



WINTER CAMP LEADERS GUIDE

January 2 – 4, 2026

Dear Unit Leaders,

Scouts, and Parents Welcome! The staff of Winter Camp 2026 welcomes you to Camp Horne. We look forward to another successful year where your Scouts can continue to grow in their life journey through Scouting.

Winter Camp is a wonderful place to discover new friends, enjoy good food, and build lifelong skills through both Scouting and Venturing program opportunities. This year's Winter Camp will be different from previous sessions! Though we offer merit badge programming like that of summer camp where Scouts can work on up to 2 merit badges. Winter Camp stresses fun through the open program activities. These activities allow Scouts to enjoy utilizing some of the skills they have learned already in Scouting.

Please review the Leaders' Guide as parts of it has changed for estimated requirements per merit badge, they should complete during camp along with the open program activities being offered. This Leader's Guide is an attempt to provide you with as much information as possible about what to expect at Winter Camp. If you have any specific questions or unit requirements, please do not hesitate to let us know. We will do everything within our power to ensure your Scouts have a memorable experience and an enjoyable learning opportunity.

Please be sure to thank our staff (your merit badge counselors, kitchen staff, and countless other volunteer leaders) who help make this program possible. If not for our volunteer staff and their willingness to take time out to provide this experience for your Scouts, Winter Camp would not exist. A big thank you is definitely in order! Speaking of the kitchen staff who specifically puts in very long hours.... please be sure to thank them daily for keeping us well-nourished and full of warm hot cocoa.

On Saturday, January 3rd, there will be a dessert cook off. This will be offered for ALL participants, both youth and leaders. Bring your entry to the Dining Hall between 5pm and 7 pm. Those that wish to turn in an entry will need to bring their own cooking gear.

On behalf of the River District, the Black Warrior Council, and the staff of Winter Camp 2026, we look forward to seeing you soon!

Yours in Scouting,
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Registration for In-Council Participants

Registration will open **November 3, 2025**, and will close when full or on December 19, 2025*, whichever comes first.

Registration can be completed using the online registration system at the council website, <https://www.bwc-bsa.org>.

The online registration uses a real-time system for signing up for merit badge classes. All adults and youth attending camp must be registered members of BSA. Refunds will be handled following the council's refund policy, see the council website for details. The camp fees are as follows:

Youth - \$125**

Youth Eagle Rank - \$75*** (17 years of age or under)

Adults - \$60 - One adult leader may attend free for every six (6) paid Scouts (max 2 per unit).

*Registration will include a T-shirt and Winter Camp patch if paid by the December 11th deadline. Late registration (Dec. 11th) rate of \$140 for youth and \$75 for adults will apply.

**Certain merit badge classes require an extra fee. (See the merit badge section for more information.)

*** Youth Eagle Rank rate will apply if that Eagle will agree to assist instructing a Merit Badge or Assist with one of the Open Activities (climbing tower or Range or Target Activities).

Early Arrivals **

Units must schedule early arrival with the Winter Camp Director as early as possible, and no later than Dec. 19th. Early arrivals must contact the Camp Ranger upon arrival, but they will register with the other Units on Friday, January 2nd. Provisional Scouts will arrive during check-in on Friday, January 2nd.

**Meals are not included for early arrivals, so Units should make their Thursday evening and /or Friday breakfast meal plans prior to arriving.

Check-In

The check-in process will begin at 6:45am on Friday, January 2nd at the Hulsart. Arriving Units must have all paperwork completed and ready for hand-in to expedite you getting to site/classes. The camp administrators will collect medical forms, Unit rosters, and any unpaid fees. Units should plan to arrive at camp as a Unit. This will help speed up the check-in. If your Unit does not have all attendees during check-in, the unit will be required to have an adult remain at the check-in to collect the remaining attendee's paperwork and then check-in their unit. We apologies ahead of time for this inconvenience but the Morning Check-in is very hectic and the staff of focusing on making this the best Winter Camp experience for your Scouts.

Every camper (adult and youth) must wear their Winter Camp ID at all times.

Vehicles will be permitted to drive to the campsites to unload gear. Once unloaded, all vehicles will need to be moved to the Lower Hulsart parking lot by 9am.

REMINDER, please ensure that your Scouts eat prior to arrival as the Dining Hall will not open until the noon meal. The Trading Post will open, but not during check-in.

