



## YMCA CAMP OCOEE

# PARENT HANDBOOK

### Contact Information

Camp Office (423) 338-5588  
Camp Fax (423) 338-5507  
Infirmary (423) 216-1004 (Emergencies between 4:30pm-8am Sun.-Fri. Summertime Only)  
Emergency Email (24/7) [jordway@ymcachattanooga.org](mailto:jordway@ymcachattanooga.org) or [bdavis@ymcachattanooga.org](mailto:bdavis@ymcachattanooga.org)

Registrar/Accounting- Diana	<a href="mailto:campocoe@ymcachattanooga.org">campocoe@ymcachattanooga.org</a>
Assistant Camp Director- John Ordway	<a href="mailto:jordway@ymcachattanooga.org">jordway@ymcachattanooga.org</a>
Camp Director- B.J. Davis	<a href="mailto:bdavis@ymcachattanooga.org">bdavis@ymcachattanooga.org</a>
Cabin Assignments- Susan Glasheen	<a href="mailto:ocoeestaff@ymcachattanooga.org">ocoeestaff@ymcachattanooga.org</a>
Camper Email-	<a href="mailto:ocoeecamper@gmail.com">ocoeecamper@gmail.com</a> (Be sure to include the campers name and cabin)

Business Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9am-4:30pm (Summer) 9am-3:00pm (School year)

Mailing Address: 111 YMCA Drive  
Ocoee, TN 37361

Web Address: [www.ymcacampocoe.org](http://www.ymcacampocoe.org)

## **YMCA Camp Ocoee's Mission**

YMCA Camp Ocoee is fully committed to the overall well-being and health of our campers and guests. We commit to provide an excellent Christian focused camper experience for all our participants. We uphold the YMCA's mission of putting Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind, and body for all. Our purpose is to provide experiences, under a strong Christian emphasis, that will build character and strengthen the values of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility, and faith in all.

## **Christian Emphasis**

YMCA Camp Ocoee sees the development of Christian character as the primary objective of a camper's experience. Each day an interdenominational chapel service or devotion is given by staff and cabin groups. The opportunity to discuss the day's activities provides a meaningful tool in developing a stronger Christian faith.

## **Prior to Camp**

- Balance due date for all sessions; May 15, 2025
- Reviewed and discussed Camp Ocoee discipline policy with your child
- Required Health Form for each camper will be available through your Camp Brain online account on March 1, 2025.

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## Getting Ready For Camp

### **Cabin Assignments**

Cabin assignments are made on the basis of age and gender. Younger Camp (7-12) will be placed together, Older Camp (13-16) will be placed together. One of the goals of camp is to encourage new friendships; therefore, we recommend that close friends not always be placed in the same cabin. Mutual buddy requests from campers are honored for campers within one year of age, same gender, and enrolled in the same program and session; however, older campers will always be placed with the younger cabin. Therefore, both campers must have the other listed as their "Cabin Mate request" on their registration form to ensure the pairing is made. To ensure the best experience for all campers in the cabin group, we do our best to limit large groups of campers who already know each other from being placed in the same cabin. We can only honor one mutual and exclusive cabin mate request. We encourage you to coordinate your cabin mate request with the other family in order to ensure a smooth placement, and make sure both campers are registered for the same week. If you have a special situation which you feel should be considered, please call at least two weeks prior to the session. Please remember that even if two individuals are not in the same cabin, there are many opportunities to spend time together in camp. Campers are not able to request specific counselors or cabins. Cabin Assignments are made two weeks prior to each session and are a careful, hour's long process that takes into account a number of different variables.

### **Camp Store**

Our Merchandise store, "The Outfitter", will be open on the opening and closing day of each session. At the store you will be able to purchase t-shirts, water bottles, and other YMCA Camp Ocoee merchandise. **Merchandise will only be sold on opening and closing days.**

The campers will receive a snack and a drink daily at no additional charge. Campers do not need any cash while at camp.

### **Weekend Stayover**

Campers attending multiple one-week sessions may choose to participate in activities between sessions by registering for Weekend Stayover for an additional fee. Stayover is specially planned between the sessions and usually includes activities at camp, time for rest, pizza, movies, and more. Parents who choose to take their campers out of camp for the weekend must do so during normal Check-in and Check-out.

### **Camper Laundry**

Camp provides laundry service **only** to campers who are registered for Weekend Stayover. **A laundry bag is required to use this service.** All clothing and laundry bag should be labeled with camper's name. Laundry is sent out Friday morning and returned to the campers Monday lunch. The charges are covered by the Stayover Fee.

