

**Camp is a summer experience unlike any other.** In addition to the joy of working outside and creatively, it also provides real-life, hands-on opportunities to develop the skills employers are looking for now: complex problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, group management, emotional intelligence, negotiation, judgment and decision making, cognitive flexibility... all that, and the knowledge that you are changing the lives of the campers you are serving. *What more could you ask for in a summer job or internship?*

## Staff Basics

*Read the Summer Staff FAQ for more details and important info for your application!*

- West River offers both **overnight and day camp programs for campers entering grades 1-12.**
- We have four summer staff roles:
  - **Day Camp Staff** spend all day (9am-5:30pm) with one group of campers, leading some activities and building relationships with them.
  - **Program Staff** facilitate activities such as high ropes, large group games, worship, crafts, and kayaking for all groups on site.
  - **Kitchen Aides** help keep camp moving by serving meals, washing dishes, and supporting the work of the chef.
  - **Lifeguards** keep the pool safe and running for camp and weekend groups throughout the summer, as well as occasionally helping with activities on the river
- Most positions require staff to have graduated high school by June or be at least **18 years old**. Some positions, like Lifeguard, and Assistant Day Camp Counselor, are open to **applicants aged 16+**. Kitchen aides can be **14+ years old**.
- All staff contracts include **paid, mandatory staff training**. Training requirements vary by position.
- Most contracts are **June through mid-August** but contract dates vary by position.
  - **Program staff** work Sunday through Friday including overnights. Time off most weekends from Friday pm to Sunday am.
  - **Day camp staff** work Monday to Friday 8am-6pm.
  - **Lifeguards** are assigned shifts
  - **Kitchen Aides** sign up for shifts during the week which they will work.
- **West River is an inclusive and affirming community** - we do not discriminate based on race, gender, sexual identity, national origin or church affiliation. While we don't

require staff to identify as Christian, we expect enthusiastic and open-minded participation in all aspects of our Christian community. We serve campers, hire staff, and host volunteers who come from all different backgrounds, races, sexual orientations, political affiliations, and socio-economic status.

## Quick Facts

### Dates

Most contracts will be June 1 through August 11, 2023. Lifeguard training is Memorial Day weekend and is encouraged for all staff. There is flexibility for those wishing to come early or stay longer. There are possibilities for most positions to work during the year as well.

### Pay Details

For on-site staff, pay starts at \$375/week. Benefits include room & board, training & certifications.

Hourly staff (day camp, lifeguard, kitchen aide) start at \$13.25/hour.

For all staff, bonuses and pay bumps are available for extra qualifications, specialized positions, and experienced staff.

Staff are paid biweekly.

### Work Hours

On-site staff: Report Sunday at noon and "clock out" after closing meeting on Friday (typically by 7 pm). During the day, staff work with campers and facilitate activities through the evening.

Day Camp staff hours may be day-only, Mon-Fri. Contact us for more details.

Lifeguards and kitchen aides work specific shifts each day during the week.

### Housing

West River has 2 staff cabins- Baker and Kahlert houses. Each house has AC/heat, living space, kitchenette or kitchen. Depending on staff numbers, staff might share a room with 1 or 2 other staff members. Staff members must be at least 18 years old, or a high school graduate turning 18 during 2023, to live on-site.



Camp Map

## Activities

West River has a wide variety of activities offered to campers every week. We have kayaking/ paddle boarding/ canoeing, arts and crafts, archery, pool time, banana boating (type of tubing), large group games such as capture the flag, sailing, climbing wall, giant swing, team building, nature hikes, and campfires.

## Summer Staff FAQ

# ALL THE DETAILS

So you're interested in working at camp, but you'd like to know a lot more? Here are some frequently asked questions (and their answers!) to help you understand the nuts and bolts of working at summer camp. *Want to see the job description for a specific position?* [Contact us!](#)

### **What is West River's mission?**

West River seeks to help every person who comes to our site grow in their love of God, self, neighbor, and nature.

### **What is the application process?**

1. Apply through our online application (link). Make sure to contact your references and ask them to serve as a reference.
2. We will review your application and you may be contacted by phone or email to schedule an interview.
3. Applicants will go through a 30-40 minute Zoom or in-person interview.
4. We will email/ call and hear back from your references.
5. We will call you to tell you the results of your application.
6. If you accept a position offered to you, you will receive a work agreement and other information via e-mail.
7. All staff must pass a state and FBI background check, Child Protective Services background check, and a drug screening.

## **When does camp start and end?**

- Mandatory Staff Training for all program and day camp staff May 30- June 16, 2023
- First day of camp for campers: June 11, 2023
- Most contracts will end Friday, August 11, 2023
- Some contracts available through mid- to late August

## **What are my normal work hours?**

Staff who are **living on site work Sunday through Friday**, unless discussed with us during the interview process. Report time is noon every Sunday, and the week ends Friday evening when you are dismissed from Closing Meeting, typically by 7 pm. Breakfast is at 8am each morning, campers are typically in bed between 9-10 pm.

**Day camp staff work Monday- Friday**, 8am to 5:30pm.

**Lifeguards are assigned shifts, and kitchen aides sign up for shifts.** Lifeguards typically work 11am-5pm, while kitchen aides can either take the breakfast/ lunch shift (7am-2:30pm) or the dinner shift (4-8pm).