Medical Forms and Medication

All participants, youth, and adults, who are participating in Winter Camp, must bring a current copy of their BSA Medical Form parts A, B and C. This form must be signed by parents and medical personnel and dated within the last year. A copy of the insurance card must be attached to the medical form. Anyone attending a single day needs parts A and B only. All injuries and ailments should be reported to the Camp Health Officer.

Any prescriptions at camp must be reported and locked up. Medications should be locked up and administered by the Scoutmaster in camp. In some cases, medications can be locked up and administered by the Winter Camp Health Officer.

Emergency medications (epi-pen, inhalers etc.) should be kept with the users at all times and will not be locked up.

Buddy System

All troops and scouts are required to use the Buddy System at all times. When traveling around camp during non-merit badge times each Scout should have a Buddy to assist in the event of an emergency.

Visitors

All visitors must stop and check in at the Hulsart to receive a visitors parking pass and badge. Campers will be instructed to report all persons without proper ID to Camp Staff.

Emergency Procedures

There are several different types of emergencies that we need to be prepared for. Unless unavailable, a text message will be sent via the emergency messaging system to clarify what precautions should be taken.

The following is a list of situations that could happen and how to react in each case. IN THE EVENT OF A CAMP-WIDE EMERGENCY, THE FOLLOWING WARNING SYSTEM WILL BE UTILIZED.

Severe Weather (Scattered Thunderstorm or severe lightning watch/warning)

1. If needed, alarm will be sustained ringing of the dining hall bell.
2. All aquatic areas will be closed, and campers will be moved away from open water.
3. All campers will be instructed to stay away from clearings and solitary trees.
4. Take cover – do not try to get to your campsite and remain with your group.

Severe Weather (Thunderstorms and Tornado watch/warning)

1. Alarm will be sustained ringing of the dining hall bell.
2. When a Severe Thunderstorm Warning, Tornado Watch, or Tornado Warning is issued, all campers will be instructed to report to the Dining Hall unless otherwise instructed by camp management. No one should remain in campsites.
3. If weather conditions make it unsafe to move to emergency shelter location, move to lowest, safest area with protection. If you must take this action, notify camp management immediately. This is a last resort.
4. Stay with your group. Unit leaders will be asked to give a full head count accounting for every member of their units.

Severe Weather (Flash Flood watch/warning)

1. If needed, alarm will be sustained ringing of the dining hall bell.
2. All aquatic areas will be closed, and campers will be moved away from open water.
3. Avoid low-lying areas and areas near water.

Fire (Minor)

1. Put out fire with equipment and manpower available on site.
2. Send for staff help if needed.
3. Do not attempt to contact outside emergency services. The Camp Director will contact any needed emergency services.
4. Inform Camp Director and Camp Ranger for further evaluation.

Serious Accident or Illness

1. Start first aid at site – do not try to move a seriously injured person.
2. Send for staff help. Send a runner to health lodge.
3. Do not start rumors; all unneeded people will be kept away from the area of the incident.

4. Inform Camp Director IMMEDIATELY. Do not attempt to contact outside emergency services. The Camp Director will contact any needed emergency services.
5. Complete notes of incident will be recorded.

Major fire, Missing Person, Lost Swimmer

1. Alarm will be sustained ringing of the dining hall bell.
2. All program areas will be closed in an orderly fashion.
3. All campers (youth and adult) and staff must move to Parade Field immediately in an orderly manner and using the buddy system.
4. Campers will line up by unit. Unit leaders will conduct head counts. All campers will wait for instructions from camp management.
5. Unit leaders will report missing campers to the staff.
6. Do not attempt to contact outside emergency services. The Camp Director will contact any needed emergency services.

Inclement Weather

1. Camp administration will monitor severe weather conditions. In situations of low temperatures and wind chill, all leaders will be informed via announcements, leader's meetings, and/or emergency messaging system.
2. Program Director will work with unit leaders and staff to schedule alternate locations for Merit Badges.
3. Hiking and activities that require physical exertion will continue and campers will be reminded to dress in layers.

Intruder

1. Report any unauthorized person to the Camp Director VIA Camp Staff.
 - All visitors must check-in through the Hulsart. Anyone who is not a camper or registered visitor will be considered an intruder.
2. All program areas will be closed and locked down.
3. Depending on the situation, run away, or hide. As a last resort, fight or defend yourself.
4. Do not attempt to contact outside emergency services. The Camp Director will contact all emergency services.