### **Airport/Bus Transportation**

Camp Ocoee will offer transportation for an additional fee when campers arrive by bus or plane. All incoming campers must arrive in Chattanooga by 12:00pm on Sunday and depart by 12:00pm on Saturday. Our transportation service is only available to Chattanooga Airport (CHA) and Chattanooga and Cleveland, TN bus stations. A transportation fee of \$30 is due with registration. **Trip details must be confirmed with the Cabin Life Director two weeks prior to arrival and you must complete the Airport Form on the Camp Brain portal.**

## What to Pack for Camp Ocoee

Pack in a large duffle or wheeled footlocker. You will need to carry your luggage from the parking lot to your cabin. Pack for the full week of camp. We strongly advise you to write your camper's first and last name on all items brought to camp. Campers spend all day outside; we recommend old clothing appropriate for outdoor play.

Recommended Items for one-week session:

- Sheets (Single Bed)
- Blanket & Pillow
- Sleeping Bag (For Campout)
- Laundry Bag
- Undergarments (7)
- Shorts (7)
- T-Shirts (7)
- Socks
- Raincoat/Poncho
- Hat/ Bandana
- Pajamas
- Shoes
- Water Sandals\*
- Sweatshirt
- Swim Wear (2)\*\*
- Shower Caddy
- Toiletries- Soap, Shampoo, tooth paste, comb/brush, etc.
- Towels (3)
- Sunscreen
- Insect Repellant
- Camera (not cell phone)
- Crazy Creek Chair (Stadium Chair)
- Water Bottle
- Day Pack
- Small Clip Fan for bed
- Flashlight
- Camping Hammock
- Freedom Friday Clothing- Patriotic Clothing
- Stationary, Stamps, envelopes

\*Sandals with a tight back strap are the perfect shoes for camp. Flip Flops/Crocs are not safe or acceptable camp shoes

\*\* Swim wear should provide complete coverage, fasten securely and be designed for active wear, we suggest one piece or tankini style swimsuits.

### **Laundry**

Laundry service is only available for campers who are signed up for Stayover between sessions. Stayover camper's laundry is sent out Friday morning and is returned to the campers Monday lunch.

### **Rafting**

If your camper is signed up for the Ocoee or Hiwassee River rafting, they **must** have water shoes\* for the trip. Girls may want to include swim shorts.

### **Horseback Riding**

If your camper is signed up for Horseback Riding they **must** have closed toed shoes.

### **What to Leave at Home**

- Money
- Firearms
- Alcohol
- Fireworks
- Chewing Gum
- Knives of any kind
- Electronics of any kind including but not limited to: Cell Phones, iPods, Ipads, Radios, Computers, etc.
- Drugs
- Tobacco Products
- Vape Pens
- Pets

Camp Ocoee staff will make every effort to help your child keep track of their belongings, YMCA Camp Ocoee is not responsible for their personal belongings. All Lost & Found is donated to charity two weeks after camp ends for the summer.

Camp is a natural setting that provides children the opportunity to "unplug" from electronics. **Please leave all electronics at home.**

Please examine your camper's selection of clothing, which might carry offensive slogans or symbols.

**We are not responsible for any damaged items.**

## **Opening Day/ Closing Day**

Parents are encouraged to bring their child to camp, meet the staff, tour the facilities, and help get their campers settled into their cabins.

### **Check-In Time: Sunday, 1pm-2:30pm ET**

Check in on Sunday's is staggered based on the parent's last name. M-Z will check in between 1pm-1:45pm while A-L will check in between 1:45pm-2:30pm.

### **Check-Out Time: Saturday, 9:30am-10:30am ET**

If you arrive prior to 9:30am ET please be prepared to wait at the camp office. Boys will be waiting in their cabins while girl campers will be waiting with their luggage at the bottom of the hill near the lower parking lot. Campers must be signed out with their counselor. You will need a photo I.D. to sign out your child.

If your camper(s) took medication during the session, please stop at the infirmary to receive these medications from the nurse. Prescription medicines that are not picked up on closing day can be mailed home and the cost will be charged to your account.

If you are unable to arrive by 10:30am ET on check-out day, we are happy to care for your children until 12:30pm ET for an additional \$20. Please call the office to add this care to your camper's registration.