## **Do I have any free time?**

On-site staff typically have on-site free time after camper “Lights Out,” after around 9pm. Year-round staff work to give at least an hour/ hour and a half activity block off for each staff each day. Lifeguards and kitchen aides have 15 minute breaks throughout their shifts.

## **What about weekends?**

On-site staff have most weekends free from approximately 7 pm Friday through 12 pm Sunday. You may go home or stay at camp for the weekends. West River hosts picnic groups on

Saturdays throughout the summer and staff can sign up to work those days for extra pay.

Lifeguards will also be asked to work certain weekends.

## **Do I get any other time off?**

Requests are preferred prior to the start of your contract, but must be made at least 2 weeks in advance of the time off.

**Flexible contracts may be considered** on a case by case basis for staff who will require full weeks off during the summer for mission trips, family vacations, etc. These requests MUST be included on your application and discussed prior to contract offers.

## **What and when will I be paid?**

Pay varies by position, qualifications, and length of contract. Base pay for all first year domestic staff (those already with US work eligibility and not sponsored or recruited by an agency) is \$375/week for on-site staff; first year international staff (those with sponsored J-1 visas or recruited by an agency) are paid in accordance with their agency's "pocket money" determination.

Base pay for hourly staff is \$13.25/ hour.

Bonuses and pay bumps are available for extra qualifications, specialized positions, and experienced staff.

Paydays are every other Friday; direct deposit is required as of 2021.

## **Where do I live?**

West River has 2 staff cabins: Baker and Kahlert houses. Each house has AC/heat, living space, and a kitchenette or kitchen. Depending on staff numbers, staff might share a room with 1 or 2 other staff members. There are dressers in each room for staff belongings. Staff members must be at least 18 years old, or a high school graduate turning 18 during 2023, to live on-site.

## **Will I be fed?**

Of course! Meals are provided throughout the week, and staff have access to food on weekends. The dining hall serves up a variety of meals, with healthy options provided. Special dietary needs can often be accommodated if we are notified in advance.

## **What is your electronics policy?**

One of the best things about camp is the fact that you can unplug and enjoy nature. Campers are not permitted to bring any electronics with them (and counselors are expected to confiscate any items that are found during the week). Staff are expected to have their phones with them for emergency communications, taking pictures, and participating in the weekly staff and volunteer group message system; however, staff serve as role models and should be an example of the "unplugged lifestyle" for campers by using their phones only as needed for camp.

## **Is there a uniform?**

On opening day, staff are expected to wear the West River polo provided to them by camp. The rest of the week, you may wear casual clothes professionally appropriate to your job.

## **Is there a dress code?**

A dress code is enforced for practicality and professionalism. Staff are to dress in a manner appropriate to the work which they are doing. For the most part, we want staff to be wearing clothes that will keep them safe and appropriately clothed for whatever activities they are doing; this may mean having sun protection, wearing closed-toe shoes in the kitchen or while running a ropes activity, or having a swimsuit appropriate for athletic water-related activities. The full dress code is in the staff manual.



### **What else should I bring to camp?**

In addition to clothes you can be active and comfortable in, like t-shirts and shorts, it's good to have a pair of long pants for when you need to belay. Water shoes, athletic shoes, bathing suit, towels, toiletries, bedding (for international staff, we can provide this), sunglasses, hat, water bottle, sunscreen, bug spray, and a backpack are all very useful and/or necessary. There is a kitchenette or kitchen in each staff cabin if you want to bring particular snacks/drinks to store there.

### **What about laundry?**

West River has a few washers and dryers around camp. Staff can use the facilities in the maintenance shop, or in the dining hall/ Retreat Center if there are no guests in those buildings.

### **How do staff maintain physical and mental health at camp?**

Staff need to stay physically and mentally healthy: the summer is not a sprint; it's a marathon! On top of that, it's important to model these things for our campers. Personal hygiene, balanced eating, and good sleep habits are essential parts of maintaining your health. If staff are feeling



physically or mentally unwell, it's encouraged and expected that you let your supervisor know. There will be a camp nurse on site each week, and the director also has access to a mental health professional throughout the summer. You can't care for others if you aren't caring for yourself, and there are resources available to help staff with self care.

## **Can I receive packages and letters at camp?**

Yes! The camp's address is 5100 Chalk Point Rd. West River, MD 20778

## **What are your policies regarding drug, tobacco, and alcohol use?**

Our policies are designed with the law and the safety of staff and campers in mind. While respecting the independence of its community members, West River requires that staff and campers comply with local and federal laws, including those that govern use of alcohol and other drugs. The Baltimore-Washington Camp & Retreat Ministries has no ability or authority to shield individuals from prosecution under federal, state, or local law. Drug use (including marijuana) is strictly prohibited on and off camp property. Alcohol is also prohibited on camp property, and staff may not consume alcohol within 12 hours of reporting to work. West River promotes non-smoking, and there is only one place at camp designated as a smoking area; this applies to all products containing tobacco and/or nicotine, including cigarettes, vapes, chewing tobacco, etc.



## **What else do I need to know if I want to work at camp?**

**Every staff role also includes** kind and empathetic communication/engagement with children and youth, setting clear boundaries by teaching and enforcing camp rules and procedures, working cooperatively with fellow staff, being willing to look and act a little silly sometimes (like by dressing up for theme activities and singing goofy kids' songs, for example), taking care of oneself in order to care for others, and contributing to the overall mission by sometimes doing tasks that aren't explicitly listed in your job description.