Hazardous Material Exposure

1. Contact Health Officer to follow instructions on appropriate SDA Sheet.
2. If Necessary, Contact Alabama Poison Control Center @ 205-334-6969.

Dangerous Encounters with Wildlife

1. Snakebite: Contact Health Officer immediately.
2. Apply pressure above the affected area.
3. Have the person remain calm.
4. Camp Administration will coordinate transport to Druid City Hospital.

Natural and Manmade Hazards at Camp and Program Sites

1. Use caution around hazard.
2. Report any new hazards to Camp Director or Camp Ranger.

Equipment Emergencies

1. For any issued in the campsite, please use the QR code to report any camp equipment that is not working properly.
2. If injured, contact Health Officer

Winter Weather Preparedness

As you know, the weather in West Alabama in December is very unpredictable. It could be 70 degrees, or it could be 20 degrees. Most likely, it will be in the 30's or 40's and wet. The best thing to do is to "Be Prepared." When camping in the winter it is important for the Scouts to be dressed for the weather and to stay dry. They should have layers of insulation under their sleeping bag. Help the Scouts by ensuring that they have what they need, they can use the equipment checklist at the end of the leader's guide to help them pack.

Uniforms

The Scouts BSA field uniform should be worn to the evening flag ceremony and evening meal each day. The rest of the day and night the Scouts may wear whatever they choose as long as the clothing is in good taste. Weather conditions will be a major factor in how the Scout's dress.

Theme Days

Scouts and Units, this is your chance to be silly and outright wacky by participating in the daily theme. Camp staff will be on the lookout for the most creative, funny, and original looks that fit the day. All theme attire must be in good taste and follow BSA guidelines. Refer to the Winter Camp schedule for the theme of the day. If you have a theme that you would like to see added in the future, please see the Winter Camp Director. It is all about Scout spirit!

- Friday (Holiday Hat/Socks)
- Saturday (Ugly Christmas Sweater)
- Sunday (Hawaiian Shirt)

Meals

All meals will be provided at Camp Horne's dining hall, starting with lunch on January 2nd and ending with Lunch on January 4th. There will be a special Cracker Barrel each night; the location will be announced at lunch; all campers are invited to come by.

******For special dietary needs, please note during your registration
and contact the Winter Camp Director******

Before each meal every day, a Scout will lead grace. Any Scout who wishes to lead the grace should see the Winter Camp Director. Please note that Scouts are reverent each in their own way. The Scout may say his own grace or can lead Grace.

The Summit Grace

For this time and this place,
For Your goodness and grace,
For each friend we embrace,
We thank Thee, Oh Lord.
Amen

Winter Camp Schedule		
Friday 1/2		HOLIDAY HAT
6:45 - 7:45am	Check - In	Hulsart
8:00 - 9:30am	Morning Class #1	
9:45 - 11:15pm	Morning Class #2	
11:30 - 12:15pm	Lunch	Dining Hall
12:30 - 5:00pm	Open Program	
5:00 - 5:45pm	Free Time	
5:45 - 6:00pm	Flags	Parade Field
6:00 - 7:00pm	Dinner	Dining Hall
7:00 - 9:00pm	Game Show Night	Trading Post
7:00 - 9:00pm	5 Mile Hike	TBD
9:00pm – 10:00pm	Cracker Barrell	TBD
11:00pm	Lights Out	Assigned campsites
Saturday 1/3		UGLY SWEATER
7:00 - 7:10am	Flags	Parade Field
7:10 - 7:50am	Breakfast	Dining Hall
8:00 - 9:30am	Morning Class #1	
9:45 - 11:15pm	Morning Class #2	
11:30 - 12:15pm	Lunch	Dining Hall
12:30 - 5:00pm	Open Program	
5:00 - 5:45	Free Time	
5:45 - 6:00	Flags	Parade Field
6:00 - 7:00pm	Dinner	Dining Hall
7:00 - 9:00pm	Campfire Program	Dining Hall
9:00 – 10pm	Cracker Barrel	TBD
11:00pm	Lights Out	Assigned campsites

