



Parent Handbook 2026!

Thank you for choosing Camp Esquagama to be a part of your camper's summer adventure! Whether this is your family's first time joining us or you're a returning camp family, we're so excited to welcome you to another season filled with fun, friendship, and discovery.

At Camp Esquagama, we believe just one week can have a lasting, positive impact on a child's life. For generations, campers have come here to build lifelong friendships, grow in self-confidence, learn new skills, and—most importantly—just enjoy being a kid. Our team is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment where your child can thrive through group experiences and personal growth, all while having an absolute blast.

This handbook is your guide to everything you need to know before camp begins—from registration details and what to pack, to drop-off procedures and how to stay in touch. If you have any questions along the way, don't hesitate to reach out. We're here to help and excited to partner with you in making this summer amazing.

Registration Questions

There are two simple ways to register your camper: **online** or **over the phone**.

We use **UltraCamp**, a secure and user-friendly system for online registration and electronic health records. Through UltraCamp, you can complete all necessary forms, update your camper's information, and manage your account with ease.

Need help? We're here for you! Give us a call at **(218) 865-6589** or email robert@campesquagama.com, and we'll walk you through the process. We're also happy to help you register and fill out forms over the phone if that's easier.

Payments, Fees, & Cancellations

All camp fees must be paid in full by the **first day of your camper's session**.

If you have any questions about your account or need help with payment, please don't hesitate to reach out. We're happy to assist in any way we can.

Ways to Pay:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• By Mail:
Camp Esquagama
4913 Pine Lane
Gilbert, MN 55741
<i>Checks payable to Camp Esquagama</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• By Credit Card or ACH:
Payments can be made through your UltraCamp account or over the phone by calling our Camp Director. |
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Cancellations

We understand that plans can change! If your camper won't be able to attend their session, please let us know as soon as possible. Early notice helps us offer the spot to another camper who may be on our waiting list.

Here's how our cancellation policy works:

- You may cancel or transfer to a different week **at no charge**, as long as we're notified **before your camper's session begins**.
- If camp is notified **after the session starts**, a **50% refund** may be issued.
- **No refunds** will be issued once the session ends and no cancellation notice was received.

We're always happy to work with families to find the best solution. Please reach out with any questions or special circumstances—we're here to help.

Medications

Your camper's health and safety are top priorities at Camp Esquagama.

If your child takes any prescription medications, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, or supplements, please follow these important guidelines:

- Medications must come to camp **in their original containers**—no daily organizers or loose pills.
- **Only send what's needed for the week.**
- Medications will be collected at check-in by our **Camp Nurse or Camp Director**.
- Please pack medications in an **easy-to-access spot** in your camper's luggage.
- We also ask that you **log and update all medications** in your camper's **UltraCamp profile**, which we use for registration and electronic health record keeping.

Our trained staff will securely store and administer all medications throughout the week. We follow best practices to ensure each camper receives the correct medication at the correct time, with care and attention.

Camp Mail & Email a Camper

There's nothing quite like hearing from home while at camp! We encourage families to stay connected with their campers through letters, packages, and our convenient Email a Camper feature in UltraCamp.

Traditional Mail

You are welcome to send letters and small packages to your camper throughout the week. We encourage messages that share updates from home, ask about their adventures, and celebrate all the fun they're having at camp. Please note: Traditional mail can take 3–7 business days to arrive. If you plan to send something through the postal service, be sure to mail it early enough that it arrives before the end of your camper's session.

Email a Camper

Looking for a faster way to send a message? Through your UltraCamp account, you can send email letters directly to your camper!

To send an email:

1. Log into your UltraCamp account.
2. Open the menu and select Message Center.
3. Click Email a Camper.

4. Write your message and send it to your camper.

Our staff print email letters each day around noon and deliver them along with regular mail during the afternoon mail call.



Invite Family & Friends

Want grandparents, relatives, or family friends to send messages too?

Within the Message Center, select Friend Account to invite others to email your camper.

Once invited, they can send email letters throughout your camper's week at camp.



Will My Camper Write Back?

Maybe!

Sometimes campers write home every day. Other times, they become so immersed in camp activities, friendships, and adventures that they completely forget. This isn't a good thing or a bad thing. It usually means they're busy having fun and making the most of their camp experience.