## **Early Check-out**

Check-out time is a very important time for your campers. They have made great friendships during their time at camp, and it is very important that they are able to say goodbye.

If you must pick up your camper before the end of the session, please notify the camp office 48 hours in advance.

## **During Camp**

### **Camper Mail**

We encourage families and friends to write their camper. Please be sure that every mailed item is labeled with the camper's full name and cabin. Mail letters and packages (no food please, **Camp Ocoee is a Peanut Free Camp**) to:

YMCA Camp Ocoee  
Camper Name and Cabin  
111 YMCA Drive  
Ocoee, TN 37361

Campers can receive e-mail at [ocoecamper@gmail.com](mailto:ocoecamper@gmail.com). This service is free. Please be sure to include the camper's full name and cabin in the subject line. E-mails are printed once daily at 4:30pm and delivered to the campers with the regular mail at dinner Monday- Friday. Do not include attachments to your emails to campers (emails are batch printed so attachments are not printed).

You can drop mail off on Sunday during check-in at the office; just include the day you want it delivered on each package/letter, along with the campers name and cabin.

## **Ranger Camp Overview: Ages 7- 16**

### Daily Schedule- Monday- Friday – Younger Camp (ages 7-12)

7:00am	Rise and Shine
7:45am	Flag Pole
8:00am	Breakfast
8:45am	Morning Watch
9-10am	Skill Area 1
10-11am	Skill Area 2
11-12pm	Skill Area 3
12:15pm	Flag Pole
12:30pm	Lunch
1:30-2:30pm	B.O.B Time (Body on Bunk)
2:30-5:30pm	Cabin Centered Activities
5:45pm	Flag Pole
6:00pm	Dinner
6:45-7:30pm	Duty Areas
7:30-8:45pm	Evening Program
8:45pm	Return to Cabins to prepare for bed
9:30pm	Cabin Devotion
9:45pm	Lights Out

### Daily Schedule- Monday- Friday – Older Camp (ages 13-16)

8:00am	Rise and Shine
8:45am	Flag Pole
9:00am	Breakfast
9:45am	Morning Watch
10-11am	Skill Area 1
11-12pm	Skill Area 2
12:15pm	Flag Pole
12:30pm	Lunch
1:30-2:30pm	B.O.B Time (Body on Bunk)
2:30-5:30pm	Cabin Centered Activities
5:45pm	Flag Pole
6:00pm	Dinner
6:45-7:30pm	Duty Areas
7:30-8:45pm	Evening Program
8:45-9:45pm	Older Camp Evening Program
9:45pm	Return to Cabins to prepare for bed
10:30pm	Cabin Devotion
10:45pm	Lights Out

**Skill Activity Periods:** Younger Camp campers attend 3 skill periods each day, while Older Camp campers will attend 2 skill periods each day, to get advanced instruction in the activity. Campers sign up for these activities on Sunday and Tuesday. The youngest cabins in Younger Camp (Hudson & McCarty) will travel as a cabin group to all the most popular activities.

**Cabin Centered Activities:** The cabins will schedule special activities during these activity periods. Activities may include regular camp activities, canoe trips, challenging other cabins, hiking, and much more.

**Evening Programs:** Each night offers a different camp activity. Some nights are camp-wide and involve everyone, while other night's campers are split by either gender or age. Activities include Luaus, campfire, Clue, Excalibur, etc.

**Cabin Campout:** Cabins will go on a campout in the forest during their session (depending on weather conditions and site availability). The campers leave camp at 5pm and return to camp prior to morning activities the next day. Campers will cook dinner over a fire, set up camp, and eat S'mores. Hudson and McCarty Cabins will do a cookout on the camp property.

### **Land Activities**

Archery, Arts & Crafts, Climbing Wall, Cheerleading, Dance, Drama, Flag Football, High Ropes, V-Swing, Hiking, \*Horseback Riding, Mountain Biking, Nature Study, \*Paintball, BB Ranger, Sling Shot Range, 9 Square in the Air, Soccer, Ultimate Frisbee, GaGa, Team Sports and much more.