Sunday 1/4		HAWAIIAN SHIRT DAY
6:00 - 6:30am	Polar Plunge	Lakefront* subject to change
7:00 - 7:10am	Flags	Parade Field
7:10 – 7:15 am	Non-denominational prayer service	Dining Hall
7:10 - 7:50am	Breakfast	Dining Hall
8:00 - 9:30am	Morning Class #1	
9:45 - 11:15pm	Morning Class #2	
11:30 - 12:15pm	Lunch	Dining Hall
12:30 - 3:00pm	Campsite Clean Up	
3:00pm - 4:00pm	Check Out	Hulsart

MERIT BADGES

Archery	All requirements to be covered during camp
A.I.	All requirements to be covered during camp
Bird Study	All requirements to be covered during camp
Cit. in Nation	All requirements to be covered during camp
Cit. in World	All requirements to be covered during camp
Climbing	All requirements to be covered during camp
Communication	All requirements to be covered during camp
Cooking (pending)	All requirements to be covered during camp EXCEPT #4
Disability Awareness	All requirements to be covered during camp
Fire safety	All requirements to be covered during camp
Fly Fishing	All requirements to be covered during camp
Geocaching	All requirements to be covered during camp
Law	All requirements to be covered during camp
Music	All requirements to be covered during camp
Reptile and Amphibian Study	All requirements to be covered during camp
Rifle Shooting	All requirements to be covered during camp
Shotgun	All requirements to be covered during camp
Surveying	All requirements to be covered during camp
Veterinary Medicine	All requirements to be covered during camp

Trail Blazer & First Aid MB Program

The Trailblazer Program, first year campers get started right at camp while working on requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class. The Trailblazer program will run during both morning sessions of Winter Camp. Trailblazer participants will attend First Aid MB during the first part of open program to allow scouts time to participant in open program fun in the afternoon. Trailblazer is also a great opportunity to get all your newly recruited scouts a jump ahead as they prepare for Summer Camp.

Open Program Activities

Open Program activities sign-up is available during the Unit's initial registration. Many of these activities have a participant limit so that we can better serve the youth in these areas. Many of these activities have professionals coming into camp to provide these opportunities for our scouts. Spaces for these activities fill fast so complete your unit registration early. Please note that open program activities time varies. Scouts not making it to their assigned class may not show up for another offer due to class spacing. For questions concerning the open program activities, see Winter Camp Director.

**** *Adult leaders may participate in the open programs also. Please sign up to attend.***

Skeet Challenge Course** is open to youth 14 years of age and up. If you enjoy shooting skeet or just looking for a new challenge, we have a thing for you! Did you know that Camp Horne has 13 stations that offers a different challenge for all shooters? Space is limited so sign up early.

3-D Archery is open to youth 14 years of age and up. Typical archery range is flat, with targets set at exact distances. In contrast, 3-D Archery takes the archery range into the woods, introduces unique angles, and creates new ways to have fun with a bow. Camp Horne has simple challenging course with 10 targets for your fun and excitement!

Other activities for Winter Camp

- 2026 5-mile evening New Years Resolution Adventure hike
- Blacksmithing – (limited space)
- Corn Hole Tournament
- Chimney Climb
- Climbing
- Dutch Oven Cooking
- Open Shotgun
- Open Rifle
- Open Archery
- Cowboy Action shooting – (14 yrs. of age and up)
- Conservation and Nature Camp Projects
- 9 Square Tournament
- Ga-Ga Ball Tournament (weather permitting)

Wildlife Photo Contest – Open to all.

Contest to capture the beauty of the wildlife around Camp Horne. All photos need to be sent to Winter Camp Director by 7pm Saturday. Winner will be announced at campfire.

Polar Plunge – All Polar Plunge participants must wear appropriate swimwear and a properly fitted PFD. Also bring a large drying towel and warm clothing for after the plunge; water shoes are recommended due to possible frost on the dock. Participants will meet outside the boat dock before 6:00 AM for check-in and a head count. Once PFDs are inspected, everyone will form a single-file line to the entry point. Only **one participant will be allowed in the water at a time**. When given the signal, each participant will take **one step** off the boardwalk—**no diving or jumping**—then turn immediately, swim to the ladder, and proceed to the boat shed to remove their PFD and dry off. No one may leave the area until all participants have completed the plunge and the final head count has been confirmed. The Winter Camp Director and a designated Adult Leader will supervise safety throughout the event.

What to Bring

Each scout should bring his or her own personal gear. Each item on the list is important. Please stress the necessity of having the proper gear.