If you'd like to make it easier for your camper to write home, consider packing:

- Pre-addressed and stamped envelopes
- Postcards
- Paper and pens or pencils

Even with the best intentions, many campers will proudly arrive home at the end of the week with every letter they meant to mail still tucked safely in their backpack!

Emergency Notification

Your camper's safety and well-being are our highest priorities.

In the event of an illness, injury, or other emergency, a member of our camp administration team or the Camp Director will contact you **as soon as your camper is safe and receiving care.**

To help us reach you quickly, please make sure your **UltraCamp profile** includes the most up-to-date contact information for:

- Primary parent/guardian phone numbers (home and cell)
- Work contact numbers (if applicable)
- At least one additional emergency contact

Keeping this information current ensures that we can reach you right away if needed—and gives you peace of mind while your camper enjoys their week.

Canteen (Snacks & Camp Store)

We refreshed the canteen experience in 2025 to keep it fun, tasty, and a little healthier too. Each day, campers can enjoy **two special treats—one snack and one drink**. Classic favorites like chips and sports drinks are still available, but we've also introduced more wholesome, lower-sugar options to help campers feel their best. As part of this change, we've phased out items with higher amounts of sugar and caffeine.

The Camp Store Is Back—Now Online!

We're thrilled to announce the return of the **Camp Esquagama store**—this time in an easy-to-shop online format! Hosted through **Bonfire**, our online store allows families to shop for camp gear anytime.

You'll find:

- This summer's **official camp t-shirt** is available online in many colors and hoodies! Don't worry as your camper will still receive new camp shirt to tie-dye at camp!
- **Limited-edition throwback designs**
- Get your hoodie and sweatpants to show off your Camp Esquagama spirit all year long

Visit our website to see what's available and place your order! **Make sure to ship it to your home.** *Camp Esquagama is not responsible for anything shipped to camp.*

<https://www.bonfire.com/store/campesquagama/>

Camper Birthdays

We love celebrating birthdays at Camp Esquagama! If your camper has a birthday during their time at camp, we make the day extra special with ice cream treats and a variety of fun surprises and celebratory moments throughout the day.

That said, we know not every camper wants to be the center of attention. If your camper prefers a low-key celebration, we'll still recognize their special day—but in a more minimal, low-stress way that fits their comfort level.

If you'd like to arrange something special for your camper, you are welcome to:

- **Mail or drop off a birthday package** ahead of time
- **Coordinate a treat** for their cabin or day camp group (store-bought and allergen-aware, please!)

In either case, please **talk with the Camp Director beforehand** to ensure everything goes smoothly and fits within our camp's safety and scheduling guidelines.

Weekly Themes

Every week at Camp Esquagama is filled with creativity, laughter, and camp magic—but our weekly themes take it to the next level! Themes shape everything from cabin decorations and skits to games and our legendary Thursday night celebrations. Campers are encouraged to join the fun by dressing up—whether that means going all-out in costume or adding a few playful accessories. It's all about making memories, being a little silly, and feeling part of the week's adventure.

Costume Tips:

Since camp is primarily outdoors, we recommend packing outfits that are **comfortable, breathable, and okay to get a little dirty**. Whether it's dust from the trail or glitter from a dance party, it's all part of the story!

2026 Weekly Themes Preview



Week 1 – Super Heroes

Camp becomes a superhero training ground! Whether you swing in like Spider-Man, soar like Wonder Woman, or invent your own original alter ego, the week ends with an epic celebration of creativity and courage.



Week 3 – Under the Sea

Dive into a whimsical underwater world! From mermaids and scuba divers to jellyfish and sea creatures, the camp transforms into an ocean-inspired celebration straight out of Atlantis.



Week 4 – Outer Space

Blast off into an intergalactic adventure! Campers can channel their inner astronaut, alien, or sci-fi character for a cosmic dance party that's truly out of this world.



Week 5 – Animal Kingdom

Let your wild side roam free! Whether you're prowling in leopard print, flapping in bird wings, or relaxing in panda PJs, this is the week to celebrate the creatures of the camp jungle.

Week 6 – Disney

Camp becomes an enchanted kingdom! Dress up as your favorite Disney character—princesses, heroes, sidekicks, or even villains are welcome. There's a little magic in everyone!

