

## Mountaineers Youth Programs Essential Eligibility Criteria

Participant safety and health are the top priority on all Mountaineers activities. To minimize the risk associated with participating in a Mountaineers program, each individual must be fully capable of and committed to engaging in course activities, meeting physical and social challenges, and tending to their personal needs as well as the collective needs of the group.

The Mountaineers values diversity – including persons with diverse abilities – in its programs and encourages youth of all abilities to consider participating in our youth programming. Our youth program instructors and coordinators are skilled experiential educators and group facilitators, but The Mountaineers does not specialize in serving persons with disabilities or significant mental health, emotional, or behavioral conditions. Our staff are neither therapists nor medical professionals, and are neither trained in adaptive programming nor able to provide specialized, individual support.

The Mountaineers Youth Programs Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC) provides a guideline of the physical, cognitive, and behavioral skills needed for participation in youth programs sponsored by The Mountaineers. These EEC are intended to be a resource for anyone considering participating in a Mountaineers youth program, and are not intended to be exclusionary. If a participant cannot meet the EEC, a determination will be made as to whether The Mountaineers can reasonably accommodate them while maintaining the health, safety, and positive learning environment for all youth and staff members in the course.

To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all campers, the following **essential eligibility criteria** must be met by all participants **with or without assistance from a trained aide**. By enrolling in camp, families agree that their camper is able to meet the following standards:

### **General**

- Able to adapt to the physical, emotional, and social demands of summer camp- being outside and active each day, participating as a member of a group/community, respecting rules and policies communicated by instructors. Able to comprehend hazards and safety concerns after instruction, and to adhere to safety policies and procedures even when instructors are not present.
- Able to consistently follow verbal and visual instructions and refrain from self-injurious behaviors, violence, threats, and aggressive or intimidating outbursts. Able to refrain from use of and references to violence and weapons (real or fake).
- Able to recognize safety hazards and communicate danger, distress, or medical and/or mental health issues to staff in a timely manner.

- Able to perform essential self-care, including maintaining adequate nutrition and hydration, dressing appropriately for environmental conditions, maintaining personal hygiene, and managing known medical conditions away from home.
- Able to refrain from the use of alcohol, nicotine (*unless otherwise approved*), and all unapproved substances, and misuse of prescription or non-prescription drugs.
- Able to be respectful of the various identities (such as race, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and nationality) of others; refrain from behavior that is discriminatory to other's identities, socially exclusive behavior, and language that is derogatory or harmful to others.
- Able to contribute to a safe, inclusive social and learning environment; maintain appropriate relationships with other group members and instructors; and refrain from behaviors that disrupt the learning and enjoyment of others.
- Compliance with The Mountaineers' "Rule of 3", stating that campers must travel with either 2 other campers or one camper and one instructor when leaving the larger group.
- Must arrive at course-start neither experiencing nor presenting any symptoms or signs of communicable disease.

**Lodge Camp (*in addition to everything in the "General" category*)**

- Able to adapt to the environment of overnight summer camp- sleeping in a room with other participants, living and recreating 24/7 with others, and being flexible in ways of living that are different from home.
- Able to respect the physical lodge space for the duration of the program, including cleaning after oneself and the group, keeping personal belongings with one's own bags, refraining from roughhousing or throwing items indoors, and generally leaving the space better than you found it.
- Able to independently hike on uneven terrain for up to 6 hours a day (with frequent breaks) while carrying a small backpack (lunch, water, and layers). Groups will often be split to accommodate different hiking paces and/or difficulties of hikes.
- *[For climbing weeks only]* Able to wear a climbing helmet, as per manufacturer's recommendations. If participating in climbing activities, able to wear a climbing harness, as per manufacturer's recommendations.

**Campers who do not meet these eligibility criteria or who break community agreements may be sent home at the discretion of the camp staff and director, as described in our behavior management response protocols.** Please also refer to [The Mountaineers Essential Eligibility Criteria](#) for a broader look at the club's eligibility criteria and to our [Member Code of Ethics](#) for information about our community expectations.

## Behavior Management Response Protocols

### Level 1: Early recognition & response

- **Examples:** Repeated disengagement, pushing boundaries, not listening to instructors, disrupting other participants' experiences.
- **Response:** One-on-one conversation between participant and instructor, call to parent/guardian, clarify expectations of camp and review community agreement.

### Level 2: "Last chance", preparing for departure

- **Examples:** Bullying or teasing other participants, repeated pushing of boundaries or disregarding leadership of instructors, repeated disruptive behaviors.
- **Response:** Follow up one-on-one conversation between participant and instructor, call to parent/guardian, clarify expectations with participant as well as parents and staff, clear positive and negative consequences, timeline for changed behaviors/dismissal.

### Level 3: Dismissal from camp program

- Examples: Physical violence, verbal abuse, sexual harassment, possession of weapons, vandalism, stealing, leaving camp grounds, or repeated negative behaviors after "last chance" conversation.
- Response: Immediate call to parents and early release from camp program.
  - ***In the case of dismissal from camp, guardians of participants will be required to arrange for their child's travel home. There will be no refund of any kind.***