Scout Equipment • BSA uniform shirt • Scout Handbook • Water bottle or canteen • Flashlight with extra batteries • Personal first aid kit Bedding • Sleeping bag and pillow • Old blankets - to put over/under Sleeping bag as an insulation Other Items • Duffel bag or footlocker for personal gear • Lip balm • Personal hygiene items • Washcloth and towel • Notebook, pens, pencils • Camp chair • Spending money • Camera	Clothing The key to cold weather camping is to stay warm and dry. Bring both light and heavyweight clothing to "layer" if the weather is cold. For underwear and socks, bring at least one change per day. Underwear Socks - a pair of lightweight socks next to your feet will pull the moisture away and keep your feet warmer. Socks - heavy (wool is best - they will be warmer, even if wet) T-shirts - Long, thermal underwear - at least one pair – Hooded sweatshirt and sweatpants – (make the best pajamas in cold weather) Long pants - Long sleeve shirt - Warm coat or jacket - suitable for camping environment - Stocking cap and gloves or mittens Winter boots Extra Pair of footwear - sneakers are OK – Rain gear
• Troop Gear • Water cooler • U.S. Flag / Troop Flag • First aid kit • Broom - Ropes – Tarps • Cooking equipment for Holiday Dessert cookoff	What NOT to bring • Space heaters • Firearms • Fireworks • Alcohol • Illegal Substances • Electronics • Valuables • Pets • Large sheath or survival knives • Anything that detracts from scouting

Winter Camp Troop Challenge

Troops can compete to win the Winter Camp Cup. Troops will receive an activity scoring sheet along with instructions upon arrival at check-in. Troop will earn points for the activities they participate in during Winter Camp. The Troop collecting the most points will be awarded the coveted Winter Camp Cup during lunch on day 3.

Provisional Troop

We recognize that not all troops will be able to attend winter camp. We have arrangements for those scouts who would like to attend without their troop. Scouts attending camp in a provisional status will be placed together and adult leadership will be provided. Scouts are responsible for participating as a provisional Troop and following provisional leadership. Adults wishing to camp with the provisional troop are welcomed. There are Adirondacks available, but the scouts may bring their own tents.

Daily Duties

Campsite	Tuscarora	Chickasaw	Cherokee
Friday Task	Flags	Dining Hall	Prayer
Saturday Task	Dining Hall	Prayer	Flags
Sunday Task	Prayer *	Flags	Dining Hall

***On Saturday after evening meal, it is requested that all Chaplain Aids or any youth that would like to lead a Non-denominational Prayer after Breakfast to See the Camp Director.**

Facilities

Camp Horne sites have Adirondacks with areas to accommodate some tents as well. Most campsites have platforms for tents to be set up if you choose to bring your own. To request a specific site, please indicate when registering before December 19, 2025.

(In order to reserve a specific site, ALL fees must be paid in full at the time of registration).

The youth protection rule of separate accommodations will be enforced. All adults are required to enforce this policy. If needed, adults are asked to bring tents to sleep in, even when staying in sites with Adirondacks, to maximize the number of spaces available to the youth.

Accommodations

Q. Why do youth tent separately from parents outside of Cub Scouting?

A. Scouts BSA, Sea Scouts, and Venturing are youth-led programs. The Cub Scout program is family oriented.

Accommodations – Excerpt from Guide to Safe Scouting.

Separate accommodations for adult males and females and youth males and females are required.

Adirondacks/Tenting

- Separate tenting arrangements must be provided for male and female adults as well as for male and female youth.
- Youth sharing tents must be no more than two years apart in age.
- In all other programs, youth and adults tent separately.
- Spouses may share tents.

