, demands, losses, and liability arising out of or related to any ILLNESS, INJURY, DISABILITY OR DEATH I may suffer, or loss or damage to person or property, WHETHER ARISING FROM THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASEES OR OTHERWISE, to the fullest extent permitted by law.
5. I will abide by all local, state and federal guidelines or laws.

I HAVE READ THIS RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK AGREEMENT, FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS, UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE GIVEN UP SUBSTANTIAL RIGHTS BY SIGNING IT AND SIGN IT FREELY AND VOLUNTARILY WITHOUT ANY INDUCEMENT.

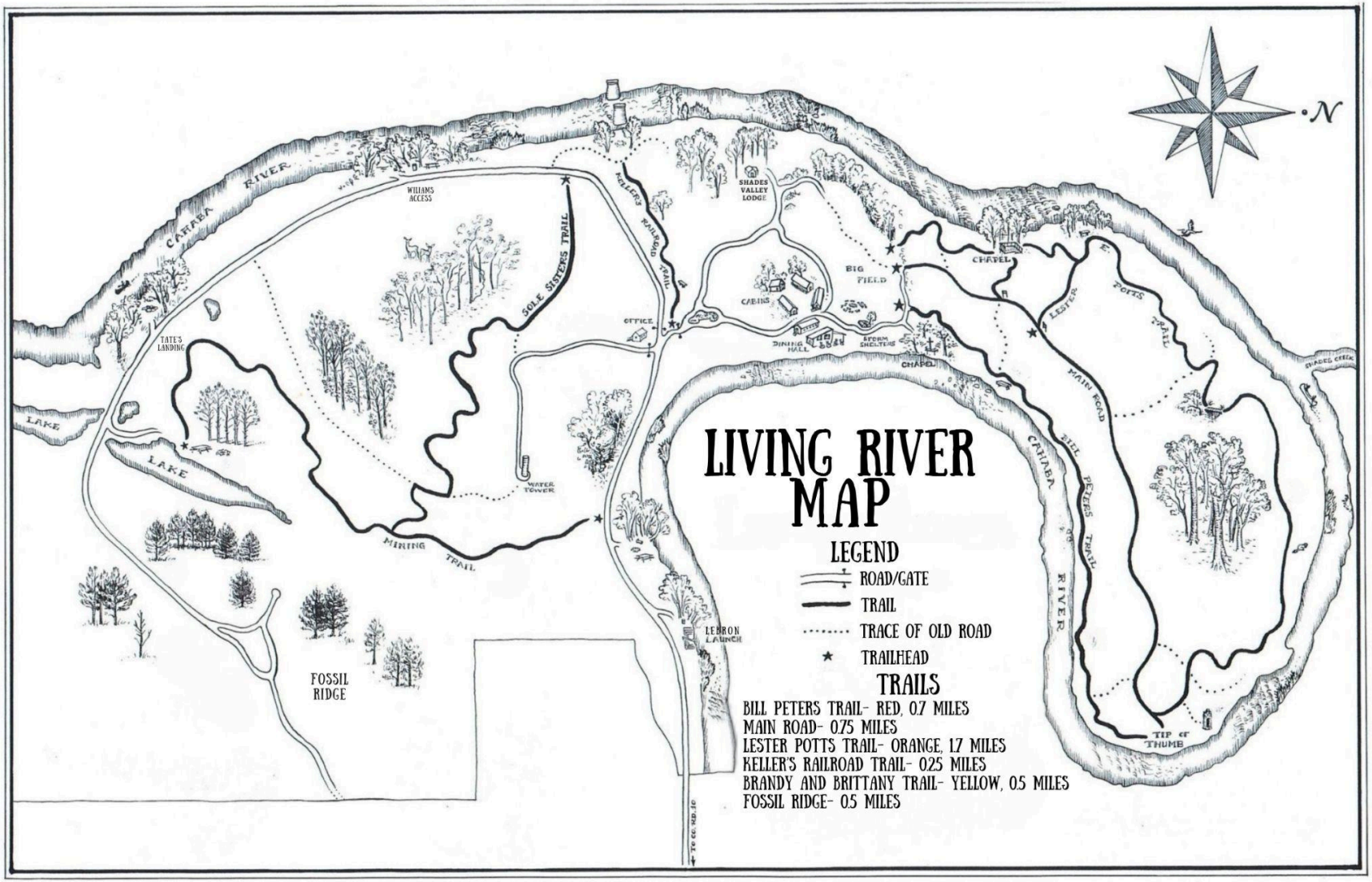
_____ _____

Adult (18 or over) Participant's Signature Date

FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF PARTICIPANT(S) OF MINOR AGE (under age 18 at time of registration) This is to certify that I, as parent/guardian with legal responsibility for this participant, do consent and agree to his/her release as provided above of all the Releasees, and, for myself, my heirs, assigns, and next of kin, I release and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Releasees from any and all liability incidents to my minor child's involvement or participation in these programs as provided above, EVEN IF ARISING FROM THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASEES, to the fullest extent permitted by law.

_____ _____ _____

Parent/Guardian Signature Date Emergency Phone Number

Updated Sept., 2026

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