

# VIRGINIA LIVING MUSEUM

Thank you for registering for the Virginia Living Museum's camp programs! This handbook reviews all camp procedures and policies. Please ensure you are familiar with each section in our handbook. **By registering for camp you are agreeing to all policies outlined in this handbook.**

A minimum enrollment is established for each camp and must be met at least two weeks prior to the first day of camp. You may cancel up to 10 business days before the camp begins, and receive a refund minus a \$10 handling fee. After that time, no refunds can be made. If the Virginia Living Museum cancels the program, a full refund will be issued.

Each day of camp, your camper will experience fun hands-on crafts, science experiments, and an exclusive meet & greet with an ambassador animal. You will receive an itinerary that reviews the daily theme, as well as a few sample activities for the day.

## **Camp Supplies**

Please send your camper with the following supplies for camp

Required:

- a packed snack and lunch that do not require heating (they will not have access to a fridge or a microwave) **Half day camp age group 3-4 will only need a snack.**
- closed toed shoes
- refillable water bottle
- weather appropriate clothing (there will be some outdoor activities, weather permitting)
- a change of clothes (we may get messy!)
- a tote bag or backpack to carry home craft and personal items

Optional:

- personal craft supplies (i.e pencils, markers, scissors, glue sticks)
- sunscreen (applied before coming to camp)
- bug spray (applied before coming to camp)
- a coloring book or reading book
- one small personal item (i.e stuffed animal, toy car, etc). Larger or complex items such as legos, pokemon cards, remote controlled cars, etc, often prove to be distractions for both the child and other campers, and are not allowed at camp.
- a sweater or jacket (some areas of the museum may be chilly!)

## **Electronics Policy**

If you wish for your child to be in possession of an electronic device for emergency purposes, the device must remain in the child's backpack/bag and be put on silent mode. Campers will not be permitted to have out or use any electronic device, including cell phones, smart watches, tablets, etc., for the entirety of camp. If the camper is found to be using such devices during camp, the camper will be given one verbal warning to please put the item(s) back in their bag. If the camper is found using the device(s) again, the device(s) will be taken by the camp staff and stored with them until the end of the camp day.

Please refrain from contacting your child using any electronic devices during camp hours. If there is an emergency and you need to contact the camp or your child, please call 757-595-1900 or 757-534-7410.

## **Staff and Camper Supervision**

Our VLM summer camp staff come from a variety of backgrounds, with each one being selected by the Education Director based on their interpersonal skills and their experience with children. All staff have some type of early childhood or recreation experience. The staff are CPR, first aid, and AED certified. Each camp will have a minimum of 2 staff members at all times, and the campers will remain under their supervision for the full time that camp is in session. No person under the age of 18 will be responsible for any group of campers, and no camper will be left indoors or outdoors unattended at any time.

## **Drop off & Pickup**

Drop off begins promptly at 9am for all camps. Each age group will meet outside in front of the museum. In the event of inclement weather, please meet inside the museum. Drop off ends at 9:10am for all camps. Late arrivals must check in at the front desk. Please note parents of late arrivals will need to wait with campers until a member of the education staff is available to escort them to their camp group - campers may not be left unattended at the front desk.

- Pick up will occur inside the museum at the following times:  
**Half Day ages 3-4 at 12:00pm**  
**Full Day ages 5-11 at 3:00 pm**
- Only adults (18+) will be allowed to pick up campers.
- Any adult picking up campers must know the **2 word pickup code** set during camp registration. If any adult does not know the code, they must present valid identification and their name must be listed on the approved pickup list. To update your 2 word pickup code or your approved pick up list please email [reservations@thevlm.org](mailto:reservations@thevlm.org).
- If you need to pick up your camper early, please inform your camp counselor at the beginning of the day. When you arrive, please provide the front desk with the child's name and age group. Due to the nature of camp, please allow a few minutes for your camper to arrive at the front desk.
- **We cannot accommodate early pickups after 2:30.**

## **Late Pick-up Policy**

- Parents of participants enrolled in Virginia Living Museum Camps will be charged \$2.50 per minute beginning 15 min after listed pick up time.
- **If you know you are going to be late, please notify the museum by calling 757-595-1900 so we can let your child and the educators know. Late fee will still be charged.**
- If a parent or authorized pick-up person does not arrive or call by 15 minutes past the designated pick-up time, staff will assume an emergency exists and will begin to call emergency contacts for your child.
- If no emergency contact can be reached within 1-hour past designated pick-up time, staff may contact the Newport News Police Department who will pick up the child.
- Late fees will be due within two business days. Late fees can be paid at the front desk upon pick up.
- Any child who is not picked up will be under the supervision of an assigned educator/administrator until the parent, emergency contact, or the authorities arrive. All

information about the incident will be discussed directly with the parent or guardian and never with the child.