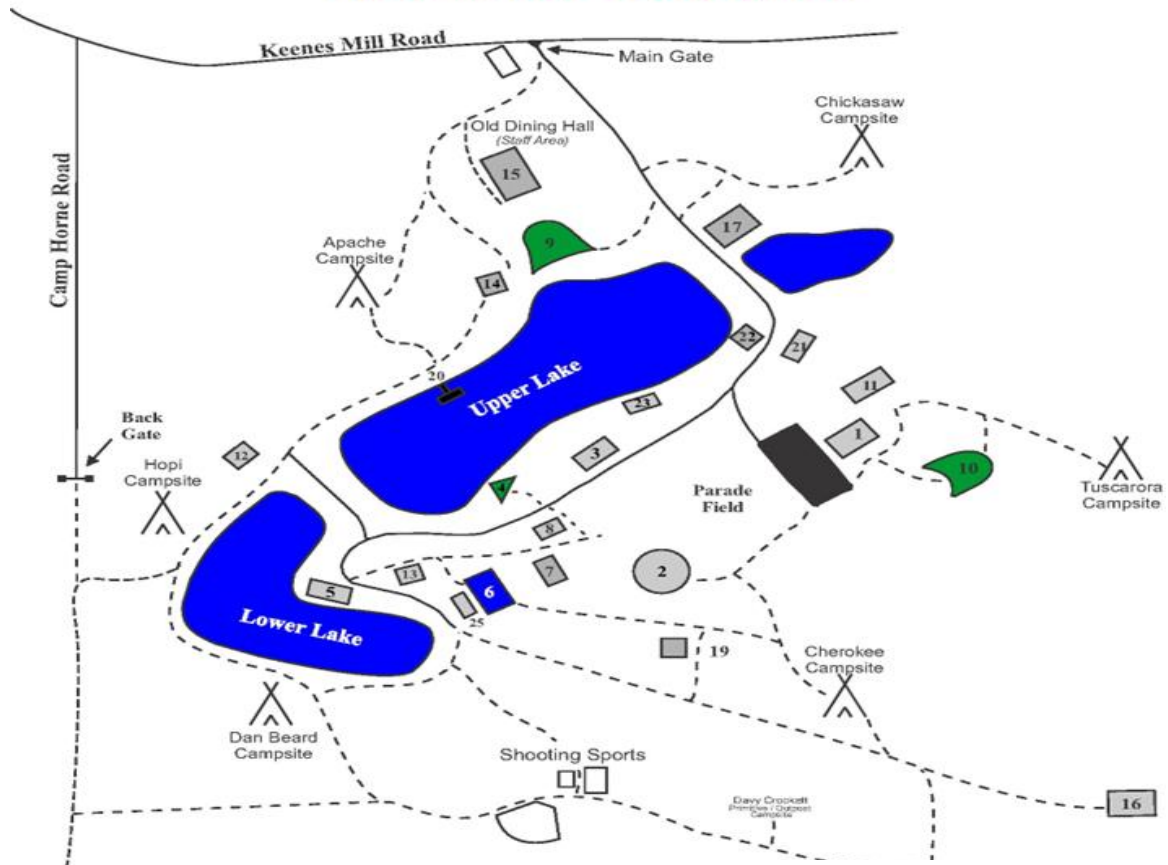
Holiday Dessert Cook-Off Extravaganza

Attention all youth and adults!!! Showcase your Holiday cooking skills in our dessert cook-off! A select few of our lucky, or possibly unlucky, staff will be called upon to judge this event. Participants will need to bring their equipment and ingredients.

Please bring your entry to the Dining Hall at 7:45pm on Saturday night to be judged.

Camp Horne

Black Warrior Council, BSA



- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Hulsart Training Center | 13. Blackfoot Cabin |
| 2. Dining Hall | 14. Ecology Cabin |
| 3. Program Storage Building | 15. Old Dining Hall (Staff Area) |
| 4. Livingston Chapel | 16. Climbing Tower |
| 5. Trading Post | 17. Warehouse |
| 6. Pool/Showers | 18. Target & Range Activities |
| 7. Health Lodge | 19. Sue Cabins/Scout Skills |
| 8. Handicrafts | 20. Boating Area |
| 9. Warren G Finney Council Ring | 21. Trailblazer Pavilion/ScoutCraft |
| 10. Sunday Night Campfire Ring | 22. Boat House |
| 11. OA Lodge | 23. Lakeside Pavilion |
| 12. Hopi Cabin | 24. Pool Pavilion |

Campsite departure checklist

Item	SPL Initials	Leader Initials
Campsite entrance clear and free of trash		
Personal belongings and trash removed from Adirondack		
All Mattresses hung on hooks/nail		
Adirondack curtain closed		
All toilets flushed w/lids down		
Trash bag removed and replaced in latrine		
Latrine swept and cleaned of trash and dirt		
Campsite tools: broom(s), rake(s), shovel(s) stored away in the latrine		
Ensure to extinguish all fires by pouring water on them, ensuring they are cold to the touch		
Remove all debris and unburned firewood, ensuring firewood is cold to the touch.		

Verified by Camp Staff Member