Week 7 – Black Tie

We close out the summer in style! Campers dress in their finest (think tuxedo tees and summer dresses), but with a twist—it's also a spy-themed soirée. Secret agents, gadgets, and mystery abound in this fancy-meets-fun farewell celebration.

Week 8 – Mystic Kingdom

Step into a world of wonder as Camp Esquagama transforms into a Mystic Kingdom filled with brave heroes, wise wizards, shimmering fairies, soaring dragons, noble knights, unicorns, and legendary adventurers. Campers can arrive as students of magic, royal explorers, guardians of dragons, or woodland creatures as we focus on the light and inspiring side of fantasy, think castles, treasure maps, glowing lanterns, and enchanted forests. Grab your cloak, crown, or wand, the kingdom awaits!

Drop-Off & Pick-Up Information

To help everything run smoothly and safely, we've set up a few important procedures for camper drop-off and pick-up. Please read through carefully—and don't hesitate to reach out with any questions!

Authorized Pick-Up

For your camper's safety, only individuals listed on their **UltraCamp account** will be allowed to check them in or out. **A valid photo ID may be required at pick-up**, so please come prepared. Need to add someone (like a grandparent or a friend's parent)? Just update your UltraCamp account or contact the Camp Office ahead of time.

Overnight Camp Programs

Check-In (Sundays)

- Sign up for a check-in time for your week of camp using our online scheduler: <https://calendly.com/campesquagama-1935>
- Appointments are available every 5 minutes to prevent crowding and long wait times.
- Check-in takes about **2–6 minutes per camper**.
- All check-in takes place at our **PAVILION**, located just inside the front gate between the cabins.
- Have more than one camper? Book one spot for every 2 campers if possible. Coming with a larger group and your times aren't back-to-back, we'll help you check them in together.

Check-Out (Fridays)

- Camper pick-up is between **2:00 PM and 3:00 PM**.
- At **3:00 PM**, we invite all families to join us down at the **waterfront** (weather permitting) for a final **Closing Ceremony** featuring songs, smiles, and a warm camp send-off.

Day Camp Program

 **Daily Check-In:** Between **7:15 AM and 8:00 AM** at the PAVILION

 **Daily Check-Out:** Between **4:15 PM and 5:00 PM**

- Camper must be checked out with staff before picking them up from their group.
- On the **last day of camp**, early check-out begins at **2:00 PM**, followed by our **Closing Ceremony at 3:00 PM**.
- As with overnight camp, **only authorized individuals** listed in UltraCamp may pick up your camper, but additional family members and friends are welcome for the final camp songs!

Camper Behavior & Expectations

At Camp Esquagama, we believe every camper deserves to feel safe, respected, and included. Our goal is to create a positive environment where kids can be themselves, try new things, build friendships, and have a blast.

We expect all campers to:

- Be kind to one another
- Respect themselves, others, and the camp environment
- Follow directions from staff
- Participate to the best of their ability
- Help make camp a fun and welcoming place for everyone

If a camper struggles with behavior, our staff will work with them using compassion, encouragement, and clear communication. However, if unsafe or disrespectful behavior continues—or if a camper's actions put others at risk—Camp Esquagama reserves the right to send the camper home at the parent/guardian's expense.

In such cases:

- **Camp fees will not be refunded**
- **Families may be billed for any damage caused by the camper**

Examples of behaviors that may result in dismissal include (but are not limited to):

- Physical or emotional harm to others
- Inappropriate or threatening language
- Destruction of property
- Possession of prohibited items (see "Please Do Not Bring")

We believe in helping campers grow through challenges, and we'll always do our best to support them in making positive choices.

Lost & Found

With all the excitement of camp, it's easy for a sock, towel, or water bottle to get left behind!

To help your camper return home with everything they brought, we strongly encourage you to **label all belongings clearly** with their name.

At the end of each session, we'll display lost and found items during check-out. We recommend families take a moment to look through the items before heading home. Unclaimed items will be held at camp **through October**. After that, anything still left behind will be donated to a local charity such as Goodwill or the Salvation Army. If you realize something is missing after camp, give us a call. We'll do our best to help you locate it and arrange for pickup or shipping if needed.