- **Continued disregard for the pick-up time or failure to pay late pick-up fees can be cause for the child's termination from the program.** It is very important to have updated contact information in your child's file at all times - contact the museum's Reservations staff at (757) 534-7410 or [reservations@thevlm.org](mailto:reservations@thevlm.org) to update for your contact information.

### **Absences**

If your child is going to be absent for any days of camp, please inform the camp staff at the beginning of the week. If an unexpected absence must occur, please call 757-534-7410, or email our Reservations team at [reservations@thevlm.org](mailto:reservations@thevlm.org). Please note that refunds are not available for non-medical absences. For our policies about medical/sick related absences, please see below under "Camper Health Policy".

### **Food Procedures**

Each day, campers will be provided set times to eat a **morning snack and lunch**. These times will occur at approximately **10am and 12pm**, respectively. Please note the half day age 3-4 camp does not eat lunch (pick up is at noon). Campers will be given 15-30 minutes to eat the morning snack, and 30 minutes to eat lunch. Please read the following information regarding our snack and lunch procedures:

- It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide both a snack and a lunch for their child.
- For the child's sake, we recommend packing them separately in the lunchbox, or clearly indicating to the child which is which.
- Campers must eat their snack and lunch during the allotted times, and will not be allowed to eat food from home outside of the allotted times. Medical reasons would be an exception to this policy, but must be discussed with camp counselors at the beginning of the camp week.
- **We cannot provide any refrigeration or heating for the food items.**
- We encourage you to pack a snack and lunch that are nutritious and provide the camper with the energy they will need for the camp day. We also encourage you to not provide more food than what you believe your child is able to consume within the allotted times.
- **Camp Counselors cannot, under any circumstances, provide snack or lunch items for the child.** If the child does not have their snack and/or lunch by the start of the camp day, it is **the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that a snack and/or lunch is delivered to the child by 10am for snack, and 12pm for lunch.**
- We encourage avoiding severe allergens (i.e peanuts, shellfish) when packing your child's snack and lunch. If your child has any such items, and another camper has a severe allergy to any of the items your child has brought, it is at the discretion of the camp counselors to use distancing and cleaning measures to ensure the safety of all campers.

On occasion, camp activities will include food items, where the campers will be given the choice to eat the food items during the duration of the activity. The days when these activities will occur will be listed on the itinerary, and **it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform camp counselors at the beginning of the camp week if they do not wish for their child to partake in these activities and/or eat any specific food items. The Virginia Living**

**Museum and its employees are not liable for any consequences of your child consuming foods which were not explicitly stated to be allergens for your child at the start of camp. Please read all itinerary information carefully.**

## **Allergens, Medications, and Accommodations**

### **Allergens**

Due to the nature of the camp experience, campers may come in contact with a variety of items, including foods, materials, plants, etc. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide the camp counselors with a **full and complete list of any allergies** (food, medications, materials, etc.) that your child has, by the beginning of the camp week. **The Virginia Living Museum and its employees are not liable for any medical consequences resulting from your child's reaction to an allergen.** If your child has a severe allergy for which they require specific care, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform camp counselors by the beginning of the camp week, and to provide the child with the appropriate emergency medication.

### **Medications**

The Virginia Living Museum **does not administer any medications.** Camp educators are not permitted to administer medications under any circumstances, in accordance with requirements set forth by the Virginia State Board of Education and/or the Board of Health. All campers must be capable of self-administering any medications they require.

Camp educators may assist campers with retrieving their medications when needed, but administration remains solely the responsibility of the camper.

If your child requires routine medication, camp educators must be notified at the beginning of the camp week, and the child must be capable of administering it themselves.

If your child requires spontaneous medication (pain medication, allergy medication, etc.), parents/guardians must provide that medication, camp educators must be informed at the beginning of the camp day, and the child must be capable of administering it themselves.

The Virginia Living Museum is unable to store medications on behalf of campers. All medications must remain in the child's backpack/bag for the duration of the camp day. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that all necessary medications are sent with the child each day and that camp educators are informed of any medications the child may need, the conditions under which they may be required, and the child's ability to self-administer.

### **Accommodations**

The Virginia Living Museum strives to provide an enriching and inclusive experience for all our campers. We understand that campers may require certain accommodations. Camp staff will strive to work with campers and their families regarding any accommodations they may need. Camp staff will do this to the best of their ability, provided that the accommodations are feasible with the camp setting and are safe for camp staff and other campers. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to inform camp staff of any accommodations their child may need. Please note that in the effort to meet the needs of all the campers, camp staff will not be able to provide constant individualized attention to any one camper. If your child requires more consistent individualized attention, you are welcome to request that an aid (provided by

the parents/guardians, NOT the Virginia Living Museum) accompany your child during their week at camp. Such a request is subject to approval by the Education Director.