### **Water Activities**

Banana Boat, Canoeing, Kayaking, Keowees, Stand Up Paddleboards, Rope Swing, Swimming, Water Trampoline, Aqua Jungle Jim, Water Volleyball, \*Water Skiing, Water Slide, Sit-on-Tops

*All campers are required to take a swim test on the first day of camp, which consists of swimming 25m, treading water, and floating on back.*

*\*Elective Activities- Campers may also sign up for special elective activities to enhance their camp experience. Please note that there is an extra fee for these activities. Electives take the place of regular cabin activities so campers signed up for electives may miss some of the regular camp programming.*

### **Special Elective Activities**

Campers may also sign up for special elective activities to enhance their camp experience. Please note that there is an extra fee for these activities. Electives take the place of regular cabin activities so campers signed up for electives may miss some of the regular camp programming. Spaces are limited in many of these electives.

**Paintball** (\$30, ages 10+) 20 campers per session: One 2 hour session of splattering paintball fun.

**Paintball Plus** (\$20, ages 10+): An additional afternoon session of paintball.

**Horseback Riding** (\$130, all ages) 18 campers per session: Improve riding skills; learn to saddle, clean saddles and horses, trail riding, and basic horse care. Four one-hour sessions.

**Water Skiing** (\$130, all ages) 18 campers per session: 4 days of 1 hour water ski/kneeboard/wakeboard instruction. Campers share instruction period with 2-3 other skiers.

**Hiwassee Rafting** (\$50, ages 10+) 12 campers per session: Introductory rafting on the scenic Hiwassee River.

**Ocoee Rafting** (\$70, Ages 12+): Intermediate to advanced rafting on the Ocoee River, site of the 1996 Olympic whitewater events. Camp Ocoee contracts with Adventures Unlimited Inc. for the Ocoee raft trip.

### **Daily Photos**

Parents and families can view the current camp activities by clicking on the "Camp Photos" link on our website or visiting [ymcacampcoee.zenfolio.com](http://ymcacampcoee.zenfolio.com). This site is password protected for the safety of the campers. The password needed to access the pictures will be sent to you prior to the session and is also available during check-in.

Cabin photos will be posted after each session on the Camp Ocoee Facebook page. "Like" us at [www.facebook.com/ymcacampcoee/](http://www.facebook.com/ymcacampcoee/).

## **Homesickness**

It is perfectly normal for new and returning campers to miss family, friends, and pets while at camp. Most campers need 2 days to adjust to a new routine and their new cabin mates. By Wednesday parents sometimes receive a "please come get me now" letter. Campers are most likely having fun at this point in time and have adjusted to the new environment. If your camper is experiencing abnormal homesickness, the Cabin Life Director will initiate the following process.

Step 1 – The cabin counselors will work with the camper and notify the Cabin Life Director

Step 2 – The camper will write the Cabin Life Director a letter expressing their feelings, and the director will call the parents and share the information. The Cabin Life Director and parent will partner to create a plan for the camper.

Step 3 – The Cabin Life Director will meet with the camper and discuss the plan made with the parents.

Parents can help their camper adjust to camp by following simple steps: Do not make a "pick-up deal" with your camper, encourage your child's independence throughout the year, practice separations, involve your child in the process of choosing a camp, discuss what camp will be like, pack a personal item from home, send encouraging emails to your camper during the week (do not refer to things they are missing at home or people or pets that miss them).

Visit <https://www.acacamps.org> for more information about preparing for camp.

## **Camper Care**

The Infirmary is staffed by medical professionals 24 hours a day for urgent medical situations. Our team of medical staff provides care and supervision of camper safety and health. **All camper medications, including vitamins and over-the-counter medications, must be checked** in with the Infirmary staff at check-in. All medications must be in their original containers and turned in to the Infirmary. Medication will be administered as directed on the bottle and must be clearly marked with the child's first and last name. **No medications (including OTC meds) are allowed in the cabins.** If your child has a severe allergic reaction and needs an Epi-pen or needs immediate access to an asthma inhaler, please discuss these needs with the nurses upon check-in. Campers who are not feeling well have the opportunity to visit the Infirmary. In the event that a camper spends the night in the Infirmary or there is a serious situation, parents will be called. All staff is trained in First Aid and CPR.

All campers are required to go through a lice check on check in day as a part of their cabin tour. If your camper is found to have lice, they will be required to return home until clear of lice and nits. Once treatment of the camper and belonging has occurred at home, the camper can return to camp. It is highly recommended to check your camper for lice prior to arriving for camp.

## **Birthdays**

Birthdays are super special at Camp Ocoee. Campers are recognized at lunch with a song. Parents wishing to order a cake, or cupcakes can contact our local Food City at 423-244-9249 (each cabin houses up to 15 people). If you order a cake, pickup should be scheduled for the morning (9am-11:30pm) and you must contact our Cabin Life Director to make arrangements for pickup at 423-216-1003 or [ocoestaff@ymcachattanooga.org](mailto:ocoestaff@ymcachattanooga.org).