Please Do Not Bring

To support a safe and distraction-free camp experience, we ask that the following items **stay at home**:

- **Electronics**
(Cell phones, tablets, music players, gaming devices)
Camp is all about unplugging from screens and reconnecting with nature, community, and the present moment.
- **Food, candy, gum, or beverages**
These can attract pests like ants, squirrels, and raccoons—and also create health risks for other campers who may have **severe food allergies**. All campers receive snacks through the canteen or day camp program, so no extra treats are needed.
- **Knives, weapons, or hazardous items**
For everyone's safety, these are strictly prohibited.
- **Valuable or sentimental items**
Camp is an active place—things can get dirty, lost, or damaged. It's best to leave irreplaceable items at home.

 *Any prohibited items will be collected and held in the Camp Office until pick-up day.*
Camp Esquagama is **not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged belongings**.

Final Thoughts

Thank you for taking the time to read through the 2025 Camp Esquagama Parent Handbook. We hope this guide has answered your questions, eased your planning, and helped build excitement for an incredible summer ahead. If anything comes up—before, during, or after your camper's session—please don't hesitate to reach out. We're here to support you and your family every step of the way.

 **Phone:** (218) 865-6589

 **Email:** robert@campesquagama.com

We can't wait to welcome your camper to a week full of laughter, growth, connection, and unforgettable memories. See you at Camp Esquagama!

OVERNIGHT - What to Pack for Camp

Packing for camp is part of the adventure! Use this guide to help your camper feel prepared, comfortable, and ready to dive into an unforgettable week.

Tip: Please label all belongings—especially clothing, water bottles, and bedding—to help prevent lost items.

Adventure Program: No additional gear is needed, if you have questions, please contact us at camp!

Clothing

- T-shirts and tank tops (6–8)
- Shorts (4–6 pairs)
- Long pants or jeans (2–3 pairs)
- Sweatshirts or hoodies (2–3)
- Light jacket or fleece
- Raincoat or poncho
- Pajamas (2 sets)
- Underwear (8–10 pairs)
- Socks (8–10 pairs)
- Swimsuits (2)
- Dance or theme night attire (see Weekly Themes)
- Hat or cap for sun protection
- Sunglasses

Footwear

- Closed-toe athletic shoes (1-2 pairs)
- Sandals or flip-flops (for shower and waterfront use only)
- Water shoes or old sneakers (for water activities)

Bedding & Linens

- Sleeping bag or twin-sized bedding set
- Pillow with pillowcase
- Fitted twin sheet (recommended for mattress)
- Bath towels (1-2)
- Beach towel (1)
- Washcloths (1-2)
- Laundry bag (labeled)

Toiletries

- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Hairbrush or comb
- Shampoo and conditioner
- Body wash or soap in a container
- Deodorant
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Shower caddy or toiletry bag
- Feminine hygiene products (if applicable)

Miscellaneous Essentials

- Reusable water bottle (labeled)
- Flashlight or headlamp (with extra batteries)
- Pre-addressed and stamped envelopes or postcards
- Stationery and pens/pencils
- Books or quiet activities for rest time
- Small backpack or daypack

Optional Items

- Goggles for swimming
- Disposable or digital camera (no smartphones)
- Decorations for bunk area (photos, small posters)
- Theme night accessories (face paint, fun hats, etc.)

Camp Esquagama is **not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged belongings.**

DAY CAMP - What to Pack for Camp

Day campers should bring everything they need for a full day of fun packed into a **backpack they can carry and take home each day**. We ask families to **double-check your camper's belongings at pick-up**, as items often shift or get left behind in the excitement of the day.

Please clearly label everything with your camper's name.

Daily Essentials

- **Backpack** (easy to carry and big enough for all daily items)
- **Refillable water bottle** (labeled)
- **Extra change of clothes** (shirt, shorts/pants, underwear, socks)
➤ *We play hard! Kids may get wet or messy during activities.*
- **Swimsuit and towel** (*for fun in the lake!*)
- **Sunscreen** (we do have extra in case it is forgotten)
- **Bug Repellent** (we do have extra in case it is forgotten)
- **Hat or cap** (for sun protection)
- **Closed-toe shoes** (sneakers recommended for running and playing)
- **Sandals or water shoes** (*for water play only*)

Optional

- Lightweight jacket or hoodie (for cool mornings)
- Raincoat or poncho (on forecasted rainy days)

Reminder:

Day campers **take all items home with them at the end of each day**. Please help your child check their backpack before leaving, and double-check at pick-up to ensure everything makes it home.

Camp Esquagama is **not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged belongings.**