## **Behavior Policy**

In order to ensure that your child(ren) and other children participating in the Virginia Living Museum Camp program have a great time and gain the most from the experience, there are certain rules that all participants must follow. **By registering your child(ren) in the VLM Camp program, you are agreeing to these policies and will review these expectations with your child or children.** Your participation in discussing these policies with your child and in supporting these policies is an essential piece of helping all campers enjoy camp.

### **VLM Camp Behavior Expectations**

1. Be respectful towards camp staff, volunteers, other participants, museum guests, and animals.
2. Respect and follow the VLM Camp rules, which include but are not limited to:
  - Listen to and follow directions.
  - Keep hands and feet to yourself.
  - Stay with your camp group.
  - Walk in the museum unless we are in a game area and adults tell you that you may run.
  - Use an inside voice.

### **Rule Enforcement**

1. Minor Rule Violations (examples: running instead of walking, shouting in the museum, talking when a staff member is talking, etc.)
  - Camp staff will give a maximum of two verbal warnings each day as they feel is appropriate, considering the child's overall behavior.
  - A third verbal warning will result in a 5 minute cool down period from camp activities supervised by camp staff.
  - A repeat of the behavior after the break will result in the child being sent to the Education Director for a behavior conference. Campers will be expected to help come up with a list of ways to fix the situation.
  - The adult picking up the camper will be informed if the camper received a break from camp.
2. Major Rule Violations (examples: physical or verbal aggression towards staff, volunteers, or participants; bullying; putting oneself, others, or animals in danger, etc.)
  - For a single violation, the camper will be immediately removed from camp and sent to the Education Director.
  - The Education Director will call the parents to pick up the child immediately and the camper will be dismissed from camp for the day.
  - Any sequential major rule violations will result in an immediate dismissal from camp for the remainder of the camp week, with no refunds.
  - The Virginia Living Museum reserves the right to dismiss a child from camp entirely if, in the opinion of the camp staff and Education Director, the dismissal is in the best interest of the camp, its staff, volunteers and participants. There will be no refund for campers that are dismissed from the program for rule violations.
  - The Virginia Living Museum also reserves the right to deny any future registrations for any children that have been dismissed from previous camps as the result of rule

violations.

## **Camper Health Policy**

Before sending your camper off to the VLM, we ask that you do a verbal health screening with them. Look out for symptoms such as cough, sneezing, nausea, lethargy, or headaches. When in doubt, it is better to be safe and keep your camper home.

Any children with a fever of 100.4 and above, vomiting, diarrhea, or other flu-like symptoms, will be asked to stay home from camp that day. Once they are symptom free for 24 hours without the aid of medication, they will be able to return. Additionally, any campers who have tested positive for COVID-19 will be asked to stay home from camp until they are able to produce a negative test.

If a camper expresses to staff that they are feeling sick or generally unwell, staff will assess whether or not the camper is fit to stay at camp for that day. If the camper is deemed too sick to continue, a staff member will reach out and a guardian will be asked to pick that camper up within an hour of the call. Once your camper has been healthy for 24 hours, they may return.

In the case that a camper cannot return for the rest of the camp week due to illness, a staff member will reach out to the number on file to discuss potential refunds or rescheduling. Please note that a refund or reschedule is not guaranteed and will be dependent on circumstance and future availability.

For the safety of all campers and staff, the Virginia Living Museum has the right to decide whether or not any child is well enough to attend camp based on our observations of the child. We want all campers to be safe and have fun, and our health policy allows us to do so. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call the museum or chat with your camper's counselor if it is during the camp week. We are happy to help!

## **Photo Policy**

During your child's program VLM staff and volunteers may take photos of camp activities. These photos will be shared with you in a Google Photo album to the email used during registration. Other parents from your child's camp will be able to access this photo album. If you would not like your child photographed please answer **no** to the photo release policy during registration. If you would like to update your answer before camp, please email our reservations team at [reservations@thevlm.org](mailto:reservations@thevlm.org).

As a parent of a child/children enrolled in a program at the Virginia Living Museum, I agree to the following:

- I understand that my child(ren) may be photographed at the Virginia Living Museum during normal program hours and activities.
- I understand that these photographs may be used in newsletters, on the website, on various social media platforms, or any other publication.
- I give permission for my child(ren)'s photograph to be posted in newsletters, on the website, on various social media platforms, or any other publication. (When names are added, only first names will be used).
- I understand that I have the right to request, in writing, to have a photo removed from the website or Facebook within 30 work days.