## **Dining Lodge**

Appealing and nutritious meals are prepared under the careful supervision of our trained dietary staff and satisfy the hearty appetites of campers and staff. Fresh fruit, cereal, hot breakfast and vegetables are offered every day. A salad bar and sandwich bar are available at lunches and dinners. At mealtime, as well as with all other camper activities, mature and knowledgeable counselors gently guide campers toward healthy and appropriate choices. **Special dietary needs and food allergies should be indicated on the camp health history.** If your campers has uncommon dietary needs please be prepared to bring their special food to camp with you so we can ensure they have the appropriate food. Camp Ocoee maintains a grade "A" rating from the Tennessee Board of Health. **Camp Ocoee is a Peanut Free Camp.**

# The Fine Print

## **Camper Discipline Policy**

Our goal is to guide children in becoming happy, responsible, and cooperative participants through positive techniques. In the event that behavior requires discipline:

- Staff action will not damage the child's self-image or embarrass the child.
- Staff action will help children learn self-control, choose alternatives, identify feelings, and develop an understanding and respect of feelings for others.
- Staff will communicate with families regarding severe behavior concerns.
- Every effort will be made by staff to enlist the cooperation of the child and parents to solve problems.

Campers are expected to follow the instructions of camp counselors and other Camp Ocoee staff. In respect to discipline, Camp Ocoee has established two levels of behavior classifications (Type I and Type II behaviors) with consequences for each. It is not our intention to alarm parents, but rather to make everyone aware of our discipline policies.

**TYPE I** behavior includes (but is not limited to) serious infractions such as damage or theft of property, assault, possessing weapons, tobacco or tobacco products (Vapes), alcohol, narcotics or illegal drugs, gang-related activity, sexual misconduct, bullying, repeated Type II violations, and any conduct that may be detrimental to the best interest of the other campers.

Type I behavior will result in immediate suspension and dismissal from camp. Parents will be responsible for providing transportation to return the camper home. No refunds will be issued.

**TYPE II** behavior is less serious, but disruptive, and therefore unacceptable. This includes (but is not limited to) infractions such as profanity, verbal abuse, tardiness, and uncooperative behavior. Campers who engage in Type II behavior will be told of their unacceptable behavior and asked to correct it and offer solutions.

Further problems will result in a written reprimand with logical consequences, and viable alternatives for future behavior will be discussed or may result in a meeting with the Cabin Life Director and the parent to discuss the behavior or special circumstances and possible suspension or dismissal from camp.

Suspension or Dismissal from Camp Ocoee could occur by the following:

- Inappropriate behavior(s) that cannot be solved after repeated attempts
- When behavior of a child becomes detrimental to him/herself and others

## **Property and Equipment Damages**

To teach responsibility, in the event that a child deliberately damages any camp property or equipment, the child/parent will be responsible for the cost of replacement.

## **Shared Responsibilities**

Personal responsibility and group cooperation are important elements of the camp experience. Mature, caring counselors work with campers on the importance of caring for one's own personal belongings, assisting in daily camp clean-up, and pitching in on general camp tasks known as "shared responsibilities."

Camp Ocoee will use "Think Sheets" to document concerns regarding behavior changes or patterns being established. These concerns will be communicated to parent with a phone call from the Cabin Life Director or Assistant Camp Director.

## **Visitation/Phone Calls**

Camp Ocoee does not have a visitation day, although letters and e-mails are welcomed and encouraged. Parents are also invited to look over the facilities and meet staff on check-in or check out day. Camp Ocoee does not permit campers to make or receive phone calls. (Especially when campers are homesick, we have found that calls from home disrupt the camper's adjustment to camp life.) If an emergency situation arises at home, we ask that parents contact the camp office.

## **Insurance**

The YMCA of Metropolitan Chattanooga provides liability insurance for all of its programs. It is the parents' responsibility to provide their own health and accident insurance coverage for their camper. Parents/guardians should include their personal health insurance information in the space provided on the camper's Health Form. In the event of serious illness or accident, the parent will be notified as soon as possible. Parents/guardians are responsible for prescriptions and charges incurred for the outside medical treatment of their child, should medical services be required while in attendance at camp.

## **Parent Evaluations**

We appreciate your immediate comments and feedback about our staff and programs. If you see or hear of a problem with any part of our camp program or staff, please contact the camp office at 423-338-5588 or e-mail John Ordway at [jordway@ymcachattanooga.org](mailto:jordway@ymcachattanooga.org) so immediate corrections can be made.

A parent/child evaluation form will be sent home with each camper at check-out. Your sincere response is requested and appreciated. The evaluations are available online at our web site: [www.ymcacampcoee.org](http://www.ymcacampcoee.org).

## **Payments and Refunds**

A \$100 deposit is due with each registration (per child per session). The balance for the registration is due May 15, 2025.

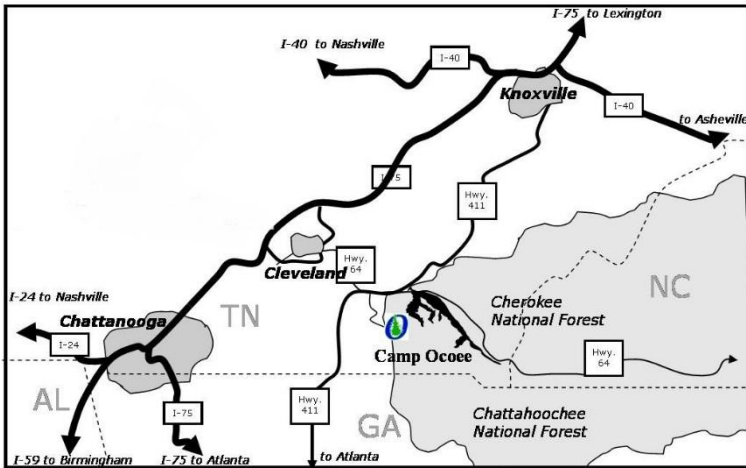
A \$100 deposit per session is required with registration and is 100% refundable until May 15, 2025. If Camp Ocoee receives written notification of cancellation prior to May 15, 2025, I will receive a full refund of all fees paid. Notification after May 15, 2025 will result in the loss of the \$100 deposit (per session, per camper). Cancellations made less than 2 weeks prior to the start of your respective session will forfeit all previous payments. Cancellations can be emailed to [campcoee@ymcachattanooga.org](mailto:campcoee@ymcachattanooga.org) or mailed to: 111 YMCA Drive, Ocoee, TN 37361.

Any camper leaving prior to the end of the stated period of session is not entitled to a refund except in case of illness or accident.

Camp management reserves the right to refuse acceptance or program continuance of any participant deemed detrimental or not in the best interest of participant or Camp Ocoee.

## Directions to YMCA Camp Ocoee

For directions from your location, go to [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) and type in YMCA Camp Ocoee.



**DO NOT USE A GPS TO FIND CAMP OCOEE. PLEASE USE THE DIRECTIONS BELOW.**

### **To Camp Ocoee from Chattanooga:**

1. Take I-24 East toward Knoxville/Atlanta
2. Take I-75 North toward Knoxville
3. Take first Cleveland exit (Exit 20) - Highway 64/74E
4. Turn right off of exit ramp toward Cherokee National Forest
5. Travel approximately 6.5 miles.
6. Take Highway 64 EAST to Ocoee River/Cherokee National Forest toward Murphy, North Carolina
7. Travel approximately 10 miles.
8. Highway 64 will go from a 4 lane to 2 lane highway just before Cookson Creek Rd.
9. Turn RIGHT onto Cookson Creek Road
10. Travel on Cookson Creek road for approximately 3.8 miles. \*Very curvy road"
11. Turn left into the Camp Ocoee entrance

### **To Camp Ocoee from Nashville:**

Take I-24 East toward Chattanooga  
Follow steps 1-11 above

### **To Camp Ocoee from Knoxville:**

Take I-75 South toward Chattanooga  
Take Exit 25- Highway 60 toward Cleveland/Dayton  
Turn right onto Georgetown Rd. NW—this becomes Hwy. 60  
Follow Steps 6-11 above

### **To Camp Ocoee from Atlanta:**

Take I-75 North toward Dalton  
Take Highway 411 North at Exit 293  
Travel on Highway 411 North toward Cleveland, TN and Chatsworth travel approximately 65 miles  
Take Highway 64 East to Ocoee River/Cherokee National Forest toward Murphy, North Carolina  
Follow Steps 8-11 above

YMCA Camp Ocoee  
111 YMCA Drive  
Ocoee, TN 37361  
Tel: 423-338-5588

